

ENFIELD DISPATCH

Nº 64

THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

JAN 2024

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SANTA DELIVERED A Christmas present for families in Ponders End last month with the opening of the new Ponders End Youth and Family Hub. The hub, created within Ponders End Youth Centre in South Street, brings together a range of different services for children and families in one place, making it easier for them to get the help they need. Delivered and run by Enfield Council, the hub has been funded with a grant from the Department for Education and a second one is due to open at Craig Park in Edmonton early this year – read more at enfielddispatch.co.uk Credit Enfield Council

Residents remain in 'unsafe' towers

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

More than 100 families continue to live in tower blocks on an Edmonton estate over a year after they were found to be structurally unsound – with several residents telling the *Dispatch* they feel “unsafe” living there.

Enfield Council has been urged to speed up the evacuation of residents from Cheshire House and Shropshire House on Shires Estate, which both had their gas supplies cut last winter after they were found at risk of collapse in the event of an explosion.

The news even made national headlines in December 2022 when Cheshire House residents were forced to shower in outdoor cubicles during freezing weather, as the council scrambled to install an alternative hot water system.

Three-quarters of residents living in the two towers voted to leave last March but, as of November, 132 out of the 204 flats in total remained occupied. The council says 95 offers

of alternative accommodation have now been accepted.

Speaking to the *Dispatch*, residents voiced their frustrations with the length of time it was taking the council to arrange new accommodation, the conditions of the blocks, and the inflated cost of heating their homes using electric heaters.

Abdirahim Abdillahi, who lives in Cheshire House, said living there was “scary”, while a resident of Shropshire House said: “They told us it was unsafe, but we are still living here.”

When the *Dispatch* visited, signs were visible inside both towers which warned residents that “gas canisters may not be used or kept in this building”.

A survey of Shropshire House prepared by consultancy firm Ridge in May 2022, which has been seen by the *Dispatch*, concluded: “The re-assessment of the blocks has shown that, even with the piped-gas supply stripped from the building, they remain insufficiently robust to resist disproportionate collapse.”

Residents of a Bristol tower block were evacuated immediately when the building was found to be structurally unsound. The opposition Conservative group’s housing spokesperson questioned why similarly swift action wasn’t taken at Shires. Lee Chamberlain said: “It can’t be allowed to drag on. These blocks are ultimately unsafe. In the structural integrity report, the buildings fail on almost every count. It makes for horrific reading.

“The risk is small but it is a risk.” The council says the Bristol issue is “not comparable”.

Several Shires Estate residents have complained that the cost of heating their flats has “doubled” since the gas was switched off last winter, but the council had not given them enough to cover it.

Cllr Chamberlain submitted an urgent motion on Shires Estate at November’s full council meeting, but it was rejected for debate. He pointed out that the Labour administration’s original intention was

to connect the towers to its district heating network, Energetik, rather than decommission them.

“We had to drag them kicking and screaming to the position we are at now. They have had their head in the sand on this.”

However, the Regulator of Social Housing ruled the council’s actions over Shires Estate “did not demonstrate a wider failure to meet our standards”.

The council is now offering tenants in the two blocks alternative properties and buying back leasehold flats.

At the nearby Meridian Water redevelopment, the first residents moved in last September, but one Shropshire House tenant said she’d been forced to reject an offer of housing there because it would raise her rent from £104 per week to £185.

The latest stats show the council has met only 75% of its three-year housing target. Cllr Chamberlain added: “The council is now struggling

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Council plans for nearly 10,000 Green Belt homes



Green Belt land at Vicarage Farm

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

The leader of Enfield Council has said the borough will become “a deeply green place” as she welcomed plans to allow nearly 10,000 homes to be built on the Green Belt.

Last month the council published a long-awaited update to its draft Local Plan, which proved highly controversial two years ago when it included proposals to ‘de-designate’ Green Belt areas currently protected from development and allow 6,430 homes to be built on them.

In the new version of the plan, drawn up after more than 7,000 consultation responses were submitted in 2021 to the council’s original draft, the council confirmed it wants to allow an even greater number of homes to be built on the Green Belt by developers – a total of 9,651.

Of this number, 7,151 would be built within the plan period up to 2041, while another 2,500 would be built later. The two biggest areas of Green Belt development are proposed to be at Crews Hill, where the plan states 3,700 could be built in total, and at Vicarage Farm – dubbed ‘Chase

Park’ – where 5,500 are allocated. The plan again allocates 160 homes to Green Belt land at Hadley Wood, despite a new neighbourhood plan for the area being agreed in November which set out local opposition to Green Belt de-designation.

Meanwhile, at the Meridian Water development zone in the east of the borough, the new Local Plan allocates 7,722 homes to various sites – including 1,500 homes at the former Ikea site – while stating that the “longer-term goal” is to build 10,000 in total. The first new residents at Meridian Water moved in four months ago.

In total across the whole borough, the number of homes planned is being increased from the 25,000 included in the 2021 version of the Local Plan to 34,000 in the version published on 6th December.

Although it’s not known exactly how many respondents to the previous Local Plan draft opposed construction on the Green Belt, the move proved highly controversial and has been widely criticised.

Conservative group leader Alessandro Georgiou told the *Dispatch*: “After a record number of objections to this council on its draft Local Plan, they have decided to plough

on with destroying our Green Belt.

“Residents have rejected this plan, independent groups have rejected this plan, environmental groups have rejected this plan and even their own mate the mayor of London is against the plan.

“Quite frankly, local democracy is dead in Enfield.”

The Labour administration disputes Cllr Georgiou’s claims, however. Announcing the launch of the new Local Plan, Cllr Caliskan said: “We are proud of this draft Local Plan which will support the delivery of more and better homes for residents in the right areas of the borough.

“It will make Enfield a deeply green place by enhancing parks, woodland, open spaces and biodiversity. We will plan for new schools, GP surgeries and places of leisure and recreation for all residents and we will help the local economy to flourish.”

A six-week public consultation will begin after 6th March if councillors approve the new Local Plan. An independent inspector must then examine it before it can be adopted by the council.

Residents can view the new draft Local Plan via the Enfield Council website: Visit enfield.gov.uk/services/planning/new-enfield-local-plan

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

gling to re-home people because it’s failed year-on-year to develop the housing we need.”

A council spokesperson said: “Enfield Council has been working hard to decant the blocks as soon as possible by matching tenants with new homes that meet their needs.

“So far, 194 offers have been made, and we continue to support residents who remain. We have been offering considerable financial

support to cover bills, which last month was a £445.30 payment per household. In addition, rehousing teams are on site to offer advice.

“We’ve always prioritised the safety of residents. The [structural integrity] report in May last year was immediately discussed with the gas supplier and an agreed route to replace the heating system was agreed. However, a gas leak was discovered in November [2022] which prompted the disconnection of Cheshire House – this changed the council’s plans. The

Shires blocks differ from the tower in Bristol and are not comparable.”

Regarding Cllr Chamberlain’s motion, the spokesperson said it was “rejected by the mayor of Enfield because it wasn’t submitted by the deadline” and the issue had been discussed at three prior meetings.

Edmonton MP Kate Osamor urged the council to move faster on the evacuation and said Shires Estate residents shouldn’t have faced “another Christmas in housing which is neither suitable nor safe”.

Better deal

A new operator has taken over Enfield Council’s leisure centres.

Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL), a social enterprise, was handed the keys to Albany, Edmonton, Southbury, Southgate, and Arnos Pool leisure centres after a contract with the previous operator Fusion Lifestyle ended last month.

The council announced it would be terminating its contract with Fusion early after a report highlighted “a significant number of maintenance faults”. Fusion had been running the council’s leisure facilities since 2010.

GLL will be operating Enfield’s leisure centres under its recognised brand name, Better. Cabinet member Chinelo Anyanwu said: “I’m delighted to welcome Better to Enfield so we can jointly work together on the recovery and transformation of our leisure centres.”

Peter Bunday, CEO of GLL, said: “We are looking forward to start this exciting new partnership with Enfield Council to operate their leisure facilities.”

The council claims it cannot say how much money was handed to Fusion to terminate the contract because the information is “confidential”.

Long waits

BY LOUIS ALTMANN

Sixty percent of ambulances arriving at North Middlesex University Hospital had to wait more than 30 minutes to hand over to A&E in the first week of December, according to NHS data.

The NHS England target is for all handovers between ambulances and A&E to take place within 15 minutes, with none waiting more than 30 minutes.

But out of 518 ambulances waiting outside North Mid in the week ending 10th December, 311 had to wait for longer than 30 minutes, and 58 (11%) had to wait longer than 60 minutes.

North Mid’s 60% figure for 30-minute waits is the ninth highest in England for NHS trusts, with the longest being University Hospitals Plymouth at 83%.

While ambulance handover statistics are better than they were at this time last year, trends suggest the situation is deteriorating.

An inspection of North Mid’s A&E by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in 2022 found that a lack of beds was leading to some patients being left waiting outside in ambulances. However, CQC also said that there were good processes in place for identifying patients who needed escalating through the ambulance queues.

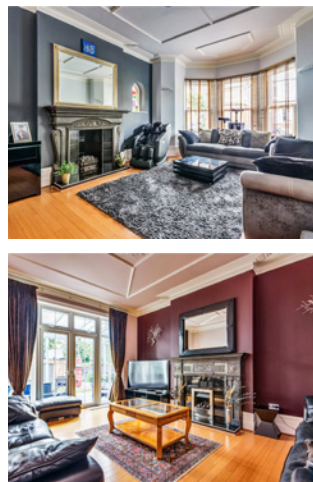
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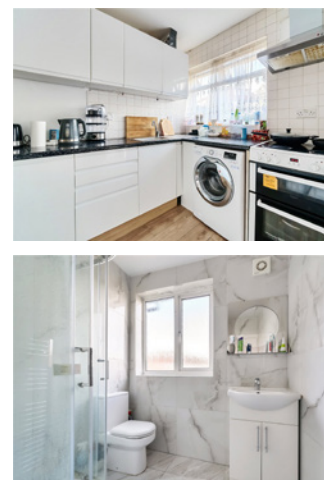
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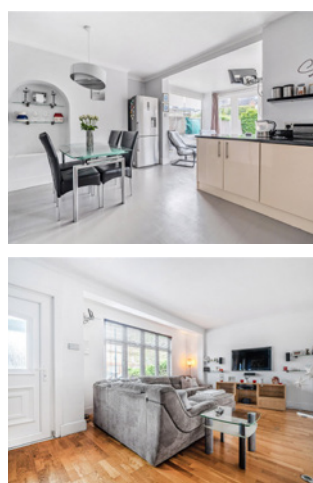
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Cuts to library service feared as council issues latest warning over finances

Opposition leader calls new consultation on the service a “smokescreen” for cuts

BY GRACE HOWARTH,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Fears have been sparked that Enfield Council is considering cuts to its library service as it attempts to close a £39m hole in its finances.

The council is set to launch a consultation this month as it draws up a new library services strategy – however the leader of the opposition Conservatives has called the move a “smokescreen” for cuts.

In its report setting out the reasons to draw up a new library strategy, published at the end of November, the council states that it “must make savings of £39.4million in 2024/25” and that there is “a forecasted budget gap of £118.7m for the five years through to 2028/29”.

Even though no specific plan to make cuts to the library service has yet been



Oakwood Library is one of 16 run by Enfield Council and one of 17 in total across the borough announced, the report warns: “It is inevitable that savings will need to be made now and in years to come across the council in order to set a balanced budget.”

The report later adds: “The council is under a duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service. In light of the council’s funding pressures, we need to consider whether our library service can be delivered in a more efficient way, while ensuring that it continues to meet people’s needs and is comprehensive.”

In response, Tory group leader Alessandro Georgiou told the Local Democracy Reporting Service: “The council, due to its reckless spending, is £1.2billion in debt. This consultation on the library service is nothing but a smokescreen – library cuts come as a direct result of their financial mismanagement of Enfield borough.”

At present Enfield Council directly runs 16 libraries across the borough. Another public library is operated by Raynham Primary School. Enfield’s total of 17 libraries is said to be the highest of any London borough.

The council has been asked to clarify what it is now planning for its library service. A spokesperson said: “We provide a comprehensive library service for people who live, work or study in Enfield.

“This includes books and access to digital

resources, quiet spaces for study and reflection, access to support groups and social activities for all ages, health and wellbeing support, makerspaces, training and employment advice.

“Our phase one engagement is to find out more about how people are currently using our libraries, their experience of them, and how we could deliver our library service more efficiently.

“This consultation on the library service is nothing but a smokescreen”

“We will use the feedback and ideas we get through this engagement to help us develop a draft proposal for a new library strategy for Enfield and consult on this in summer 2024.

“The engagement is expected to launch in December 2023 and will last for twelve weeks.”

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Enfield's last D-Day veteran tells his story

Donald Howkins was 23 when he helped liberate France from Nazi occupation in 1944



Donald Howkins pictured last month with his medals at Elsyng House in Forty Hill

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Nearly 80 years on from the Normandy landings in June 1944 that marked the beginning of the end of the Second World War, only a tiny handful of British veterans – thought to be fewer than 20 – survive.

One of them resides in an Enfield care home.

Donald Howkins moved to Elsyng House in Forty Hill last year, at the age of 102, having previously been living at his home in Winchmore Hill where he had resided since being relived of duty in 1946.

As one of a dwindling number of D-Day veterans still able to talk about the events of 1944, Donald has become more open about recounting his memories and, last month, shared his story with the *Dispatch*.

“It was a big boat we went over the Channel in, and we didn’t disembark for two days,” he says. “For the landings I was a dispatch motorbike rider, taking messages from one unit to another.”

Donald and his unit, part of the 90th Middlesex Regiment of the Royal Artillery, had previously gathered at a camp near Weybridge in May 1944 to undergo training, including how to waterproof their guns, before transferring to London Docks where they set sail on

6th June along with thousands of others. It was only then they were told where they were going.

“When we got the order to disembark, we climbed down the netting into the [landing] barges,” says Donald. “And that was very frightening.”

The Normandy landings were the largest seaborne invasion in history, with nearly 5,000 landing and assault craft and 160,000 troops crossing the English Channel on D-Day. In total, 875,000 arrived by the end of June.

Donald remembers getting to Normandy – Gold Beach, one of the five landing sites – but not what happened afterwards, possibly because of the trauma from what he witnessed. On the first day alone, more than 10,000 Allied troops were either killed or wounded.

He says: “The next thing I remember was getting to Arromanches [a coastal settlement] and seeing all the dead cows – they were killed by the shelling.”

Donald undertook his duties carrying messages between units as the Allied effort to connect up its landing forces continued. He later arrived in Tilly-sur-Seulles, ten miles south of Arromanches, where he engaged in combat for the first time as a gunner.

“At that point Bayeux [the nearest big town] had been recaptured without any shots being fired, so our first

action was in a place called Tilly.”

Tragically, Donald witnessed the “total destruction” of the town and lost friends from his unit, while others were wounded and sent home.

The Normandy campaign lasted until the end of August 1944. Troops moved from one town to the next, gradually liberating the French people from Nazi occupation. Some of the civilians Donald met stayed in touch with him for many years.

“I met some lovely French people out there,” he says. “They appreciated what we did. I made friends who later came back to visit me.”

In total, 22,442 soldiers from 30 different countries died while serving in British units during

the Normandy campaign. Donald would go back to visit every year on Remembrance Day, until travel was disrupted during the pandemic and ill health – he’s now in a wheelchair – made the journey difficult.

In 2022, however, Donald was able to attend the launch event for the British Normandy Memorial near the village of Ver-sur-Mer, which has since become the focal point of commemorations. Donald is even a trustee of the memorial. He says: “I used to enjoy going to Normandy every year, we always stayed in the same hotel.

“In Cabourg [a seaside town] they really done me proud and gave me the freedom of the city – they had a special party for me.”

Donald also received the highest award possible in France, the Légion d’honneur, on the 70th anniversary of D-Day.

After Normandy, the liberation of the rest of the Europe continued for several more months. Donald’s unit moved through Belgium and the Netherlands, but it was here in December that he was injured after being hit in the leg by a piece of shrapnel.

Shortly before departing London he married wife Dorothy and, while Donald was still in hospital in the Netherlands, their son Michael was born. Donald spent a couple of weeks recovering from his injuries – although to this day he still has that piece of shrapnel in his leg.

Returning to action in early 1945,

Donald rejoined his regiment as they prepared to enter Germany. On 8th May, he was in Munster guarding a prisoner-of-war camp. “I remember it well – we were all drinking tea, and suddenly we were told the war was over,” says Donald.

“We felt relief that it was over, but you have to remember I was only 23 years old – you don’t take things too seriously at that age.”

Donald continued serving with the army until 1946. “After we came back we had remembrance dinners [with the regiment] every year, but of course every year it got smaller and smaller and then there was no-one left.

“I think about them every year – it was quite a big regiment, about 800 men. But even during the war, I had more good times than bad times.”

Remarkably, Donald had four brothers who served in the war, and all survived. Two were evacuated at Dunkirk, another was in the

RAF, and a fourth worked with British intelligence.

Donald grew up in Buckingham but it in was Winchmore Hill where he and Dorothy lived after the war and had their family. Eldest son Michael now lives in Suffolk, second

son Alan lives in the United States, while daughter Susan still lives locally, in Southgate. Donald also has three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

It was also in North London that Donald’s career in the butchery business took off. Before the war, he had been a butcher’s apprentice and, after returning, Donald worked his way up to become the managing director of a company that boasted shops all over London. “After being in the army for seven years, I had to work hard to gain the experience I needed,” he says.

Among its 14 locations, Buckingham & Partners had shops in Winchmore Hill, Palmers Green and Edmonton prior to its closure in 1992, when Donald decided to retire.

Reflecting on his grandfather’s incredible life, grandson Gary said: “The nicest thing is, he is very open about it. I get very emotional when I talk about him – he is my hero, an amazing man.”

“The French appreciated what we did – I made friends who came back to visit me”

British troops landing at Gold Beach in Normandy on 6th June, 1944



Family fear being split by new Home Office visa rules

Paige and Tom married in Enfield in 2018 and have a two-year-old daughter but face the fear of Tom being denied the right to remain under new visa rules

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

An Enfield mother fears her husband could be deported if proposed changes to UK visa rules by the Home Office go ahead.

Paige Ballmi's husband Tom came to the UK in 2018 as a spouse from Albania and the couple – who have a two-year-old daughter together – are due to apply this spring for their final visa providing indefinite leave to remain.

But last month the Home Office announced the introduction of new rules which suggest Paige and Tom will no longer meet the income thresholds allowing him to remain.

Paige told the *Dispatch*: "The new proposed rules will mean the goalposts have been moved and we will no longer meet the requirements of living in the UK. It will mean that all the stress we have already endured will have been for nothing.

"We now have a two-year-old daughter and if these rules are to be set in stone, we have four months to earn the required £38,700 minimum income – or my husband will have to leave me and my daughter behind."



Paige and Tom Ballmi with their daughter

Tom works as a builder currently but his income fluctuates and would be unlikely to meet the new higher threshold, which the Home Office is proposing in place of the current position of £26,500. Paige hasn't returned to work since their daughter was born.

She said: "It will push me into the welfare state, as I have no job, no childcare, no

support, he [Tom] is my only support. He's been in the UK for so long and built his home here, he has nowhere else to go.

"He has worked so hard [but] has become a government scapegoat just because of where he happened to be born. We are not the only family that will suffer under these new proposed rules, but it's not fair."

Paige and Tom were separated not long after they became engaged when the Home Office ruled in 2017 that their combined earnings did not meet the existing threshold – a decision that was later overturned by a court appeal.

Paige added: "I haven't slept all night worrying and my PTSD, which was already caused by the Home Office, is now rife. I'm finding it hard to function at the thought of my family being split up again.

"I'm disgusted, disappointed, and I just don't know what to do. These rules already tried to kill me once. I'm not sure we have the strength to do it again."

The Home Office's press release announcing the change states that from spring, the government will increase the earning threshold for overseas workers by nearly

50% from its current position of £26,200 to £38,700, "encouraging businesses to look to British talent first and invest in their workforce, helping us to deter employers from over-relying on migration, while bringing salaries in line with the average full-time salary for these types of jobs [...]" The government will also increase the minimum income required for British citizens and those settled in the UK who want their family members to join them".

Home Secretary James Cleverly said: "It is clear that net migration remains far too high. By leaving the European Union we gained control over who can come to the UK, but far more must be done to bring those numbers down so British workers are not undercut and our public services put under less strain.

"My plan will deliver the biggest-ever reduction in net migration and will mean around 300,000 people who came to the UK last year would not have been able to do so. I am taking decisive action to halt the drastic rise in our work visa routes and crack down on those who seek to take advantage of our hospitality."

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Hinterlands Enfield Project News!

Hinterlands Enfield 2023-2024 is a grassroots community and artist-led project created by the Canal & River Trust to explore the past, present and future of the Lee Navigation – for community, culture, environment and climate. Collectively artists, local groups and partners are thinking about placemaking and developing work and activities in response to identity, heritage, nature, ecology, migration and folklore themes which will culminate in a River Lea Festival held in July 2024. For more information about the artists and project please visit <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk> and search 'Hinterlands Enfield' or follow @Hinterlandsenfield2324 on instagram for updates.



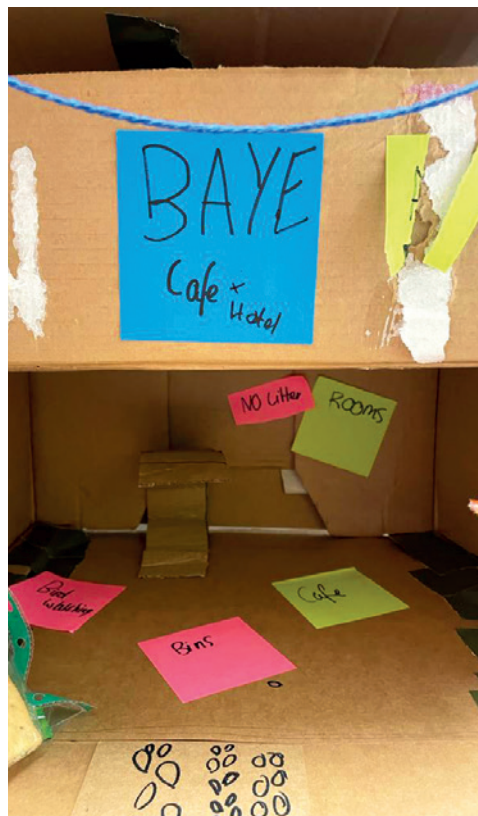
Raynham School Pupils 'wayfinding with eel ribbons' on Chalk Bridge, River Lea
Credit: Sophie Thompson-Semple

BIRD HIDE DREAMING!

Year 5 & 6 Raynham School Pupils recently visited the Lee Navigation with artist Cathy Wade and Canal & River Trust Learning, Skills, Volunteer and Operations Team to explore holistic 'placemaking in nature' one of a number of exciting place based themes they have been exploring since April 2023. This term the artist collaborated with architects from Enfield Council Zahra Haider, Amy O'Shaughnessy, Tolu Faleti and Sandy Rompotiyoke (Periscope) to co-create urban planning and design workshops with Raynham pupils that included the design and making of 'Bird Hide' models and explored what the canal could look like in 2038.



School pupils presenting their 'bird hide models' and asking Operations Manager Sandile Mthiyane, Joseph Gray Engineering Technician and Mike Wakeford Skills & Learning Coordinator questions about the River Lea
Credit: Sophie Thompson-Semple



Raynham Reporters, Bird Hide design and model making, 2023
Credit: Cathy Wade

In October artist Chantelle Purcell installed 'Reflections' a series of banners along the Lea with words from members of the Afro Caribbean community in Enfield that the artist has been working with to explore our connection to water.

"All water has a perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was." – Toni Morrison, The Site of Memory

This quote is a starting inspiration point for Chantelle Purcell's residency which is encompassing a journey back to the artist's ancestral homeland through folklore and storytelling, a discovery of selfhood and collective remembering that seeks to interweave different narratives from the Afro diaspora. Water for many Caribbean communities holds deep significance. Chantelle is collating audio recordings whilst capturing a series of portraits to form an evolving archive,

WHAT ROLE DOES WATER PLAY IN OUR LIVES?

A photography and audio project inviting women from the Afro Diaspora to share their thoughts on the cultural significance of water. Visit the website or follow the link to find out more information.

www.chantellempurcell.com



There is so much more happening, underway and in the planning with all of the amazing artists, community groups and partners based in the area watch this space for more 2024 news! Or follow @HinterlandsEnfield2324 for regular updates about the project.

Hinterlands Enfield has been made possible through support from the Arts Council England, players of People's Postcode Lottery, Enfield Council and Canal & River Trust



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Maternity services at North Mid rated 'inadequate'

Care Quality Commission inspectors who visited the Edmonton hospital say they were “deeply concerned” by what they found at the maternity unit



North Middlesex University Hospital's maternity unit

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

The boss of North Mid has vowed to make improvements after the rating for the hospital's maternity services was downgraded by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Following an inspection last May, inspectors have written a report that rates the maternity unit at North Middlesex University Hospital as 'inadequate', after previously being rated 'good'.

Saying they were “deeply concerned” by what they found, some of the issues raised by the inspectors included “poor leadership”, a higher-than-average rate of stillbirths, lack of record-keeping, and equipment not being properly maintained.

The CQC inspectors also reported that they'd received feedback from staff who told them they felt “bullied, intimidated and undermined by leaders”.

In response to the CQC report Dr Nnenna Osuji, chief executive of North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust, said they had “made significant improvements in all these areas in the six months since the inspection took place”.

As well as maternity services dropping from 'good' to 'inadequate'

overall, the CQC has also dropped the ratings for being well-led and for being safe to 'inadequate' as well. Last year's inspection didn't rate how effective, caring, or responsive the service was. The overall rating for the hospital as a whole remains 'requires improvement'.

Carolyn Jenkinson, CQC's deputy director of secondary and specialist healthcare, said: “When we inspected maternity services at North Middlesex University Hospital we were deeply concerned to find both staff and women and people using the service being let down by poor leadership.

“Leaders lacked oversight of the issues we found, and we saw signs that a closed culture could be developing within the service, discouraging staff from speaking up to improve people's care.

“For example, there was a process in place to assess people's risks during triage, however staff were not using it, meaning they didn't always prioritise the people who needed care the most urgently.

“While many staff were committed to improving the service, we found leaders didn't always support them to do so. Staff told us leaders didn't always take action when they reported incidents, and some midwifery staff told us they

felt bullied, intimidated and undermined by leaders.

“Women and people using the service also told us of poor experiences, but we found leaders were not always using people's feedback to drive improvements.

“The trust needs to take immediate action to ensure leaders are listening to their staff and the people using this service to drive improvement.”

Since the CQC inspection six months ago, North Mid says it has “reviewed and revamped” its clinical assessment pathway for triaging patients, improved training for staff and also increased staffing levels – recently appointing 20 new midwives.

Dr Osuji said the report “reflects many of the national challenges that are facing maternity providers all over the country” and added:



Dr Nnenna Osuji Credit North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust

“I acknowledge the findings, which focus heavily on triage, training and staffing. We have made significant improvements in all these areas in the six months since the inspection took place.

“I am particularly proud that so many of our nurses and midwives who undertake placements with us during their training choose to return to North Mid after they qualify, with 20 new colleagues most recently this autumn, increasing our staff base. We have also made some important changes to bolster our triage service.

“I realise that [the report] will be difficult for our staff and local community. I am and continue to be proud of the good in North Mid's maternity service, and am confident that the improvements we have made in the past year will continue, as part of our forward-looking focus. I hope that local families will be assured.”

In the CQC report, the service stillbirth rate in February 2023 was said to be 6.82 per 1,000 births, above the national rate of 4.8 – and significantly increased from North Mid's 2020 reported rate of 3.71.

Addressing this data, Dr Osuji added: “Any and every stillbirth is a tragedy. We strive continuously to reduce and mitigate any outcome of that nature. Based on the most recent data, our stillbirth rate is in keeping with maternity units of similar size and population demographics.

“Like all maternity services, we are working hard to reduce stillbirths and to address this and other inequities that unfairly impact our local community.”

Chief nurse Professor Lenny Byrne added: “Our local community has every right to expect that their local maternity service is going to keep them and their baby safe, and we are determined to live up to that expectation.”

The full report is available on CQC's website: Visit [cqc.org.uk/location/RAPNM](https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/RAPNM)



Angel Corner is one of the borough bus stops now served by the Superloop

'Superloop' buses arrive in Enfield

The 'Superloop' express bus service has been launched in Enfield.

Transport for London (TfL) launched the SL1 bus route between North Finchley and Walthamstow – via New Southgate, Arnos Grove, Palmers Green and Edmonton – on Saturday, 9th December.

The Superloop concept was announced last March as a way to improve public transport connections between outer London boroughs, providing express buses that only stop at limited places to make them as fast as possible. Together, the routes will form a ring around the capital.

The SL1 gives people more transport options to move between key locations such as transport hubs and town centres in Barnet, Enfield and Waltham Forest boroughs, including stops at New Southgate, Arnos Grove and Silver Street stations.

However, the route has also been criticised for not providing a direct link to North Middlesex Hospital in Edmonton despite pleas from local NHS bosses. Stops at Palmers Green and the Meridian Water development were added following a public consultation over the summer.

New TfL data shows that customers are already taking advantage of the Superloop network. The data so far shows demand on all Superloop routes has increased above the network average level.

The full loop of the Superloop will be complete by spring, mayor Sadiq Khan has pledged.

Khan, said: “It is fantastic to see the Superloop already encouraging more people onto London's bus network. It's proving a real game-changer.”

The SL1 runs every twelve minutes Monday to Saturday and every 15 minutes on evenings and Sundays. This service, combined with the 34, will mean customers can expect a bus every five to six minutes during Monday to Saturday, up from every eight minutes at present.

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I want our street bins back!

Conservative councillor Ruby Sampson despairs at the removal of street bins in Cockfosters ward

In 2022 I was honoured to be elected for the first time as one of the councillors for Cockfosters ward.

I am proud to be the youngest councillor in Enfield. When I was elected, the average age of a councillor in the UK across all political parties was 60! We need to see more young people, particularly women, in politics.

It may seem like a departure from the traditional activities of your twenties, but young people can be proficient in their council work, still excel in a career, and of course party by night!

We can also provide a different perspective on local issues – 70% of people living in Enfield are under the age of 45, with the average resident being 32 years old. Young people face distinctly different problems and we will only see these issues reflected more acutely when the make-up of the council changes.

Councillors make long-term decisions for the future generations of the borough so it is only right we ensure our voices are represented. But little did I think when I became a councillor that street bins would be such a contentious issue.

The street rubbish bins in Cockfosters are



An extant Enfield Council street bin

disappearing. No, they haven't sprouted legs and walked away, although that would be perhaps a less astounding explanation of their disappearance.

Myself and my Conservative ward colleague Alessandro Georgiou have been consistently lobbying for the return of these street bins to Cockfosters. We are always faced with the illogical argument from the council that "if a bin is being used too

much or not enough we will remove it".

So instead of residents being able to dispose of their rubbish, they are forced to play hide-and-seek with their bins to see whether they are there that day or not!

In meetings I've had with officers they claim that their policy of removing bins reduces fly-tipping. But in Cockfosters we have repeatedly seen the very opposite. Fly-tipping is now occurring in the exact spot where a bin used to be. The bolts that used to secure the bin to the pavement are now the only remaining evidence of its previous presence.

I know that the council removing bins and not retuning them has been occurring across the west of Enfield. Residents quite rightly find this policy maddening. The council should have more important things to do than removing street furniture in Cockfosters.

"Fly-tipping is now occurring in the exact spot where a bin used to be"



Ruby Sampson was elected to represent Cockfosters in May 2022

You won't find many young people passionate about bins. But I am. I find this policy deeply frustrating and I echo the numerous emails from my residents saying: "Bring back our bins!"

Ruby Sampson is a councillor for Cockfosters ward alongside Alessandro Georgiou (both Conservative). Residents of the ward can get in touch: Call 020 8132 0539 Email cllr.ruby.sampson@enfield.gov.uk

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EDMONTON YOUTH HEROES



★ ★ Sponsored by **edminitons** the big club for little shoppers ★ ★

First lunar football kit designed by teen

A colourful kit designed by a local schoolgirl could be worn by the lunar footballers of the future.

Talented 13-year-old and budding engineer Erim Ali beat over 500 other entries to design the kit and had her winning design presented to her by Lioness star Bethany England and aerodynamicist Sophie Harker.

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)'s 'Engineer a Better World' competition invited children to design the first football kit for the Moon after IET revealed humans could be playing a competitive game of football on the lunar surface by 2035.

Erim was one of two winners who got to have their designs made real and modelled by a professional footballer. The teenager counts astronaut Mae Jemison and education activist Malala



Footballer Beth England (left) and aerodynamicist Sophie Harker (right) model the lunar kits designed by Erim Ali (centre left) and Ishaani Nair (centre right) Yousafzai as her idols.

Hoping to one day be an engineer, Erim's belief that football should be for any gender, race or ethnicity led her to create a unisex kit

with "geometric, molecule-inspired shapes in a muted dragonfly colour pallet".

The judges were inspired by Erim's environmental considerations and the incorporation of an inventive, future-thinking sweat absorption and correction patch that would turn sweat into usable water.

Speaking of her win, Erim said: "As a Spurs fan it's an honour to receive my winning shirt design from Beth England. The competition really inspired me to think big, be creative and show how science can change how we work, live and play in the future."



"Maybe one day I will get to wear the shirt for a kickabout on the Moon as 2035 is not that far away."

The aim of the Engineer a Better World competition was to challenge "outdated perceptions of engineering" and show children how they could combine a passion for football and space with a career in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

To find out more about the campaign, the Lunar Football Rule Book or information about STEM Visit eabw.theiet.org

Nominate your heroes

Dispatch readers are welcome to nominate their own 'Edmonton Youth Hero' – an inspirational young person (16 or under) from Edmonton who has made a valuable contribution to their local community. Simply email your nomination to EnfieldDispatch@socialspider.com

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LETTERS

Send us your letters

Got an opinion on something in Enfield? We accept letters of up to 150 words from people and organisations in the borough. Email EnfieldDispatch@socialspider.com before the next deadline on **Monday 15th January**.

Our views were ignored

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Regarding the new development to be built at 2 Moorfield Road [Go-ahead for 100% affordable homes scheme in Enfield Highway, published online 21st September] I am absolutely astounded that Enfield Council has approved the planning application for this development, having no regard for the residents or their objections whatsoever. The whole planning procedure has been a farce. There are still residents on this estate who have no knowledge of what is going on.

This was the second planning application [the first was rejected]. We would like to know why Enfield Council has decided to go ahead with the proposed development, only this time with three buildings, up to twelve storeys high, when the original plan was for one eight/nine storey building.

Why are they totally ignoring the recommendation in the original daylight assessment that the proposed development should be no more than four storeys?

Mavis Young

Lytchet/Moorfield Road Estate

Winter help

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Winter can be a challenging time of year, but we at Royal Voluntary Service are determined to be there for people. We know that shorter daylight hours, cold weather and the worry of heating homes are just some of the factors that make this season difficult.

We've created the 'Stay Safe, Warm and Well' guide, which is packed full of the most useful information, tips and advice to support people through the challenges of winter. It includes vital information such as money saving tips, how to keep active and eat a healthy diet, how to ensure your home is gas safe, who to call in a power emergency, contacts for mental health support, and where to find essential NHS contact details. From 22nd–26th January, we will also be hosting a 'Virtual Village Hall', a free online activity hub.

Details of both can be found at royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/safe-warm-well. Physical copies of the guide can also be requested by calling 0800 731 9197.

Catherine Johnstone
Chief executive,
Royal Voluntary Service

Temporary banking fix

Dear Enfield Dispatch

While I think it is a good idea to provide banking hubs run by the Post Office in areas where banks have closed down their branches over the past few years [New 'banking hub' to help residents access cash, Page 14], I think the services offered may be too limited and, despite good intentions, are only going to provide a temporary fix.

Major high street banks offer services online but there are some issues that can only be dealt with in person and require specialist knowledge.

When my mother passed away in 2017, her flat was sold to release funds related to my late grandmother's estate so that I could distribute the money to my family, as stipulated in her will. This had resulted from the flat being put in trust. But by the time my mother passed away, the other trustees were no longer alive, which left myself and my cousin to deal with the situation.

The trust had been assigned to us by a solicitor several years previously. Documents had to be signed in person by the two trustees and we had to show our passports and other ID as proof of identity. Several weeks later, we eventually got the letters countersigned in the bank branch after they liaised directly with the bereavement department. We also received compensation for wasted time, numerous visits and taking time off work.

Another common issue is getting approval for power of attorney, particularly in cases involving people with dementia. I don't see any mention of this banking hub providing anything other than basic services. In my opinion it is no substitute for a full branch service with experienced staff.

Neil Littman
Winchmore Hill

Celebrating 50 years of Chickenshed

Susan Jamson from Chickenshed on how the Southgate theatre group plans to celebrate its 50th anniversary this year



Chickenshed founders Mary Ward MBE (left) and Jo Collins MBE (right) at the original chicken shed in Barnet that gave the theatre group its name

Chickenshed's hugely successful Christmas show – *The Toymaker's Child*, which ends its run on 13th January – also marks the launch of our 50th anniversary year in 2024.

This show is the first of many events we have planned for the coming year as we offer opportunities to connect people from our past, present and future. Chickenshed is a community that embraces everyone. Every person who walks through our 'door' changes us in some way – and we hope they are also changed.

The Chickenshed story began in 1974, when musician and composer Jo Collins met teacher and director Mary Ward. They both shared the belief that everyone should have the opportunity to perform and create, leading them to establish our theatre company.

Initially operating out of local church halls, the pair approached Lady Elizabeth Byng, a local benefactor and landowner, to inquire if there might be a vacant space on her land that the company could use as its base – history was made when she generously offered them the use of a disused chicken shed in Barnet!

For five decades since we have

produced bold and beautiful work from our limitless belief in each other. Through our productions, our performance training, our education courses and our outreach projects, we have created wonder out of chaos and change out of challenge.

We are very excited about the coming year when we'll be celebrating our 50th anniversary by gathering stories, sharing memories and creating a collaborative vision for another 50 years of innovation. As we celebrate this milestone, we will reflect on the incredible achievements, shared endeavours and unwavering support of our Chickenshed and wider North London communities – and beyond.

It's a time to cherish the memories that helped to shape us and the triumphs that inspired us to push boundaries and show the world what we can be.

Throughout this remarkable year we invite our community to join us, as we present a series of special shows, events, initiatives and fundraising campaigns celebrating this monumental occasion.

Commemorative gatherings and community-driven projects will provide an opportunity for everyone to be a part of this historic moment.

An exciting part of our celebra-

tions is a National Lottery Heritage Fund project called 'Echoes', which will help us to keep alive the stories of those who have contributed to Chickenshed's past and present – and will preserve Chickenshed's heritage for future generations to come.

Five decade-focused community projects will explore different aspects of our history with events and exhibitions throughout the year, culminating in a film documenting the 50-year history and heritage of Chickenshed.

Each decade focuses on unique themes, from the 1970s letter-writing exchange between our original Chickenshed members and young people involved in Chickenshed today, to the 1980s celebration of Enfield as the home and long-term supporter of Chickenshed.

The 1990s highlights our inclusive education programme, and the fourth decade invites the community to vote for next year's Chickenshed Christmas show. The fifth decade explores Chickenshed's theatrical methods based on participants own lived experiences.

We hope you will join us on this incredible journey!

To find out more about Chickenshed's 50th anniversary year:
Visit chickenshed.org.uk/50



Review: The Toymaker's Child

Chickenshed's Christmas show is another spectacular triumph

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Chickenshed has always been popular across Enfield and Barnet, but last year the theatre group achieved wider national fame thanks to an emotional run to the semi-finals of *Britain's Got Talent*, when even Simon Cowell gave them a standing ovation.

In her programme notes for *The Toymaker's Child*, managing director Louise Perry reflects on the impact television stardom has had when she writes: "We weren't expecting the magnitude of love [...] It was as if the door we had been pushing against for so many years was suddenly opened, and the room we fell into was filled with hundreds of balloons with our name on."

"It felt amazing – beautifully overwhelming – and convinced us even more that THIS needs to spread, to show the world what it can be."

Understandably, there has been a surge of interest in Chickenshed's shows since last April, with tickets selling fast and perhaps putting a little bit more pressure on the theatre's young performers to live up to the hype.

I never doubted they would. I've been watching the annual Christmas shows since 2016 and I've yet to see a performance I could describe as anything less than fantastic – and *The Toymaker's Child* is certainly no exception.

Much like last year, when *Jack!* took the old-fashioned story of a giantkiller and placed it into a modern world of video game baddies and bosses, *The Toymaker's Child* transforms the wooden carpenter's toy Pinocchio into an AI robot that spends the show trying

to work out if it might be something more than a lump of metal with a computer chip.

It's another great concept, and one that is perfectly timed given the recent transformational arrival of ChatGPT and the debates about the influence of technology it has sparked.

While there might not be any definitive answers about the future of AI to be found here, the journey of PIN:0cch10 is still a thought-provoking one. Most importantly, it's a fun one, as the robot toy and her owner, Katy, venture into mysterious surroundings such as the trap-laden funfair, the 'unschool' where stupidity is rewarded, and the not-so-leisurely leisure island.

The big set-pieces, sometimes featuring as many as 200 actors, singers and dancers on the stage at once, are interspersed with regular reports from a news desk above the stage where two hapless anchors do their best to get the 'scoop' of what PIN:0cch10 is up to. At one point this theme is extended to one of the songs, in which – to my surprise – copies of *Enfield Dispatch* are even used as a prop.

Everything from the music to the set design is perfectly matched to the mood of the story, helping bring each character to life.

With four rotating casts, there are 800 performers involved in this production in total, including (as usual) many children with special educational needs and physical disabilities – seeing how much joy they get from performing on stage is always a delight.

The Toymaker's Child is showing at Chickenshed Theatre until 13th January.
For tickets:
Call 020 8292 9222
Visit chickenshed.org.uk

Is this Enfield's best Indian restaurant?

Neil Littman on why Anokhi in Winchmore Hill is his favourite local curry house

Channa masala (spiced chickpeas), pilau rice, chicken rezala and a chapati



On a cold damp Monday evening in November, after deciding to give the *Masterchef* finals a miss, I visited Anokhi in Winchmore Hill Broadway, which has been open since 2019.

This was the first time I have eaten there, having ordered takeaways from them during the pandemic lockdown. My invited guest had a cold, so I went on my own. Undaunted and hungry, I made the effort and was surprised by how busy they were for the beginning of the week.

At one table alone, a party of 14 were already settled in (for a work leaving do apparently) and other tables were occupied, in addition to a steady stream of home deliveries.

Anokhi means 'unique' in Punjabi – an appropriate description as it turned out – and the restaurant is a bright star in the area, with award-winning chef Ray at the helm (evidenced by a large gold cup on top of their counter which I initially mistook for a football trophy).

Ray's experience includes working at Michelin-starred establishments such as La Porte Des Indies in Marble Arch, which

features palm trees and a waterfall! Anokhi's interior, by contrast, is less gimmicky, with clean lines and a mural on one wall.

Anokhi offers dishes from several regions in India and a changing menu throughout the year, though this meant my favourite duck curry was not available. I was also impressed to see a menu offering dishes that I had not heard of before, demonstrating they are prepared to take risks with a non-formulaic approach.

"They are prepared to take risks with a non-formulaic approach"

There is a decent wine list, but I stuck to a small Cobra beer and a poppadom and ordered a starter of panner potli. On the plate were four wraps of filo pastry and inside each was spiced paneer cheese with a marinade on the side. They looked like those nibbles you only buy at Christmas from M&S, but the taste of the paneer mix was

not something you would get ready-prepared.

From the main courses, I ordered chicken rezala, their version of a popular Bengali dish. The original recipe includes cream and nuts but as a nod to those with allergies, Anokhi avoids serving dishes with nuts. I also ordered channa masala (spiced chickpeas), pilau rice and a chapati which looked like two servings but was simply very large and homemade.

Newer items on the menu include hara gujarat (vegetable cutlets), aloo mutter tikki (pan-fried savoury potato patties) and golden crab cakes, which they have adapted as a house special. They also have an extensive vegetarian menu.

Overall, I think Anokhi are offering the best Indian food in Enfield, and the service is good considering how busy there were on the evening I dined there. My bill came to £35 including drinks and service.

Anokhi Indian Restaurant can be found at 757 Green Lanes, Winchmore Hill N21 3SA and is open Monday-Thursday 5.30pm-10.30pm, Fridays and Saturdays 5.30pm-11pm, and Sundays 5.30pm-10pm. To book: Call 020 8360 4144 Visit anokhi-restaurant.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 15th January**.

THEATRE

TEO Theatre presents *Snow White*
From Thursday 11th until Sunday 14th January
Waterhouse Hall, 77 Compton Road, Winchmore Hill N21 3NU

Brighten up your January with a trip to TEO's family pantomime! This lavish production is packed full of music, magic, laughter, and fun for the whole family.

Tickets £12 adults, £7 children
Visit teo-theatre.org.uk/book

Chickenshed presents *The Toymaker's Child*
Until Saturday 13th January
Chickenshed, Chase Side, Southgate N14 4PE

Our talented cast of over 200 fill the stage with wonder, beauty, and just a touch of delightful chaos in our annual Christmas show, running at various times and dates until 13th January.

Tickets from £10
Visit chickenshed.org.uk

EXHIBIT

Without Boundaries Photography Exhibition
Until Friday 9th February
North London Hospice, 110 Barrowell Green, Winchmore Hill N21 3AY

An exhibition of new work by the North London Hospice 'Catching the Light' photography group. The exhibition is open on weekdays excluding Wednesdays. Tickets are free and can be booked online or by visiting Eventbrite.

Free entry but booking essential
Visit bit.ly/3v9yath

WORKSHOP

'Animation Live' Theatre Workshop
Saturday 27th January, 1.30pm-3.30pm
39 London Road, Enfield Town EN2 6DS

This workshop will explore the art of using simple animations in performance. The art of interacting with animation is a skill encompassing mime, clowning, devising, and collaboration across art forms. It will teach performance styles and devising ideas and explore how we fuse eye-catching animated ideas with strong performance to create magical images!

Booking required via email
Email penny.skerrett@enfield.gov.uk

TREES

Forty Hall Orchard Wassail
Sunday 28th January, from 1.30pm
Forty Hall Farm, Enfield EN2 9HA

Join us in the orchard for our annual wassail ceremony. Bring along drums, tambourines anything that makes a noise to awaken the trees!

Free entry
Email fhforchard@gmail.com

CHOIR

MumSing Choir
Mondays 10am-11.30am
St Stephen's Church Hall, Park Avenue, Enfield EN1 2BA
Mondays 7.30pm-9pm
Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road, EN2 6TG

At MumSing you'll be singing some great songs. Anything from your favourite musicals, gospel, 80s ballads, 90s RnB and, obviously, Disney! I'm sorry, but if you don't like Disney, you just can't join!

Free taster session, then £17 per month
Visit mumsing.vocallysound.co.uk

BRIDGE

Duplicate Bridge
Every Friday 1pm-4.30pm
St Stephen's Church Hall, Park Avenue, Enfield EN1 2BA

Duplicate bridge, partners not essential.

£3 entry
Call 07810 130 884

SEWING

Refashion and Reuse Social
Tuesdays, 7-9pm
Stitch Crafts and Classes! 2
Hazelwood Lane, Palmers Green, N13 5EX

Join Liz for an evening of sewing where we encourage you to focus on altering and mending second-hand or worn clothes to create something that can become a favourite once again. Turn some old jeans into a fabulous bag, add some embroidery detail to a boring sweatshirt, restyle a frumpy skirt to make it your own.

£8 entry
Call 07903 614 726
Visit stitch.org.uk

AROUND THE BOROUGH

ENFIELD HIGHWAY

New 'banking hub' to help residents access cash

EASTERN ENFIELD WILL BENEFIT from a new 'banking hub' as a way to "protect access to cash".

The facility in Hertford Road will become the third of its kind launched in London by Link, the UK's cash access and ATM network. Banking hubs are a shared banking space, similar to a traditional bank branch, but are available to everyone.

The Enfield North constituency area, which includes Enfield Highway where many bank branches have closed down in recent years, was identified by Link as a place where cash is not easily available for local residents.

Enfield North MP Feryal Clark has long called for better access to cash along Hertford Road, following the closure in 2021 of a Barclays branch in



An existing banking hub in Scotland Credit Link

Enfield Wash and Santander branch in Enfield Highway – which she said entrenched "socio-economic divides".

The new banking hub in Hertford Road will consist of a counter service operated by Post Office employees, where customers of any bank can withdraw and deposit cash, make bill payments and carry out regular banking transactions. In addition, there will be private spaces where

customers can speak to community bankers from their own bank, with staff from different banks working in rotation.

Feryal Clark said: "In recent years several bank branches have closed their doors for good, leaving many of my residents with no access to a bank. That's why the news that a banking hub has been granted for our community is so important.

"This will provide residents and local businesses with access and support to manage their money without having to travel for miles."

The banking hub will be delivered by Cash Access UK. It is now engaging with the local community and looking for potential sites with a hope to open the hub in the next few months.

MERIDIAN WATER

Award for council-led scheme

ENFIELD COUNCIL'S FLAGSHIP Meridian Water redevelopment in Edmonton has been named 'best local authority initiative' as part of a national awards scheme.

Not-for-profit group Revo, which says it "supports the interests and values of the retail, leisure, and placemaking real estate community" picked Meridian Water for its award category presented to schemes led by local councils.

The award "reflects recently completed milestones" including the completion of the first council homes on the site three months

ago, the opening of Enfield Construction Skills Academy, and the creation of a temporary community garden.

Council leader Nesil Caliskan said: "We are thrilled to see Meridian Water receive another award for Enfield Council's innovative approach to public sector regeneration schemes. 2023 has been a big year for the project, with several major milestones achieved. Meridian Water is rapidly picking up pace and becoming an example to other councils on how regeneration can benefit everyone."

RIDGEWAY

Care home rebuild approved

BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A CARE HOME IS SET TO UNDERGO "major" redevelopment which will see the current two-storey building replaced with a new 95-bed residence – doubling its size.

Applicant Geras Estates Ltd plans to replace Arnold House, located in The Ridgeway, with a new four-storey care home and two car parks. The proposal designed by DAP Architecture also features seven day-lounges, seven quiet rooms, a café/bistro, a games room, tea room, beauty salon, drawing room, study room and library, and cinema.

The site, which has been vacant for two years, does not include any listed buildings, however Arnold House

is classified as a 'non-designated heritage asset' as a "rare example of Edwardian architecture within this section of The Ridgeway".

For this reason, heritage officers and The Victorian Society objected to the demolition. A spokesperson for the society said: "This building is a rare survivor in the area and a good example of a large, early 20th Century house with many fine interior features."

Complaints from local residents included fears of increased on-street parking and traffic and the new building being too high, too close to neighbours, and having inadequate access. But at a planning committee meeting in late November councilors voted to approve the application.

SOUTHGATE

Men jailed over 'gangster movie' killing



Victim Koray Alpergin

FOUR MEN HAVE BEEN SENTENCED to a combined 46 years in jail for their part in an abduction and killing that police likened to a "gangster movie".

Turkish DJ Koray Alpergin, 43, was kidnapped from outside his home address in Ebony Crescent, Southgate, on 13th October 2022, when a group of men bundled both him and girlfriend Gozde Dalbudak into the back of a van after he arrived home.

Koray was then taken to a disused restaurant in Tottenham where he was repeatedly physically assaulted, resulting in 94 separate injuries to his body including 14 fractured ribs and a blow to the

head, which caused brain damage. The pathologist who analysed his body estimated that Koray would not have survived his injuries long after they were inflicted.

After killing him, the men then moved his body to a trading estate in Tottenham, before moving it again to Oakwood Hill Industrial Estate in Loughton. The body was discovered on 15th October. Meanwhile, Gozde was left locked in a toilet for two days before being freed.

Ali Kavak, aged 26 of De Quincey Road in Tottenham, was found guilty of manslaughter, kidnap, false imprisonment and perverting the course of justice. Tejean Kennedy, aged 33 of Cricklewood Broadway, was found guilty of manslaughter, kidnap and false imprisonment. Steffan Gordon, aged 34 of Dehavilland Close in Northolt, pleaded guilty to kidnap and was found guilty of false imprisonment. Samuel Owusu-Opoku, aged 35 of Dunbar Road in Wood Green, pleaded guilty to perverting the course of justice and was found guilty of kidnap.

Kavak has now been sentenced to 13 years in jail, Kennedy to 18 years, Gordon to eight years, and Owusu-Opoku to seven years.

Detective chief inspector Matt Webb, the lead investigator, said the case was one of the most complex his team had dealt with. DCI Webb said: "The circumstances of Koray's death were like something you see in a gangster movie. First he was kidnapped by a group of men in a highly organised operation that involved placing a tracker on his car. He was then taken to a disused restaurant where he was subjected to a horrific attack.

"We cracked this case through painstaking and lengthy analysis of CCTV that demonstrated the group's collective activity and presence at key locations. We also presented detailed mobile phone records to the jury showing how they were in contact before, during and after Koray was kidnapped.

"I'm pleased that these extremely violent and dangerous men will be in prison for a long time."



Tejean Kennedy (left) and Ali Kavak (right) were both found guilty of manslaughter

BRIMSDOWN

Crook conned people out of £192k

A MAN WHO CONNED FIVE people out of over £192,750 has pleaded guilty to three counts of money laundering.

Nydayishmye Shabani, aged 49 and from Carterhatch Road in Brimsdown, used his company Protek Property Solutions Ltd to charge vulnerable victims for unnecessary and over-priced roofing work.

Following a detailed investigation by Hertfordshire County Council's

trading standards team, Shabani, admitted money laundering offences at St Albans Crown Court on Friday, 1st December.

Protek Property Solutions operated by door-stepping vulnerable and elderly residents in a deliberate attempt to exploit them. The business was also used as a front for illegal money laundering.

The team investigating managed to secure refunds back from the banks of over £280,000.

Towners exceeding expectations at season's halfway point

Andrew Warshaw gets the verdict on the season so far from Enfield Town boss Gavin Macpherson

Enfield Town move into the second half of the season in optimistic mood having exceeded expectations since the new management team arrived in the summer.

When Gavin Macpherson and his coaching staff took over following Town's disappointing ninth-place finish last year, "reset" was very much the optimum word. It was widely anticipated that it might take two campaigns for Town to get back to challenging for promotion as Gavin team rebuilt the squad.

Instead, for much of the last six months, the Towners have found themselves in or around the play-off places despite having lost ace striker Jake Cass two games into the campaign with a career-threatening injury.

"Obviously there have been some ups and downs," Gavin told the *Dispatch* as he assessed the first half of the season. "Losing Jake was a huge blow because we'd built a lot of what we wanted to do around him. It would have jolted a different group of players

yet we found a way.

"Going out of the FA Cup when we were one game short of playing Charlton, as it turned out, was another big disappointment, but from a league perspective we've got to be really, really pleased, not only because of our position and results.

"The dressing room is a very close-knit unit which makes for a really good foundation ahead of the second half of the season."

It's no secret that the club was focused on more likely being in the play-off mix next season rather than this one, but the manager is not surprised at being third in the table at Christmas.

"I like to go about my business very quietly and not make stupid predictions," said Gavin. "But we looked at it and thought, why not this season? If at the start we'd known we'd be in contention in December I think everyone would have taken that. Is it above expectations? Maybe, but I believe in what we do and in the players. We're there on merit, it's no fluke."

The fact that attendances are up compared to last season despite a budget that is dwarfed by many ambitious clubs who are lower in the Isthmian Premium Division table is a testament to the style of football the management staff preach, and their attention to detail both during matches and in training.

"When I looked at the previous style of play, I thought it would be quite difficult to change system completely," explained Gavin. "So in that respect I have to give a huge shout-out to the players who have worked with us from minute one."

It's still very much a work in progress, but there is no doubt the club is heading in the right direction.

Gavin continued: "When I took the role, it's no secret there were other offers. I always instinctively thought Enfield was the place for me but you still have to do your homework and understand what the club's about.

"The sheer enthusiasm and passion from the board, the kitman, the fans and all the volunteers runs incredibly deep. Sometimes you have to take a step back and go, 'wow'."

Combining a full-time job with management has been a massively time-consuming combination, as it is for most non-league managers.

"It's probably harder in non-league because it's not full-time, yet you still have to put the work in if you want to give yourself the best chance because there are no half measures," said Gavin. "There's no magic formula, it goes with the territory."

And, of course, the club is still in Europe in the guise of the Fenix Trophy, with the recent 3-1 home victory over holders BK Sjkold of Denmark generating rare nationwide exposure. "I wasn't very well on the night but I had to be there," said Gavin. "I didn't realise quite how much it meant to the club.

"Will I laud it up if we go on and win the competition? Damn right I will!"



Holtwhites Bowls Club is based in Holtwhites Hill

Give lawn bowls a try in Enfield this year

Keith Comley from Holtwhites Bowls Clubs invites novices to give the sport a try

Traditionally bowls is viewed in England like driving a Volvo or taking a cruise for a holiday – it's something for retired folk.

But bowls is increasingly being enjoyed by the younger generation, and there's no reason why young people can't join their local bowls club.

Have you recently ceased playing football, hockey, rugby, netball or golf, and find you miss sport with good facilities and a social atmosphere? Bowls is a fun sport that can be played by anyone of any age to a competitive level.

At Holtwhites Bowls Club, we have a professionally maintained green with six rinks and a clubhouse to enjoy tea, coffee, beer or wine. By playing bowls, you will be enjoying the health benefits that exercise and sport can provide as well as joining a new friendship group and the challenge of trying something new.

Holtwhites is a club for newcomers and experienced players alike; for those who want to play socially with a few friends and for those who want to play competitively at all levels.

For beginners we provide free introductory sessions and coaching. I liken bowls to golf and chess; the basics are quite simple but, to be good, well, that takes practice!

Experienced players will be free to play in club matches as well as regional and national competition. There is also the opportunity to muck-in, helping with running the club, maybe gardening the borders, helping with clubhouse

maintenance, while still enjoying the social side.

This all helps build and maintain our welcoming, vibrant growing club. As a venue, we are proud to host Middlesex county matches and cup competitions.

We play casually Monday evenings, Saturday mornings and certain weekday afternoons. Matches are held weekdays, weekends and evenings. Yes, bowls is played at times to suit all!

Locally we play all summer, from mid-April through to mid-September (weather allowing, sometimes we even play into October). Would you like a try? Feel free to get in touch to find out more and put the date of our next open day – Saturday, 11th May 2024 – in your diary.

Holtwhites Bowls Club is based by the railway bridge on the corner of Holtwhites Hill and Kirkland Drive (postcode EN2 0RN). Get in touch: Email keith.comley53@outlook.com

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BK Sjkold's Kristian Kold challenges Enfield Town's Ollie Knight in the first-ever European game at QE2 Stadium, which the Towners won 3-1 Credit Tom Scott



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Enfield Dispatch is published by Social Spider Community News, a not-for-profit social enterprise. Our mission is to hold authority to account and provide a platform for the community. But because we have no shareholders or wealthy backers we rely on local people and organisations to support our journalism. The number of supporters making monthly contributions has nearly doubled in a year – helping us to break even and look at how we can grow as a publication.



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OUR CURRENT SUPPORTERS

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