

ENFIELD DISPATCH

Nº.41 THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

FEB 2022

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ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNERS opposing a new, larger incinerator at Edmonton Eco Park have vowed to fight on despite a contract for the project's construction being signed between North London Waste Authority and Spanish firm Acciona in January, when further protests were held in Edmonton Green. A legal challenge is now being considered – read more on Page 2

Bid to force LTN rethink fails

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER & JAMES CRACKNELL

Opposition councillors failed in a bid to force a rethink of Enfield Council's decision to make a controversial low-traffic neighbourhood (LTN) scheme permanent.

A vote by the council's overview and scrutiny committee to endorse the LTN in Bowes Park brought to an end a long-running battle to have the scheme – which uses a combination of bollards, planters and cameras to block car access for drivers who once used the residential area as a shortcut to the North Circular – ripped out.

However, the Conservatives have committed to still do so should they win control of the council at May's local election.

A number of other councillors, including four independents, two Greens, a Liberal Democrat and a rebellious Labour member, joined the Tories in their bid to overturn the council's commitment to making the LTN permanent, claiming the decision had been underpinned by "unreliable" and "misleading" data.

But Labour councillors voted to confirm leader Nesil Caliskan's decision, taken in December, to keep the scheme in place.

Opposition councillors are now focusing on the council's

other LTN trial scheme, in the Fox Lane area of Palmers Green, after a council report was published at the end of January which recommended it also be made permanent. The council recorded a 72% average drop in traffic within the Fox Lane LTN area, compared with a 6% rise on boundary roads.

Designed to stop rat-running drivers and boost walking and cycling, the two LTNs were introduced on an experimental basis by the council in summer 2020.

In the Bowes Park LTN, data showed reductions in traffic of 17% within the LTN and 7% on boundary roads, with a 2% rise on surrounding roads. More than

52% of residents who took part in the public consultation on the LTN submitted negative views on it, compared with less than 25% who said they welcomed the measures.

The Conservatives, in addition to the Community First grouping of independent, Green and Lib Dem councillors, subsequently 'called in' the council leader's decision on the Bowes Park LTN to the overview and scrutiny committee in an attempt to force a rethink. They criticised the data set out in a report on the scheme, written by the council's healthy streets programme director Richard Eason.

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30-storey tower proposed at Meridian Water

Council bid to increase density of homes in the first phase of its flagship redevelopment scheme

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A 30-storey tower block is being planned for Meridian Water as Enfield Council looks to boost the number of homes built in the early stages of the development.

The tower is more than double the size of the largest block that was approved in the 2017 outline application for Meridian One, the first part of the £6billion council-led regeneration scheme.

Detailed plans for phase 1a of Meridian One, set to provide 300 homes, were approved in May last year. If the detailed plans for phase 1b of the scheme also win approval, they will provide an extra 677 homes, with almost half set to be studio or one-bedroom units. There will be 260 two-bedroom homes, 80 three-bedroom units and one four-bedroom home.

Some 218 (32%) of the planned homes on phase 1b are classed as 'affordable', with 14% for shared ownership and 18% for London Affordable Rent, although half of the total number of homes across Meridian One will be affordable.

The council, which has previously faced criticism over delays to its flagship development on former industrial land in Edmonton, claims the increased density means it will be able to deliver more homes earlier in the programme.

But housing campaigner Matt Burn, from campaign group Better Homes Enfield, said: "The greatest need locally is for family-sized homes, particularly in Edmonton, where there are high levels of overcrowding."

"There is a real problem with the way the council approaches site optimisation. There is a focus on the most number of units rather than helping the greatest number of people. Family homes with three bedrooms are an efficient way to use land because they house a lot more people."

Councillors have frequently criticised housing applications with low levels of family homes. The council's local housing need



Detailed plans for phase 1b of Meridian One, part of the wider Meridian Water redevelopment in Edmonton Credit Hawkins/Brown

assessment, published in 2020, states that more than 60% of new households will need homes with three or more bedrooms.

Matt added: "They say it is for local people, but it is quite hard to see in reality. So many homes are not even the type people need or can afford."

He also raised concerns over the level of parkland provided at Meridian Water, claiming the parks were "far too small in relation to the number of flats being built" and would fail to compensate for the loss of the one-hectare Lady-smith Road Open Space, which was built on several years ago.

Responding to the concerns, a council spokesperson said the increase in density would boost the overall number of homes at Meridian One from 725 to 977 and increase the affordable homes from 213 to 491. It said the target number of homes at Meridian Water remained 10,000, and more family-sized homes would be delivered on future phases of the scheme.

The spokesperson added: "We are aiming for 30% of the entire site at Meridian Water to be green open space which is publicly accessible. The height of the blocks set out in the planning application led by Vistry is appropriate for the future of Meridian Water."

"In addition to the extensive green space that will be provided at Meridian Water, residents also

welcome the new community facilities which will be, or already have been, provided by this scheme. They include skills academies, film studios and health centres, all of which will play a significant role in making Meridian Water an attractive and aspirational place in which to live and work."

A spokesperson for the applicant, Vistry Partnerships, said the firm had worked with the council to increase the level of affordable housing from 25% in the previous Meridian One proposals, to 50%.

They added: "Phase 1a, the first homes delivered at Meridian Water, displays our commitment to the delivery of affordable housing, with 272 of the 300 homes, equating to 91% of the homes in this phase, being affordable. The proposals for Meridian One will also provide 50 more family homes than was consented under the 2017 outline planning permission."

"Meridian One will deliver 1.4ha of public open space across three landscaped parks, a civic square, three pocket parks and a green Park Street, which connects the four main open spaces."

"We are committed to continuing to engage with the local community and investing in new jobs through construction training and the new skills academy in partnership with the council."

Incinerator fight 'not over'

Anti-incinerator campaigners have vowed to fight on despite the construction contract for a new, larger Edmonton facility being signed last month.

Hundreds of protestors again took to the streets of Edmonton hoping to persuade North London Waste Authority (NLWA) to pause and review its plans for Edmonton Eco Park in Advent Way, which includes both a new incinerator and new recycling facilities. However, Spanish firm Acciona has now signed a deal to build them.

Campaigners from Stop the Edmonton Incinerator Now – an alliance of local action groups opposing the incinerator – are launching a crowdfunder to raise £6,000 for legal advice over a potential court challenge to NLWA's decision. It could see them submit a judicial review request against the waste authority to the High Court.

A statement issued on behalf of Stop the Edmonton Incinerator Now said: "Campaigners are determined to continue the work of the Stop the Edmonton Incinerator campaign. This includes informing residents of crucial information and participating fully in the May council elections."

"Legal action is also being considered. This is the first of many actions making clear that councillors will feel the consequences of their decisions at the forthcoming elections in May 2022."

NLWA says the new incinerator will prevent North London's waste being sent to landfill, and that the project will create 418 jobs.

Omicron peaks

Hospitalisations at North Mid caused by the Omicron wave of Covid-19 peaked in January at under half the level of the pandemic's previous wave.

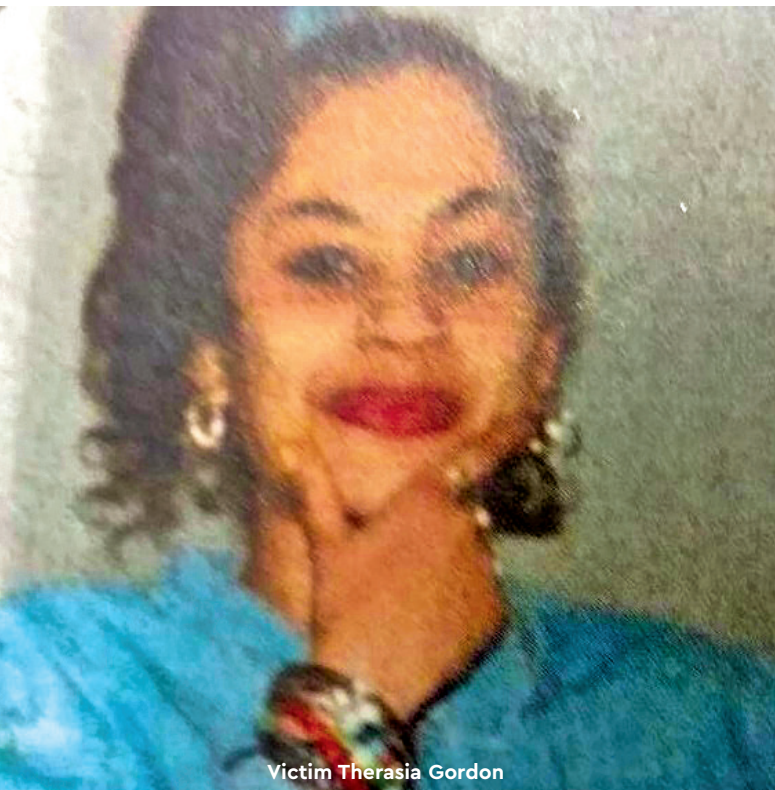
The Edmonton hospital was treating 155 patients with the virus on 4th January 2022, compared with 321 on 11th January 2021 and 243 on 2nd April 2020. This was despite case numbers in Enfield borough peaking at a level nearly twice as high as that seen the previous winter.

The number of deaths in Enfield where Covid-19 was recorded on the death certificate is now 866, the 13th highest rate in London.

To read more about the Omicron wave turn to Page 10.

Man guilty of murdering woman kidnapped from Fore Street

Two other women were attacked on the same night in August 2020



Victim Therasia Gordon

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

An Enfield man who attacked three women on the same night – killing one and raping and stabbing another – has been convicted of murder following a trial at the Old Bailey.

Brian Sengendo, aged 27 of Gilbert Street, Enfield Wash, was found guilty of multiple charges, including two counts of kidnap, one count of rape, and the murder of 44-year-old Therasia Gordon.

Therasia had been a sex worker in Edmonton at the time of the attacks in August 2020. She was kidnapped in a van driven by Sengendo in the early hours of

the morning, with the alert being raised by a witness who heard someone scream for help. Police found a pool of blood at the scene, plus Therasia’s mobile phone. Two days later, her body was found by a cyclist in a secluded area near Crews Hill.

It later transpired that two other women had been kidnapped and attacked by Sengendo on the same night, but had managed to escape.

Speaking after Sengendo’s conviction, Therasia’s mother Jan said: “I am always thinking about what Therasia must have gone through when she died. Listening to the evidence in court has been heartbreaking.

“One of the things that keeps

on going through my head, is the evidence that one of the witnesses could hear her groaning, I can’t get the thought of her being in pain at his hands out of my head.

“I will never come to terms with what this person [has] done to my child. He has left a big hole in my heart.”

During the trial the court had heard how, in the early hours of Thursday, 4th August 2020, police received a phone call from a resident of Grove Street, Angel Edmonton. He said he had heard a woman shouting “help” and looked out of his window to see a white van parked in the alleyway and a young black man striking at someone or something through the door of the vehicle.

Officers quickly attended the location and found a discarded grey shirt, as well as a large pool of blood and a mobile phone. A search of nearby gardens also led to the discovery of two bloodstained knives.

The phone was quickly examined by detectives who found that it belonged to Therasia Gordon. Enquiries were made as to her whereabouts, but she could not be found, and she was declared a high-risk missing person.

The witness had also been able to provide police with the van’s partial registration number. Using automatic numberplate recognition (ANPR) technology, officers identified that the same van had been cruising around the Enfield area that evening, although there was no record of who owned it.

On Thursday, 6th August, as work continued to trace Therasia and the suspect, police received a call from

a cyclist who said he had found a woman’s body in Burnt Farm Ride, near the Enfield borough border with Hertfordshire. Officers attended and the woman was identified as Therasia Gordon.

Further enquiries led police to another woman who said she too had been kidnapped by a man just hours before Therasia had gone missing. She managed to escape by jumping out of the van but was able to tell officers that his name was Brian, as well as passing on a number he had given her. Crucially, this number led officers to Sengendo and showed that he had recently moved to Princes Avenue in Muswell Hill. Police attended the address and, in the early hours of Friday, 7th August, Sengendo was seen leaving a property and getting into a blue BMW. The car was immediately stopped and he was arrested.

The investigation found Sengendo had also threatened and attacked another woman earlier the same evening. She told police she had been picked up by a man in a white van from a petrol station near Fore

Street. After she got into the vehicle, he held a knife to her throat and raped her. As she attempted to open the door to escape, Sengendo stabbed her seven times. A later medical examination found she had narrowly avoided being fatally injured.

Sengendo is due to be sentenced on Friday, 18th March.

Detective Chief Inspector Neil John, who led the investigation, said: “Therasia’s murder has had a devastating impact on her family, not least her mum Jan. Not only has she had to cope with the pain of losing her daughter, but she has also had to relive the events of that night thanks to Sengendo’s refusal to take responsibility for his actions.

“We must not forget the other women who suffered at Sengendo’s hands. They too have spoken about the lasting effect that night has had on them. We commend their bravery in speaking to us and providing the evidence which was crucial to his conviction.”

Chief Superintendent Simon Crick, in charge of policing for Enfield, added: “Therasia’s murder and the kidnap of two other women rightly caused significant concern. Everyone has the right to feel safe on our streets, no matter who you are or what you do.

“Our priority remains addressing vulnerability and exploitation linked to sex work. We have a dedicated unit committed to safeguarding sex workers and diverting them to relevant charitable organisations. We hope that by building relationships, these women feel confident to come forward and report any information or crimes.”

Killer Brian Sengendo
Credit Met Police



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Presenting the first of the two call-in requests, Conservative councillor Maria Alexandrou claimed the traffic data was unreliable, as there was no information for eight of the 29 roads in the LTN. She also called the cycling data “highly suspect”, with decreases in some roads and increases of up to 8,200% in others.

Similar concerns over data were raised as part of the the call-in by Community First, joined by Labour’s Bowes ward councillor Yasemin Brett. Daniel Anderson, a member of the group, presented the call-in on behalf of his Com-

munity First colleague, Green Party councillor Charith Gunawardena, who was unable to attend.

Cllr Anderson – who once served as the council’s cycle lanes champion when he was a Labour councillor and cabinet member for the environment, before quitting the party in 2020 – claimed the LTN data was “unreliable and potentially highly misleading” and did not form a “robust evidential basis” to show whether the benefits of the scheme outweighed the harm caused.

He said the data failed to show the overall impact of the scheme on vehicle use, emissions and active travel, and that post-

scheme testing took place during a period that included World No Car Day, London Car Free Day, and a nationwide petrol shortage. In addition, Cllr Anderson said pedestrian counts took place on a single day, 20th July 2021, which was the day after lockdown restrictions were eased and temperatures hit 31 degrees.

Responding to the claims, Cllr Caliskan said the report showed cycling was up by 20% and walking up by 14%. Warning that the borough’s population was set to rise significantly during the next 15 years, the leader said there was a need to reduce short car journeys to tackle air pol-

lution. She acknowledged that traffic schemes were “painful and difficult for residents” but insisted they had a part to play in cutting emissions.

Richard Eason said pedestrian counts were taken and showed some “seasonal variation”. He added that it had been challenging to obtain baseline data in certain cases, and acknowledged the Covid-19 pandemic had affected travel patterns. Responding to the concerns over cycling data, he said there would “naturally become roads that cyclists will focus on and that will become more direct routes”. Richard also said traffic data had been removed for some

dates to take into account the effect of the fuel crisis, adding: “I am confident in the data that has been presented.”

During the call-in debates, Conservative committee member James Hockney asked whether it was fair to make the scheme permanent when 76% of people with a disability had opposed it.

In response, Cllr Caliskan said the council was proposing exemptions for Blue Badge holders and those with caring responsibilities that would improve their access to the LTN. She added that the council should work “more proactively” to make sure the views of those with disabilities are heard.

Get on your bisiklet

Cycling instructor David Hilliard on how Turkish speakers in Enfield are embracing two wheels thanks to an award-winning community group



A Londra Bisiklet Kulubu (LBK) training session taking place at the British Alevi Federation in Edmonton

What makes someone with little interest in cycling decide to take on a bike ride of more than 2,000 miles – through eleven countries – from London to Istanbul? And how did this spawn an award-winning community group in Enfield?

It all started three years ago. Driving instructor Ozgur Korkmaz was in a bit of a

rut, bored with his sedentary lifestyle and tired of doing the same old thing all the time. He decided to seek out a challenge: something that was outside his comfort zone that would really stretch him both mentally and physically.

He reflected on how, when he had originally come to the UK from Turkey, the journey had taken him four hours by

plane. Ozgur started to wonder how long it would take by other means to make the journey. And so, the seed of the idea of a bike ride was sown. Despite attempts of friends and family to dissuade him, he eventually decided on cycling to Istanbul in 2018, despite never having cycled more than ten miles in his life.

Before his transcontinental trip Ozgur could not have imagined that he would end up leading an initiative to make his Turkish-speaking community back home in North London – with its love of cars – get on bikes. However, Ozgur's personal experience of riding across Europe opened his eyes to the benefits of cycling, and so it began.

Roll on three years and, on a typical Sunday morning, you will find Londra Bisiklet Kulubu (LBK) and its volunteers holding training sessions at the British Alevi Federation site in Edmonton, next to Churchfield Recreation Ground.

Using funding and resources from Transport for London (TfL) and Enfield Council, Ozgur and his team of volunteers have created a cycling hub which has 40 bikes available

for training sessions, a facility for repairing bikes and a training area where cycle skills sessions take place.

Social media has played a significant role in helping the club reach out to North London's Turkish-speaking population. It has sparked the imagination of a community that TfL and local authorities otherwise find difficult to reach.

Demand for training is very high. LBK provided cycle training for more than 125 women and 76 kids last year. The club also holds regular free Dr Bike sessions, repairing and servicing bikes, and in 2021 donated 32 bikes to low-income black, Asian and minority ethnic women, plus another 26 bikes to schools and community centres.

LBK recently won the 'Growing Cycling' award from London Cycling Campaign (LCC) and, after becoming a community partner with LCC, the group also received a donation of more than 150 new bikes.

Find out more about Londra Bisiklet Kulubu:

Email info@londoncyclingclub.org

Facebook /Londrabisikletkulubu

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Building community resilience

Francis Sealey from Enfield Climate Action Forum on how local people can be involved in protecting their communities

The World Health Organisation has stated that climate change is a health crisis and that certainly was the case in France in 2019 when temperatures of over 40C saw hundreds of people die from heat-related illness, many living alone.

It is clear that soon we will have temperatures like this in the UK and the public health implications will be serious. Climate change has enormous implications for human health. This includes the direct effects of weather extremes as well as the mental health impacts caused by people losing their homes from flooding, for example.

Other indirect effects are also expected, arising from interactions between the environment and populations, for example through disruption of food supply, economies and international relations, with tensions raised between nation states.

In Enfield, we desperately need a climate change adaptation strategy to address all of

this. Enfield Climate Action Forum (EnCaf) is working with the North Central London NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and Enfield Racial Equality Group to set up a number of community panels to involve communities in identifying the major health risks in their locality, making recommendations about what needs to be done and finding ways to build community resilience.

By doing it as a co-production with local people in their own areas, we hope to build a strategy that is owned by the communities we engage. We are in the process of discussing the outlines of the project, whether we will have one community panel or more, how we can select people randomly so the panels are representative of each local area, and what pre-panel information and learning material we would need to create.

We also are discussing how the panels will be organised; who runs them and what outputs and tangible impacts will come out of them. Ideally we would also like to see if



Flash flooding could become a regular problem thanks to man-made climate change

Credit Chris Gallagher via Unsplash

these panels could form the basis for community resilience circles that could then be replicated across the borough, similar to what has been set up in other parts of the UK. National organisation Civic Voice initiated such a panel in Southgate around the issue of high-rise development.

We hope to build on this experience and

take it forward to develop local social capital within communities to address the climate change public health risk that will affect us in the coming years.

If you are interested in this project, would like to know more, or would like to help in any way, please contact me at fsealey@gmail.com.

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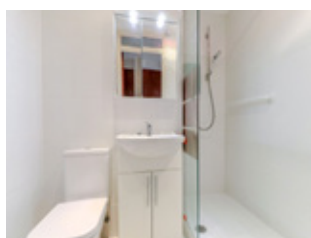
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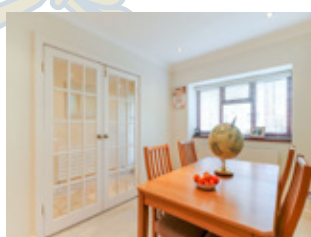
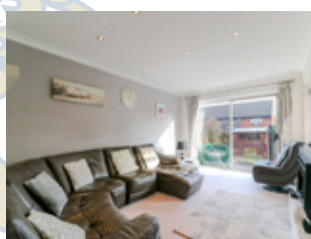
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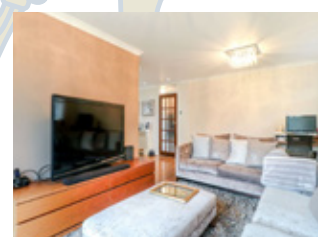
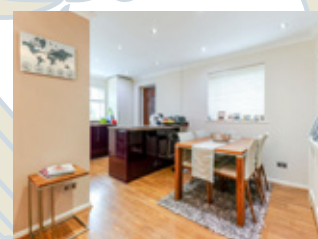
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Stay of execution for historic theatre

Planning committee demands theatre provision be included in new facility



Intimate Theatre in Green Lanes is on the Enfield Local Heritage List

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Plans to demolish a historic theatre in Palmers Green have stalled after councillors demanded that a new facility set to be built in its place be capable of hosting theatrical performances.

Enfield Council's planning committee had voted to grant planning permission for the redevelopment of St Monica's Church Hall in Green Lanes – commonly known as Intimate Theatre – more than a year ago, sanctioning its demolition and replacement with a block of flats and a community hall.

But councillors were forced to reconsider the application at a meeting last month. Planning officers explained the original decision to grant permission needed to be revisited after a series of legal and technical hitches. Theatres Trust, a national body representing British theatres, had threatened to launch a judicial review of the committee's November 2020 decision, disputing some of the advice that councillors had been given prior to their vote. With some planning policies having also been updated in the last year, such as the London Plan, the

"This is an attack on the arts, culture and heritage of Enfield"

council took legal advice and decided "it was necessary to refer this application back to committee" for a fresh decision.

Shortly after opening, St Monica's Church Hall was leased to a theatre company in 1935 and renamed Intimate Theatre. It then made history when it staged the first play broadcast live on UK television in 1946, with famous names including Richard Attenborough, Roger Moore and David Bowie performing there over the years.

The building's use as a theatre declined in recent years, however, and because of the limitations of the venue, owners St Monica's Parish wants to replace it with a facility that can be adapted for different community uses. A petition of 4,513 signatures – launched by the Save the Intimate Theatre campaign – objected to the plans, while a petition in support gained 1,500 signatures.

Before the debate on 18th January, councillors were told the application was "identical" to the plans previously approved, with the only difference being some additional supporting information.

Jenny Harris, a planning consultant representing St Monica's, told councillors the existing building was in "poor condition" and that the new facility would be "modern, energy efficient and accessible". She added that there was "significant capacity" at other theatres in Enfield.

Conservative committee member Mike Rye said he thought the church had allowed the building's usage as a theatre to fall into decline and that the "exceptional circumstances" required to justify the loss of the facility "had not been proven". He added: "There is nothing here [in the plans] that allows performance of any quality. There's no lighting rig, no stage, no dressing rooms. This is a completely different community facility [...] the design is pretty utilitarian."

Hass Yusuf, a Labour committee member who was the only councillor to vote against the theatre's demolition in November 2020, reiterated his opposition and said he considered it to be "vandalism against the arts". He added: "This is an attack on the arts, culture and heritage of Enfield. The new building adds nothing to the character of the area and doesn't address our housing needs."

To help fund the new community facility, the redevelopment plans include a three-storey block of flats at the rear of the site, providing six two-bed homes. But the council's report on the plans noted it would result in the loss of "an asset of community value" and "non-

designated heritage asset". The council's conservation officer also said the existing building was "a rare survivor of a repertory theatre building of the inter-war period" and was one of the last remaining local theatres in London.

Labour member Doug Taylor, who abstained on the plans at the previous vote, said St Monica's had given "scant regard" for the heritage of the existing building and asked whether it was possible to add a condition requesting some of its historic features be preserved.

Later in the debate, it was proposed that the plans be deferred to give St Monica's a chance to "explore whether the explicit use of theatre performance can be retained" by including provision for a moveable stage. This motion was then unanimously approved by the committee.

Reacting to the vote afterwards, Tom Clarke, a national planning advisor for Theatres Trust, said: "While the deferral to seek further commitment to theatre performance may help alleviate some of our concerns about the loss of a community theatre, it would still see the loss of a unique heritage asset. We were pleased some committee members were critical of this and of the design of the replacement building. Theatres Trust believes that there is an opportunity to retain and refurbish the existing theatre to better provide a wider range of community facilities without the need to demolish and build anew."

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What Domesday Book tells us about Enfield and Edmonton

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Domesday Book is famous for being the first attempt made to survey England’s population and land in detail, providing an invaluable source of information for historians.

Having been completed in 1086 by command of William the Conqueror, 20 years after he became the first Norman monarch of England, *Domesday* contains a record of the country’s settlements, who lived there, and what assets they held.

The book still exists today, safely held by The National Archives at Kew, and extracts from its pages can be downloaded for free via its website – although you’d need to be familiar with Medieval Latin to read them.

So what can *Domesday* tell us about this part of the world in the 11th Century?

Within the modern borough of Enfield, just two places boast a *Domesday* record; Enfield and Edmonton. The first thing to note is that, in contrast to the modern

arrangement of Edmonton being a settlement within Enfield borough, in 1086 Enfield was a settlement within Edmonton Hundred, one of six subdivisions of Middlesex that comprised not just Enfield and Edmonton but also Tottenham and South Mimms.

Enfield was the biggest of these four settlements, recording 114 households. Of these, 57 were “vil-lars” (villagers), 20 were “bordars” (smallholders), 30 were “cottars” (cottagers), six were slaves, and one was a priest. Edmonton was smaller, recording 52 villagers, 17 smallholders, 14 cottagers and four slaves, but both are said to be among the largest 20% of settlements recorded in *Domesday*.

In Enfield, the mention of a priest – said to hold 30 acres of land – gives rise to the obvious question; surely that means there was a church? *Domesday* does not confirm the name of any specific place of worship, but given that St Andrew’s Church in Enfield Town was first recorded in writing in 1136, it is thought likely to have also existed at the time of *Domesday*.



Domesday Book was commissioned in 1086 by William the Conqueror (pictured here in a 16th Century painting) as a record of the people and resources within his new kingdom

In terms of land and resources, Enfield is recorded as having 24 “ploughlands”, four “lord’s plough teams” and 16 “men’s plough teams”, while Edmonton boasted a slightly greater agricul-

tural capacity of 26 ploughlands, four lord’s plough teams and 22 men’s plough teams.

Both Enfield and Edmonton are said to have had access to a wood-land containing 2,000 pigs and a

mill worth ten shillings. This mill is today thought to have occupied the site of Wright’s Flour in Ponders End, on the River Lea, and gives rise to the family-owned company’s claim that milling has taken place on its land for a thousand years.

Another nugget of information we get from *Domesday* is that Enfield was, in 1086, valued as being worth £50, while Edmonton is valued at £40, suggesting perhaps that there was an economic divide between the two areas as long as a millennium ago.

The owner of these lands, and indeed much of the rest of Middlesex and Essex at the time, was listed by *Domesday* as being Geoffrey de Mandeville, one of the richest magnates of the reign of William I. Geoffrey also served as the first sheriff of London and Middlesex and as a constable of the Tower of London.

Among the many landmarks and streets named after Geoffrey today is De Mandeville Retail Park in Southbury Road – home to Argos, Harveys and PC World.

Explore Domesday Book online:
Visit opendomesday.org

ENFIELD

WINTER LIGHTS

03 FEB – 09 MAR 22

FREE EVENT

A series of outdoor light installations and workshops taking place throughout Enfield.

WWW.ENFIELDWINTERLIGHTS.COM

We must ensure Edmonton Green's redevelopment works for the community

With planning permission now granted for the redevelopment of Edmonton Green Shopping Centre, Koko Hill hopes that the needs of local traders and residents are not ignored

Local markets breathe life into any area. You can touch, feel and experience the things you need; fresh fruit, coffee, flowers, fish.

A common experience for everyone, from all walks of life, is going to a local market. Compare browsing market stalls to squeezing down tight, claustrophobic supermarket aisles, fighting with the self-service checkout and begging for customer services to save you.

At a market with independent traders, you spend your money at a slower pace, looking for quality over quantity, and it's easy to find more products you can identify with. The market experience gives you greater value for your hard-earned money, with even tourists attracted to landmark markets such as at Borough, Brixton, Spitalfields or Hackney, just for the experience.

Travel anywhere in the world and you will find markets are a fountain of life, providing a means for employment, trade and meeting the basic needs of a community. As much as you may love Asda, Tesco or Sainsbury's, there's nothing like getting your groceries from a market trader.

Markets, however, often occupy land that

can become a hot asset for developers. Major applications for redeveloping markets use fancy words like 'hybrid' or 'mixed use'. They can also include Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), forcing people out. The language at times can be confusing, with each new major redevelopment creating either an opportunity or a threat to any local market, depending on the developer's intentions.

Edmonton Green Market has an interesting history. In an extremely dense urban area, many people don't have to walk far to benefit from the array of stalls. The existing shopping centre is quite successful in making the market central to the main design, without having any major effect on the huge stores adjacent to it.

Now, with the redevelopment of the shopping centre by developer Crosstree having been approved, the question is what will happen to the existing market traders? And what lessons can be learned from other market developments?

Down the road, there has been a huge campaign to protect the 'Latin Village' traders at Seven Sisters Indoor Market. The redevelopment was scrapped by developer Grainger last



Edmonton Green Market as it looks today – the whole shopping centre is now set to be rebuilt, with a new market provided on a different site within the development

year, but now with the indoor market closed since the start of the pandemic, community traders are both displaced and dispersed.

The redevelopment was supposed to contain safeguards to protect the market and its traders during construction, to limit the damage from the upheaval to traders and to create a temporary market while works are in progress. However, with the market building scheme scrapped, land owner Transport for London is refusing to either let the traders use the site or provide them with an alternative.

It shows is that if safeguards are not enforced, more is at risk than just fruit and veg. Every local authority has a duty vested in the community, which they serve as democratically elected members, to maintain the fabric of that community. Whether they be Conservative or Labour or another party altogether, councillors hold the keys to the future of the local area. We have to make sure that the future of market traders at Edmonton Green is protected, so they do not suffer the same fate as those at Seven Sisters.

Exposing abuses of power

Paul Everitt from Love Your Doorstep on the importance of holding power to account

We have only just started a new year and we are already inundated with stories of people abusing their positions of power locally, nationally and internationally, with rulebooks and procedure being used to hide uncomfortable truths and protect privileged positions.

Internationally, there is some positive news from the USA that their legal system will not allow a procedural issue to stall the holding of a member of the British aristocracy to account for what, if proved, would be the ultimate abuse of power.

Nationally, we are watching the soap opera of the 'partygate' scandal at Downing Street. We are all being taken for fools as we are

forced to wait for the results of an internal inquiry, despite it being obvious to everyone that the leaders of our country think that the rules they make don't apply to them.

Locally, Enfield Council's "non-essential" meetings were cynically cancelled in January, under a smokescreen of protecting people from Covid-19 as the Omicron variant took hold, but in reality to restrict proper scrutiny from taking place in the run-up to local elections in May.

I have just fortuitously finished binge-watching a gripping Japanese drama on Netflix, *The Journalist*, which brilliantly shows the way that lies told in government lead to untold injustices, and how the system of government protects those in power. It's a



Paul Everitt joins Lisa Seagroatt for the launch of her book, 'Bandits in the Boardroom'

fascinating look at the role of the civil servant, whose purpose is to serve the politician, not to serve the public. It's a great watch and rekindled my belief in the freedom of the press.

Late last year an Enfield-based HR professional, Lisa Seagroatt, released her book *Bandits In The Boardroom*, which tells the true and cautionary tale of a local charity that imploded because of the abuse of power at the top of the business. The book is a modern parable and is a reminder of why the bonfire of regulations that has happened in recent years has paved the way for appalling executive behaviour.

On the cover of the book, the author is seen lassoing the bandits, proclaiming: "No more lies. Now you will have to tell the truth!" If only it were so.

'Bandits in the Boardroom' is available to buy from Amazon:

Visit amazon.co.uk/Bandits-Boardroom-Lisa-Seagroatt/dp/B09KN9YM5W

Feryal Clark was first elected in December 2019



Why we need to change the law on gambling

Enfield North MP Feryal Clark on the impact of gambling venues

Gambling venues are becoming a blight on our communities and they need to be challenged.

In my maiden speech in the House of Commons, I talked about Enfield as being a tale of two cities, with the economic and social divides between the east and west of our borough becoming ever starker.

Sadly, the pandemic has only deepened those divides, and nowhere are they more present than on our high streets. This has been shown through the increasing prevalence of gambling venues, particularly along the eastern corridor of the borough.

We know that these venues encourage anti-social behaviour and draw in vulnerable people, praying on their financial difficulties. The 2020 report from Enfield Poverty and Inequality Commission showed that Enfield had the eleventh-highest rate of child poverty in the country, with one in five workers being low-paid.

Figures such as these make

it even more shameful that gambling companies persist in praying on these vulnerable communities, entrenching the issues they already have. Not only are these venues coming to dominate our high streets, but they are also coming in place of vital community assets.

Only recently we saw a branch of Barclays in Hertford Road replaced by Merkur Slots, which itself is a matter of yards away from a betting shop. Sadly, outdated and ineffective legislation means this issue is far from going away and we face battle after battle to stop multi-million-pound gambling companies preying on vulnerable people.

Residents may remember a campaign I ran in spring 2021, where I fought to stop a new Merkur Slots venue opening in Southbury Road, in our town centre. While we managed to ensure Enfield Council's licensing committee refused the application on very well-reasoned grounds, this was not the end of the case.

The council was powerless to stop an appeal being taken to

court, which found in favour of Merkur Slots, and the venue is now open. We are left with a situation whereby people are powerless to stop these venues, local authorities are powerless to stop these venues, and gambling companies are being given free reign.

The legislation affecting the creation of new gambling venues has not been properly updated since the 2005 Gambling Act, almost 17 years ago. Both the gambling industry and our local communities have changed immeasurably since then, and it is high time that we saw an update in legislation.

I will continue to push ministers on this and would urge any constituents who have concerns to get in touch and help me make the case. Together, we can stop gambling venues from breaking up our communities.

Feryal Clark is the Labour MP for Enfield North. If you are a constituent, you can get in touch with her by phone or email:

Call 0208 804 4543

Email feryal.clark.mp@parliament.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 14th February**.

We need a pocket park

Dear Enfield Dispatch

There are plans to build two blocks of flats on tennis courts in Abbey Road, which is part of a conservation area. The tennis courts are owned by Bush Hill Park Bowls and Tennis Club. A local action group has been set up to oppose this development.

I think it would be good to, instead, develop a community Japanese garden with water features and a fountain. It would be used by local residents, with their own access key, as a meditative, peaceful area and meeting place.

Perhaps funding for this could come from lottery funding or similar. A contractor could develop/create the garden in conjunction with the local residents' action group. Local people could work together to maintain the garden. It could also open the way for more 'pocket parks' to be developed within the Enfield area, which would benefit all.

Antony Smith
Edmonton

Borough-wide consultation

Dear Enfield Dispatch

I have read the recent correspondence regarding the introduction of low-traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) by Enfield Council. I understand that more LTNs are proposed, but without proper democratic and transparent consultation.

Every residential street in Enfield belongs to all the people of Enfield, not just to the residents of a partic-

ular street. We should all be given a say in this, so that no single-interest group is allowed to dictate to the rest of us, while ignoring the many problems caused by LTNs.

I suggest a consultation on LTNs, inviting all residents to express their opinion. This should be borough-wide, highly publicised and conducted not solely by accessing a website.

Peter Neill
Bush Hill Park

Misleading LTN data

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Enfield Council claims pedestrian activity rose 14% in its survey [of the Bowes Park low-traffic neighbourhood trial] which "appears to be a positive trend". This is false; they know that their one tiny sample of 12 hours with no control sample indicates nothing about the effect of the scheme on walking.

The council says that cycling increased by 20% within the scheme area. They know this is wrong, because they could see that their data for two roads in the baseline period is corrupted [showing one 'cycle flow' in 24 hours in Maidstone Road and three in York Road] rendering the data for these roads meaningless. When this erroneous data is excluded, on the remaining sixteen roads cycling activity fell by 1%.

The council strongly implies that the scheme significantly reduced motor traffic. The reduction was in fact tiny; on average each surveyed road saw one fewer car every three minutes in daytime, not enough for anyone to notice. This is why it is not surprising that levels of pollution, noise and accidents were virtually identical before and after implementation.

The trial proves that the Bowes Park LTN scheme is ineffective and must be removed.

Michael Lord
Arnos Grove

Advertisement

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Crown Workspace Ltd of 1-4 Ardra Road, London, N9 0BH is applying to change an existing licence as follows: to amend an operating centre to keep 16 goods vehicles and 4 trailers at Crown Workspace Ltd of 1-4 Ardra Road, London, N9 0BH.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Flower Freight Ltd of Pinetops, Theobalds Park Road, Crews Hill, Enfield, EN2 9BH is applying to change an existing licence as follows: to keep an extra 4 goods vehicles and 0 trailers at the operating centre at Pinetops, Theobalds Park Road, Crews Hill, Enfield, EN2 9BH.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

My experience helping the vaccine rollout

Neil Littman shares his experience helping to administer the NHS vaccine rollout at an Enfield pharmacy over the past year

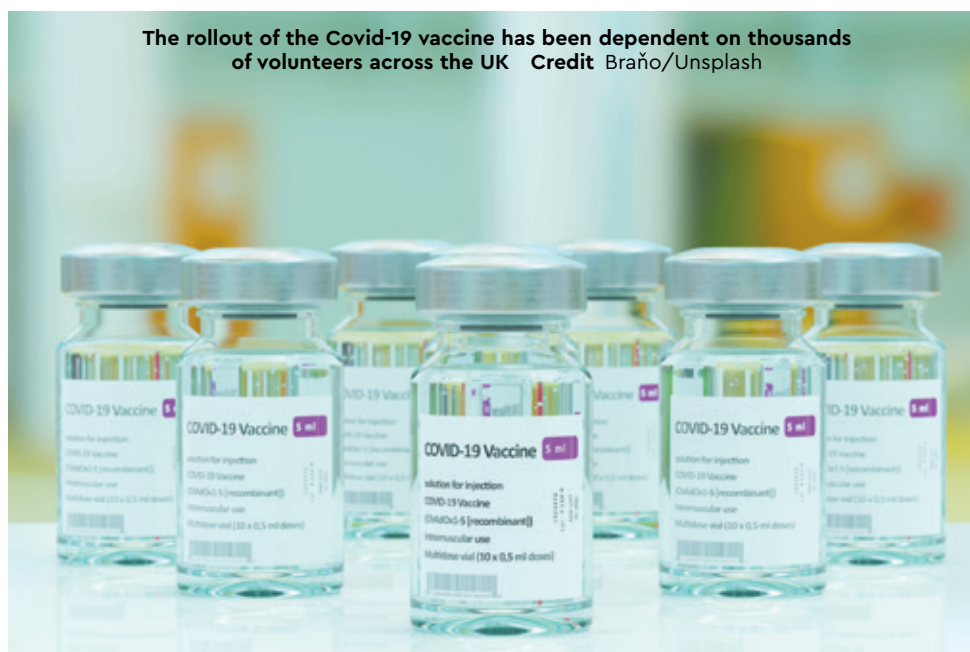
Following six months of voluntary work at my local pharmacy during 2020, making prescription deliveries to residents across the borough of Enfield, I returned to work there as an administrator on the vaccine rollout in January 2021.

Initially, vaccinations at the pharmacy were by appointment only, with priority given to the over-60s and those with vulnerable conditions. We cross-reference names and NHS numbers and record the dates the vaccines are given on the system and give each person a card to keep for their records, containing the batch details.

If people don't show up, we offer spare vaccines to key workers. Once a batch of vaccine is opened, it has a short shelf life. The clinician has to count the number of vaccines compared to the expected number of patients booked on the system.

Things run smoothly for the most part. A few people ask questions about the vaccines – which one are we giving, is it any good etc – with many of the concerns expressed being informed by what people have seen on social media.

Our catchment area at the start of the rollout was very wide. People were even



turning up from outside the borough. To begin with we were vaccinating between 80 and 120 people per day.

We supply lateral flow test kits to patients when we have them in stock. We also keep a record of the code numbers associated with kit requests and sell masks. Meanwhile, the normal day-to-day

work of the pharmacy still goes on.

By October, there had been some changes. While at the start we were giving patients the Astra-Zeneca vaccine, for the booster jabs we give the Moderna vaccine. We are also now giving flu jabs on a walk-in basis.

In November, when the initial 15-minute safety time that people were asked to wait

after receiving the vaccine was dropped, the number of people being vaccinated per day doubled to 160 almost immediately.

In the middle of December 2021 we were asked to get as many people vaccinated before the new year as possible and, though we still had an appointment system, we were vaccinating walk-ins as well. The working hours became extended to 9pm and we also texted patients to see if they could attend earlier appointment times.

During the 'big push' just before Christmas, we peaked by doing 270 vaccinations per day, thanks to having three vaccinators available instead of the usual one. Some days, the pressure of dealing with so many patients was relentless.

The rollout of the vaccine programme has also resulted in a digital revolution for people who previously didn't know what a QR code was or how to use the various NHS apps on their phones. It is probably the way things will be run from now on.

I would like to acknowledge all those who have given their time to help support the public and their GP practices and pharmacies and continue to do so during a very challenging time.

North Mid 'turning corner' amid Omicron wave

Less than 100 Covid-19 patients now being treated at Edmonton hospital



Dr Nnenna Osuji is the chief executive of North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust

BY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

North Mid is "turning a corner" in the battle against the Omicron Covid-19 variant amid falling numbers of patients with the virus and reduced staff absences.

Dr Nnenna Osuji, chief executive of North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust, said the number of inpatients with the virus had fallen below 100 for the first time in weeks.

The trust is continuing its efforts to convince staff and the wider public to get vaccinated, which the chief executive described as "the safest, most effective protection we have against Covid".

Speaking to the Local Democracy Reporting Service at the end of January, Dr Osuji said: "It does feel like we are turning a corner, if not turned a corner.

"At the peak of this wave, we had somewhere between 130 and 160 [Covid] inpatients at any one time. That was sustained for a period of time. As of today [24th January], we have less than 100 inpatients with Covid for the first time in many, many weeks."

Dr Osuji said that while there is "a lot of talk" about the Omicron variant producing milder symptoms, the number of people infected had been larger than during the Delta wave, leading to a "quite significant" number attending and being admitted to hospital.

She added: "What we have noticed is that the people who tended to be ill and the people who tended to need admission were largely those who were not vaccinated."

Like many other hospitals, North Mid

has been hit by staff absences because of people having to self-isolate. The chief executive said: "We had more than 200 staff off at one moment in time because of Covid-related issues. That is hugely significant, and at this moment we are well below 100 staff, so that is a huge improvement."

From 1st January, as Covid cases remained high, the trust restricted ward visits to certain groups of patients for safety reasons. Dr Osuji said the trust would revert to normal visiting hours "as soon as we reasonably can".

She added: "It is [a decision] we have had to take in the public interest for safety and infection prevention, but as soon as we can we will be reversing that. While we have had to restrict it, we recognise the need for compassionate visiting in certain circumstances, and also to have other mechanisms of contact – phone calls and iPads, for example."

During the first wave of the pandemic, North Mid and other trusts were forced to cancel non-emergency or 'elective' procedures as they focused on treating Covid-19 cases, creating a backlog of

patients waiting to be treated.

Dr Osuji said North Mid had not stopped elective treatments during the Omicron wave, although it had been forced to defer some surgeries, and she apologised to those who had been affected by delays.

The chief executive added that Chase Farm Hospital and other partners had "continued to provide the vast majority of surgery throughout this period" and the trust would focus on reducing the backlog of cases.

The NHS is now racing to encourage staff to get vaccinated ahead of a fast-approaching government deadline. Frontline staff are required to have their first jab by 3rd February and their second by 1st April, leading to fears more than 70,000 NHS staff in England could potentially be at risk of losing their jobs.

According to statistics published by the NHS earlier this month, 88.3% of healthcare workers at North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust had received a first dose of the vaccine, 83.5% had received a second dose and 60.2% had received a booster or third dose. Dr Osuji said the trust was continuing to encourage all staff to receive the vaccine.



Sign up to the ED newsletter

Our weekly newsletter keeps readers up-to-date with the latest news, features and comment from the Enfield Dispatch website

Sign up: eepurl.com/didKNH

WE NEED YOU!

Do you enjoy helping people?



Enfield Voluntary Action is delighted to offer an opportunity to join our team of Social Prescribing Link Workers who support residents to make positive changes that result in a healthy life. The post holder will work with the existing team members to:

- Help residents to connect to local activities within their community which will help them to achieve their goals appropriate to their own health & wellbeing and relevant to the wider determinants of their health, such as debt, poor housing and physical inactivity.
- As an SPLW you have great interpersonal skills and excellent local knowledge of the local Voluntary and Community sector. You will have experience of working positively with people facing social, health & wellbeing challenges.

Enfield Voluntary Action supports positive local social action with a wide range of organisations making a positive difference in Enfield.

If you are interested in this job, please send your CV to admin@enfieldva.org.uk by Tuesday 22nd February at 9am. Interviews will be held on 1st March

Visit enfieldva.org.uk/social-prescribing-link-worker

Advertisement



Award winning care homes

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Our highly trained care home teams are specialists in residential, nursing, dementia and respite care. With some of the highest care ratings in the UK, we're here to help you and your family at every step of your journey.

If you're considering care, call **Jaime** on **0204 502 9286** or email **jaime.stubberfield@careuk.com**

Trusted to care.



Elizabeth Lodge care home
Enfield
careuk.com/elizabeth-lodge

Artist Lauren Baker will use the Suffragette movement as inspiration for her art installation in Palmers Green



‘Spectacular’ lights festival arrives in Enfield

Month-long event will feature colourful art installations across the borough and see local landmarks lit up

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

The first-ever ‘Enfield Winter Lights’ festival will illuminate the borough’s streets in February and March – bringing “light, joy and positivity”.

The arts showcase will feature a series of large-scale installations designed to illuminate four town centres; Angel Edmonton, Enfield Town, Palmers Green and Southgate.

Backed with funding from the government’s Welcome Back Fund, organisers say Enfield Winter Lights will bring together artists, local businesses and the wider community with “spectacular” light artworks designed to celebrate the heritage of the borough and “dazzle us with colour, creativity and innovation”.

The festival will see six artists deliver site-specific art installations in each town centre; in

Angel Edmonton, a series of light portraits by local rising talent King Owusu will shine a spotlight on residents; in Palmers Green, a light artwork by Lauren Baker will focus on the significance of the Suffragette movement and female empowerment; in Southgate, local artist Dan Maier plans to deliver installations bringing the “essence of nature to architectural landmarks”; and in Enfield Town, a luminescent sculpture “promoting unity and connection” will be created by artist Mark Beattie.

In addition, a “mesmerising light projection” will be created by Claire Luxton at “two iconic architectural landmarks” in Enfield Town and Edmonton, plus an “immersive neon light garden”. The artists will also be creating installations to occupy vacant shop premises and will curate a borough-wide art trail on billboards in seventeen locations

around Enfield borough.

Part of the idea behind Enfield Winter Lights is to pay homage to Sir Joseph Swan, a pioneer in the electronics industry and an early developer of the incandescent light bulb in the Victorian age. In 1886, Edison Swan United Electric Light Company opened a factory in Ponders End to manufacture electric light bulbs, known colloquially as ‘The Lamp’.

As well as outdoor art interventions the festival will include interactive elements, where local people are encouraged to get creative. On the opening weekend, residents are invited to take part in a neon life-drawing class led by Jylle Navarro, which will use ultraviolet reactive arts materials.

Enfield Winter Lights runs from Thursday 3rd February until Wednesday 9th March. All workshops will be free or under £10. For more information:

Visit enfieldwinterlights.com

Inspiring the next generation

Edmonton teacher Antoinette Jordan has written a children’s book themed around environmental issues

The idea of writing an environmentally-friendly book arose as an act of love for the environment.

This was influenced by my childhood and upbringing when I spent time a lot of time playing outdoors in the park or garden. I had my own garden patch and we had a lovely lavender hedge and compost heap.

Aged ten, I left England to live in Nigeria. I enjoyed rock climbing, taking my dog for walks, and travelling to different states with my family. On these trips mum explained geographical features, landscape and vegetation. It was fascinating, and I developed a love for travelling and environmental issues.

Mum suggested I write a book with an environmental theme including the ‘three Rs’ of reduce, reuse and recycle. She was an expert at this, creating an awesome garden using a variety of materials. It was a great idea, so it became the central theme of my story. But I also wanted readers to know about the endangered sea turtles in St Vincent and the Grenadines, so I included this in the story as well.

My Beautiful Island was written in 2020 during lockdown. I was at home doing nothing, so I decided it was a good time to write it. It began with a story plan which evolved over time. I did some research work on St Vincent and the Grenadines, as well as on dogs! This may sound strange, but they play an important role in the story.

Finally, Sophie the protagonist was created as a role model to address the issue of fly-tipping in St Vincent and to inspire positive change. The character is Afro-Caribbean, because I wanted to raise the profile of black books as there are not many of them around and also give children an opportunity to learn about Caribbean culture.

I believe it is a great family book with a universal theme, as it is our responsibility to look after our environment. I know Enfield residents like myself are upset with fly-tipping in the borough, so I think this book provides an opportunity to educate the next generation about the issue.

The story has been described as “amazing, thoughtful and exciting” by children who have read it so far. There are other lovely reviews on my Instagram page.

‘My Beautiful Island’ is available to buy online:

Instagram @antoinettejordan14

Visit antoinettejordan.com



Antoinette Jordan with a copy of her book, ‘My Beautiful Island’

Hitting the right notes

Enfield-based children's choir star in TV advert

An Enfield youth choir has provided the soundtrack for a television commercial.

Young Notes is part of the award-winning Young Talent Academy, a community interest company which provides opportunities for young people from the borough to get involved with performing arts – and includes singers aged from three to 21 years.

The advert for Center Parcs focuses on a family relaxing during their break and features the children from Young Notes

singing Stevie Wonder's *For Once In My Life*. The children recorded their version of the toe-tapping tune at Metropolis Studios in Chiswick, where artists such as Madonna and Elton John have previously recorded.

Regan O'Mahony, founder and director of Young Talent Academy, which boasts 150 students attending its singing, dancing and drama classes in Enfield Town, said: "When we were asked to take part in the Center Parcs advert, the students were so excited!

"The whole experience was really

enjoyable, and the students were incredibly professional throughout – I'm so proud of them all.

"When I came up with the idea of Young Notes, I knew young people loved to sing, and I also knew there were great mental and physical benefits that come from singing and, in particular, group singing.

"Having worked with young people as a teacher, I wanted to design a new dynamic choir that challenged the traditional stereotypes of singing in a choir. I wanted to create a place where young people could sing upbeat music that they love."

Andrew Regan, Center Parcs' senior brand and content manager, said: "After a really difficult two years, we wanted to have a song that was upbeat, optimistic and made people feel good! But we also wanted to convey our brand essence – families – and how better to do that than to have a children's choir singing the soundtrack."

Past students of Young Talent Academy, which runs its classes at Enfield Grammar School, have gone on to perform in West End shows as well as at venues such as the O2 Arena and Westminster Cathedral.

For more information about Young Talent Academy:

Visit youngtalentacademy.co.uk



Children from Young Notes, part of Young Talent Academy, preparing for their latest star turn

Helping new authors

Damien Mosley on the concept behind Indie Novella

Last month saw the exciting launch of new volunteer-led independent publisher and social enterprise, Indie Novella.

Based in North London, Indie Novella is a publisher and book-seller with a difference. What's unique is that it's run solely by authors, editors and graphic designers, all one community and all keen to democratise publishing and encourage more diversity and inclusion in the sector.

We saw there was a big gap in the market and we realised that the biggest single barrier both preventing new authors being published and people from different backgrounds becoming authors, was the financial barrier. Writing courses cost a fortune and literary consultancies make false promises

on how to 'hook an agent'.

We were founded on the principle of making publishing more inclusive and accessible. We simply want to help great authors writing unique, edgy stories get published. And help promising authors become great authors.

One example is Southgate's Alex Woolf, whose novel *Mr Jones* is among Indie Novella's first releases. Alex is an acclaimed author of books for young adults and has previously written a number of novels, including *Chronosphere*, *The Shakespeare Plot*, and *Iron Sky*.

Mr Jones is Alex's first novel for adults, a psychological thriller about a single parent who fears someone is out to kidnap their child. Alex says: "It's about a stressed-out suburban single

father called Ben whose eight-year-old daughter, Imogen, starts receiving messages from someone claiming to be her missing mother.

"The question is, how much of Ben's fears are real and how much are a result of his own stress-induced paranoia?"

As a commitment to our independence, at Indie Novella we try to steer potential readers away from Amazon and to buying our novels either direct from our website or through Bookshop.org, where you can collect it from your local bookshop. And as part of being a social enterprise, we run a fully-funded and completely free online writing course, and have an open submissions page.

Find out more about Indie Novella and Alex Woolf's novel 'Mr Jones':

Visit indienovella.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 14th February**.

THEATRE

Tales from the Shed

Every Saturday until 26nd February, plus Wed 16th Feb and Thu 17th Feb
Chickenshed, Chase Side, Southgate N14 4PE

Tales from the Shed are vibrant, inclusive theatre shows that are perfect for young children. They are informal, lively and amazingly engaging as the performers and audience share the same space.

Entry £7, free to babies under six months

Call 020 8292 9222

Email bookings@chickenshed.org.uk

Visit chickenshed.org.uk/Event/tales-spring-22

BLUES

St Harmonica's Blues Club

Every Friday, 7.45pm–11.30pm
The Southgate Club (Crown Lane entrance), Southgate N14 5BP

A great February line-up at St Harmonica's Blues Club. Headhunters from Liverpool (18th) and Frankie Connolly Band (25th) are terrific young blues acts; living proof that the genre is safe. Best to book early!

Tickets £10 in advance:

Visit stharmonicas.co.uk

VOLUNTEER

Bush Hill Park Community Litter Pick

Sunday 6th February, 10am–12pm
Bush Hill Park, Lincoln Road EN1 1PS

Monthly community litter-picking session organised by Carole Stanley from Friends of Bush Hill Park. Equipment supplied. Accompanied children and dogs welcome. Come help us tidy up our local park.

Turn up and go

Email carolestanley@gmail.com

Enfield Town Community Litter Pick

Sunday 13th February, 2.30pm–3.30pm
Town Park, Cecil Road, Enfield Town EN2 6LE (Meet at the cafe)

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Visit vocallysound.co.uk

Neapolitan elite

Neil Littman enjoys lunch at a new Italian restaurant in Enfield Town



Marcus Bar and Kitchen opened last year in Burleigh Way

Set back from Church Street in the centre of Enfield Town, recently-opened Marcus Kitchen and Bar is that rare thing – an Italian restaurant serving authentic regional food. It's a challenge, especially when diners are used to menus dominated by pizza and pasta.

In fairness, much of it is dictated by the range and quality of produce available in the UK. Anyone who has been to an Italian food market such as the Quadrilatoro in Bologna will appreciate the difference; dozens of varieties of mushrooms, aubergines of all colours and sizes, misshapen

tomatoes that taste and smell of the heat and sun of the region. Borough Market in London is also a good place to check out similar produce.

I have now dined at Marcus twice. The menu is not overlong and is based on both Neapolitan and Sicilian cuisine, with an emphasis on seafood. There are vegetarian options as well, plus grilled meat dishes. There is a definite sense of dedication to serious cooking in the kitchen.

My first experience at Marcus was a quick lunch back in November when I bravely sat outside (and froze) while eating nero

di seppia, linguine with cuttlefish, and tomatoes in cuttlefish ink. I ordered this as a reminder of a previous encounter with the same dish in Venice at the famous Harry's Bar. The only thing missing was the view of the boats arriving and departing from the San Marco pier! Even the bread basket at Marcus is unique, with green olive bread and carta di musica, which originates from Sicily, as thin as the sheet music paper it is named after.

Since then, I have been back for a second helping, a lunchtime meeting with a friend (dining inside this time), which was a much more attractive experience while watching food prepared in the open plan kitchen as tables filled up. We began with fresella, a starter based on bruschetta, then scarpariello (tagliatelle with tomatoes, parmesan and pecorino) and a seafood risotto with mussels, clams, large prawns, octopus and squid. This dish is also available with linguine as an option.

The desert menu looked tempting. This included baba' al rum, Caprese, a chocolate and almond cake and tartufo nero.

The service is exceptionally good – I was even greeted by my first name on arrival! We also received complimentary shot glasses of strawberry cello, made by infusing vodka, strawberries and vanilla.

One suggestion I would make is that the name could convey more of the authenticity and origin of the establishment with the simple addition of one of the following words in front of Marcus: Osteria, Antica, Ristorante, Sfogliata, Trattoria or Taverna.

Marcus Kitchen and Bar is based at 16 Burleigh Way, Enfield Town EN2 6AE and is open Tuesday to Sunday, 12pm–11pm. Booking is advisable in the evening. A typical meal costs £30–45 per head. For more information and to book:

Visit marcuskitchenandbar.com



Nero di seppia, a dish made from tender fresh cuttlefish cooked in a sauce containing its own ink

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AROUND THE BOROUGH

ANGEL EDMONTON

‘Ugly’ affordable homes rejected

The 18-storey development in Fore Street would have provided 110 homes available at London Affordable Rent levels Credit HTA Design LLP

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

AN EDMONTON TOWER BLOCK with 100% of its homes designated for affordable housing was rejected after councillors slammed the scheme as “monolithic”.

Enfield Council’s planning committee debated the plans to redevelop The Gilpin’s Bell pub in Fore Street, Angel Edmonton, for a third time in as many months on 18th January. It came

after the developer made changes in response to earlier criticisms about a lack of family-sized homes.

Social Capital Partners Fore Street increased the number of three-bed flats in the development from 14 to 22, although this meant the total number of flats had to be reduced from 113 to 110. But the boost in family-sized homes was not enough to convince councillors that the scheme’s contribution to solving

Enfield’s housing crisis outweighed the “ugly” 18-storey tower block’s impact on nearby Fore Street Edmonton Conservation Area.

Mike Rye, a Conservative member of the planning committee, said: “The height [of the tower block] does damage to the area. Residents have said they fear it looms over the street.”

Maria Alexandrou, a fellow Tory councillor, said she thought the scheme was “over-development”, while independent member Derek Levy said the increase in family-sized flats was “a move in the right direction – but not enough”.

Cllr Levy added: “It is quite monolithic.”

A council heritage officer who attended the meeting said the conservation area that lies next to the development site was “at risk” and that his team were “extremely concerned” about its future.

A new pub unit to replace The Gilpin’s Bell was proposed as part of the scheme, which had benefited from a Greater London Authority grant to enable it to provide all of its homes at London Affordable Rent levels.

Despite planning officers recommending the scheme for approval, councillors rejected it over its “bulk, mass and height”. The application will still need to be referred to Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, who may decide to call it in for his own determination.

RIDGEWAY

Care home to replace hotel

A FOUR-STAR HOTEL WILL BE demolished to make way for a 92-room care home and 64 residential dwellings after the scheme was approved by Enfield Council’s planning committee.

Plans by care home operator Signature Senior Lifestyle and home-builder Bellway will see Royal Chace Hotel in The Ridgeway, closed since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, knocked down. In its place will be built a three-storey complex comprising a new care home and

housing estate adjacent to the Green Belt.

The scheme was unanimously approved by councillors, who praised its contribution to family-sized housing provision in Enfield. Out of the 64 homes proposed, 29 (45%) will have three bedrooms. Just under 36% of the total will be designated as affordable housing, including a mix of shared ownership, London Affordable Rent and London Living Rent homes.

The care home will include 23 rooms

specifically designed for dementia patients, which was also welcomed.

The only concern raised by the planning committee related to the need for a pedestrian crossing outside the entrance to the development, with Labour member Hass Yusuf warning there were “lots of mad drivers down The Ridgeway”.

Council officers reassured the committee that some of the £520,000 being contributed by the developer towards sustainable transport would be spent on a new crossing.

PONDERS END

Kebab shop fined

PEST INFESTATIONS DISCOVERED at a kebab shop led to the firm and its owner being prosecuted by Enfield Council.

Food safety officers discovered a cockroach infestation “within minutes” of an inspection taking place in August 2020, and then on a return visit in March 2021 found evidence of rats in food storage areas.

The “disgusting” infestations led the council to launch a prosecution against both EBM Catering Ltd, which trades as Ponders End Kebab in Ponders End High Street, and its director, Kazim Recber, aged 42 of Town Road, Edmonton. They pleaded guilty to 15 offences under the Food Safety and Hygiene

(England) Regulations 2013 and both the company and director were fined £436, ordered to pay half each of the council’s costs £3,283.12, plus a victim surcharge of £43 each – a total of £4,241.12.

George Savva, the council’s cabinet member for licensing and regulatory services, said: “This was a genuinely disgusting pest infestation which this business failed utterly to control. Food businesses are obligated to protect the public from harm.”

Ponders End Kebab is currently open for trading and, asked by the *Dispatch* whether there were still any cockroaches there, a staff member said: “There is no problem now – it was two years ago.”

ENFIELD TOWN

78-home scheme approvedBY SIMON ALLIN,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A HOUSING SCHEME PREVIOUSLY criticised for a lack of affordable housing has now been approved by councillors – after the developer agreed to add two extra affordable units.

The plan by HPJ 11 Developments to build 78 homes in blocks up to six storeys high at the site of the former Metaswitch office in Church Street was backed by Enfield Council’s

planning committee last month.

Councillors rejected a near-identical scheme in October over concerns about heritage impacts and the level of affordable homes. The site lies within Enfield Town Conservation Area, next to the New River, and is close to several listed buildings.

In response, the developer agreed to increase the number of London Affordable Rent homes from seven to nine, bringing the total level of affordable housing to 11.5%.

WINCHMORE HILL

Igloo impresses

BUSINESS OWNERS WHO BUILT an igloo and snow scene in their shop window won a local competition.

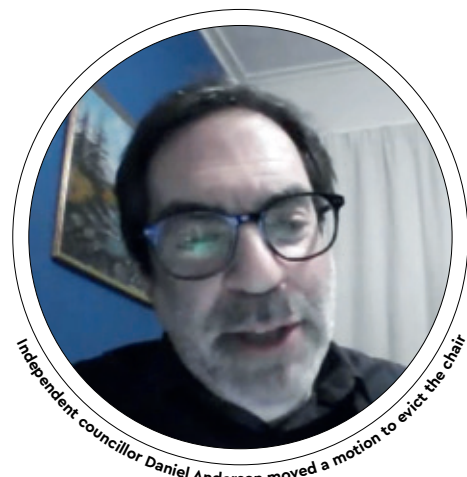
To support the ‘N21 Shop Local’ campaign before Christmas, Winchmore Hill Residents Association invited 24 businesses in the area to take part in a competition to dress their windows, to show off their design skills and to draw interest from local residents.

First prize of a luxury hamper was awarded to interior design and furnishings shop Il Falcone, on Winchmore Hill Broadway. Their winning entry, based on an



Helen Osman of Winchmore Hill Residents’ Association (right) makes the winning presentation to shop owners Daniela Falcone and Noel Askew igloo in a snow scene, was said to be “very imaginative” after being made entirely from recycled materials.

Councillors clash as 'informal' meeting turns farcical



Independent councillor Daniel Anderson moved a motion to evict the chair

“Given the incompetent chairing of the previous formal meeting, I have no confidence in the chair”

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

A virtual meeting of an Enfield Council scrutiny panel descended into farce last month when a new unofficial chair was elected and three councillors logged off in protest.

One of several meetings in January held under an unusual, informal format via MS Teams, the environment and climate action scrutiny panel meeting began with chair Mahmut Aksanoglu insisting that despite it being held virtually “the meeting will be managed as if it were a formal in-person meeting”.

But in scenes reminiscent of the infamous Handforth Parish Council meeting which went viral on social media last year, it quickly unravelled, as several members of the panel took advantage of the informal status of the meeting to rebel against Cllr Aksanoglu’s chairmanship.

A temporary law change had previously allowed local authorities to hold official meetings online during the pandemic, but this expired in May 2021 and no new regulations have since been brought in to allow councils to revert back to this virtual format. Most authorities have continued with in-person meetings through the latest wave of Covid-19, but the Labour administration in Enfield decided to cancel more than a dozen meetings in January and instead hold them informally online, meaning no official decisions could be taken.

January’s environment scrutiny panel began with Conservative councillor Andrew Thorp expressing his “disappointment” that councillors were “not meeting in person”. He added: “I feel we could meet perfectly safely in the chamber wearing masks as we did previously. I’m also disappointed we have an agenda pack that hasn’t been made available to the public.”

When Cllr Aksanoglu attempted to proceed,



Chair Mahmut Aksanoglu logged off after being voted out

“There is no need to do these kinds of things. Members were aware of the situation relating to this meeting”

independent member Daniel Anderson interrupted and said: “This is not a formal meeting and I am trying to understand the formalities you are trying to insist on – I don’t understand what the chair thinks he is doing running a formal meeting.”

Director of law and governance Jeremy Chambers explained that although the meeting was informal “that doesn’t prevent it being chaired and run as if it were a formal meeting”.

However, Cllr Anderson said he didn’t “have confidence in the chair” and wished to “move a different chair”. Jeremy said that panel members could elect a new chair for this meeting if they wished and “talk over each other” or, he said, “we could get on with the business at hand and let the meeting progress”.

When Cllr Anderson asked if he could nominate Cllr Thorp to chair, Jeremy replied that councillors could conduct themselves “how they liked – as long as they don’t breach the members code of conduct”.

Labour panel member Susan Erbil said: “I think what you are doing Cllr Anderson is very unacceptable. Cllr Aksanoglu has done nothing wrong – we have officers waiting to present the agenda, so what difference does it make who chairs? It is very rude what you’re doing right now. Let’s just go ahead.”

Cllr Aksanoglu added: “There is no need to do these kinds of things. Members were aware of the situation relating to this meeting. The decision [to hold meetings informally] was made with the opposition as well. If you are not agreeing to it, I don’t understand why you are here.”

Cllr Thorp insisted the move to hold informal meetings in January had not been agreed by Conservative group leader Joanne Laban. At this point Jeremy confirmed that although Cllr Laban had spoken to council leader Nesil Caliskan in December about the risk to public



Conservative councillor Andrew Thorp unexpectedly took over the reins

“I feel we could meet perfectly safely in the chamber wearing masks as we did previously”

health and agreed to cancel a number of meetings before Christmas, “since then the decision was taken to expand this into January, and that decision was taken by the leader of the council, the chief executive and myself”.

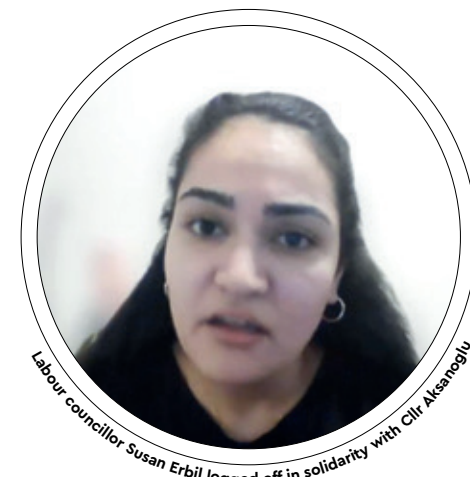
Asked by Cllr Erbil why he was trying to evict the chair, Cllr Anderson, referring back to December’s panel meeting at which Cllr Aksanoglu had refused to allow members to debate the council’s controversial low-traffic neighbourhood (LTN) trial scheme in Bowes Park, said: “Given the incompetent chairing of the previous formal meeting, I have no confidence in the chair.”

The motion was seconded by Charith Gunawardena and a vote was taken to elect Cllr Thorp as chair of the informal meeting. Cllr Aksanoglu then said he was leaving and insisted he had “done nothing wrong” and that “the previous meeting was chaired appropriately”. He added: “It’s a shame members have to take this as a political opportunity. We are trying to get business done in hard times, we are doing as much as we can to keep council staff safe.”

Cllr Erbil said she was leaving for the same reasons, and both councillors logged out. A third councillor, Labour’s Ahmet Hasan, who had not contributed to the meeting, also logged out.

At this point Jeremy said: “It is worth noting that once the panel reconvenes in a formal setting, Cllr Aksanoglu, who has been elected as the chair by the council, chairs the meeting. I have only permitted this to happen because this meeting has no standing in the authority – it is all informal.”

After Jeremy also confirmed that whatever was discussed and noted at the informal meeting may or may not later be ratified formally by the panel, Cllr Anderson said: “What you are telling the public is that this a futile meeting



Labour councillor Susan Erbil logged off in solidarity with Cllr Aksanoglu

“What difference does it make who chairs? It is very rude what you’re doing right now”

– you have facilitated a process with no validity. You have just confirmed it.”

Jeremy hit back: “This is an informal meeting. Officers – and we may get to their presentations eventually – can give a steer to councillors who are informally gathered, so when you formally meet you can simply say you formally ratify the discussion that took place informally. But councillors are under no obligation to ratify.”

After 21 minutes had passed, councillors reached the first agenda item, which was a presentation from the council’s principal officer on pollution, Ned Johnson, about air pollution. The panel later asked him about the impact of the Edmonton incinerator on air quality and Ned replied that it was “a very small point source of particulate matter in the borough in comparison to road vehicles” and that the incinerator’s chimney helped to disperse particles over a wide area “so concentrations are very small”. He added: “There is an upgrade due to take place which will make it one of the cleanest incinerators in Europe.”

The panel also quizzed Ned on the impact of the Bowes LTN on air pollution, and whether the effect of restricting motor traffic on residential roads had been to displace rather than reduce it. Ned said “there are negligible beneficial effects” but the aim over time was to encourage a “modal shift” from driving to walking, cycling and public transport, which would more substantially reduce pollution.

At the end of the meeting councillors agreed a number of action points; asking for the council to adopt its own position on the environmental impact of a new, larger Edmonton incinerator, rather than deferring to the position of North London Waste Authority, and asking for more air quality data at key locations in and around the council’s LTN schemes to be made public.



The well-prepared Enfield Town dressing room on a matchday, with every player's kit neatly laid out



Doing it for the kits

Andrew Warshaw meets Enfield Town's long-serving kit man

He's one of Enfield Town's unsung heroes; the guy in the background who stays out of the limelight but who plays a critical role in the smooth running of the club.

Neil Butterfield will this year celebrate a decade as Town's kit man, making sure that every piece of player clothing is meticulously prepared on a day-to-day basis.

Players come and players go, but Neil has been a constant at the club ever since September 2012, having watched the old Enfield FC with his dad. And guess what? Incredible though it may seem, he hasn't missed a game or a training session in all his ten years – despite getting up at 4am for his day job as refuse collector for Enfield Council.

Neil told the *Dispatch*: "I wash all the kit, clean their boots, provide match towels etc. All they bring to the ground is a toilet bag. I try to make the role as professional as possible."

Every player knows on a match day exactly where his kit is laid out – not dissimilar to a full-time set-up. And Neil knows exactly where each of them likes to sit in the dressing room and all their little superstitions.

"We may be at the Step 3 level of the non-league pyramid, but like I say, I want it to look professional. When they walk into that dressing room, they know where everything is – shorts, shirts, towels. Everything they need."

Neil thinks the entire kit man ethos is underplayed. "We are totally out of the limelight but we're the first one in and the last one to leave. The kit man's job never ends. If we are playing away on a Saturday, for instance, I prepare Thursday and Friday, wash all the kit on Sunday, have Sunday evening off, then back in on Monday ready for a Tuesday game if we have one."

"If one piece of kit has the tiniest stain on it, it has to come out"

And that's with a full-time job too!

"My employers are very understanding. If we're playing away on a Tuesday night and I don't get home until, say, midnight, I'll invariably take the Wednesday off. But they know I'm good at my job. I never go sick."

Nevertheless, it must at times be an extremely tiring combination, with Tuesday and Saturday games and training on Thursday – all three requiring fresh kit. "I'm not blowing my trumpet but you kind of get into a routine," Neil explains. "And if I take a holiday, I make sure it doesn't clash with the football."

Before he became Town's kit man, he was a volunteer steward at the club. And before that, he was a qualified chef. But he wanted his weekends back, and the rest is history.

So what does Neil like most about the role? "First and foremost you've got to have a decent relationship with the players and staff, know when to have a laugh and when

to be serious. If you don't have that, the role becomes really hard. I also love the feedback. If one piece of kit has the tiniest stain on it, it has to come out."

And the least enjoyable part? "I sometimes wonder if the authorities at our level think enough about people in terms of the way they

schedule games. We had ten games in January, whereas at the start of the season we had one midweek game in about six weeks at a time when both the weather and pitches were better."

But the pros massively outweigh the cons for Neil, who relishes the job. Well, most of the time. "When it gets muddy and filthy, trust me I don't! But I always have three spare sets of everything."

"I try and be as meticulous as I can. I have checklist after checklist. After our new forward, Jake Cass, had played just a couple of times for us, he said he couldn't believe how efficient the setup was. That was music to my ears."

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