

# ENFIELD DISPATCH

No.54 THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

MAR 2023

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WHEN SOUTHGATE STATION opened 90 years ago this month, it was said to look "as if a spaceship had landed". The Grade 2\*-listed tube station was designed by renowned architect Charles Holden and is celebrated as one of the most striking on the network. To mark its anniversary, local resident Mervyn Maggs recently arranged for some "people of no earthly origin" to pay it a visit. Turn to Page 5 to read more about the history of the station.

## Community groups praised for 'vital role' in earthquake response

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

The "incredible" response from Enfield's community groups to the devastating earthquakes in Turkey has been praised by local political leaders.

Groups representing Enfield borough's Turkish-speaking community, thought to be the largest in the UK, "sprang into action" within hours of the twin earthquakes hitting south-central Turkey and northern Syria last month.

In just one week, two lorries and a van had arrived in the affected areas after being loaded with warm clothes and blankets at the Enfield Alevi Cultural Centre in Great Cambridge Road, run by the British Alevi Federation. Fundraising efforts were also led by other groups and schools across the borough, including Eldon Primary

School which held a non-uniform day and sweets sale to raise cash.

The large Alevi and Kurdish communities living in Enfield were particularly impacted, as the quake struck regions of Turkey where many have close friends and family. Among those to lose relatives in the earthquake was former Enfield mayor Ali Bakır, who is originally from the city of Elbistan where around 80% of buildings were destroyed.

Ergin Erbil, the deputy leader of Enfield Council whose family also hails from one of the affected areas, has paid tribute to local people who helped assist with the mammoth relief effort. He told the *Dispatch*: "Enfield is home to vibrant and large Turkish and Kurdish speaking communities, many of whom have family ties and links to the regions impacted by the earthquake."

"The Turkish and Kurdish speaking communities of Enfield sprang into action. Through the leadership of community organisations such as the British Alevi Federation, they have raised much-needed funds and have packaged and transported donated items to victims of the earthquake."

Cllr Erbil said he and other councillors had frequently visited Turkish and Kurdish speaking community organisations in Enfield since the earthquakes struck on 6th February. He added: "We witnessed the large number of volunteers and community members actively involved in supporting victims of the earthquake. Many of the volunteers and leaders of the community organisations have not even had a chance to mourn their loved ones who have died."

"Enfield's active community

organisations have once again proved their vital role and I remain proud of their work."

At time of going to press, the official death toll from the 7.8-magnitude earthquake and its strong aftershocks was approaching 50,000, making it the deadliest in the region for many hundreds of years.

Enfield North MP Feryal Clark, who was born in Turkey, writes in her latest column for the *Dispatch* on Page 6: "While the international response to this disaster has been immense [...] the community response in Enfield and across North London has been incredible. It has touched me the most."

"I spent that Monday [6th February] at an Alevi community centre in Enfield. Seeing families there

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MAR 2023

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# Life sentence for Enfield man who killed his mother

*Son admitted manslaughter of his mother after "physically and mentally abusing her over many years"*

**A**n Enfield man has been sentenced to life imprisonment – with a minimum term of nine years and four months – after pleading guilty to causing the death of his mother.

Darren Constant, aged 39 from Carterhatch Lane, attacked his mother Judy Constant, aged 62, who died the next day on 4th July 2018.

As part of his sentence, Constant was also handed an indefinite restraining order, preventing him from contacting the victim's three surviving sisters and two of his former partners.

Metropolitan Police officers began an investigation after Judy was found dead at a property in Marlborough Road, Holloway, the day after officers had been called there to an assault. A post-mortem examination confirmed her cause of death was blunt force trauma.

During the investigation, detectives found that Judy, who had been beaten by her son, had bruising all over her body and there was evidence of a huge number of old and far more recent injuries.

Before she died, an ambulance was called. Medics attended and Darren Constant could be heard telling his mother the excuses she should give for her injuries.



Darren Constant Credit Met Police

Those instructions were captured on body-worn video and he was arrested. Judy refused to go to hospital and continued to refuse despite medics believing she had suffered a brain bleed. She was found dead the next day.

The police investigation resulted in Darren Constant being charged with manslaughter in March 2021. Following the sentencing, Judy's family issued a statement and said it "brings the end to over four-and-a-half years of anguish, after our beloved sister Judy was killed by her son".

They added: "Judy was a joyful person, very open, hardworking and honest. In her youthful days, she was the most vivacious amongst the siblings.

"She largely raised Darren on her own and provided everything he could wish for. He betrayed her love by both physically and mentally abusing her over many years, ultimately resulting in her death.

"No sentence, no matter the length will make amends for what he did to his own mother, the woman who gave him life only for him to cruelly take hers. Whilst he plead guilty to manslaughter, this comes after four years of denying any responsibility or accepting any blame.

"We recall the day we learned of Judy's death as though it were yesterday. She is deeply missed by us all. We would also like to thank both the police homicide team and barristers who worked so hard to bring justice for Judy."

Detective Inspector Frank Copley said: "This was a shocking, tragic offence made all the more painful by the fact that Judy's killer was her son.

"Her protective, maternal instincts had prevented her from reporting the violent abuse that she had clearly endured at his hands for some time.

"She was a well-liked lady and it is truly awful that her life ended in such a brutal way by the man she had raised and cared about so much."

## Station car parks closing

**T**he car parks at Arnos Grove Station are set to close this month ahead of the start of construction work on controversial plans for new housing.

The historic Grade 2-listed tube station is set to become flanked on either side by blocks of flats up to seven storeys tall, providing 162 new homes. The scheme was granted permission by a planning inspector following a public inquiry last year, after initially being rejected by Enfield Council's planning committee. It will mean the loss of 292 car parking spaces at the station, which is one of several in the capital – including Cockfosters further up the Piccadilly Line – where Transport for London (TfL) plans to build homes on car parks used by tube and rail passengers.

TfL has confirmed the Arnos Grove car parks will close on Monday, 13th March. Capacity for disabled Blue Badge holders to park at the station will be provided "as much as possible" throughout construction. However, there will be no spaces available for non-disabled drivers and only Blue Badge spaces will be retained after construction is complete – expected in 2026.

## Council axes all parking meters

**P**ay-and-display parking machines will be removed from all council-run car parks and high streets in the borough, the civic centre has confirmed.

From April drivers will be told to use a smartphone app to pay for parking, leading to fears of "digital exclusion" from elderly residents who may not be able to use the technology. However, there will still be an option to pay by cash or card at local shops or to buy parking scratchcards in advance from borough libraries. The council points out that there has been a reduction in the use of pay-and-display machines in recent years and that axing them will save £44,000 per year.

A council spokesperson said: "Pay-and-display parking machines are being removed to reduce the amount of street furniture on the borough's pavements.

"We have seen an increase in the use of cashless parking over the past five years and a reduction in the use of pay-and-display, with cashless now being used more."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

talking to loved ones and watching on, via a WhatsApp video call, while family members tried desperately to dig through the rubble was heart-rending."

As well as donating money to trusted local groups, the council is encouraging residents who wish to help the relief effort to donate money via the official Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) fundraising appeal, which is linked to international support groups. It said that because there had been an "incredible response" from Enfield residents donating items at local collection points, many were at full capacity and were unable to take further items.

To help people in Enfield who are now unable to return to Tur-



A lorry full of warm clothes and blankets is loaded by volunteers at the British Alevis Federation's centre in Enfield before leaving for Turkey

key, the council has also set up a dedicated resource within its refugee support team to provide help and advice. This includes housing issues, family support, mental health and help with accessing other relevant services, as well as contacting embassies and consulates in the UK.

**People affected by the disaster who need help can contact the support team at Enfield Council:**

Call 020 8132 0834

Email [refugeesupport@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:refugeesupport@enfield.gov.uk)  
Visit [enfield.gov.uk/news-and-events/2023/02/turkey-syria-earthquake-appeal](http://enfield.gov.uk/news-and-events/2023/02/turkey-syria-earthquake-appeal)

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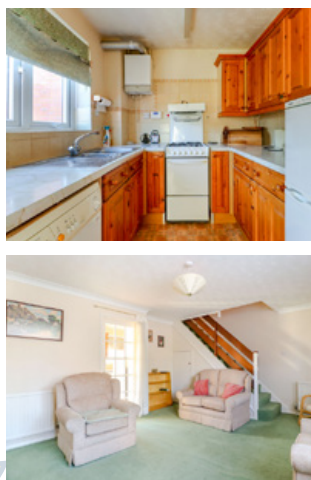
AN EXTENDED THREE BEDROOM SEMI DETACHED HOUSE – EPC E  
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SOLE AGENTS

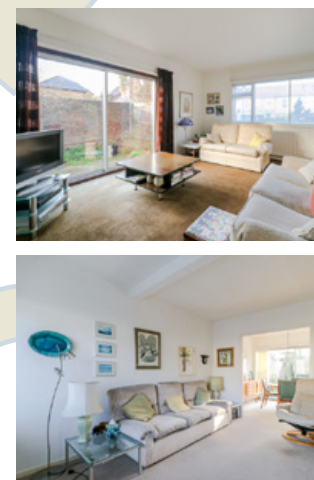
THREE BEDROOM SEMI DETACHED HOUSE – EPC D  
Gladbeck Way, Enfield, Middx EN2  
£550,000 Freehold



CHAIN  
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SOLE AGENTS

AN EXTENDED FOUR BEDROOM FAMILY HOUSE – EPC D  
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CHAIN  
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SOLE AGENTS

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## How Enfield's pubs got their unique names

*Author Sam Cullen reveals the fascinating stories behind some of the borough's historic pubs*

The most recent audit carried out by the Greater London Authority, published in late January, found there are 65 pubs across the borough of Enfield.

In among the typical pub names like The King's Head and The Rose and Crown, there are also several with more original and intriguing names. These pubs feature in the book I wrote with my friend James Potts – *What's in a London Pub Name* – revealing the stories behind the names of 656 London pubs, with several Enfield boozers featuring in the mix.

First up, The Alfred Herring in Green Lanes, Palmers Green (run by JD Wetherspoon currently but put up for sale in September). Alfred Herring was a second lieutenant in the First World War. After being surrounded with his men, he counter-attacked and held the advanced position for over eleven hours through the night.

He kept encouraging his men to keep fighting, which gave them the morale boost they needed. Alfred was captured the next day and remained a prisoner of war



The King & Tinker in Whitewebbs Lane got its name after being visited by royalty 400 years ago

for the rest of the conflict. In recognition of his bravery, Alfred won a Victoria Cross in March 1918. He was living in Palmers Green when he was first called up in 1916 – hence the naming of the pub.

Next, The Gilpin's Bell in Fore Street, Angel Edmonton. This pub takes its name from the protagonist of a comic ballad written in 1782 by the poet William Cowper: *The Diverting History of John Gilpin*.

In Cowper's tale, Gilpin was a wealthy draper whose attempts to reach The Bell Inn in Fore Street, to celebrate his 20th wedding anniversary with his wife, were calamitous. His first attempt saw him unable to control his horse, which kept on going past The Bell to end up in Ware, ten miles away.

Trying to get back to The Bell, the horse failed to stop again, and took Gilpin right back to where he started, in Cheapside in the City.

Various pubs in the area claimed to be The Bell from the poem, but sadly none of them now exist. The pub now called The Gilpin's Bell is relatively modern, dating from the late 1990s (but now earmarked for redevelopment). As well as being commemorated in the pub name, there is a stone statue of a bell on the opposite side of the street, carved with images from Gilpin's disastrous ride.

The King & Tinker in Whitewebbs Lane, Enfield, derives its name from an Enfield hunting trip by King James I when he became separated from his entourage. He decided to grab a pint at this very pub and struck up a conversation with a tinker.

Unaware of who he was talking to, the tinker asked who he was. James replied saying it would only be revealed when everyone else was hatless, leaving the tinker puzzled. When the king's men caught up with him, they immediately removed their hats and the tinker realised who his new drinking buddy was!

The Occasional Half in Green Lanes, Bowes Park, opened in 1995 and formed part of a small collective of pubs all with 'half' in the title; others including The Significant Half in Clapham Junction, The Better Half in Ealing and The Half and Half in Streatham. The Occasional Half is the last one standing!

**'What's in a London Pub Name' is available to buy at bookshops including Waterstones as well as online:**

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## Celebrating 90 years of an iconic station

*Jane Maggs from Southgate District Civic Voice on what makes the area's tube station so special*

On 13th March 1933, Southgate Station finally opened to passengers. For the people who had watched it taking shape, it seemed like an extra-terrestrial craft had arrived to transform the small village of Southgate, which was even then still surrounded by fields, woods and farmland.

The Piccadilly Line originally terminated at Finsbury Park, but it soon became clear this was a mistake. The campaign to extend the line gathered pace after the First World War, until finally in December 1929 plans were submitted and, in 1930, work began.

The stations on the Piccadilly Line extension – including Arnos Grove, Oakwood and Cockfosters – were commissioned by Frank Pick and designed by Charles Holden. Together they promoted functional modernism for the new station designs, taking advantage of newly available materials.

Our station is built in the Streamline Moderne style using brick, reinforced concrete and glass. The circular building has a flat, projecting concrete roof and a raised central section that gives the illusion it is supported by the horizontal band of

windows. The whole building is topped by a Tesla ball, set to be restored to its original gold in 2024.

In their planning, Pick and Holden carefully considered the activities taking place around stations in order to influence their urban design. As a result, at Southgate where the site was large enough, a bus lay-by wraps around the station. Travellers could quickly transition between modes of transport, and the station became a focal point in the town. As a further benefit to travellers, shop units were included.

As an echo of the cylindrical forms, it was proposed to include a small, round florist's kiosk on the south-east lawn (corner of Crown Lane and High Street), which would be converted to a plant nursery and seating area, complete with sculpture. Sadly, this enhancement to the original plans never transpired.

Southgate Station is Grade 2\*-listed, having retained many of its original features. This makes it special, as one of only five at this grade out of 272 stations on the underground network.

According to *Enfield Gazette* on 17th March, 1933: "The first passenger train left Enfield West [now Oakwood] at 5.40am and carried about eight passengers, while another half-dozen or so joined the train at Southgate Station."

After travelling to Piccadilly Circus, the *Gazette* reporter returned to Southgate in



How Southgate Station looked when it first opened and was still surrounded by fields

Credit Southgate District Civic Voice archive

time for breakfast! They wrote that the underground trains were the fastest in the world, averaging 25 miles-per-hour. The service initially provided 131 trains each weekday, with 98 on Sundays.

The coming of the tube made Southgate fully accessible, and the developers started moving in to complete its final transformation from village to suburb. The housebuilding started slowly, but by 1934 planning applications were being submitted and about 750 houses were due for completion by May 1935. This was just the beginning of Southgate's transformation

over the next 90 years.

So, what next for Southgate? The day the line opened passed quietly (apart from the intrepid *Gazette* reporter), so 90 years later Southgate District Civic Voice (SDCV) has teamed up with Transport for London and Enfield Council to mark the occasion.

On Sunday, 12th March, come along at 2.30pm to sing 'happy birthday' and ride on a vintage bus, investigate the station's darker reaches and eat some cake!

For more information about the 90th anniversary celebration for Southgate Station: Visit [southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org](https://southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org)

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES FACE INSURANCE PREMIUMS INCREASE OVER 1000 %



Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) covers professional practices, such as accountants, architects and surveyors, in the event of a client complaint in respect of the service provided. Many professions within the construction industry are required to have PII as part of their respective industry governing body's regulatory requirements.

Over the past three years, companies have seen increases in their PII premium by as much as 1000%. This has resulted in many practices having to cease trading. Ultimately, the consumer is suffering as the supply of professionals in specialist areas is reduced and costs are being passed on to the consumer. This adds yet more misery to the current cost of living crisis.

It is not just in professional services that there is an insurance crisis. As of January 10th, 2022, the Government set out a new plan to protect leaseholders from having to pay for unsafe



CREDIT UMIT YILDIRIM

cladding. Unfortunately, there is no such protection for other professional services and their regulatory required insurance. The Housing Secretary, Michael Gove, recently described the insurance market as 'failing' due to escalating increases, some of more than 1000%, including long leaseholders as a result of Grenfell.

Reasons cited for this dramatic premium increase include loss of profitability by insurance companies, decreased supply of providers within the market, future uncertainty and higher levels of exposure. Additionally, despite premiums increasing drastically, the coverage being offered is generally restricted and reduced.

Bellevue Mortlakes Chartered Surveyors started a trade body called PIFA (Professional Indemnity Fairness Association) in an attempt to assist and provide support, particularly to small/medium-sized firms in the broader construction industries who feel under-represented. The platform allows firms and professionals, in any industry, to put forward their views and concerns via <https://thepifa.com>. These are circulated within the industry and the working committee of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors on the subject of PII, of which we have a role.

It is our view that, unless the Government intervenes soon, our worst fears will be realised. There will be an almost complete annihilation of professional small/medium-sized businesses in the construction sector, leaving larger corporations dominating the sector, as always, to the cost of the consumer.



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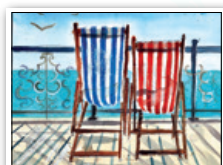
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# Enfield has stepped up to support Turkey

## Enfield North MP Feryal Clark on the local response to the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria

One of the few things you can take solace in after such a devastating event is the responses and actions of others. Enfield has truly stepped up.

The scenes from the devastation caused by the 7.8 and 7.5 magnitude earthquakes in Turkey and Syria are heartbreaking. Like many members of the British Turkish/Kurdish community in Enfield, my family woke up on Monday, 6th February trying to contact loved ones and relatives. We were incredibly lucky to find out that the majority of our family were safe.

Thousands of families have not been so lucky. Victims were trapped under collapsed buildings and their loved ones, with communication to the region limited, even took to social media to call for help. Feeling totally helpless, many could do little more than take to Twitter to raise the alarm and call for help for relatives who were trapped under collapsed buildings.

While the international response to this disaster has been immense – and I am grateful to our own government for immediately sending over search-and-rescue and medical teams – the community response in Enfield and across North London has been incredible. It has touched me the most.

I spent that Monday at an Alevi community centre in Enfield. Seeing families there talking to loved ones and watching on, via a WhatsApp video call, while family members tried desperately to dig through the rubble was heart-rending.

The feeling of desperation grew as time passed and as people waited longer and longer for help to reach them. But after this came action. The response has been heart-warming; it has brought the community together.

Last month I visited numerous community centres in and around Enfield, whose members have been spending days and nights organising aid to be sent to Turkey via trucks and holding fundraisers in order to send much-needed monetary assistance. I will continue to visit local community groups to show my solidarity and support efforts.

The number of local faith groups – including Jewish, Sikh, Christian and Muslim – which came to visit the local community centres to show their support and make



Feryal Clark is the Labour MP for Enfield North  
Credit parliament.uk

donations has been great to see. Even our primary schools across Enfield and across North London have held fundraising events.

In the coming weeks, we will learn more of the scale of this disaster. And we must ask questions about how thousands of buildings, supposedly designed to withstand these kinds of events, were reduced to rubble in a matter of minutes. But for now, the focus both internationally and in the disaster zones must be on those who remain in Turkey and Syria and have had their lives destroyed.

Since the news of the earthquake came in, I have questioned both the foreign secretary and prime minister on the government's response to the earthquake. I continue to work with my fellow MPs to support our constituents who have been personally affected by this disaster.

It is hard to see now how some of the areas in Turkey and Syria will begin to rebuild. But I know the community here in Enfield and in all of North London will continue to do all they can to support those in such dire need and I call on our government and Turkey to do the same.

Enfield North constituents can contact Feryal Clark:  
Call 020 8804 4543  
Email [feryal.clark.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:feryal.clark.mp@parliament.uk)



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## Spurs concern

### Dear Enfield Dispatch

The Enfield Society has looked carefully at the Whitewebbs Park situation since it became clear the council wanted to dispose of the land through a 25-year lease. We appreciate the council's financial situation and can see it likely to lead to disposal of the land in some form, assuming the council has the legal right to enter into an agreement. Under such circumstances the proposal from Spurs seems acceptable. However, we do not understand nor support the inclusion of the wooded area to the west of the former golf course. We see no value in this to Spurs. We also wish to see a number of critical safeguards included in the terms of any lease.

**Dave Cockle**  
 Chair, The Enfield Society

## About the money

### Dear Enfield Dispatch

As someone on a low income, the Ultra Low Emission Zone (Ulez) expansion is going to mean I lose my car completely – I cannot afford the £30,000+ cost to replace it. Many low-income, elderly, disabled and self-employed people will be in the same position. With energy bills rising and public transport inadequate, these people will be desperate. If the pollution is still too high in London, yet only a few thousand vehicles will be replaced, then it's not just those vehicles causing the high levels. And if the mayor is so concerned about our health, he would not be encouraging them to ride bicycles or walk in 'toxic air'. So what's it really about? Money!

**Jackie Lane**  
 Enfield Town

## Cynical handouts

### Dear Enfield Dispatch

Like so many vacuous and mendacious promises from now-discredited politicians, the concept of 'levelling up' is meaningless. The practice of it is reprehensible, a cynical throwback to a time when a lord of the manor dished out a bowl of soup to selected tenants. Just what 'level' are we supposedly travelling up

to? Will we feel 'level' when, for example, the money spent per pupil in state schools matches the fees for a day pupil at Eton or Winchester? The targets identified by Enfield Council for support are worthy and had they been funded, lots of folk would have benefited. But no-one can pretend that success in the latest round of handouts would have brought a fair, equal and just society any closer.

**Roger Blows**  
 Elmwood Avenue, Palmers Green

## What a waste

### Dear Enfield Dispatch

I want to express my disappointment with the state of waste management in the borough of Enfield. Despite paying higher council tax, the frequency of rubbish collection has decreased, leading to a build-up of trash on the streets. This has even resulted in fines for fly-tipping. My brother was fined £150 for fly-tipping because a letter flew out of our bin, which was not collected for three weeks. The rubbish not only creates an unsightly environment but also poses health and safety risks to residents. We deserve better.

**Martin Milev**  
 Palmers Green

## Just plain wrong

### Dear Enfield Dispatch

As a lifelong Spurs fan, I can understand why taking a lease of Whitewebbs Park makes sound commercial sense for them, particularly for an astonishingly low rent. But as a lifelong Enfield resident, I am dismayed Enfield Council proposes to dispose of a country park. The council has already reneged on verbal commitments to fully consult throughout the process, and is unlikely to change course now. However, they must be mindful of the law. The land is subject to trusts providing that there must be full public access to the park, which precludes sports facilities based on anything other than a modest fee. Further, any premium rents received by the council can only be utilised for the sole benefit of Whitewebbs.

**John Lawrance**  
 Gloucester Road, Enfield



# Questions over £86k taxpayer cash handed to cabinet member's company

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Enfield Council handed more than £86,000 to a local company part-owned by a senior Labour councillor – described by the leader of Enfield Conservatives as “potentially inappropriate” spending.

Jubilee ward councillor Chinelo Anyanwu is a director and part-owner of catering firm Smokey Okey Ltd which, since 2021, has been given a total of £86,178.79 in council grants, according to new declarations made to the civic centre's register of interests.

The vast majority of the sum – all but £2,000 of it – was paid by the council to Smokey Okey in the period following Cllr Anyanwu's by-election victory in May 2021. Out of the total, £68,378.79 was awarded after Cllr Anyanwu became the council's cabinet member for public spaces, culture and local economy in May 2022.

A council spokesperson said Cllr Anyanwu “was not involved in any subsequent decision to award grant funding to Smokey Okey” and that “decisions on grant funding are made by council officers”.

However, Enfield's Conservative group

leader Alessandro Georgiou has written a letter to Secretary of State Michael Gove expressing his concerns over the grants paid to Smokey Okey, as well as calling for an investigation, since much of the cash was dished out by the council using government grants issued as part of its Covid-19 pandemic relief programme.

In response, Cllr Anyanwu said: “I've always been open and transparent about my local, family-run business established in 2014. My register of interests are accurate and up to date, having sought advice from the council's monitoring officer following my election and throughout my time as a councillor.

“Funding secured by Smokey Okey, through an open and public procurement process, including from a time prior to me being elected as a councillor, has paid for more than 13,500 healthy meals to children and families in Enfield from disadvantaged families.”

The Conservative group's probe into Smokey Okey originally uncovered around £64,000 of council handouts, but Cllr Anyanwu later updated her register of interests with a full disclosure of all the grants the company has received to date – showing the total exceeded £86,000.



Chinelo Anyanwu has been the Labour administration's cabinet member for public spaces, culture and local economy since May 2022

One of the funding pots Smokey Okey successfully applied to – the £200,000 Together Fund, financed using the Household Support Grant issued to local councils by the Department of Work and Pensions – was promoted as being open to “local community groups, based and operating in Enfield, whether grassroots, voluntary sector organisations or faith groups”.

Cllr Anyanwu insists Smokey Okey was fully eligible for the fund.

Another question raised by Cllr Georgiou relates to a meeting of a scrutiny panel on 20th October 2021, which included a discussion of the council's Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF), distributing

funding from the Department for Education. Cllr Anyanwu chaired the meeting as a substitute but says she did not declare her interest in Smokey Okey at that meeting because the company had yet to begin receiving funding from it – a first payment of £7,200 was made in December that year and Smokey Okey went on to receive a further £46,808 during 2022.

Cllr Georgiou says both the council and Cllr Anyanwu have “serious questions to answer” and said tens of thousands of taxpayers' money going to a Labour cabinet member's company “doesn't look good”.

A council spokesperson added: “Throughout the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis Enfield Council has ensured that funding has been effectively distributed to local organisations and providers best placed to provide the vital support needed for our most vulnerable people and communities.

“Enfield Council has robust procurement rules in place to ensure good governance. Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu registered her interest in Smokey Okey [...] and] also registered the fact the company had a contract with the council pending in May 2022.”

The government has not commented.

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## Standing up for Ukraine

*Yevgeniya Pozigun launched a hub for Ukrainians displaced by war*

When Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February last year, Yevgeniya Pozigun wanted to help but didn't know where to start.

She had been living in the UK for 15 years, while her family were still in Odessa and it was unclear what might happen to them. After a few weeks, Yevgeniya decided to do something to help those who had fled and were arriving in the UK as part of the government's refugee programme.

Since April last year, Yevgeniya has run the North London Ukrainian Hub from Trinity Church in Enfield Town. It is open from 12–2pm every Saturday and offers a variety of support for Ukrainians in Enfield and beyond.

Yevgeniya Pozigun  
Credit: Jacopo Spillimbergo



Yevgeniya told the *Dispatch*: “I was trying to find a way to help and for about a month I couldn't do very much, I was so worried, but at some point I thought I can't just do nothing, so I decided to work with the local community and with Ukrainians arriving here.

“I didn't have any experience, I just wanted to help people get integrated here and find a job and meet other people in London. We didn't have a plan at first, we just started listening to people and very quickly they started coming to us.

“The church were very supportive of starting a Ukrainian community group and we started the hub – it is now a registered charity. People might come here monthly or once per week. They come not just for material help but for

the atmosphere and to talk to people. There are families with children so they like to meet up and make friends.”

The hub runs a variety of activities, including English language classes and help accessing local services and other support, plus donated materials for people who are settling into new homes. Between 20 and 30 Ukrainians attend each week, with a larger online community of around 1,800 people on Facebook.

Yevgeniya adds: “For every person we help, I am so happy for them, but I can't stop, I want to do more!

“I am very grateful to the English people who have really welcomed Ukrainians into their homes and their hearts.”

Visit [sites.google.com/view/trinity-church-enfield-new/ukrainians-in-enfield](https://sites.google.com/view/trinity-church-enfield-new/ukrainians-in-enfield)

### 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](mailto:EnfieldDispatch@socialspider.com)



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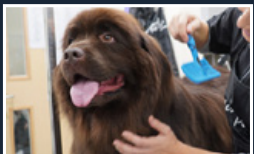
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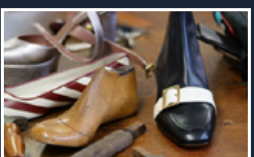
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## Council tax rising by 5% as big budget gap looms

*Civic centre scrambling to plug five-year budget hole of £65m as debt payments and inflation hit council coffers*

BY SIMON ALLIN,  
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

**C**ouncil tax bills in Enfield will rise by almost 5% from April as the civic centre faces a number of financial challenges to balance its books.

The 4.99% hike is made up of a 2.99% increase in core council tax and a 2% rise in the levy used to fund adult social care. Together with an expected 9.74% increase in the Greater London Authority's own council tax precept, the hike will push up annual bills for average-sized band D homes by £114.40 during the 2023/24 financial year.

The planned council tax increase, signed off by the Labour administration last month, comes after the Conservative government gave local authorities new powers to raise council tax by 4.99% without holding a referendum. Previously, councils had to ballot residents if they wanted to hike bills by more than 2.99%.

Tim Leaver is Enfield Council's cabinet member for finance and procurement



At a scrutiny meeting in January council officers revealed that an extra £3m from the revenue budget would be used to pay down debt during 2023/24, taking the total annual repayment on the council's £1billion debt to £26.6m. It also emerged that although the 2023/24 budget will be balanced, the council is still facing a major dilemma over how to plug a £65m budget hole that will appear over the next five years unless action is taken.

Even though the council will receive an extra £8.1m in government grant funding

for 2023/24 in addition to the increases in council tax and business rates revenue, this will still not be enough to cover forecast spending. Inflation alone is expected to cost the council an extra £21.9m, which comes on top of £6.8m extra spending needed to cope with growing demographic pressures.

At a cabinet meeting last month, Tim Leaver, the council's cabinet member for finance and procurement, acknowledged the current financial situation for Enfield Council was "very difficult" because of the cost-of-living crisis, the impact of austerity and rising interest rates – which he blamed on the government – but said the council had "tried hard to limit the budget to be balanced and sustainable" and that it was designed to protect the borough's most vulnerable residents.

To bridge the gap between income and spending, £15.9million of savings are proposed in 2023/24. The majority of cuts, some £5.3m, will be made to the adult social care department. This move sparked concerns during the January scrutiny meeting, when officers revealed some staff reductions are being planned and at least one day care centre could close.

To raise an extra £380,000, the council also plans to hike fees and charges for a number of services. Conservative scrutiny panel member James Hockney said this would have a "huge impact on a very wide range



of people", particularly sports clubs and community groups, and he did not understand why the council could not reduce the amount it pays on consultants and solicitors to avoid "heaping on costs to residents".

In response, Cllr Leaver said there would be a "modest increase" in some fees and charges after they were reviewed on a "case-by-case basis". Despite drawing down £2m from its reserves in 2022/23, the council does not plan to use reserves to balance the 2023/24 budget.

Meanwhile, new investment plans include £600,000 to create a community law enforcement team to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour and £1m to fund the recruitment of extra children's social care workers.

To read a full report on the big council budget debate which took place on 23rd February, go to [enfielddispatch.co.uk](https://enfielddispatch.co.uk)

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scan the QR code to register.



Young people from Chickenshed meet their peers at Shed Helsinki in Finland



## Developing theatre around the world

*Chickenshed's senior creative producer Dave Carey on how the Southgate arts charity is helping to develop inclusive theatre models in different countries*

Chickenshed has been working internationally for many years, sometimes in one-off projects such as working with a rural girls school in Shijiazhuang, China, and sometimes working with organisations to develop their own inclusive theatre models such as Chickenshed New York and Shed Helsinki.

All of these projects not only help us develop our practice and spread our ethos far and wide, they also give many of our young people the opportunity to meet and work alongside their peers from other cultures and countries.

In January a group of our first-year foundation degree students took part in a two-week exchange with young people from one of our 'Shed Link' partners in Finland, Shed Helsinki. This was the second such exchange trip and gave us the chance to really develop how our young people can engage internationally about inclusion in different cultural settings.

During week one, young people from Helsinki travelled to our Southgate base to explore and create a short performance piece based around topics and issues that interested them – cultural dif-

ferences, food, education systems, music, youth culture. From Monday to Friday we workshopped ideas, wrote songs, developed scenes and generally worked at a high and intense speed to develop a show that we could tour.

Within this week were also team-building trips to Hollywood Bowl and a scratch performance of the piece at Finnish Church, Rotherhithe. This gave us the chance to connect directly with the Finnish Embassy here in London and further strengthen the ties between our organisations.

No sooner was the week here in London over before we were boarding a flight to Helsinki to take the fruits of our work on a tour of schools across Finland. We travelled to the cities of Turku and Tampere before returning to Helsinki to perform in schools and the theatre. Along the way we took in cultural visits that really inspired our young people.

This initiative gives an experience of life in another country and shows how inclusion – whatever the issues – remains a central part of all our work and approaches.

For the young people from both communities it became a journey of friendship and collabora-

tion that really allowed them to explore in-depth how the two groups approach theatre-making. In the words of one participant: "It really let me see how you can have inclusion all around the world."

No sooner had I returned from Finland when my colleagues Matthew Lyons and Sarah Driver were boarding a plane to Bangladesh. Matthew and Sarah were invited to contribute to TheatreEx's production of *SwarnBoal* that was in development by The British Council and Sudip Chakroborthy, associate professor of theatre and performance studies at University of Dhaka, for the Women of the World (Wow) event in Bangladesh held in February. This ongoing collaboration between Chickenshed and Dr Chakroborthy has been developed over nearly 20 years since we first met as part of the Contacting the World Festival at Contact Theatre, Manchester, in 2004!

It was a fascinating trip and an amazing experience working with so many young theatre and music artists to support the development of their production and we look forward to many more years of collaborative work.

Find out more about Chickenshed's outreach work:  
Visit [chickenshed.org.uk/set-up-a-shed](http://chickenshed.org.uk/set-up-a-shed)

## Performing Haydn's choral masterpiece

*Lesley Jordan and Ian Mackenzie on what audiences can expect from Enfield Choral Society's spring concert*

Joseph Haydn is one of the great composers of the Classical period, when a more dramatic compositional style became common. Throughout this time the Austrian remained a pioneering figure, with most of his life devoted to orchestral and instrumental music. It was after he completed *Symphony No. 104*, his last, that he composed his supreme choral masterpieces *The Creation* and *The Seasons*.

While visiting London, Haydn became an enthusiastic admirer of Handel after attending performances of *Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt* at Westminster Abbey. He was determined to produce a work of similar substance and power.

*The Creation* was premiered at a private event in 1798 in Vienna, to great acclaim. Large-scale performances soon followed in London, Paris, St Petersburg, Stockholm and Budapest. It is in three parts; part one portrays the first four days in which heaven, earth, land, sea, plant life and the celestial bodies are made; part two describes the fifth and sixth days with the appearance of birds, beasts, fish and finally man and woman; the shorter part three introduces us to Adam and Eve as they enjoy the delights of Eden.

The text of *The Creation* was originally produced in English, then

translated into German, but Haydn always kept both languages in the score. It integrates choral and solo parts in music, which is highly inventive, colourful and full of lyrical melody. Memorable passages include the opening 'representation of chaos', the awesome depiction of the creation of light which bursts in on the very first chorus, and the superb sunrise of the fourth day.

*The Creation* is being performed by Enfield Choral Society at St Paul's Church in Winchmore Hill on Saturday, 18th March, with professional soloists singing the arias, duets and trios. Choir members are enjoying the challenges of rehearsing its soaring choruses!

Enfield Choral Society is a friendly, strong and growing non-auditioned SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) choir of 60 members, with a mix of ages. We welcome new members, so if you enjoy singing, why not give us a try? Summer concert rehearsals start from Tuesday, 21st March at St Stephen's Church in Bush Hill Park. If you're interested, why not introduce yourself to us during the interval of our Haydn concert?

To enquire about joining Enfield Choral Society:  
Email [membership@enfieldchoralsociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@enfieldchoralsociety.org.uk)

To buy tickets (£14 advance) for the 18th March performance of Haydn's 'The Creation':  
Call 07864 061 755

Email [tickets@enfieldchoralsociety.org.uk](mailto:tickets@enfieldchoralsociety.org.uk)  
Visit [enfieldchoralsociety.org.uk](http://enfieldchoralsociety.org.uk)



Enfield Choral Society has been performing locally since 1938





Duck live pate

## Winchmore Hill restaurant inspired by Masterchef

Neil Littman enjoys a lunchtime visit to Buckle & Vaughan

One thing I'm aware of is the sheer volume of restaurant reviews on online platforms. I often check out comments before deciding whether to visit somewhere new and get concerned if they are overly negative – but then you never know who is writing them and why.

Matters took a strange turn recently when a restaurant ranked number one in Montreal on Tripadvisor turned out not to exist, despite receiving 85 five-star reviews. Fortunately, this month's restaurant Buckle & Vaughan, which opened in 2014 in Winchmore Hill and takes its name from a 1920s grocery store, is very real!

I had considered reviewing B&V when I first started writing this column in 2021. I have eaten there several times – both lunchtime and evening – and

since it was always busy I wasn't sure if it needed my support. Two years on, I decided to check it out again, having had an excuse to meet a friend for lunch. They have refurbished the interior, which I already thought was well designed. It has two distinct dining spaces including an area that can be closed off from the main restaurant for private parties or special events, including weddings.

There is a glitzy welcome as you enter, in the form of an Art Deco bar, and there is an open-plan kitchen where you can see all the hard (and hot) work happening from the main dining area. It's good to have a stylish restaurant of this calibre for special occasions – and they now also have an outdoor dining area on The Green. B&V serves an inventive seasonal menu with a chef thinking about what kind of food people like and reasons to encourage their customers to make return visits. It's a formula that is the result of hard work and graft, plus the dining

landscape has changed and value-for-money is still a key factor.

Weekday lunch is the best value and my recent visit exceeded expectations. We were welcomed into a full and noisy dining room at 12.30pm and presented with a mainly modern European set menu (two courses £19.90, three courses £24.90). We ordered starters of duck liver pate with flatbreads and a prawn cocktail with marie rose sauce. Both dishes were served 'deconstructed' – all the essential ingredients present but arranged in a less traditional order with a hint of *Masterchef* in the presentation.

Our mains were pan-fried sea bass with samphire and new potatoes and minute steak with homemade fries, which was accompanied by a rather dangerous looking knife. The desserts were chocolate brownie and tiramisu, both of which evaporated off the plate in seconds.

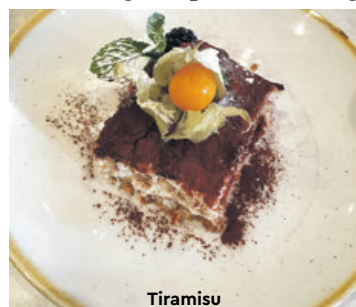
On the positive side, B&V has an excellent wine list and attentive service. But there is room for improvement in the portion sizes for some dishes and supplements for main course items.

**Buckle & Vaughan can be found at 10-12 The Green, Winchmore Hill N21 1AY. It is open from Tuesday to Saturday, 12pm-11pm, and Sundays 12pm-8pm. Booking is essential at weekends. For more information:**

**Call** 020 8886 2981  
**Email** info@buckleandvaughan.com  
**Visit** buckleandvaughan.com



Prawn cocktail



Tiramisu

# 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](mailto:enfielddispatch@socialspider.com) by **Monday 20th March**.

## FESTIVAL

### Enfield Culture Festival

From Monday 28th February until Sunday 5th March  
Dugdale Arts Centre, 39 London Road, Enfield EN2 6DS

Join us at DAC for Enfield Culture Festival, a week-long celebration of local culture and creativity featuring a variety of events including a night of Cypriot comedy, a Sunday afternoon Caribbean tea dance, and a club night celebrating Afro-Caribbean music in the queer nightlife scene.

#### Various ticket prices

**Visit** [dugdaleartscentre.co.uk/whats-on](http://dugdaleartscentre.co.uk/whats-on)

## BRUNCH

### Free Sunday Brunch

Sunday 5th March, 10am-12pm  
CRM Agape House, Raynham Primary School (early years building), Raynham Terrace, Edmonton N18 2JQ

A free Sunday brunch, open to everyone with no restrictions. We provide a hot meal, drinks and sandwiches.

#### Free entry

**Call** 07951 881 991

**Visit** [crmagapehouse.org.uk](http://crmagapehouse.org.uk)

## FILM

### Talkies Short Films Premiere

Saturday 25th March, 7.30pm  
St John's Hall, Bourne Hill, Palmers Green N13 4DA

Talkies Community Cinema presents new work from talented young film makers, premiering at this very special event. The films include a boxing bishop, gambling coppers, alien invasions, and much more!

**Tickets £6.50**

**Visit** [talkies.org.uk/event](http://talkies.org.uk/event)

## CRAFTS

### Knit and Natter

Tuesdays, 10.30am-12pm  
Stitch! 2 Hazelwood Lane, Palmers Green N13 5EX

Come and join us on Tuesday mornings at Stitch! Bring your knitting or sewing project, make new friends and enjoy a cup of tea/coffee and biscuits.

#### Free entry

**Email** [hello@stitch.org](mailto:hello@stitch.org)

## THEATRE

### Chickenshed presents 'Rush'

Thurs 9th March until Sat 25th March, 7pm (plus 3pm matinee on Saturdays)  
Chickenshed Theatre, Chase Side, Southgate N14 4PE

Chickenshed's new spring show, 'Rush', explores early colonised Africa, the Windrush scandal and modern-day gentrification. Through the eyes of three women, Rush tells their story as it spans across the generations. Connected in ancestry, united in spirit, but divided by experiences of oppression echoing across the centuries.

**Tickets £10 (£8 concessions)**

**Call** 020 8292 9222

**Visit** [chickenshed.org.uk](http://chickenshed.org.uk)

## MUSIC

### Music from The Black Barn

Saturday 11th March, 7pm-11pm  
Forty Hall Farm, Forty Hill EN2 9HA

Back for the first time in what feels like an eternity we are really pleased to present California Screaming. Arguably one of the best bands playing covers you will ever see, their set list includes The Streets, Xample, Madness, Dizzee Rascal, Belinda Carlisle, Rod Stewart, James Morrison and Billy Bragg.

**Tickets £11**

**Visit** [livestockuk.com](http://livestockuk.com)

## ANIMALS

### Lambing Weekend

Saturday and Sunday 25th/26th March, 10am-4pm  
Forty Hall Farm, Forty Hill EN2 9HA

Forty Hall Farm reopens to the public for a celebration with delicious local produce and food stalls, family activities, and our new lambs.

**£3 entry adults, under-16s free**

**Visit** [fortyhallfarm.org.uk](http://fortyhallfarm.org.uk)

## CONCERT

### Spring Concert

Saturday 25th March, 11am  
Grange Park Methodist Church, Old Park Ridings, Winchmore Hill N21 2EU

Natalee Jeremic on violin and Mine Dogantan-Dack on piano recite Elgar's 'Salut D'Amour', Schubert's 'Sonaata in D Major' and Beethoven's 'Spring Sonata'.

#### Free entry

**Visit** [grangeparkmethodistchurch.com](http://grangeparkmethodistchurch.com)



## AROUND THE BOROUGH

## WINCHMORE HILL

## Park's new community hub takes shape

Toni Guiver and Helen Osman from Friends of Firs Farm outside the newly-installed modular building



A LONG-AWAITED COMMUNITY hub for Firs Farm has taken one big step forward – but more money is needed before it can be opened to the public.

After eight years of planning and fundraising by the charity Friends of Firs Farm, the park's new modular community hub arrived on site last month. The £300,000 raised to date – a combination

of individual donations to the crowdfunder, grants from various other charities and support from Enfield Council – has enabled the building to be erected and installed.

However, the total fundraising target has had to be increased because of rising costs and another £40,000 is still needed to pay for the fit-out of the building, which is set to include a cafe, changing

rooms and toilets, and rooms for hire by the community.

Helen Osman, a trustee with Friends of Firs Farm, told the *Dispatch*: "There is a lot of excitement now we have got to this stage, but the costs have gone up exponentially.

"We are hoping with a push, and if the community really gets involved, we can get over the next hurdle. We have done the hard work to get this building here and now we need just a little bit more."

Friends of Firs Farm's chair, Toni Guiver, describes it as a "trailblazing project" and said planning for the hub first began in 2015. "It has been a lengthy process," said Toni. "It has been something the community has wanted for a long time and we have been driven by the community."

If the last phase of the crowdfunding campaign is successful the aim is to have the community hub fully open by Easter.

**To contribute to the Friends of Firs Farm crowdfunder:**

**Visit** [crowdfunder.co.uk/p/friends-of-firs-farm-charity](https://crowdfunder.co.uk/p/friends-of-firs-farm-charity)

## ENFIELD HIGHWAY

## Residents facing £16k bills to fix flooded flats

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

LEASEHOLDERS IN A "NEGLECTED" housing block hit by leaking roofs and overflowing sewage are facing bills of up to £16,500 for a major upgrade programme.

Larksfield Grove, a group of housing blocks owned by Enfield Council and occupied by a mixture of tenants and leaseholders, is currently undergoing a major works scheme approved by civic centre bosses in 2021. It includes a range of repairs to roofs, windows and other structures.

Long-term resident John Woodger said delays to scheduled works left residents experiencing flooding from leaking roofs. He added leaks had been a problem for years, but the blocks – built in the 1960s and 70s – had been

"neglected" by the council.

With leaseholders facing bills of between £12,250 and £16,500 per flat, John warned that many will struggle to pay. He said repairs should have started in June, but were delayed until October – meaning it had coincided with wet weather and resulted in flooding.

"Flats on the top floor are being flooded," he said. "The ceiling has come down in several places, and several flats on the top floor have got water coming in."

Residents had been complaining about leaks for the past eight years, John said, but the council had carried out only superficial filling of cracks and painting of the top-floor corridor ceiling. A few months ago, he added, sewage was coming up inside the corridor of one of the blocks. John also raised concerns over a lack of awareness

of asbestos in the buildings.

A council spokesperson said the roof was undergoing a full replacement and works should have been completed by the end of February. They added: "We're aware of some minor leaks in some of the top floor flats during recent works and have been in regular contact with those affected, conducting inspections, visits and works as required.

"The council is investigating the concern from the resident about the sewage pipe and will pick this issue up urgently.

"All work involving any materials containing asbestos have been undertaken by a licensed asbestos removal contractor.

"How we apportion major works costs to leaseholders is set out on our website. We have written to all leaseholders explaining the costs they are responsible for."

## PALMERS GREEN

## Pub reopens after five years

AN ICONIC PUB CLOSED SINCE 2018 has finally reopened after undergoing a £1.35million refurbishment.

The Fox in Green Lanes is now owned by Star Pubs & Bars and is being run by operator Austin Whelan of Whelan's Pub Company, which specialises in traditional Irish pubs.

The long-awaited refurbishment has come alongside the construction of a four-storey block of flats by Dominus Group, now joined to the pub building in Fox Lane.

Austin says: "There aren't many pubs in Palmers Green compared to other parts of London, and The Fox is a very prominent and well known pub, so there's been lots of interest in the plans from residents. People

have been desperate for The Fox to reopen as a really good local.

"We've gone all out to make it a pub that Palmers Green can be proud of. It's exciting to be reopening the doors and showing residents their new-look local."



The Fox in Green Lanes has opened for the first time since 2018

## EDMONTON

## Another block's gas supply cut

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

ENFIELD COUNCIL IS SWITCHING off the gas supply to another tower block that has failed structural safety tests.

Shropshire House, an 18-storey block on the Shires Estate, was due to have its gas turned off by the end of February after the council dropped controversial plans to wait a whole year.

Test revealed last year that the block was at risk of collapse in the event of an internal gas

explosion. Gas distributor Cadent originally told the council the supply would be cut off in June 2023, but the company later agreed to extend to January 2024 to allow the building to be connected to the council-owned Energetik heat network, which would have made it eligible for grant funding.

However, a council spokesperson said it had instead decided to install electrical heating and boilers at Shropshire House, allowing the gas supply to be cut in February.

## ENFIELD TOWN

## Eyes on the prize



Staff from Hammond Opticians

AN OPTICIANS FIRM HAS WON a national award from the UK's largest association representing independent opticians and optometrists.

Hammond Opticians was named

'community practice of the year' by industry group Sight Care for their "dedication to eyecare in the local community".

The business has been based at the same location in London Road for over 90 years. Practice owner and optometrist Deven Lakhani said: "We are very proud and honoured to be recognised as the community practice of the year.

"Our family-run business has been looking after the eyecare needs for Enfield residents since 1932."



# Ex-Chelsea star relishes role with Enfield Borough FC

Enfield Borough FC secretary Renee Mair speaks to Michael Duberry about the progress being made at the club

**F**ormer Premier League footballer Michael Duberry has spoken about his role as an ambassador for Enfield Borough Football Club.

Duberry, born and educated in Enfield, had a 20-year career that included Chelsea and Leeds United and is keen for young players at the club to follow in his footsteps.

"I speak regularly with Marvin and Aaron [Walker and Archer, co-founders of Enfield Borough] about ways that we can push the club forward.

"The great thing that Enfield Borough can offer is opportunity and that is what everyone craves. We will push players to make the best of their talent because if the players do well, it reflects well on the club.

"A pathway is there into the professional game which shows that you don't necessarily have to go through a football league club's academy. This club has people with a vast experience and knowledge behind them, manager Anthony McNamee also



Pictured at College of North East London in Enfield Highway are Enfield Borough FC's head of football academy Josemar Santos (third from left), Conel vice principal Robin Hindley (centre), and club chairman Marvin Walker (third from right)

played top flight football while others played to a decent standard in the non-league game, and very few clubs at this level can offer that insight.

"I like the club's values and ethos and really enjoy my involvement."

The Enfield Borough production line continues to turn out fine young players. Fifteen-year-old Elvis Elendu has just been

signed by Cambridge United, while first-team goalkeeper Harry Cooke has been on trial at the same club. Cooke, only 16 himself, has been a regular between the posts since September and has produced a string of fine performances.

This season the club expanded its youth programme by increasing the number of teams from

four to six, with age groups ranging from under-13 to under-18.

"Elvis has been signed straight from our under 15s," says Borough's chairman Marvin Walker. "Last season a number of our youngsters were signed up by both Cambridge United and Blackburn Rovers, so the professional clubs know what we do and have an eye on our talented young players." The club's link with the College of North East London, through its college programme, continues to prosper. The intention is that it will grow further with more teams being established for the 2023/24 season.

Plans for the future are not confined to on-pitch matters. The hope is that the club will be able to return to the Borough whose name it bears in the near future. Marvin adds: "We are actively looking to have a ground of our own. While we are very grateful for the support and facilities that Wingate & Finchley provide for us, we have been away from Enfield for five years now and there is no place like home."

***"I like the club's values and ethos and really enjoy my involvement."***



## Everything is going to be croquet

*Enfield Croquet Club chair Nicola Hyde on how local people can get involved with the sport*

**C**roquet is a game for all, regardless of age.

At its simplest it is a fun and relaxing escape from the world outside the lawns; at its highest level it is a phenomenally interesting challenge of skills and tactics.

Enfield Croquet Club is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year and as part of our 30th year celebrations we're holding free introductory courses throughout April.

The club has been based at Bush Hill Park Recreation Ground since 1993, when it was formed on the site of a pitch-and-putt golf course. With membership having since grown, we are now the biggest club in North London – with a strong team in the leagues of the East Anglian Croquet Federation.

In recent years we have had successes in both local and county matches and individual members have won several national competitions, as well as playing at county and international level. But many members are just social players, preferring to relax with a game or two on club afternoons and take part in internal tournaments.

We're always keen to welcome newcomers to the game and new members to the club, regardless of if they just want to have a relaxed knock around or hold ambitions to be the world champion.

So why not come and try one of the most addictive sports out there? We are running free introductory courses throughout April for those who may be interested in joining our friendly club. If you join, we have many opportunities for competitive and social play. No experience is necessary, but booking is essential as numbers are limited.

**For more information and to book a free introductory croquet course:**

Call 07982 259 789

Email [secretary@enfieldcroquet.org](mailto:secretary@enfieldcroquet.org)

Visit [enfieldcroquet.org](http://enfieldcroquet.org)

## Towners power on with 'electric' team spirit

BY ANDREW WARSHAW

**E**nfield Town FC are not known as a community club for nothing.

In early February, as a special gesture, the home game against Wingate & Finchley was dubbed 'public services day' with free entry to those who work in the public sector, including NHS staff and firefighters. Two weeks later, the club let in women and girls for free for the game against Margate – being the closest home fixture to International Women's Day.

Town chairman Paul Reed explained: "We are trying to make our supporter base more diverse. And although we've been here [at QE2 Stadium] ten years, there are some people who still don't know we exist."

Regular fans are enjoying a highly impressive league campaign with a team every bit as strong – if not more so – than last season, when Town narrowly missed out on promotion. Many felt striker Mo Faal's departure would weaken the side, given his goalscoring exploits, but if anything the squad is a stronger, more cohesive unit. While the goals have been spread around, the additions of Chez Isaac in midfield and loanee Lewis Knight in defence have given Town far more of a spine, while the bench is invariably full of impact players.

The team has been in the play-off positions almost all season and, with no dominant side in control of the division, automatic promotion is still a possibility (despite two defeats in February).

Manager Andy Leese says: "Mo's goals were huge but perhaps disguised some of our weaknesses elsewhere on the pitch which we no longer have.

"We basically lost five players at the end of last season. We didn't start too well as a result but the players we've brought in since have made a huge difference.

"There's a heck of a long way to go but we feel we're a stronger squad this year. Defensively we are a much sounder unit, while in midfield we have a balance and a huge amount of experience. There are some very difficult challenges to come but we are ready for it."

Plans to expand the ground are underway and there is an infectious spirit and camaraderie among the players. "The dynamic

of the group is really good and I don't think there are any obvious glaring weaknesses," said Leese.

"It's going to be a merry-go-round between now and the end of the season. But unlike last season with Worthing, there is no obvious runaway team. We're right in it and there's no reason why we shouldn't consider ourselves title contenders."

Striker Jake Cass agrees. He adds: "Now we're more solid at the back, we're a very different animal to last season. A lot of players are just getting into their groove.

"I've been playing non-league football since I was 16. Last season was one of the best changing rooms I've seen. Some of us were a bit wary whether it would be as good this time. But the team spirit is electric."



# WE NEED YOUR HELP



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- Every penny of income from Enfield Dispatch helps us deliver more journalism in Enfield
- The paper costs nearly £6,000 per month to produce and distribute, but monthly income is under £5,000 currently
- We currently have 183 supporters who contribute around 16% of our income, but we need more!

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