

ENFIELD DISPATCH

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A NEW CULTURAL PROGRAMME - 'Fore Street for All' - has been launched in Angel Edmonton thanks to £200,000 in funding from the Mayor of London. It aims to boost the area's night-time economy by connecting local businesses with arts and culture groups - read more on Page 12 Credit Natalie G

Edmonton incinerator contract 'a disaster'

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER & JAMES CRACKNELL

Edmonton MP Kate Osamor has described the decision to award a contract for the construction of a new, larger incinerator as "an absolute disaster".

North London Waste Authority (NLWA) voted in December to approve a construction deal with Spanish firm Acciona to build the new facility, which will be around a third bigger than the current incinerator at Edmonton Eco Park in Advent Way.

Construction work is now due to begin by the middle of this year, with work to prepare the site having been finished last year.

It comes despite environmental campaigners and local MPs piling pressure on NLWA to pause and

review the project, with multiple demonstrations held across North London, including a blockade of Edmonton Eco Park last month. Opponents warn the plant will pump out hundreds of thousands of tonnes of carbon dioxide and other air pollutants.

The new incinerator, which won planning approval in 2017, is designed to replace the existing plant built in 1969. The larger facility will be capable of burning 700,000 tonnes of North London's waste every year. The key vote to sign a construction deal took place during a meeting of the NLWA board, which is formed of 14 councillors from Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest boroughs.

Edmonton MP Kate Osamor said: "The awarding of the contract is an absolute disaster for local people.

It is Edmonton which will bear the brunt of this move to lock North London into decades more of toxic incineration that will harm children's lungs, increase rates of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and even contribute to premature deaths.

"Despite this news, huge credit must go to all the campaigners that have raised this issue and been part of the movement to stop the incinerator. Going forwards, we must push for all levels of government to work together and produce a strategy which will reduce our reliance on incineration and increase our current low levels of reusing and recycling of waste."

NLWA chair Clyde Loakes claims the new plant - part of the £1.2billion North London Heat and Power Project, which also includes new recycling facilities

at Edmonton Eco Park - will be the safest and cleanest in the UK thanks to emissions controls designed to cut pollution.

Speaking during deputations to last month's NLWA board meeting, a range of opponents criticised the incinerator rebuild. Olivia Eken, from Enfield Climate Action Forum, said: "Expanding the incinerator at such a crucial time in the climate crisis will not only plunge Edmonton into a state of low recycling rates and toxic air, but also have detrimental health issues in its residents."

Dr Edward Tranah, who works at North Middlesex Hospital, called on NLWA to boost recycling rates to avoid burning waste. Professor Vyvyan Howard, a specialist in toxicology, warned waste incineration

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Go-ahead for over 1,400 homes

Edmonton Green Shopping Centre to be rebuilt as part of major redevelopment scheme

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A major regeneration scheme at Edmonton Green Shopping Centre has been given the go-ahead by councillors.

Crosstree Real Estate Partners, which bought the site for £72million in 2018, won permission to build 13 new residential towers between ten and 30 storeys high, in a scheme designed to regenerate the town centre.

The large-scale development will see the existing 1960s-era shopping malls knocked down and up to 1,438 homes built, alongside new commercial space.

The three existing tower blocks that stand over the shopping centre – Pennine House, Grampian House and Mendip House, which date to the 1970s and rise to 25 storeys – will be integrated into the new scheme.

At a meeting last month, members of Enfield Council's planning committee approved the first phase of the scheme in full and the second phase in outline, which means a detailed application for the second phase will need approval at a later date. Work on the first phase is expected to start in spring 2023, with the entire development due for completion by 2035.

The council received eight objections to the development from members of the public. Speaking during the meeting, local resident Alex Lebel said the proposed buildings were "too high" and claimed this was not made clear to residents during consultation.

His comments were echoed by Vivienne Aiyela, who lives in Pennine House. Vivienne said many residents in the existing tower were concerned the new towers would block out daylight and sunlight from their homes.

Supporters of the scheme told the committee the development would improve the area, which suffers



How phase one of the development would look from Fore Street

from high levels of deprivation. Edmonton Green councillor Ergin Erbil said the new designs would reduce opportunities for drug-dealing and anti-social behaviour.

Matt Mason, a partner at Crosstree, said the development would create a "sustainable town centre", providing homes, green spaces and employment opportunities for local people.

When the application was discussed by the committee, several members raised concerns over the scheme's impact on neighbours and heritage, and the proposed level of affordable homes.

Conservative committee member Mike Rye questioned whether it was really a regeneration scheme. He said: "This is essentially a housing project in a poor ward of high density, where we are not even delivering the council's own aspiration of 40% social [affordable] housing."

In the first phase, 109 out of 350 homes (31%) will be classed as affordable, but the planning report stated that "the applicant has committed to 35% of units being delivered as affordable housing" across both phases of the scheme. Just under half of the affordable housing allocation would be homes for social rent.

Committee member Daniel Anderson, an independent member of the Community First group, suggested many existing Edmonton residents would be unable to afford the homes. He said: "I do not see how this development improves the opportunities for people in this borough."

Responding to concerns raised by

residents and councillors, planning officer Graham Harrington admitted there would be a loss of daylight and sunlight to some homes on the lower floors of Pennine House, but said this would be compensated for by other improvements, such as increased access to green space.

He said officers always tried to maximise affordable homes on developments, adding "in this case, we think it is acceptable".

The development site is surrounded by four conservation areas, and there are seven Grade 2-listed buildings nearby. In a report, the council's heritage and conservation officer wrote that he was unable to support the plans.

But planning officers wrote that they considered the public benefits of the scheme would outweigh the "less than substantial harm" that would be caused to the setting of the heritage assets.

Labour's Hass Yusuf and committee chair Sinan Boztas expressed support for the plans. Cllr Boztas, who represents Lower Edmonton, said: "We all have some issues with the scheme, but I think it will be an advantage for residents of Edmonton in the long term."

At the end of the debate, the four Conservative committee members voted against the application, along with Cllr Anderson. The seven remaining committee members – all Labour – voted to approve the plans, which will now be referred to the Greater London Authority because of the application's size.

Care award

Local charity Age UK Enfield won two awards at the Great British Care Awards last month.

The 'Covid Hero' team award recognised the "outstanding contribution" of all Age UK Enfield staff and volunteers during the pandemic.

Andrew Hall, who has worked at Age UK Enfield's Parker Day Centre in Edmonton since 2005, also won the 'Outstanding Dementia Carer' award. Andrew started out as a care worker in the community, where he specialised in working with people with dementia.

Ben Ingber, chief executive officer at Age UK Enfield, said: "I'm incredibly proud of Andrew and the whole team at Age UK Enfield who pulled together and worked so hard under difficult circumstances. It really shows how our organisation is at the heart of the community, working to improve the lives of all older people in the borough."

Residents back estate rebuild

More than three out of four people living on two council estates in Angel Edmonton have voted to approve plans for a major redevelopment of the area.

Enfield Council has long earmarked the Joyce Avenue and Snells Park estates for redevelopment but, because of the scale of its £770million plans and the need to demolish existing residents' homes, under Greater London Authority rules a ballot had to be held before any work could go ahead.

Residents were balloted, via independent body Civica, between 17th November and 10th December, with the council subsequently revealing that 78.5% of the people taking part had voted in favour of Enfield Council's proposals.

With a turnout rate of 85.5%, the council has described the result as a "strong mandate" for the proposed scheme. It will see the 1950s and 60s-built estate – 795 homes in total – demolished to make way for a new scheme of around 2,900 homes, including replacement social housing, new 'affordable' housing, and additional private rent homes.

Responding to the ballot result, council leader Nesil Caliskan said: "This scheme will transform the lives of people living on the estates."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

releases particulate matter that can be damaging to health.

Addressing concerns, NLWA managing director Martin Capstick said the plant would be the first in the UK to use "selective catalytic reduction" to control

nitrous oxides and a "combined wet-dry scrubber system" to reduce particulates, acid gases and other emissions. Cllr Loakes argued against exporting waste outside London, telling councillors "the rest of the country did not want our waste being exported to them".

The vote on the contract was not unanimous, however. Isidoros Diakides, a Haringey councillor, voted against, citing value for money concerns. Haringey's deputy leader Mike Hakata abstained. The remaining twelve councillors – two from each of the six other boroughs – voted in favour.

Labour councillors sidelined in 2022 selection battles



Bowes councillor and former deputy leader Achilles Georgiou

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Two Labour councillors have been denied a chance to stand for re-election this year after falling out of favour with the council leadership, the *Dispatch* understands.

Tolga Aramaz and Achilles Georgiou failed their selection interviews and were not given an opportunity to put their candidacy to a vote of Labour members. Both have taken up political positions in the last few years that have put them at odds with the Labour-run administration at Enfield Civic Centre.

In addition, ex-council leader Doug Taylor has been forced to vacate the safe Labour ward he has represented since 2002, Ponders End, and has been selected to stand in the marginal ward of Palmers Green instead.

Cllr Aramaz is a left-winger who has twice been suspended for defying the Labour whip, on one occasion abstaining on a budget vote because he was opposed to any council cuts to public services. He is also the founder of campaign group Meridian For Council Homes, which demands that all new homes being built at the authority's flagship regeneration scheme Meridian Water are made available for social rent.

Cllr Georgiou is a former deputy leader of the council, during Cllr Taylor's reign, but has been a frequent critic of several council projects in recent years, including Meridian Water, low-traffic neighbourhoods, and the closure of Whitewebbs Park Golf Course.

Cllr Taylor was deposed as council leader in May 2018, just two weeks after leading Labour to victory with an increased majority, and Cllr Georgiou was one of the five councillors who stood down from their cabinet positions in May 2019 after signing a letter to Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC) asking for alleged "irregularities" in the 2018 selection process to be investigated.

The Labour NEC later issued a rebuke



Ponders End councillor and former council leader Doug Taylor

to the Enfield Labour group, forbidding any serving councillors or candidates from being "involved in the arrangements" for the 2022 selection process, which is now ongoing – a full list of candidates is expected to be announced shortly.

Several Labour members with knowledge of the 2022 selection process have spoken to the *Dispatch* of their concerns about the way it is being conducted. Although some have said that the process has been smoother than in previous years, one source said: "Selections are not being done on merit. It is disrespectful that someone [Cllr Taylor] who gave us our biggest majority for some time [in 2018] has not been selected for his own ward.

"It is to do with who you know, not what you know."

"It's not what you know, it's who you know"

Since mid-2020, seven Labour councillors have quit the party and joined a new opposition group, Community First, now made up of four independents, two Green Party councillors, and one Liberal Democrat. All have publicly denounced the current Labour leadership. Two other councillors quit the council altogether.

Partly because of the ward boundary changes that are coming into effect for the local election this year, many Labour councillors will be standing in new wards, including current cabinet members who had previously stood in Labour strongholds but are now standing in areas where the Labour vote is expected to fall significantly – such as Bowes, Palmers Green and Winchmore Hill.

Many other Labour councillors have



Edmonton Green councillor Tolga Aramaz

decided not to seek re-election, including some existing cabinet members.

Yasemin Brett, a long-standing councillor for Bowes ward, told the *Dispatch* she was standing down after what she described as a "difficult" four years on the council. "Some of us have been here a long while, and I do feel we should give other people a chance," she said. "[But] there is no doubt that the last four years have been difficult for some of us.

"We have had very challenging times with Covid-19, and the fact people haven't got financial security, with all of this going on you need to feel like you are a united group, working together to serve the people who elected us."

Regarding Cllr Taylor's failure to be selected to stand in Ponders End, Cllr Brett said: "He is an excellent councillor and he is somebody I have a lot of faith in.

"He has brought us success after success, and increased the profile of Labour locally, with several impressive infrastructure projects, but unfortunately it doesn't just

depend on being a good councillor – there are other factors at play."

Another source, who wished to remain anonymous, said they were "shocked" that Cllr Taylor would not be standing in Ponders End but that his move to Palmers Green "shows his popularity goes beyond his own ward".

Alan Sitkin, a former cabinet member who stood down in 2018, told the *Dispatch*: "It is tradition for a sitting councillor to be given the choice to stand for reselection, unless they have been found deficient in their performance. That is not the case here – there are a number of respected, experienced councillors who have never put a foot wrong and haven't brought the party into disrepute, but are being denied the opportunity.

"The current power faction that is running Enfield Labour is excluding people who are not currently part of it, for no other reason. One thing is whether they toe the line and whether they are part of the clique."

Siddo Dwyer, procedure secretary for Enfield Labour's local campaign forum, said: "Enfield Labour has a robust candidate interview and selection process, with an independent interview panel arranged by Labour Party HQ. Candidates are then democratically selected by a vote of Labour Party members in each ward.

"This process allows for an excellent range of candidates reflecting the borough's diversity and expertise for the May 2022 election. Enfield Labour's candidate selections are ongoing and not yet complete.

"Enfield Labour looks forward to setting out our positive vision ahead of the local elections, continuing to support residents during this pandemic and investing in our borough's future."



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Keeping Enfield's green spaces tidy

Danielle Shap on what inspired her to start a litter picking group in Hilly Fields



The Hilly Fields litter picking group has been running for nearly three years

I've lived in Enfield for 33 years now and our local green spaces have been mine and my children's home and main play areas during that whole time. It's the reason I love living here.

I wanted to do something that would allow me to give something back to the environment and help look after our beloved green space. Inspired by the

litter-picking group in Bush Hill Park, I thought that was something I could easily do, being a mum-of-three, that would also teach my two youngest children to look after Mother Earth.

I never would have guessed that from a simple idea we would now have a community group of over 60 people, of all ages and abilities – and dogs! Within the group,

"It has created a greater sense of civic pride and community spirit"

friendships have been born, and it has created a greater sense of civic pride and community spirit.

We have been meeting monthly for three years in April, collecting 700 bags of rubbish in total over that time – including a large amount of dumped commercial and household rubbish. Not only do we clean up Hilly Fields, but we pick up litter over an area that covers approximately two square miles. We cover Chase Side, Lancaster Road, The Ridgeway, through Hilly Fields, Tuckers Park and Whitewebbs.

We are fortunate to be supported by charity Cleanup UK, which has given us most of our equipment. We have also been supported by local organisations such as Chamberlains Estates, Botany Bay Farm and Enfield Rotary Club.

As a result of our success, similar litter-picking groups have been started in Chase Green, Botany Bay and Southgate, and we help by lending them our equipment. This year, I'm hoping to start an Enfield Town Park group!

Sign up for volunteering with one of the Enfield litter picking groups:

Email enfieldlitterpickers@gmail.com
Visit [facebook.com/Hilly-Fields-Neighbourhood-Community-Litter-Picking-551464035374077](https://www.facebook.com/Hilly-Fields-Neighbourhood-Community-Litter-Picking-551464035374077)

Gordon benefit

John Cole has helped launch a new voluntary group aiming to enhance Gordon Hill Station

My first memory of a train journey was not the sights and sounds of a steam engine, or flying through the countryside; but the fear of not being able to open the tricky doors on the Enfield Town line. One needed muscles of a stoker to squeeze the lock, push open the door and fall to a certain death on the platform below.

A few years later, I discovered the other Enfield railway line – the so-called 'Hertford Loop'. It had electric sliding doors and, more importantly, it ran late into the night. So began a love affair with Gordon Hill Station.

I have spent 25 years commuting via Gordon Hill Station. The line has got me home safely on many occasions, even when the rest of London (and sometimes the world) was in total chaos, or when I had over done it a bit after work.

Gordon Hill is, to be fair, still a tiny bit old fashioned, in a charming 1940s way. It has corrugated iron-clad passenger walkways,

like air raid shelters or tin hats. St Michael's Primary School still uses it to re-enact war-time evacuations.

The car park at night was once a place for only a few brave souls, though Gordon Hill Tandoori was always a welcoming sight and smell!

A few months ago Alison Yates and I were asked by The Enfield Society if we wanted to work with Govia Thameslink Railway, which owns train operator Great Northern and manages the station, "to help enhance the travelling experience at Gordon Hill Station".

"Why?" we asked. "Why not?" they countered. And so we did! Last month we officially launched the Friends of Gordon Hill Station group and opened a perfectly-formed exhibition space in the waiting room on platform two. Our first exhibition, called *London*, includes 16 carefully-selected images capturing the vibrancy of our city, selected by Edmonton Camera Club.

We hope the waiting room at Gordon Hill



Pictured at the new exhibition space at Gordon Hill Station are Andrew Ridley, chair of Edmonton Camera Club, visitor Chris, and Roland Bermel

becomes a regular exhibition space for other artists and other displays. Local artist Shay Press has created a wonderful image of a 1930s American train carriage in the car park, featuring elements by Norman Rockwell and Richard Estes with added contemporary twists. Mary Duggan, our resident poet, has also sourced work by local poets from the Enfield Poets umbrella group to display.

Gordon Hill Station now has improved planting, hosts a book exchange in the waiting room, and also features Linda's Luv Coffee near the ticket barriers.

Linda has been using lockdown to reinvent her lovely coffee shop, so pull up a stool, peer into the secret courtyard, and admire the Christmas decorations!

We have further plans to promote local people, local endeavours, local businesses, local heritage and the environment; including new planting, new artwork from St Michael's Primary School, a community mosaic, heritage photos, and much more!

Get involved with the Friends of Gordon Hill Station group:

Visit [facebook.com/groups/1304751616651144](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1304751616651144)

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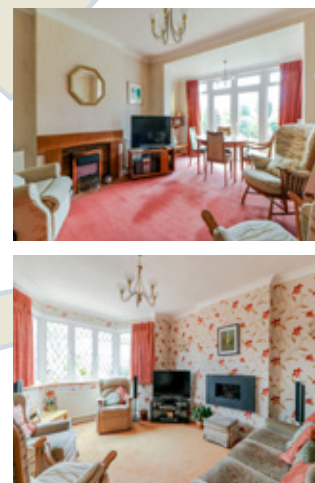


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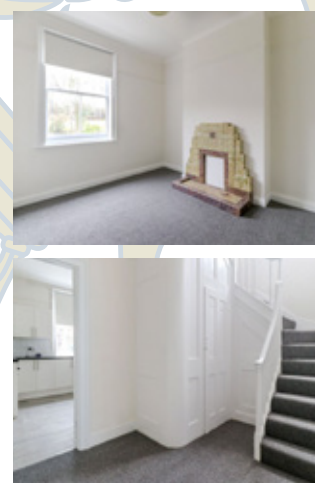


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Bowes LTN set to be made permanent

Long-awaited council report highlights data showing traffic reductions, although most people submitting their views in a consultation opposed the low-traffic scheme

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Enfield Council is set to make one of its two low-traffic neighbourhood (LTN) trial schemes permanent after it was judged to have met its key objective of reducing motor traffic in Bowes Park.

Data collected by the council before and after the scheme was implemented showed traffic had reduced within the LTN and on its boundary roads, although it did increase in neighbouring areas. More people also appear to have taken up walking and cycling, although the impact of the scheme on air pollution was less conclusive.

The findings detailed in a council report released shortly before Christmas have not persuaded councillors previously opposed to the LTN to change their minds, with the Conservatives still pledging to remove both the Bowes and Fox Lane schemes should they win election in May this year. Members of the Community First group of ex-Labour councillors – consisting of a Liberal Democrat, two Greens and four independents – also remain opposed.

The council's report, which recommended the scheme be made permanent, revealed that more than 52% of residents taking part in the public consultation on the LTN submitted negative views on it, compared with less than 25% who said they welcomed the measures.

Joanne Laban, the Tory group leader, said: "Enfield Conservatives do not support making the Bowes LTN permanent.

"The scheme benefits the few and not the many. The traffic just gets pushed on to the less affluent area of Bowes, which is unjust and unfair. The LTN has caused division in the community on an unprecedented scale.

"The Labour administration has failed yet again to listen to people's views on the scheme."

The report, authored by the council's healthy streets programme director Richard Eason, attributes the negative reaction to the LTN to the fact that 86% of consultation respondents were car owners, something which "should be considered in the context of a project where a key aim is to reduce the dominance of the private car".

As part of its recommendations the report proposes making one change to the current LTN layout, which would see the filter on Maidstone Road at its junction with Warwick Road being amended from a bollard to a camera trap "increasing permeability for any exemptions, including the emergency services".



"The LTN has caused division in the community on unprecedented scale"

A further decision on whether or not to install a bus gate on Brownlow Road will be made after neighbouring Haringey's upcoming LTN scheme in Bounds Green is implemented and a further assessment of traffic made. The council report also states that "mitigation measures" to improve access for residents with disabilities "through potential exemptions" will be explored in a subsequent report and include "consideration of those with caring responsibilities".

The Bowes LTN cost £350,000 to implement, funded via grants from the Department of Transport and Transport for London. It was installed in order to "create healthier streets", cut through-traffic from motor vehicles on minor roads, and boost levels of walking and cycling. To determine whether these objectives were met, vehicle data was collected from 37 automatic traffic counters placed on roads inside, bordering and surrounding the LTN.

On the residential roads within the Bowes LTN, there was an average drop in recorded traffic of 17%. However, some roads within the LTN that remained open to through traffic saw increases, with Spencer Avenue recording a 109% rise in motor vehicles.

The council claims this will be "significantly reduced" after Haringey Council installs its own LTN scheme for Bounds Green.

Another LTN road that saw a rise in traffic was Highworth Road, where Bowes Primary School is situated. The council stated that the 18% rise would be mitigated by a proposed 'school street' scheme.

On the three main boundary roads to the LTN – the A406 North Circular, Green Lanes, and Bounds Green Road – the council reported a 7% decrease in traffic. On surrounding roads, such as Powys Lane and Wilmer Way in Palmers Green, Station Road in New Southgate, and Bowes Road in Arncliffe, there was a 2% rise in recorded traffic.

The council report warns that "reported changes in the network should not be considered as only influenced" by the LTN, and that other factors such as the pandemic could have caused changes in travel patterns. Pre-implementation traffic surveys were undertaken by the council in July 2020, when some lockdown restrictions were still in place, while post-implementation surveys were undertaken in September 2021 – at a time when there was a short-term fuel

crisis in the UK.

However, Richard Eason writes in the report: "Acknowledging the limitations in the data, the unprecedented impacts of the pandemic and Haringey exploring further mitigation measures, the impacts associated with traffic volume do not, in isolation, suggest that the trial should not be made permanent."

Bus journey times were said to have improved, with 60% of journeys being faster, although it was noted that three bus routes had seen journey times increase by over a minute on average. And in terms of active travel, pedestrian numbers rose by 14% on average within the LTN, while cycling was up 20% on residential roads, but down 14% on Brownlow Road and down 40% on Bounds Green Road. According to the report, the fall in cycling on these two main roads was likely caused by "cyclists choosing to reassign to the quieter roads".

One of the frequent objections made to the Bowes LTN since summer 2020 has been the impact on the emergency services. The council report states that London Ambulance Service had reported "two incidents of delayed access", London Fire Brigade reported "little or no effect" on response times, and Metropolitan Police "has not raised any incidents of delayed response".

Because the council itself only has one automatic air pollution monitor located with the LTN, an air quality assessment was instead carried out by an external agency "using measured traffic data and calculated changes in traffic attributable to the project to estimate the associated impacts". This assessment showed that "the project led to slight decreases in nitrogen dioxide concentrations on some roads and some slight increases in concentrations on some roads".

The junction of Green Lanes and the North Circular was singled out for having seen a "moderate adverse impact" on air pollution. But overall, the conclusion was that "the scheme does not have a significant effect on air quality". At the automatic air pollution monitor operated by the council, nitrogen dioxide was said to have remained "below the annual mean objective".

An Enfield Council spokesperson said: "A report on the Bowes Quieter Neighbourhood has been prepared that evaluates the outcomes of the trial and takes into account residents' feedback.

"This report is still under consideration, with a decision anticipated shortly."



ENFIELD COMMUNITY HEROES

Sponsored by Edmonton Green Shopping Centre

Cooking up a storm

Clare Donovan has been cooking meals for people in need during the pandemic

When the Covid-19 pandemic first hit and people were suddenly isolated at home, community groups across Enfield sprung into action to help.

One of those was Cooking Champions, a social enterprise launched by Clare Donovan alongside her job as a maths teacher at Highlands School. The organisation was set up to provide hot meals for homeless people, but had not been running for long when the pandemic arrived.

Clare posted a message on an online forum asking for volunteers to help cook meals – and the response was immediate. Nearly 400 were prepared on the first day alone, using 70 crates of food donated by a catering company shut down because of lockdown. Clare told the *Dispatch*: “I thought, rather than sitting in the house I could go out and cook food.

“Within ten days we had found a venue and we were cooking 1,000 meals each



Clare Donovan, a former maths teacher, is the founder of Cooking Champions Community Interest Company

week. To begin with we were mainly feeding NHS staff, but the more I looked into it, the more I realised how bad the local situation was. I discovered one-in-three children lived in poverty in Enfield – the eleventh highest in the country.”

Clare is passionate about food and had been running catering at local events for several years, in her spare time, and it was these skills she put to use to build Cooking Champions into such a big operation. Unlike traditional foodbanks, people in need can refer themselves without the need to go through an assessment. Clare said: “There is no judgment. We are a lot more informal than normal foodbanks. We take great pride in the fact we have never turned anyone away.”

Cooking Champions was based initially at Winchmore Hill Sports Club, and then Millfield Theatre, but for the last year has been operating out of St Peter’s Church in Grange Park.

Free food is provided by a charity, The Felix Project, and all meals cooked are delivered directly to people’s homes.

Clare recently left her teaching job to focus full-time on Cooking Champions, and is now developing its community reach by running food education workshops for young people and a community cafe for older residents. She added: “I want to thank everyone who has helped – I know a lot of people have donated time and money and it’s been a huge community effort.”

For more information about Cooking Champions:
Visit cookingchampions.uk

Nominate your heroes

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



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We must empower local communities

In our latest MP's column, Edmonton representative Kate Osamor seeks justice for her constituents

As I write this column in mid-December, the government appears to be in a perennial crisis, with widespread accusations of a culture of entitlement, hypocrisy and corruption.

I'm sure that many of these revelations will have frustrated you just as much as they have me, and there will likely have been many more developments by the time this is published. However, what grates even more is that these elite cultures of arrogance and contempt at the top of government feed into the lack of responsiveness to the needs of my constituents and the wider public across the country.

The most stressful period of the year in my office was during the Afghanistan crisis, when we received a massive influx of constituents desperately contacting us for support to get their family out of Afghanistan, as the Taliban

gained control. We heard dozens of stories of family members in unimaginable danger.

So, to find out from a whistleblower that the Foreign Office was merely pretending to read emails requesting rescues of some of the at-risk individuals left in Afghanistan was infuriating. I'm sure the government will put this down to the nature of the crisis. However, I am concerned more widely about the lack of responsiveness in Whitehall.

Recently, my office has been met with an influx of more than 15 constituents, all Bulgarian nationals, who have had their Universal Credit suspended with no explanation and no means to appeal the decision, apparently caused by a mysterious 'risk review' about which the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) appears to be being deliberately evasive about.

These constituents are predomi-

nantly, although their circumstances are not identical, single mothers in low-paid part-time jobs and are now facing serious financial hardship, being left in rent arrears and forced to turn to foodbanks.

It's wrong that people can be forced into poverty by the government stripping them of their income support with no mechanism of appeal, especially as it appears to be related to nationality (I have seen no other nationals be subject

to the same opaque process in my casework). There is no way that a more privileged group in society would be treated in the same way.

Essential to highlighting injustices is a thriving local community with institutions that have the resources to raise cases of injustice with the powerful. This includes local cultural organisations, law centres and media outlets such as the one you're reading right now. Sadly, the latter two have been hit

Kate Osamor has represented Edmonton for the Labour Party since 2015
Credit parliament.uk



hard in recent years.

We must decentralise power and empower local communities. While much is made of the north-south divide, the reality is that despite the relative geographical proximity, power in Westminster can feel as distant to people in Enfield as it does for those in Stoke or Hartlepool. Politicians have much to do to regain trust and this work must be in alliance with, and seeking to raise the voice of, the people we represent rather than seeking to rule from above.

Kate Osamor is a Labour MP representing Edmonton. If you are a constituent, get in touch:

Call 0208 803 0574

Email kate.osamor.mp@parliament.uk

In response to the issues affecting Bulgarian nationals in Edmonton, a DWP spokesperson said: "We have a duty to the taxpayer to investigate a benefit claim where we suspect fraud, including potentially organised crime. The risk review team was set up to investigate risks of criminal activity, and it's not linked to nationality. If someone provided us with details to show their claim is genuine, we would urgently put any payment due into place."



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Councillors must represent and respect their residents

Paul Everitt from Love Your Doorstep gives his verdict on the state of Enfield's local politics

As we come to the end of another year where some of our freedoms have again been curtailed in the name of the public good, it is vitally important that we reflect upon the nature of the people who we have elected to make decisions on our behalf.

The whole country gasped in 2010 when the then prime minister, Gordon Brown, was recorded privately calling a Labour supporter "a bigoted woman" for challenging him over immigration. It revealed a political instinct to look sympathetic and interested in front of the camera but to ignore with disdain in private. It fed the idea that those in power aren't really listening. He wasn't forgiven by the public and he lost the election in 2010.

In 2021, Enfield Council's deputy leader Ian Barnes described Winchmore Hill Residents Association in an email as "a thinly disguised right-wing organisation posing as a residents association", displaying an arrogance that thinks the politician is above the people, rather than their representative.

Elected members of all parties are required to scrutinise decisions put forward by the executive, to ensure that good and robust decision making takes place. In 2018, council leader Nesil Caliskan suggested the then chair of the overview and scrutiny committee, Derek Levy, should not act with the impartiality that he was required to do by law. Cllr Caliskan was later found to have breached the council's

own code of conduct over this matter.

Then, last month, in a modern political farce, independent councillor Daniel Anderson was stopped from asking the questions his community required him to ask at a scrutiny panel meeting, leading a member of the public in the gallery to shout out and ask: "Is this the no scrutiny panel?"

In May 2022, Enfield residents will go to the polls to choose the people who will represent them on the council, the most important institution of local democracy, for the next four years. Will they work in the best interests of the whole community, or will they just do as they are told and vote along party lines regardless of what the community is asking of them?

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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 17th January**.

No mask

Dear Enfield Dispatch

In the December issue of *Enfield Dispatch* (If you can't pay the fine, Issue 39, Page 9) I question the comments made by Tom Parry. He has been vocal in defending the low-traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) and describes "people whipping up anger", some of whom "hide behind the mask of One Community".

In November, two marches took place, in Broomfield Park and Green Lanes, and Bowes. Collectively, nearly a thousand residents protested the undemocratic and unfair imposition of LTNs – no "angry mob", just a large group of concerned residents. Tom expresses the 'Nimby' view that it doesn't matter where the traffic goes, so long as it doesn't go down his street.

One Community doesn't hide behind a mask. It isn't a secret society. It's an inclusive group of local people who recognise change is essential, but are concerned about the way that change occurs.

Helen Mitchell
One Community Enfield

Undemocratic

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Iam extremely concerned by the parliamentary sleaze scandals of recent months. I simply don't believe these issues exist in a bubble. When politicians openly and knowingly fail their constituents, this is a symptom of something far more rotten at the heart of our political system.

Several bills are passing through parliament at the moment which threaten to undermine our democracy. The Elections Bill will remove the independence of the Electoral Commission and undermine its ability to monitor elections, while the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill and the Judicial Review and Courts Bill concentrate power in the hands of the government.

The fact this government is so happy to take liberties with public trust is, I fear, a sad sign it is already preparing for a future where it cannot be held accountable.

Regine Lemberger
Bush Hill Park

Local Tories should quit

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Ibelieve in local politics addressing local issues and, despite being a longstanding Liberal Democrat, I have previously voted for candidates of all parties (including Conservative) when their local representatives have clearly been doing a good job for residents.

However, with these Christmas parties in Downing Street taking place while other people missed their last Christmas with loved ones (myself included, as my dad passed this year with me not having not seen him in person since before the pandemic struck), combined with dodgy deals to finance the prime minister's flat, courts reviewing Covid-19 contracts finding that ministers funnelled taxpayers' money into the pockets of select corporate backers, and one of our highest courts finding that Boris Johnson even lied to the Queen – I refuse to vote for any candidate willing to endorse this shockingly duplicitous and corrupt approach to public life.

If Conservative councillors like my own Maria Alexandrou in Winchmore Hill want the votes of decent, law-abiding citizens who value integrity, they should resign from the Conservative Party on principle and stand as independents. I would myself be among the first to queue up to vote for her if she did.

Matt McLaren
Winchmore Hill

Big blow

Dear Enfield Dispatch

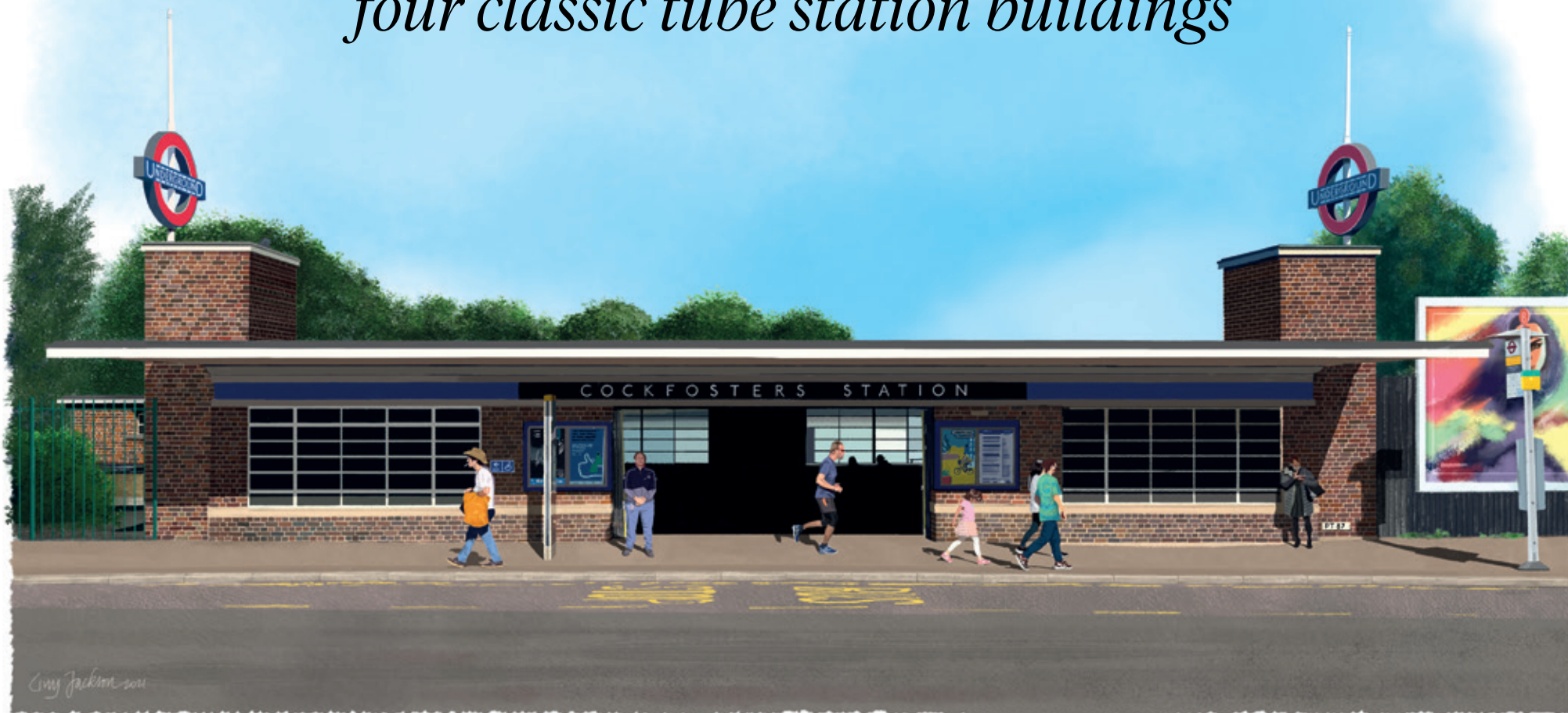
Iwas walking home recently and street cleaners were working in the footpath/street ahead of me. They were collecting leaves, using small brooms and one of those 'blowers'. You know the sort of things I mean, the ones that consume fossil fuel, while adding to noise pollution and polluting the air being breathed by the operative and any passers-by and at the same time being pretty ineffective for the job at hand.

Why aren't operatives given a strong, stiff broom which effectively lifts all the leaves and makes the area clean and tidy, and not the half-hearted job we get at the moment?

Anthony Roper
Enfield EN2

Inspired by Holden

Palmers Green artist creates detailed images of four classic tube station buildings



Four classic modernist Piccadilly Line stations are being showcased in a new range of digital drawings created by an artist from Palmers Green.

Guy Jackson, inspired by Charles Holden's Art Deco designs for the northward extension of the Piccadilly Line in the 1930s, has produced meticulous artworks based on sketches and photographs of the iconic station buildings.

Guy said: "Our local stations have such a rich history and form a fundamental part of so many people's lives.

"The underground stations designed by Charles Holden along the Piccadilly Line extension are masterpieces of modernist architecture, each with its own distinctive design. I wanted to capture the essence of these icons, as well as the human life that flows in and around them."

Using artist software Procreate and the Apple Pencil 2 on the iPad, each drawing takes Guy about 80 hours to complete, based on sketches and photographs. The drawing of Southgate Underground Station replicates a 1935 black-and-white photo, taken when the station opened.

Guy added: "The original photo was taken from the second floor of the building opposite, which is still there today. I had to work out exactly which window gave the correct angle and which flat it belonged to.

"Luckily the residents very kindly let me in to take my own pic!"

Cards and framed prints are in stock at Only Place for Pictures in Green Lanes, Palmers Green, while high-quality art prints and cards are available online:

Instagram @londonstationart

Visit londonstation.art





Live music and dance by Tottenham based musicians Akola Tambo, bringing Afro-Colombian bullerengue beats to the White Horse Pub Credit: Natalie G



Bringing culture to the Fore

Programme aimed at using culture to boost night-time economy in Angel Edmonton awarded £200,000

A community-led cultural programme aiming to boost the night-time economy in Angel Edmonton has been launched – with the help of a £200,000 grant from the Mayor of London.

Local artists, musicians, poets and other performers were hosted across various venues in Fore Street as part of an inaugural late-night event in December. It sought to test ways of “invigorating local enterprise and ultimately increasing cultural and civic engagement”.

The programme is called ‘Fore Street for All’ and is the result of a collaboration between community group Residents of Edmonton Angel Community Together (React), Edmonton art organisation Artist Hive Studios, and collaborative architects Fisher Cheng.

Among the venues to take part were

Fore Street Library, Pages and Blendz Cafe, The White Horse Pub, Coal City Restaurant, and hair salon Boss Cuts. They played host to musical acts including an Afro-Colombian bullerengue group, a steel pan musician and local DJ, while artists, ceramicists and print-makers displayed their work and poets read their verse. Yam and plantain sampling bowls were provided by Coal City for hungry attendees.

Fore Street for All was selected as one of 15 projects around the capital to receive funding from the Mayor of London’s ‘High Streets for All Challenge’ programme, which has sought innovative high street recovery strategies to “breathe new life” into town centres through local partnerships.

Joanne McCartney, London Assembly member for Enfield and Haringey, said: “Our local high streets have been hit

hard by the pandemic so far, and social enterprise projects like the one being delivered by React are key to breathing new life into them.

“This new cultural enterprise programme, being funded by the mayor, will not only place the revamped Fore Street Library back at the centre of the community, but help to equip local young people with the skills they need to succeed with mentoring and training opportunities.”

Enfield Council will shortly be relaunching Fore Street Library to allow it to host a wider mix of uses, including youth facilities, business support, exhibitions and evening events.

For more information about Fore Street for All and to find out how to get involved:

Email forestreetforall@gmail.com
Visit forestreetforall.com



Enfield Poets hosted live readings Credit: Natalie G

Musical phantasy

Palmers Green musician and artist Patrick Samuel invites residents to see his latest live show

Ever since I was a kid, I’ve loved *Labyrinth*. I would watch it over and over again just to hear the songs, see the wonderful characters and feel the magic from the film.

Actually, it’s something I still do to this very day. For me, the magic of David Bowie and Jim Henson never dies.

When I was planning my latest live show, ‘Phantasm’, I knew I wanted my main inspiration to come from the 1986 film starring Bowie, who passed away six years ago. It promises to be a spectacular live extravaganza that combines my love for cult movies with my new songs – including my trademark flair for post-punk and goth-rock sensibilities, with exciting costumes and dazzling lights!



Following a spate of live shows across Enfield in 2021, including my ‘Live and Undead’ show for Halloween and ‘Ghosts of Christmas’ tour, I will be bringing Phantasm to Culture Palace in Enfield Town for one night only.

I really want to start the year with something magical and unforgettable and I think what I’ve put together is a unique statement on how an autistic person can relate to the world and communicate the things they love about being part of it.

There will be new songs I’ve written, with nods to the influences I’ve embraced along the way; not just in music, but also film (Bowie, Tim Burton, *Batman Returns*, The Cure, Siouxsie & The Banshees).

It’s about taking those influences and feeding them through the prism of autism and creating something else entirely – that’s what Phantasm ultimately is about, and I hope the community will come and experience it.

Hopefully I can help people keep those January blues at bay!

Phantasm takes place on Thursday 13th January from 7.30pm at Culture Palace in Palace Gardens Shopping Centre, Enfield Town. Entry is free but booking is advised. For more information:

Visit dugdalecentre.co.uk/whats-on

Robin Bibi Band is among the performers lined up at St Harmonica's Blues Club this month



Singing the blues

Dave Thomas from St Harmonica's Blues Club on what audiences can expect this year

You don't need to travel far afield to hear some of the best blues in the UK – in fact you only have to travel to Southgate!

Just 50 metres from the tube station, The Southgate Club is home of the award-nominated St Harmonica's Blues Club. From humble beginnings on Friday evenings at what was the Waiting Rooms Café at Palmers Green Station, the club became a meeting place where community, singers and musicians gathered and many friendships were forged.

There then followed a ten-year spell at St Monica's Parish Centre in Cannon Hill, where a play on words gave the club the name

for which it has become known throughout the blues world; St Harmonica's Blues Club.

Now on Friday evenings, at its terrific home at The Southgate Club, audiences are thrilled by some of the finest blues musicians in the UK, plus on occasion artists from the USA and Europe. Once a month on a Sunday, a high calibre of local players and singers flock to the monthly blues jams to play and entertain.

The St Harmonica's team also organises the Broomfield Blues events at Broomfield Park throughout August, along with the perennially-popular blues stage at Livestock Festival in July at Forty Hall Farm.

Our mission has always been to make blues accessible to all

and to nurture young talent in order to keep the genre alive for generations to come. Reflecting our aim, the programme of acts for the spring term is a superb cross-section of the best in UK and international blues, showcasing the diversity of the music.

From acoustic roots to the piano and horn sounds of New Orleans and the guitar and harmonica driven blues of Texas and Chicago, every week is fresh and exciting. Sunday 9th January sees the next blues jam, with all welcome, while the spring selection from Friday 14th January features the Robin Bibi Band.

Tickets for St Harmonica's are available for £10 in advance, or on the door if not sold out:

Visit stharmonicas.co.uk

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 17th January**.

THEATRE

Ever After – A Mixed Up Fairytale

Running until 8th January
Chickenshed Theatre,
290 Chase Side N14 4PE

Chickenshed is thrilled to announce the return of its Christmas show with Ever After. Featuring their famously large and amazingly diverse cast, this mixed-up fairytale will be a dazzling and unforgettable theatrical journey for adults and children alike.

Tickets from £10

Call 020 8292 9222

Visit chickenshed.org.uk/Event/everafter

DANCING

Line Dancing Class for Beginners

Every Tuesday, 11.30am
Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road
EN2 6TG

Step-by-step line dancing tuition. No experience needed.

£5 entry

Call 07950 493 058

Visit thesaddlebags.co.uk

CRAFTS

Social Stitching Circle

Wednesday 12th January, 7pm-9pm
Stitch!, Palmers Green Post Office,
364 Green Lanes N13 5XL

Come and join some lovely knitting and crafting chat and share your knitting and sewing projects in a welcoming environment with tea, coffee, biscuits and wine.

£5 entry

Email hello@stitch.org

WORKSHOP

Life Drawing at Field

Saturday 15th Jan, 6.30pm-8.30pm
Field, 51 Palace Gardens Shopping
Centre, Enfield EN2 6SN

Join our life drawing workshop at Field! The instructor was a movement specialist for ten years and can teach any skill level regardless of anyone's previous experience with life drawing. We'd recommend that attendees be around 17+ years in age as there will be a nude model who people will be observing and drawing. All materials are provided.

£15 tickets

Visit fieldbyhive.com/pages/events

GAMES

Friday Bridge Club

Every Friday, 10am
Mary Magdalen Church, Windmill
Hill, Enfield EN2 7AJ

We are a small friendly bridge club hoping to find new members.

First visit is free

Call 020 8245 2587

Email malcolmroberts72@hotmail.com

CULTURE

Wassailing at Salisbury House

Sunday 16th January, 2pm-4pm
Salisbury House, Bury Street West,
Edmonton N9 9LA

Wassailing is an annual ancient tradition which involves blessing fruit trees to ensure a harvest for the following autumn. Trees are awakened with singing, poetry and lots of noise. The event has performers in costume who will explain some of the folklore around the trees in the garden. The trees will be hung with toasted bread and a traditional libation of cider poured around the base of the trees to venerate their importance.

Free entry

Visit facebook.com/salisburyhousen9

MUSICAL

Jukebox and Bobbsox

Saturday 29th January, 7.30pm
Millfield Theatre, Silver Street,
Edmonton N18 1PJ

Join us on a musical journey throughout the most influential decades in the history of popular music. Featuring those great songs from the kings and queens of rock'n'roll.

Tickets £22

Email ticket@oneenfield.co.uk

Visit millfieldtheatre.co.uk/whats-on

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All Greek to me

Neil Littman is reminded of a trip to Corfu on his visit to Blue Olive in Cockfosters

Blue Olive is a family-run restaurant in Cockfosters that has been around for a long time. Although primarily serving Greek cuisine, it describes itself as a Mediterranean restaurant.

On the Tuesday I visited with my friend, the place was particularly busy for so early in the week. The first thing I noticed on entering was a plate of roast potatoes on a

table occupied by a birthday group, including three generations of the same family. While the dining area seats around 120, it still manages to feel intimate thanks to the thought that has gone into the layout.

What followed turned out to be very similar to my dining experiences when I went on holiday to Corfu a few years ago (minus the warm evening weather and being outdoors!). The enthusiastic welcome we received on arrival was a good start, which I put it down to the fact that we stood out because most of the people dining there were already known to the staff. My friend said he thought the atmosphere was really good; simple moments like that are important and make the experience memorable even before a plate of food arrives.

We were told about the specials of the day, but decided to stick to the main menu – though made a mental note about what would be good to try in future. We started with hot Kalamata olives and spanakopita (triangular parcels filled with feta and spinach) plus pitta bread. The spanakopita were about twice the size of any I have eaten previously and I barely had time to take a photo before they disappeared.



Spanakopita

This was followed by keftedes (meatballs) with a large mixed Greek salad to share which my guest ordered, having eaten them in Greece and wanting to see how they compared – or perhaps remind himself he had not been on holiday for a long time.

My first choice of chicken souvla had surprisingly sold out by 7.30pm. Our waiter suggested three grilled chicken skewers and a plate of roast potatoes. Sounds simple, but the end result is always about the

best ingredients, precisely cooked.

We skipped desserts, mainly because we were full, but we saw they were serving baklava, kataifi and various cheesecakes. Including our two beers and service, the bill came to £58. And yes, you can have the roast potatoes with almost everything!

Blue Olive can be found at 12 Cockfosters Road, Cockfosters EN4 0DL and is open Monday-Saturday 12pm-11.30pm and Sunday 12pm-10.30pm, for eating in or for deliveries. The menu is about £30-40 per head. Find out more online:

Visit theblueoliverestaurant.com

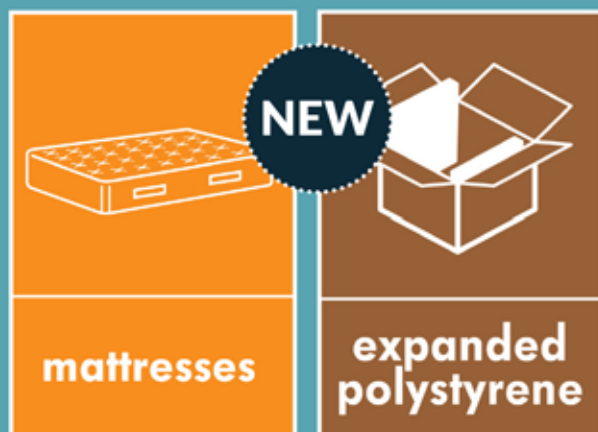


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AROUND THE BOROUGH

ENFIELD TOWN

New River cycling route proposed



Parts of the New River Path in the north of the borough, such as this section between Hoe Lane and Turkey Street, are set to be upgraded for use by cyclists

THE NEW RIVER PATH IS SET TO get a major upgrade as part of a new walking and cycling route being created between Enfield Town and the M25.

Enfield Council is proposing to

create the three-mile route by making parts of the existing New River Path in the north of the borough suitable for cyclists, while also installing new pathways along additional stretches not currently accessible.

In Enfield Town, the route would begin at St Andrew's Road before continuing up Churchbury Lane and Tenniswood Road and joining the New River just south of Carterhatch Lane. Interventions would include a "Dutch-style roundabout" at the junction with Willow Road, plus rain gardens, raised tables and zebra crossings. Some residential parking spaces would need to be removed.

The scheme is expected to cost around £4million in total, with funding coming from Highways England, and take three years to complete. The Enfield Town section could begin installation as early as March. In a letter to residents, Fatima Rana, from the council's healthy streets team, said: "This project is part of the council's work to develop an active travel network and increase numbers of journeys that are walked and cycled."

PONDERS END

Drinkers mourn loss of pub

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

DRINKERS IN PONDERS END LEFT with only one pub to choose from are urging residents to object to a bid to turn a former boozer into a restaurant.

The Picture Palace closed its doors last year, leaving The Goat in Ponders End High Street as the area's only remaining pub. Now, the new owners have submitted a planning application to reopen it as a restaurant.

Among other pubs to have closed in Ponders End in recent years are The Falcon, which has been demolished for housing development; The White Hart, which is pending demolition for housing; and The Boundary House, which was granted permission to be converted into a restaurant earlier this year.

Philip Ridley, a pub protection officer for the Enfield and Barnet branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (Camra) told the *Dispatch* that the long list of pub closures in Ponders End was harming the community.

"In a restaurant, people can't

mingle and congregate," he said. "A pub is a community asset, whereas a restaurant is just a place to eat.

"A lot of people no longer have a place to meet their friends now."

The Picture Palace was previously known as Howard Hall and was used for plays and events. It was converted into a Wetherspoon pub in 2001, then was sold in 2016 to Hawthorn Leisure, which continued to operate it as a pub serving food. Philip said it was a popular venue up until the pandemic, which he thinks led to its closure.

The *Dispatch* attempted to contact Hawthorn Leisure and new

owners Tiger Bay Ltd, but neither responded. In its planning application for The Picture Palace, Tiger Bay argues the change of use to a restaurant "does not affect" the pub's value as a "community facility" but Philip argues The Picture Palace was predominantly drinks-led rather than food-led and rejects the claim a restaurant would provide the same benefit to the area.

Residents can submit their views on the planning application for The Picture Palace by visiting the council's planning portal at new.enfield.gov.uk/services/planning and searching for reference 21/04071/FUL.



The Picture Palace in Ponders End High Street was closed down in 2021

NEW SOUTHGATE

Go ahead for towers

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A PLAN TO BUILD TWO TOWER blocks on the site of a former gasholder has been approved by councillors.

City and Suburban Homes won permission to build blocks up to 14 and 19 storeys high at the site in Station Road, New Southgate. The scheme will provide 182 homes – 30% of which will be classed as 'affordable' – and 371 square metres of commercial floorspace.

The site, currently vacant, lies

at the junction of the busy A406 North Circular Road and Station Road. It previously contained the last remaining gasholder that once formed part of New Southgate Gas Works.

The plans were unanimously approved by members of Enfield Council's planning committee at a meeting last month. Although 23 objections were received, citing concerns such as height and "overdevelopment", planning officers recommended the scheme for approval.

ENFIELD WASH

Honour for campaigner

A MOTHER WHOSE SON WAS stabbed to death has been honoured for her fight to stop more young people dying from knife crime.

Yvonne Lawson from Enfield Wash, who set up the Godwin Lawson Foundation almost a decade ago in memory of her son Godwin, has been made an MBE for services to tackling knife and gang crime in London.

After visiting Windsor Castle to collect her MBE, she said: "This award is dedicated to our handsome son, Godwin, whose contagious smile kept me going regardless of the difficulties."

Godwin, a talented footballer, was killed in a knife attack in Stamford Hill in March 2010, when he was aged just 17. Since then, Yvonne has

been heading up her foundation in his name, and has also set up education and community projects across London, all aimed at stopping young people getting caught up with gangs and knife crime.



Yvonne Lawson picked up her MBE at Windsor Castle

CARTERHATCH

Time capsule buried

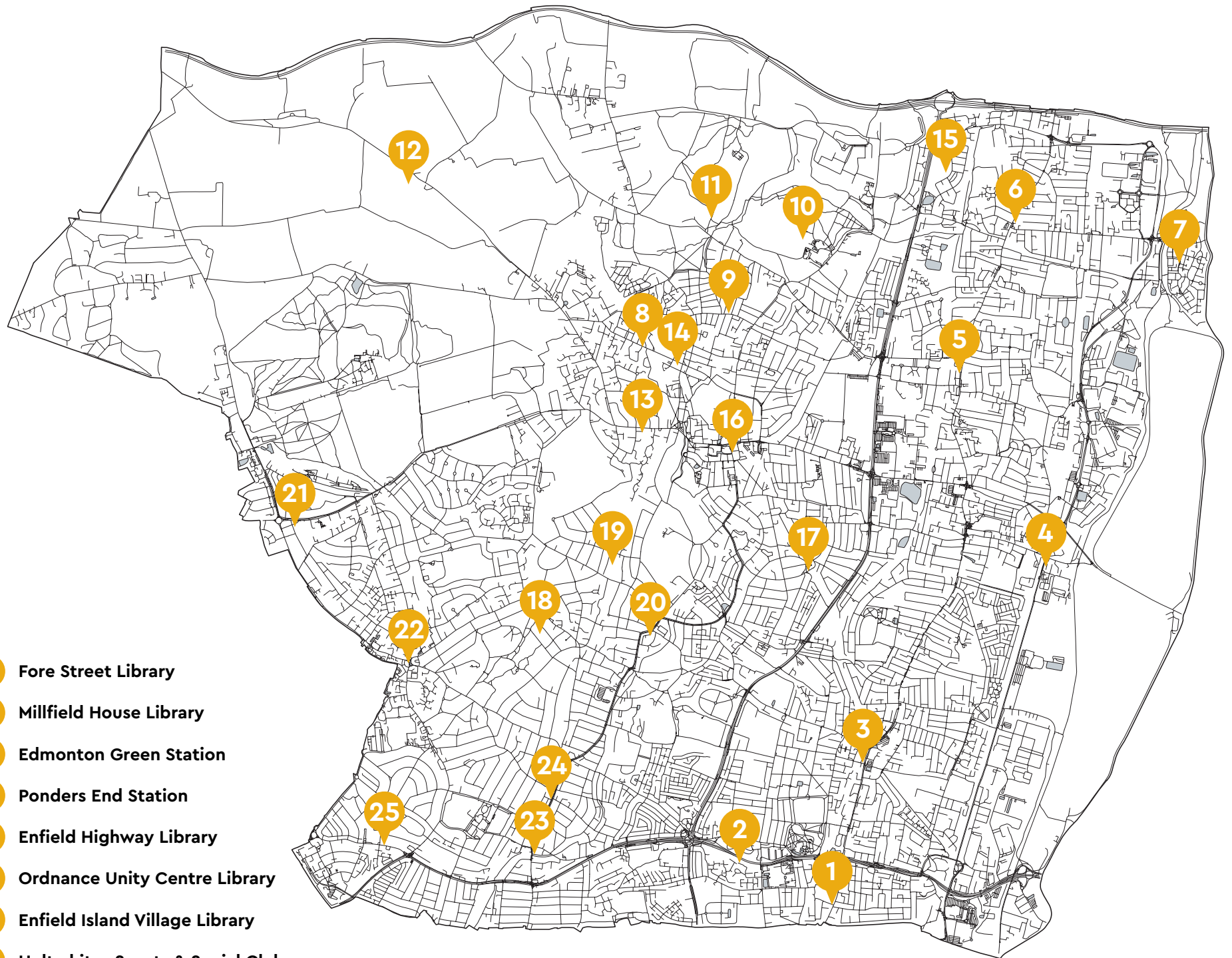
PUPILS FROM RUSSET HOUSE School in Autumn Close have collected memories of life during the pandemic for preservation within a time capsule.

The nationwide project encouraged students to reflect on and capture their experiences and was led by Bafta Kids, children's mental health charity Place2Be, and Oak National Academy.

Special educational needs pupils from Russet House submitted a woven artwork made using the novel items that appeared in school at the start of the pandemic, plus a video depicting how it felt to live in London when the streets were deserted and the buildings were closed.

The items were sealed within the time capsule at Bafta's headquarters in Piccadilly.

DISTRIBUTION



- 1 Fore Street Library
- 2 Millfield House Library
- 3 Edmonton Green Station
- 4 Ponders End Station
- 5 Enfield Highway Library
- 6 Ordnance Unity Centre Library
- 7 Enfield Island Village Library
- 8 Holtwhites Sports & Social Club
- 9 The Lancaster Centre
- 10 Forty Hall Farm
- 11 Whitewebbs Café
- 12 Botany Bay Farm
- 13 Chamberlains Estates
- 14 Jubilee Hall
- 15 Bullsmoor Library
- 16 Enfield Town Station
- 17 Bush Hill Park Station
- 18 Friends Meeting House
- 19 Refill@TheGrange
- 20 Little Green Dragon
- 21 Chickenshed Theatre
- 22 Southgate Station
- 23 Ruth Winston Community Centre
- 24 My Time Cafe
- 25 Bowes Road Library

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Southgate towers plan approved by appeal inspector

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Permission has been granted for a 17-storey development in Southgate town centre after a planning inspector overruled a previous decision to reject it.

The scheme planned for Southgate Office Village, which is close to a conservation area, was backed by the government-appointed planning inspector in an appeal decision report issued following an earlier inquiry. It means developer Viewpoint Estates can build 216 homes in five separate blocks at the site in Chase Road.

In June 2020, Enfield Council's planning committee unanimously refused permission for the high-rise scheme, which will lie just outside the boundary of Southgate Circus Conservation Area and be visible from the Grade 2-listed Southgate Station.

Committee members opposed the height and massing of the planned buildings, which they claimed would harm heritage assets and neighbouring properties. After the



developer appealed to the Planning Inspectorate against the refusal, local residents and Enfield Southgate MP Bambos Charalambous spoke against the scheme during the public inquiry held in September last year.

But in the decision issued last month, inspector Paul Griffiths found in favour of the developer. He wrote: "Bearing in mind what occupies the appeal site at present, what I regard as the excellence of the design would uplift the character and the appearance of the area. Moreover, it would cause no harm to the setting or the significance of heritage assets nearby, or further afield."

In respect of the development's impact

on the tube station, Paul acknowledged people's concerns, but wrote: "The height of the taller elements of the proposal is not so extreme that it would harmfully compete with the station complex."

The inspector added that there would be "no harmful overlooking or loss of privacy" caused to neighbouring properties, and that any loss of daylight or sunlight would be within "reasonable bounds". Because the scheme intended to be "car free", he said that it should not lead to any additional parking pressure.

Paul said the only harmful aspect of the scheme was that its timing relative to the council's draft Local Plan meant the opportunity to consider the site's suitability for tall buildings had been lost. But he concluded: "Bearing in mind the parlous state of the council's housing land supply, the harm that flows from that pales against the enormous benefits of the open-market and affordable housing the scheme would bring forward in a well-designed, contextually appropriate scheme."

Southgate District Civic Voice, a local residents' group that opposed the plans during the inquiry, issued a statement

which said: "Southgate District Civic Voice is extremely disappointed by the inspector's decision to allow the Southgate Office Village proposal to go ahead. We will be studying the decision carefully."

"We consider that this development will completely change the character of Southgate."

"We would like to thank all our members, the wider community, ward councillors and Civic Voice for their support during this whole process."

Bambos Charalambous MP said: "I'm bitterly disappointed that permission has been granted for a 17-storey housing development at Southgate Office Village."

"In September, I made representations to the planning inspector to reject the appeal for planning permission."

"The proposed development is out-of-keeping with the local area, would have an adverse impact on local services and fails to meet local housing needs. It is a retrograde step for Southgate."

Stephanos Ioannou, a Conservative councillor for Southgate ward, said the decision was "a significant loss for the campaign and all the work put in by local groups".

He added: "It shows, quite frankly, that legislation trumps local feelings and sets a dangerous precedent for further development in the area."

Charith Gunawardena, a Green Party councillor for Southgate, described the decision as "extremely disappointing".

Justice for Julio

Life sentence for man who murdered Edmonton market trader in 'swift and savage act' in Jubilee Park

A man who murdered an Edmonton market trader in Jubilee Park has been handed a life sentence. Lukasz Siemienowicz, 41, of Croyland Road in Edmonton, was sentenced at Snaresbrook Crown Court last month to a minimum of 22 years' imprisonment. He was previously found guilty of murdering 29-year-old Julio Gomes, who was stabbed to death in September 2019.

During sentencing, judge Martyn Zeidman QC said: "This was a totally unprovoked knife attack upon a good and innocent member of the public. Whatever sentence I impose, you have sent the family to a life of mourning."

Prior to the trial, Siemienowicz had entered a guilty plea to one count of manslaughter and another of possession of a knife, but had contested the count of murder. The court heard that Julio, a father of three children, was attacked in the grounds of Old Edmontonians' Sports and Social Club, in Jubilee Park. Julio, who also had a second job as a cleaner to support his family, was stabbed a little after 8pm on Saturday, 14th September 2019.

Julio had recently finished his shift working at Edmonton Green Market and had gone to the park to relax. This was something he did often and although Julio had called a friend to join him, on this occasion he was alone when Siemienowicz attacked him.

Julio was stabbed near the grandstand, around 65 metres from the clubhouse, and then tried to run away, but was pursued across the park by a "drunk and drug-fuelled" Siemienowicz. The chase came to an end near the clubhouse and was witnessed by a man and woman. Before he lost consciousness, Julio told the pair: "The man's mad, he's just stabbed me."

Bleeding heavily, Julio collapsed. The woman took off her hoodie to apply pressure to a serious stomach wound, while the man dialled 999. However, Julio was pronounced dead at the scene. A post-mortem examination found cause of death to have been a stab wound to the abdomen.

As efforts to save Julio had been taking place, Siemienowicz was detained by guests from a party inside the clubhouse. Having left

the party to assist, they persuaded a disoriented and drunk Siemienowicz to lie down on the floor. By this time he had dropped the weapon and was reported to have said: "I'm sorry, only god can save me."

Siemienowicz had been drinking heavily and had used a significant amount of cocaine. He had to be sedated before he could be taken to hospital. In a police interview he claimed he was the one attacked, taking his knife out in self defence. However, he later admitted he was not attacked and claimed instead that he couldn't remember what had taken place. He insisted he hadn't intended to kill Julio. A kitchen knife was recovered and later found to match a set of knives found following a search of Siemienowicz's bedsit in Croyland Road.

Detective Sergeant Dolores Connolly oversaw the investigation and said: "It was a swift and savage act that ended the life of Julio

Gomes, and it is satisfying that the jury has seen past Siemienowicz's defence and convicted him of murder."

"Julio, who was originally from Guinea Bissau, worked six days a week in order to earn money to look after his family, and was simply going about his daily routine when he had the tragic misfortune to wander into the path of Siemienowicz."

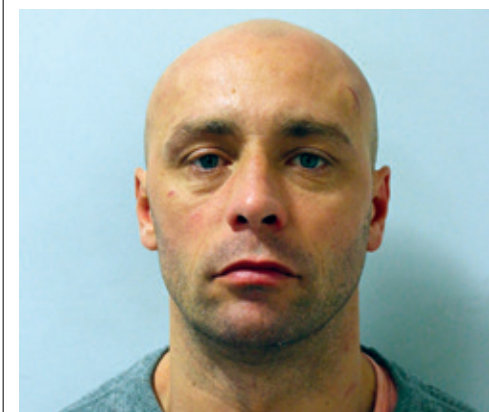
"We would like to thank the members of the public who helped Julio and detained the violent and dangerous suspect."

Cadi Gomes, Julio's mother, said: "Julio was our golden boy, our first-born child. He belonged to a humble, respectful and honest family and he had a determined work ethic."

"He has three children, twin boys aged twelve and a daughter aged eight. We know nothing will bring Julio back to us and we hope seeing the man who killed him convicted will bring us a little peace."



Murder victim Julio Gomes, a market trader at Edmonton Green Credit Met Police



Lukasz Siemienowicz was convicted of murdering Julio Gomes Credit Met Police

Trying time for rugby

Jonathan Landi from Enfield Ignatians RFC on how the borough's top rugby club has been affected by the pandemic

Enfield Ignatians RFC, in common with other sports clubs up and down the land, has had to navigate the uncertain landscape of Covid-19 lockdowns in the last two years, throwing up a number of challenges that have had to be met head on.

The spirit of the club has certainly burned bright during the ongoing health crisis and, in the first instance, Ignatians caught the national mood by supporting the NHS and raising £2,000 for Barnet Hospital.

Despite the pandemic, the senior and junior sections have continued to operate within the prescribed Rugby Football Union (RFU) guidelines. And in the period from September 2020 to April 2021, the senior section played a hybrid form of the game which resulted in eight wins from nine games.

We then moved to pre-season and, after winning our warm-up game against Chelmsford, the promoted blue and golds embarked on a return to life in London Two North-West – the seventh tier of club rugby union in England – where we have won three of nine league games to date.

The pandemic has inevitably meant a decline in senior playing resources, as players have drifted away from the game – something of a national trend – and, at a push, Ignatians is managing to field two senior teams, but actively striving to run three.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, the junior section has emerged largely unscathed and, if anything, many of the sides such as the under-16s, under-11s and the girls' section, in particular, have reported an increase in playing numbers.



Enfield Ignatians RFC play at Enfield Playing Fields in Donkey Lane

Treasurer Rob Bruce said: "There are two problem areas, and the playing side has not fully recovered since the return of full-contact rugby. This inevitably has a knock-on effect on subs and bar takings, as there are many occasions when we have no home games.

"Furthermore, the national economy has yet to fully recover. Sponsors are forthcoming, but some are paying about half of what they did pre-Covid. Furthermore, the income generated from hiring out the clubhouse for functions has yet to match pre-pandemic levels."

Still, we aren't a club to let the grass grow under our feet and, in addition to obtaining a government grant, Ignatians is addressing the playing and financial shortfalls via

two crowdfunding initiatives. Our latest venture in this area, the EIRFC Restart Fund, is designed specifically to address recruitment issues by targeting the wider community, and schools in particular. A recruitment drive across social media is also planned and, in addition to investing in playing equipment and recruiting more coaches, the club is also improving facilities, with the aim of encouraging people to stay longer at the clubhouse.

The road ahead is certainly a long and winding one, but the club is well versed when it comes to executing big projects, and we are very well placed to face the future.

Support the Enfield Ignatians crowdfunder, EIRFC Restart Fund:
Visit crowdfunder.co.uk/eirfc-restart-fund

Fixture pile-up for Towners

BY ANDREW WARSHAW

Top-flight football clubs forever bemoan fixture congestion, but one look at Enfield Town's eye-watering programme over the coming days and weeks serves only to illustrate the challenge facing non-league teams.

Unlike full-time professional players, those at Enfield's level have jobs outside the game on which they rely for their livelihoods. The pressure of working five days a week, then turning up for training and playing matches, is easily underestimated. Throw in the spread of Covid-19 – the club suffered a swathe of absentees in December's FA Trophy defeat against Eastleigh – and you get some idea of how well-laid plans can suddenly collapse.

The Towners' arduous January programme (pending any new lockdown restrictions), includes no fewer than nine league games. It's a tall order for players and staff as the team strives to remain in the play-off places.

"We need to try and keep everyone fit and available," manager Andy Leese told a podcast recently. "Somehow we're going to have to find times to train. We're going to need to suck up all our resources and energy. We tried to get a couple of fixtures nudged into February, but there's a rule that says you have to re-arrange fixtures within so many days."

Towners chairman Paul Reed is the first to recognise the task at hand for his players. "Life can be very tough with games coming relentlessly on Saturdays and midweek," Paul told the *Dispatch*. "The players need to have understanding employers and families to be able to ensure they are available for all matches, as well as Thursday training."

"The league are in a tough situation as I'm sure they are keen to finally have a completed season at the third time of asking. However, they also need to protect players and volunteers from unnecessary Covid risks."

"We will support our players the best we can and I'm sure Andy and the management team will have a keen eye on the workload of each player. We may need to rotate the squad to ensure we keep everyone fit and well."

Meanwhile the club has sent three players – Matt Walsh, Ebrimah Sawaneh and Eli Nicholls – out on loan to Colney Heath in order to get game time. All of them can be recalled and they are continuing to train with the club.

Netball courts opened

New dual-purpose and floodlit courts have been opened in Palmers Green for use by netball and tennis players.

The nine courts at Broomfield Park were renovated by Enfield Council, with extra funding from Sport England and the London Marathon Charitable Trust, and can be used year-round.

Broomfield Park has hosted North London Netball League (NLNL) since 1950, with 80 teams and more than 1,000 players meeting every year, and the upgrade was seen as vital to keeping the competition in Palmers Green.

Previously, without floodlights, matches could not be played after mid-afternoon



Netball has been played competitively in Broomfield Park for 71 years Credit Enfield Council

in winter, which was having an impact on the competitiveness of the league. The courts are now also available to be booked by anyone for tennis up until 10pm.

Elaine Smith-Modu, chair of NLNL, said: "North London Netball League is thoroughly enjoying playing netball on the refurbished courts. The surface is brilliant in all weather conditions."

"The floodlights mean winter matches can be completed and the playing time extended – providing an opportunity to expand the league and encourage greater participation."

"The new courts will ensure netball continues in the park for many more years to come."

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