

ENFIELD DISPATCH

Nº 68 THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

MAY 2024

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THE FUTURE OF a theatre company which empowers adults with disabilities to take to the stage has been secured thanks to a six-figure funding boost. Edmonton Green-based Face Front has just celebrated its 25th anniversary, but faced the prospect of having to close or pause its activities due to a lack of funds. Now, the charity can continue its work thanks to a £120,000 grant over three years from City Bridge Foundation – London's biggest independent charity funder. Read more at enfielddispatch.co.uk

Plans for Spurs women's academy on Whitewebbs Park submitted

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Tottenham Hotspur has submitted its controversial planning application for a women's football academy to Enfield Council – and admitted its plans cause “moderate harm” to Whitewebbs Park.

The Premier League club has an existing £45million training centre with 17 football pitches but wants to expand into the neighbouring public park by building a further ten pitches dedicated to its women's and girls' teams, after Enfield Council agreed to lease the site of the former Whitewebbs Park Golf Course to Spurs for 25 years.

The planning submission last month came as a surprise to local campaigners and councillors who had expected the club to wait until the outcome of a judicial review case before proceeding. A High Court judge heard three days of evidence from lawyers in February, after Friends of Whitewebbs

Park chair Sean Wilkinson claimed the council's decision to lease the former golf course to Tottenham Hotspur was unlawful. Despite suggesting his verdict would be issued by April, the judge had yet to do so before the *Dispatch* went to press at the end of last month.

Conservative Whitewebbs councillor Hannah Dyson said it was “absolutely outrageous” and “undemocratic” for the council to allow the plans to be submitted while the judicial review verdict was still awaited.

Sean Wilkinson also called it a “great pity” that an application had been submitted during a period when “we are all under pressure” to respond to the council's own draft Local Plan prior to its 20th May deadline. The council did not respond to a request to comment.

Regarding the plans, Sean added: “The Friends of Whitewebbs will go through all the details before making a response to the application. The immediate concerns are that about 50% of the park's open

space will be lost and the landscape irretrievably reconstructed.”

Asked about criticism over the application's timing, a Spurs spokesperson said: “The legal challenge relates to the process followed by Enfield Council to lease the land and is entirely separate to the planning process. In the meantime, the club is keen to progress its planning application without further delay.”

They added: “This final set of proposals is informed by the comprehensive public consultation undertaken from October to January. We're grateful for all the feedback received, which resulted in a number of amendments.”

Spurs say its women's academy will become a “regionally significant asset for Enfield”. The club's planning application proposes ten football pitches on the northern half of the former golf course, including one which would have an “artificial surface”, while an area of “historic parkland” would be created on the

southern half. The pitches would be surrounded by a two-metre high fence and natural hedging.

While 121 trees would be felled, Spurs say 3,000 additional trees will be planted through the creation of a new woodland area, alongside “wildflower meadows, bat and bird boxes, and a new biodiversity corridor”. At the southern entrance to the park a community space would be created along with a new café and toilets.

The plans also include an assessment of the impact the proposals will have on the Green Belt and conclude that, in the case of Whitewebbs Park, there would be “moderate harm” caused. However, the plans also claim that with the “beneficial impacts of the development” there would be a “net benefit overall”.

The planning application is available to view via the council's planning portal, using reference number 24/00987/FUL. Comments can be submitted online or via email until the end of May.



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Disgraced ex-councillor takes up senior role with Labour Party in Edmonton

Nesimi Erbil left the civic centre in 2018 after two criminal convictions and a conduct ruling against him

A former Labour councillor who left the civic centre in disgrace six years ago has returned to take up a new role on the executive committee of Edmonton and Winchmore Hill Constituency Labour Party (CLP), the *Dispatch* has learned.

Nesimi Erbil was suspended from the Labour Party for five years after racking up two criminal convictions – now both spent – for fraud relating to his use of a fake taxi badge in 2014 and for a public order ‘road rage’ offence in 2016.

After continuing to represent Lower Edmonton for a few years as an independent councillor, Erbil subsequently stood down prior to the 2018 local election in Enfield. Several of his family members, including deputy council leader Ergin Erbil and cabinet member for licensing Susan Erbil, were elected to the civic centre for the first time that year.

Nesimi Erbil – who is the director of several businesses spanning construction, real estate and jewellery – rejoined Labour following his suspension. Then, late last year, he was elected as secretary for the local party in the newly renamed Edmonton and Winchmore Hill constituency.

The *Dispatch* has spoken to Labour members in the constituency who have expressed alarm at Nesimi Erbil’s new position of influence, including one member who described his ascent to the voluntary role as “bizarre” and said they were unaware of his chequered past until “googling his name” when they became suspicious of who he was.

There have also been claims of Labour membership cards not being properly checked on the door before meetings – one of the factors that previously led to Enfield Labour being rebuked by the party’s National Executive Committee in 2019 following a lengthy investigation into the 2018 selection process.

Former council cabinet member Alan Sitkin was part of the same Labour group as Nesimi Erbil



Edmonton and Winchmore Hill CLP secretary Nesimi Erbil

– under previous leader Doug Taylor – prior to Erbil’s suspension in 2015. Alan told the *Dispatch*: “There was a strong consensus [in the Labour group at the time] that he was not befitting of the values we wished to represent. I was embarrassed to be a councillor in the same Labour group as him.

“I am gobsmacked there are any circumstances where he has been allowed to return.”

The *Dispatch* has asked Edmonton and Winchmore Hill CLP to comment on Nesimi Erbil’s new role within the party but both they and the Labour Party’s London regional office have refused to comment.

Among other concerns raised by local CLP members is the poor standard of minute-taking that has been in evidence since Nesimi Erbil became secretary. In a copy of the minutes taken for one meeting, seen by the *Dispatch*, there are a number of indecipherable sentences. One CLP member remarked: “His minute-taking skills are appalling.”

Before he had stood down as a

councillor, Nesimi Erbil was at one point excluded from Enfield Civic Centre and other council offices for six months – with an exception for meetings he needed to attend as an elected member. This came following a conduct complaint in response to an email Nesimi Erbil sent to fellow councillors, claiming “I’ve been stitched up”.

The councillor conduct committee of 2nd March 2017 ruled: “The email did not meet the expected general principles of conduct set out in the code in terms of openness, honesty, leadership or accountability.”

Nesimi Erbil is understood to be highly critical of Edmonton MP Kate Osamor. A ‘motion of no confidence’ in Osamor was passed by the CLP in February, following her suspension by the Labour Party for making a reference to the war in Gaza in a newsletter commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day. However, as the *Dispatch* went to press, there were reports she would be reinstated.

Other executive committee members for Edmonton and Winchmore Hill CLP include former deputy leader of the council Ian Barnes, who is now CLP vice chair, and current council planning committee chair Sinan Boztas, who is CLP treasurer. In November 2022 Cllr Boztas admitted failing to properly declare his landholdings on the council’s register of interests, but ignored calls to resign as chair of the planning committee.



Edmonton Labour Party's base at Broad House in Fore Street

Cop stabbed

A man has been charged after a police officer was stabbed in Enfield Lock.

James Moore, aged 30 and of Aldgate High Street, was charged with assault and causing grievous bodily harm, possession of a bladed article, and three separate drugs offences.

The charges follow an incident at 4.25pm on 16th April when an officer from Enfield was stabbed as he responded to reports of a man with a knife in Mandeville Road. The injured officer was treated in hospital for a number of days.

Commander Owain Richards said: “The actions of this officer demonstrates the best of the Met, showing bravery in dealing with an extremely dangerous situation. It also reminds us of the challenges our officers face each day while doing their duty to protect the public.”

Bike hike

Cyclists in Enfield have slammed a six-fold hike in the cost of using the borough’s on-street secure bike hangers.

The Cyclehoop bike hanger service allows cyclists to lock bikes securely and currently costs £12 for an annual subscription. However, from May, the price is rising to £72 per year – with Cyclehoop blaming Enfield Council for decreasing the subsidy it provides.

One Cyclehoop user, Claire Freston, said: “The price hike is so absurd – from £12 to £72 a year – really? If I had a car the parking permit is cheaper!”

An council spokesperson said: “The new fee covers the full cost of maintaining the hangers after a few years of council-subsidised rates while they were being introduced and were grant-funded. The new fees are benchmarked and are similar to other London boroughs.”

Swim lake

Enfield Council is “exploring options” for introducing a wild swimming facility in the borough.

Wild swimming in lakes and rivers has become increasingly popular in recent years with several parks around London offering facilities.

In Enfield the Labour administration promised to “build an outdoor swimming lido for residents” in its 2022 local election manifesto, however the *Dispatch* understands the projected costs are now considered by the civic centre to be too high. Instead, wild swimming is being looked at as a cheaper alternative, with several Enfield parks boasting large lakes.



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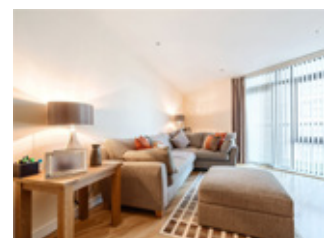
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From soldiers to sports

The Enfield Society explores the history of Enfield Drill Hall

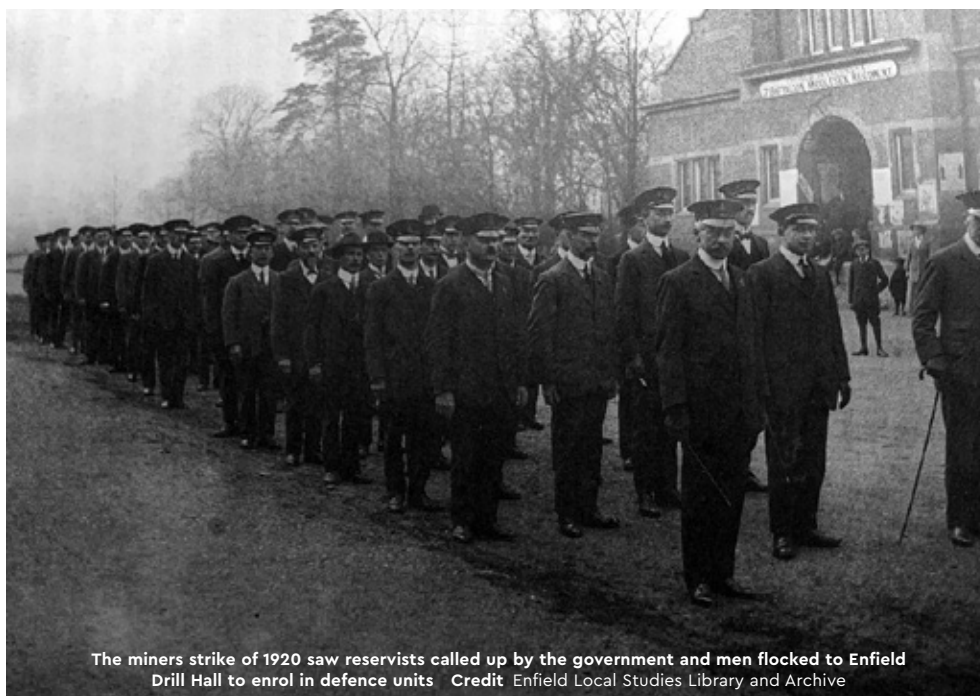
Members of The Enfield Society recently had the pleasure of visiting Enfield Drill Hall at the bottom of Old Park Avenue.

It was built in 1901 for the Enfield Company of the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment, whose roots go back to The Napoleonic Wars. At that time, volunteer rifle corps were formed in response to the threat of invasion. In reality their creation was as much to do with the fear of civil unrest after the French Revolution.

In 1803, the Enfield Volunteers had difficulty raising funds and recruits despite having support from the local gentry.



Enfield Drill Hall as it looks today Credit Joe Studman



The miners strike of 1920 saw reservists called up by the government and men flocked to Enfield Drill Hall to enrol in defence units Credit Enfield Local Studies Library and Archive

By the mid-19th Century they had become the Middlesex Rifle Volunteers, headed by Colonel Somerset who lived in Enfield Court (now Enfield Grammar Lower School). They had a fine band that must have been funded by Somerset because when he was transferred to the 9th West Middlesex, financial backing was lost. However, the band became The Enfield Brass Band.

In 1881, a new corps was set up with 40 respectable men. Parade nights in Market Square were unfortunately disrupted by

local youths mimicking the sergeant major's commands, much to the amusement of onlookers, but to the chagrin of officers.

A new lease of life was injected into the corps when Henry Ferryman Bowles became Colonel of 7th Middlesex in 1901. According to the battalion's history his tenure will always be associated with the acquisitions of drill halls in Highgate – and Enfield.

Officially £2,400 was raised by subscription to go towards the cost of building the drill hall but it's thought that Bowles (who lived

at Forty Hall) financed the cost himself.

In January 1912, the *Enfield Observer* lamented that out of a population of 56,000 there were only 168 volunteers, but two years later the First World War saw a 7th Middlesex full complement march from Hornsey to Enfield Chase Station for embarkation to the Western Front.

They saw action at various battles to great cost. On 15th September 1916, the 7th made two desperate assaults on Bouleaux Woods. The battalion lost 40 officers, 782 other ranks, and 153 invalided out.

During the miners strike in the 1920s the middle classes flocked to Enfield Drill Hall to enrol in defence units. This was reminiscent of the original Volunteer Rifle Corps.

The Second World War saw the drill hall become the base of the Home Guard. Mirroring *Dad's Army*, our local force got into hilarious scrapes. One local oral history tells us that a recruit turned up late one night, apologising that he had forgotten his ammunition. "Don't worry lad, it didn't fit the guns anyway," was the sergeant's response.

In 1960, the drill hall was handed back to Enfield Council and it became Enfield Drill Hall Sports Club. Today the venue is run by trustees who have put it on a sound financial footing and lease it out for sports and social events.

The Enfield Society visit to Enfield Drill Hall was one of our many activities. You too can enjoy its benefits from as little as £5 per year: Visit enfieldsociety.org.uk/join

'Tropical world' reopening in Palmers Green

Annabel Rutherford on how volunteers teamed up with the council to help restore Broomfield Park Conservatory



Broomfield Park Conservatory boasts a large rocky and central bed with palm trees Credit Annabel Rutherford

Stepping into Broomfield Park Conservatory is like entering a magical tropical world.

The bright displays of exotic plants and the calming sound of the waterfall offer an escape from the hustle and bustle of daily life. The only thing needed to complete the jungle atmosphere is a guest appearance by some of North London's infamous parakeets.

Some visitors have been going to the conservatory for years, while for others it is a brand new experience. Regardless, this packed mini oasis never fails to fascinate. *Strelitzia reginae* (the bird of paradise plant), orchids, billbergia, canna lilies, gingers, begonias, trailing Spanish moss, bougainvillea, yucca and banana trees are just some of the gems vying for attention.

Now, after eight months of major refurbishment by Enfield Council, the conservatory is set to reopen in the middle of May.

The refurbishment works presented several

horticultural challenges. The need to shroud the scaffolding in white sheeting, which was then covered by a corrugated metal roof, meant that light levels were significantly reduced. Specialist lighting was installed, with a degree of success, and it was interesting to see the plants adapt in different ways.

The leaves of some plants became darker, and various flowers lost their pigment, while others were not affected at all. According to Liz Macnicol, one of the conservatory's 24 dedicated volunteers, the bromeliads coped better than most.

Naturally, the plants need a ready source of moisture, which is normally provided by rainwater. Insectivorous plants and orchids in particular do not cope well with treated tap water. However, the protective sheeting prevented rain from accessing the gutters which feed two large on-site water tanks. Fortunately, a resourceful volunteer set up a system whereby rainwater would run off the sheeting into a dustbin. Although not convenient, there was enough rainwater for the plants that needed it.

The delayed reopening was partly caused by the need to replace the upper section of the conservatory, known as the lantern, which was found to be in a very poor and dangerous state.



The impressive cactus collection Credit Annabel Rutherford

However, it has been worth the wait: the conservatory has been redecorated inside and out; new preformed metal trays have been installed on the staging, where most of the plants are displayed; the windows at the lower level and in the lantern now open and close properly; and the winding mechanisms have been repaired.

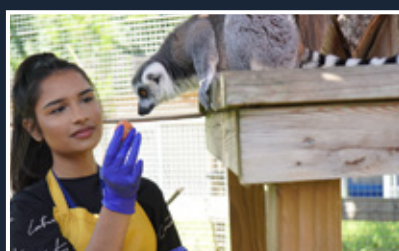
While Liz says that this has been a very trying time for the volunteers, she also stresses that the contractors, Enfield Council, and the conservatory team, worked as equal partners: all agreed that the needs of the plants came first.

For more information about the conservatory and for a list of opening times: Visit fobp.uk/conservatory.php

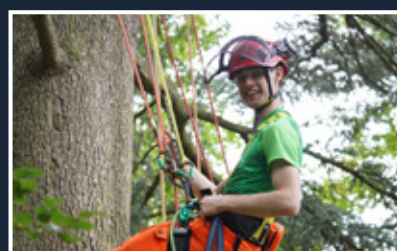
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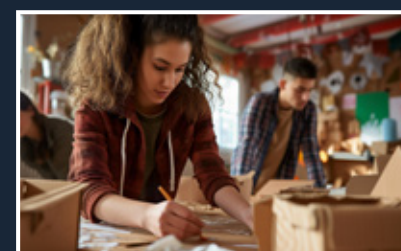
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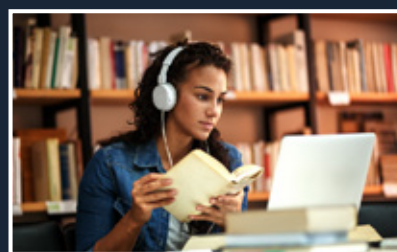
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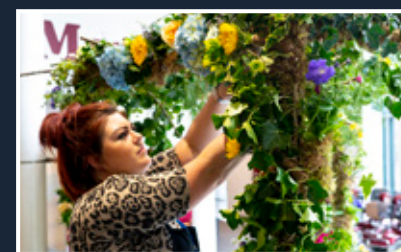
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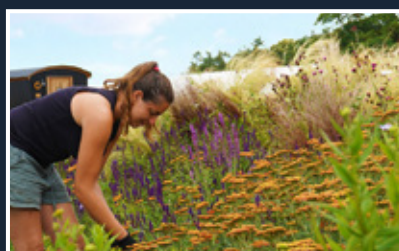
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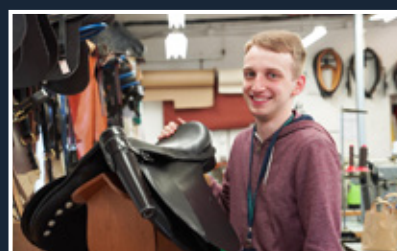
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Bambos Charalambous readmitted to Labour

The Enfield Southgate MP had been suspended for ten months after a complaint was made against him

Enfield Southgate MP Bambos Charalambous says he is “grateful” after an investigation by the Labour Party’s complaints board cleared him following allegations made last year.

Charalambous had spent ten months sitting as an independent MP after being suspended from Labour last June and also having to resign his job in the shadow cabinet.

As the *Dispatch* reported in March, during the suspension period Charalambous stopped attending and voting in the House of Commons, leaving Enfield Southgate constituents unrepresented in Westminster for the best part of a year.

Charalambous said: “I am grateful to the



Bambos Charalambous MP
Credit parliament.uk

Labour Party Independent Complaints Board for clearing my name after a thorough investigation into the allegations against me and I am delighted that the suspension of my Labour Party membership has been lifted.

“Throughout this challenging time, my primary focus has been serving the constituents of Enfield Southgate. With this matter resolved, I look forward to returning to parliament with the Labour whip restored to be the voice of my constituents once again in Westminster.”

The news has been greeted warmly by several of the Labour MP’s colleagues in parliament, including Enfield North MP Feryal Clark who simply posted on Twitter: “Welcome back.”

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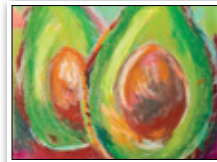
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Thank you for your amazing support so far

In the previous issue, we asked you to help our small not-for-profit organisation raise the £15,000 it needs to make sure the Dispatch can survive and grow.

We’re delighted to say we’ve already raised £5,000 towards that target in the first month.

Local news for you

Since launching in 2018, the Dispatch has been holding power to account and amplifying the voices of local people on a shoestring budget. We have a local office with journalists reporting on-the-

ground in the local community.

In 2023, we published 1146 stories online and in print. We distributed 180,000 copies of the paper for free across the borough and our website received 831,208 page views from 529,101 visitors over the course of the year.

Making local news is really difficult

We started the Dispatch at a point when sales and advertising for local newspapers was collapsing and corporately-owned newspapers were cutting staff, shutting offices or – like the Enfield Advertiser – closing entirely.

Since then, the general situation for local news has become even worse but the Dispatch has been a growing success. This has been driven by the fantastic local advertisers and 200+ local residents who support us on a regular basis – but despite the amazing support, we have always been operating right at our limit.

We receive no regular grant funding and, as a monthly publication, we are not eligible to bid for the council’s public notice advertising contract (which is the single biggest source of advertising income for local newspapers).

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Image courtesy of Bloqs



Festival of the Lea – 13th & 14th July



On Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th July, we welcome Enfield residents, the creative community and wider London audiences to join us for Festival of the Lea, an artist and community-led cultural festival taking place at Bloqs and along the adjacent towpaths of the River Lea.

Festival of the Lea is an artist and community-led cultural festival jointly produced by Hinterlands Enfield and Bloqs. Much of the Hinterlands resident artists'

work has unfolded in response to the River Lea, and so we aim to celebrate Enfield's integral waterway by transforming a stretch of the canal from Chalk Bridge to the North Circular bridge with artistic interventions created in response to the past, present and future of the River Lea. Our festival partner Bloqs is one of the key creative drivers in the area. They want to share their cultural and creative offering with local communities as they reach their 12 year anniversary.



Image courtesy of Bloqs

Join us for two days of cultural free, family-friendly arts and cultural activities including:

- 5 interactive artistic interventions along the River Lea
- Creative workshops led by local artists and co-created with local schools
- Performing arts stage with theatre and spoken word
- Music and culture programme led by Bloqs
- A talks programme featuring local speakers
- Learning and educational activities surrounding the sustainability and protection of the River Lea
- Boating activities led by the Canal and River Trust
- Food and drinks from the Bloqs cafe



Cathy Wade – Children Own The City

Artist Cathy Wade continues her collaboration with the pupils at Raynham Primary School leading more workshops exploring city planning, civic space, imagination, ecology & visual communication co-designed with assistant head teacher Iveta Bejaoui. On 25th March pupils went aboard the Barge Fiodra to learn all about living life on the water, exploring why people choose to live on boats and designing their own waterways. They met captain Bob Chase and his fellow boater artist Rosie Strickland for a fun-filled afternoon on the water.



Renin Bilginer

Artist Renin Bilginer will be running a series of workshops throughout May at Boundary Hall Community Centre for the female residents of Joyce and Snells Park Estate. Renin's Hinterlands project is exploring the connection between rivers and femininity in folklore and mythology and she aims to collect thoughts and stories about feminine power and its connection to water. Residents will take part in mind mapping and collaging activities alongside exploring dance and movement, plus children's activities making river spirit masks. Residents will also have the chance to visit Bloqs for a mini exhibition of their pieces and a group meal hosted by the artist.

Cath Carver & Christina Kalinowski

Artists Cath Carver and Christina Kalinowski are leading on a schools engagement project exploring the impact of colour in our environments and asking the question 'how does colour make you feel?'. They are working with year 7-9 pupils from Aylward Academy to consider how colour can be transformative to our landscape and the experience that people have in an area. During two workshops, pupils will be exploring the science of how colours impact our moods and perceptions, such as how warm colours like red and orange evoke feelings of energy and excitement, while cool colours like blue and green promote calmness and focus. Cath and Christina will also be creating a toolkit for schools and young people to get involved and join in the co-creation of festival activities and will be activating the towpath by painting colourful pockets along the route.

[Visit the website www.festivalofthelea.com for full information](http://www.festivalofthelea.com)

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

Scott House in Edmonton
Credit: Marathon via Geograph



Scott House residents speak out after years of disrepair

BY GRACE HOWARTH,
LOCAL DEMOCRACY
REPORTER

Tenants living in a “high risk” tower block in Edmonton believe Enfield Council “doesn’t care” following several years of failed repairs.

Residents of Scott House in Woolmer Road say the heating has never worked consistently, going out for days or sometimes weeks, while the lifts often break down sometimes leaving people to climb several floors to reach their flats.

In October, the heating went out across the building, which has 101 flats, for a month. Since there was no hot water or heating, tenants said the council offered them a stay in a hotel, two weeks after the issue began, so the problem could be investigated.

Yasmin (not her real name) said rent and charges still had to be paid and residents had to provide their own meals if they stayed at the hotel. Residents were also told they could use the showers at the nearby Craig Park Community Centre. Yasmin, who has three children, decided to shower at her parents’ house instead.

The Scott House residents, who are mostly council tenants, were given £180 per property and two fan heaters which “skyrocketed electricity” to

compensate. Yasmin said: “It’s just frustrating because it has such a negative effect on life, your wellbeing.”

Scott House was a “guinea pig” for a new heating system installed in 2013, according to Yasmin, which she believes wasn’t done “correctly”. She said pipes leaked hot water into flats and hallway.

As a solution the council installed a temporary boiler, which sits in the block’s car park and has a gas pipe which runs up the building’s stairways. But Yasmin said this broke down as well and the pipes were exposed and hot to touch.

Another resident, Rebecca Owen, said: “I took my granddaughter to school this morning. She’s seven, we had to step over this drunk person on the floor, because the lift had broken down.”

Both lifts in the 16-floor building are said to “always break down”. Yasmin recalled one shocking incident when a resident’s child was ill and needed an ambulance. She said they lived on the 16th floor and the mother had to carry the child all the way down the stairs as emergency services could not use the lifts.

Yasmin adds that every room in her flat has been affected by damp and mould. She said: “They just spray over it, they don’t actually treat it.

“We feel like they don’t care,

I don’t know whether it’s just because we live in Edmonton, we’re not part of the rich areas, we’re still human, we still pay our rent, we still pay our council tax, some of us study, some of us work, it’s not like we’re sitting here doing nothing.

“We deserve to be treated with respect and have a safe home for ourselves and our families.”

In response, a council spokesperson said it was “scoping” what improvements were needed at Scott House, adding the block was part of the council’s “£50million capital works programme” for housing repairs.

They said: “We are clear that all our residents deserve to live in safe, decent homes and all our efforts are going into prioritising the most urgent remedial works required.”

They acknowledged the existing boiler failed last year and was “unable to be repaired” while the temporary boiler was fitted “as soon as possible” and “immediate assistance” was provided in the form of heaters and offers of temporary accommodation.

Council officers were “on site engaging with residents” to provide updates on works and timescales, and all impacted residents were offered compensation.

The spokesperson added lift failures were always treated as an “emergency” and it aimed to fix them “as rapidly” as it could.

Merger of North London hospital trusts will ‘reduce waiting times’

North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust hopes merging with Royal Free London will help solve many of its recent problems

BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL
DEMOCRACY REPORTER,
& JAMES CRACKNELL

A North NHS trust claims a proposed merger with another North London hospital group will help it to reduce waiting times and improve access to specialist care – after years of close collaboration.

North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust are in active talks over their proposed merger.

Over the coming months a business case will be drawn up, which will need approval from both trusts’ boards as well as NHS England. This is expected to be completed by summer and the organisations unified, if approved, in autumn.

North Mid’s website says the trust has already been in a ‘formal partnership’ with Royal Free since 2021, and claims the Edmonton

hospital could “achieve more” if it joined Royal Free, which runs Barnet Hospital, Chase Farm Hospital in Enfield and the Royal Free Hospital in Camden.

The NHS trust explained that the Edmonton hospital would “continue to provide the same local services” as at present. This includes an accident and emergency department, maternity ward, intensive care, paediatrics, acute surgery, medicine and community services.

It argues that following the merger, waiting times will be reduced, local access to specialist care improved, community services joined up, greater opportunities made available to benefit from the latest medical research, and more co-ordinated action, with screening and early intervention services tailored to its different communities.

A North Mid spokesperson said: “Following several years of ever closer joint working, the boards of North Mid and the Royal Free London group have agreed to look at how we could come together as one organisation.

“Our experience has shown that together we can deliver better care for local people and more opportunities for staff.

“While our hospitals and community

services would continue to provide the same local services, we believe joining together would enable us to go further and faster in improving services for patients and the health of our local community.

“We are currently developing detailed plans for the proposed merger which will then need to be approved by the boards of both trusts and NHS England.”

However, a recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) report, following an inspection of North Mid’s leadership team, claimed

that the extra workload around the merger plans was affecting the NHS trust’s management.

The CQC has now downgraded the hospital trust’s overall leadership from ‘good’ to ‘requires improvement’ and again rated it ‘requires improvement’ for medical care, following inspections in September and December. The overall rating for the trust remains ‘requires improvement’.

Jane Ray, CQC deputy director of operations in London, said: “When we inspected the trust, we found a leadership team which was skilled and committed but needed to better manage the workload from a proposed merger with the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust.

“Leaders were already struggling to complete some work such as responding to complaints and investigating serious incidents in a timely manner. This meant that improvements to people’s care weren’t always carried out as fast as needed.”

North Mid chief executive Dr Nnenna Osuji said: “I am of course disappointed that our rating for ‘well-led’ has fallen and I, together with our leadership team and board, will continue to examine our processes and practices to improve.

“I know also that we have some work to do in terms of improving culture among some teams and services, and we are not shying away from this responsibility. We will continue to focus on our mission to provide outstanding care to local people as well as our journey of improvement which will take time and unwavering dedication.”



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

Waltham Forest College

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Council sending local homeless families to live in Hartlepool and Durham

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Enfield Council has been sending local homeless families to live in north-east towns such as Hartlepool and Durham – or face being thrown out on to the street if they refuse.

Data provided following a Freedom of Information (FOI) Act request submitted by the *Dispatch* shows that since introducing a new policy of only making one housing offer to homeless families stuck living in emergency hotel accommodation, ten out of 18 families moved have been relocated by the council to the north-east of England.

Since last November, five Enfield families have been sent to live in Hartlepool, which is 246 miles away, while another four have been sent to live in Durham, 266 miles away. A tenth family has been sent to another north-east town, Ferryhill, 256 miles away. Other towns local homeless families have been moved to include Blackpool (234 miles), Telford (145 miles) and Derby (126 miles).

The council decided last summer it needed to take action to reduce the number of homeless families being put up in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation. Last year the local

authority overspent on its budget for temporary housing by £19million, contributing to the “most challenging ever” year for the borough’s finance chiefs.

The Labour administration agreed to send families outside south-east England, where housing is cheaper, while only giving them one offer before ‘discharging its duty’ – effectively giving them an ultimatum of either moving many miles away or sleeping rough.

But data obtained by the *Dispatch* shows in the vast majority of cases families are not just being moved outside the south-east, but hundreds of miles north.

An ombudsman recently ruled that an Enfield family who refused to move 250 miles away after being given less than 24 hours to consider the offer had suffered a “significant injustice” and the council should pay them £5,000. They also spent a year living in a hotel.

The *Dispatch* has previously spoken to a single mother with three young children who refused to move to Telford – they were subsequently forced to spend Christmas in a homeless shelter with other rough sleepers.

Matt Burn, from campaign group Better Homes Enfield, said: “Too many families in Enfield are living with housing insecurity

Durham, where several local homeless families have been sent to live by Enfield Council



and the anxiety of knowing the council might relocate them hundreds of miles away at short notice.

“The displacement of vulnerable families is deeply concerning and, in part, caused by the council’s demolition of social rent homes. It’s also unnecessary, considering there are over 36,000 long-term vacant homes in London, including over one thousand empty homes in Enfield.”

In March Citizens Advice Enfield and Local Motion, a social justice group, ran a workshop

on the housing crisis at Edmonton Green Library. The forum was attended by people experiencing homelessness. Panos Bouras from Citizens Advice said: “Due to the crisis the council is now advising clients take control of finding their own accommodation rather than waiting for the local authority to place them, which could be anywhere in the country.”

A council spokesperson said: “Temporary accommodation is an important safety net for emergencies, but it should never be a long-term solution. It is our priority to help families find decent and affordable homes but, due to the extreme lack of appropriate housing in London, we have had to assist homeless households to move outside of the capital.

“Given the realities of the housing crisis this is often the best solution for families who need to move into the private sector, with rent levels they can truly afford. We will always help individuals and families to move with practical solutions, including access to Beam which helps applicants to find a stable job, start work and to move into a comfortable, private rented property.

“Households will be prioritised for the extremely limited supply of local accommodation based on priority need.”

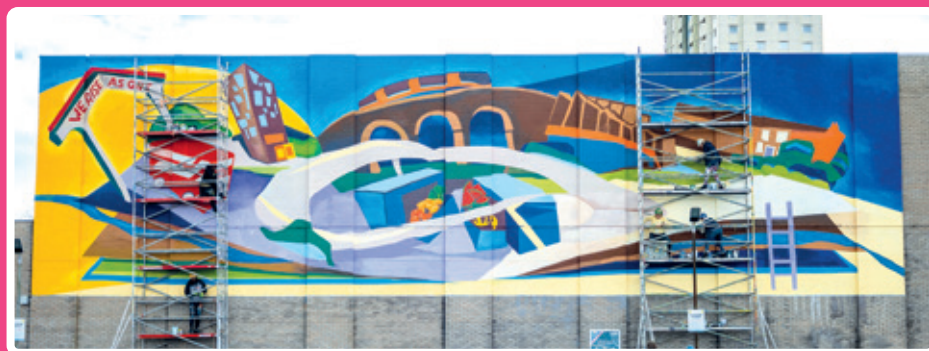
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EDMONTON YOUTH HEROES



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Forty young people collaborate to create mural



The new mural at Edmonton Green Shopping Centre Credit rucookphotography.com

The London School of Muralism (LSoM) has unveiled an exciting new mural in the heart of Edmonton Green — showcasing the collaborative efforts of local youth and students of the school.

Led by artist tutor Patricio Forrester, *Eddy’s Pop Up Book* “breathes life into the streets” with its “vibrant colours and engaging storytelling”. The mural is located in the North Square Car Park at Edmonton Green Shopping Centre.

Through a series of workshops, young participants from the Edmonton Green community shared their ideas and aspirations for the mural. From creating a child-friendly atmosphere to addressing community concerns such as knife crime, the mural reflects the “collective spirit and diverse voices of the neighbourhood”.

Eddy’s Pop Up Book also “serves as a symbol of unity and creativity, demonstrating the positive impact of art in bringing communities together”.

The LSoM team joined forces with two local charities, Northside Youth and Community Connections (NYCC) and Exodus Youth Worx UK, both dedicated to empowering young individuals in Edmonton.

Inspiration struck from an unexpected source — a ten-year-old boy’s suggestion of a pop-up book. This concept was then transformed into a 3D paper model, serving as the blueprint for the mural. It portrays Edmonton Green Shopping Centre as an open book with untold stories and “boundless potential”. From the bustling market to the youth centre, each element “reflects the vibrant tapestry of Edmonton’s past, present, and future”.

At the heart of the mural lies

a powerful message of unity: “We rise as one.”

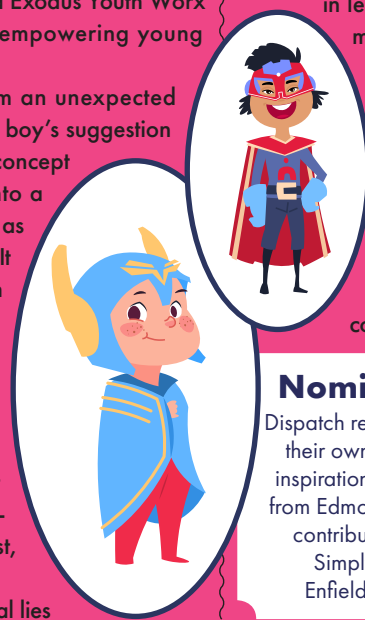
The mural spans an impressive 25 meters in length and reaches a height of ten meters. Around 40 young residents of Edmonton actively participated in the brainstorming and idea development process for the mural, while four young people worked with LSoM to directly paint on the wall.

Edmonton Green Shopping Centre contributed £2,000 towards covering the project costs.

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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For the borough of Enfield, we distribute 15,000 free copies to readers via local, community venues, and door-to-door, with a total estimated readership of 45,000 people.

Call **Klaudia** 07732 000 430
Email klaudia@socialspider.com

LETTERS

Send us your letters

Got an opinion on something in Enfield? We accept letters of up to 150 words from people and organisations in the borough. Email EnfieldDispatch@socialspider.com before the next deadline on Monday 20th May.

Better leisure

Dear Enfield Dispatch

It's to the council's credit that they changed the provider responsible for running our leisure centres [from Fusion to Better]. Things have certainly improved at Southbury, now that the pool is open all day and it's easier to swim. Keeping the population active is one of the best ways to reduce the burgeoning social care budget, both now and down the line. Cutting back on local services is always a false economy.

When I recently fell because of a poorly maintained pavement, it cost the NHS five X-rays, two hospital visits and a course of physiotherapy. It's to the government's shame that they have starved local councils of cash so that 1,000 swimming pools in England have been lost since 2010, and now Edmonton Leisure Centre remains closed for the foreseeable future. We badly need an end to austerity, allowing proper investment in local services.

Sheila Spooner
Bush Hill Park

Green spaces

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Thank you for your excellent coverage of the ongoing battle to stop the council selling off more public land to Spurs. Both Conservative and Labour councillors supported the original sale of 56 acres of Green Belt land for the club's existing training centre in Whitewebbs Lane. Only a relatively small area of this vast facility is ever in use at any one time. High class facilities already exist for the ladies to use. There is absolutely no need to set this dangerous precedent of selling off yet more public land to a private company. If this sale goes ahead, which parkland will be sold next?

If you agree that Enfield needs its green spaces and that the council should not be allowed to sell them, please respond to the council's live consultation on its Local Plan before the deadline on 20th May. For more information go to enfieldsociety.org.uk/localplan

Margaret Hume
Whitewebbs

Local Plan pain

Dear Enfield Dispatch

The Local Plan consultation [ending 20th May] is potentially inaccessible to many Enfield residents. Firstly, we were greeted by thousands of pages of writing and, in our busy lives, this felt overwhelming. With the sheer amount of information that we, the public, had to look through, I feel strongly that this consultation was potentially inaccessible to people for whom English is not their first language; disabled people; young people; and people who don't have access to computers. How is Enfield Council allowing for this when expecting responses using legal jargon?

The council is proposing to destroy our Green Belt, while building thousands of homes that will not solve the housing crisis – it is council housing that's needed. A 2019 report outlined how there is space to build 37,000 homes on brownfield sites in Enfield. Why hasn't the council taken account of this, instead proposing [nearly] 10,000 homes on Green Belt land?

Sam (Avid Beats)
Enfield Town

Better cycling

Dear Enfield Dispatch

This month I stand down as co-ordinator of both Better Streets for Enfield and Enfield Cycling Campaign. It's been a busy and challenging three years, with active travel becoming part of the 'culture wars'.

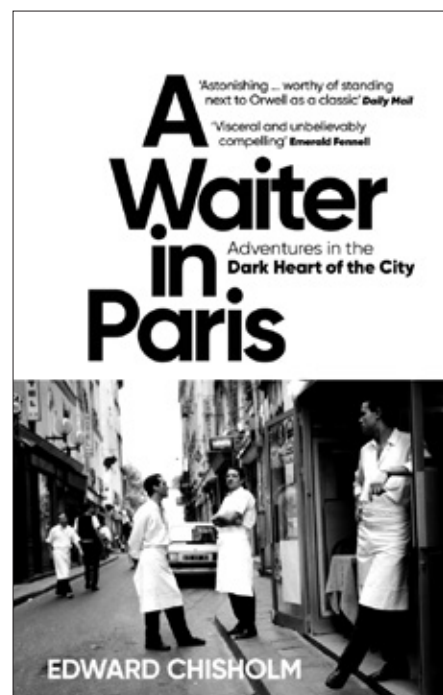
There's much to be positive about in Enfield. We have the highest cycle lane mileage of any London borough, two large quieter neighbourhoods and many smaller active travel interventions – free Dr Bike sessions, bike parking (notwithstanding the unwelcome 600% price increase for bike hanger parking) and an experienced active travel team at the council led by Richard Eason.

There's more to do – we're a long way from a borough-wide network of safe walking and cycling routes, illegal parking is a big issue (though we've noticed some improvement), and bike and e-car hire/sharing schemes are needed. To end on a positive, the council's draft transport strategy incorporates most of our key asks and speaks to our Better Streets for Enfield vision.

Adrian Day
Better Streets for Enfield

Recommended reads

Bookworm Emily Cameron, who works at Waterstones in Enfield Town, recommends two books to read this summer



A Waiter in Paris

Ever dreamed of escaping to a distant location? Perhaps a quaint town in Italy or a serene Greek island? Or perhaps the bustling energy of a city like New York, where skyscrapers catch up to you on every corner?

In his compelling memoir, *A Waiter in Paris*, Edward Chisholm takes readers on such a journey. Chisholm recounts his experiences of being overworked and underpaid in the romantic city of Paris. Throughout his time as a waiter, Chisholm substitutes the romanticised 'la vie en rose' view of Paris with a raw and tumultuous portrayal, unveiling an unseen side of the city.

Instead of a relaxing sit down with a charcuterie board, think coffee and bread for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Naturally, the memoir depicts Chisholm's journey, which encompasses the numerous mistakes he makes along the way, both culturally and professionally. Moving to Paris as a waiter without knowing the language undoubtedly has its drawbacks. Yet, there's something refreshing about discovering that the "city of lights" isn't always so bright.

This book offers a captivating portrayal of a life beyond imagination, blending amusing anecdotes with the challenges of starting anew. Reading it will prompt you to contemplate where you would go and what you would do if you were to start fresh in a new location.

The Temptation of Gracie

If you haven't yet discovered Santa Montefiore's writing, I highly recommend adding her to your list of authors to enjoy

while lounging by the pool or relaxing in your garden, basking in the warmth of the sun with a good book in hand – this book is the perfect choice.

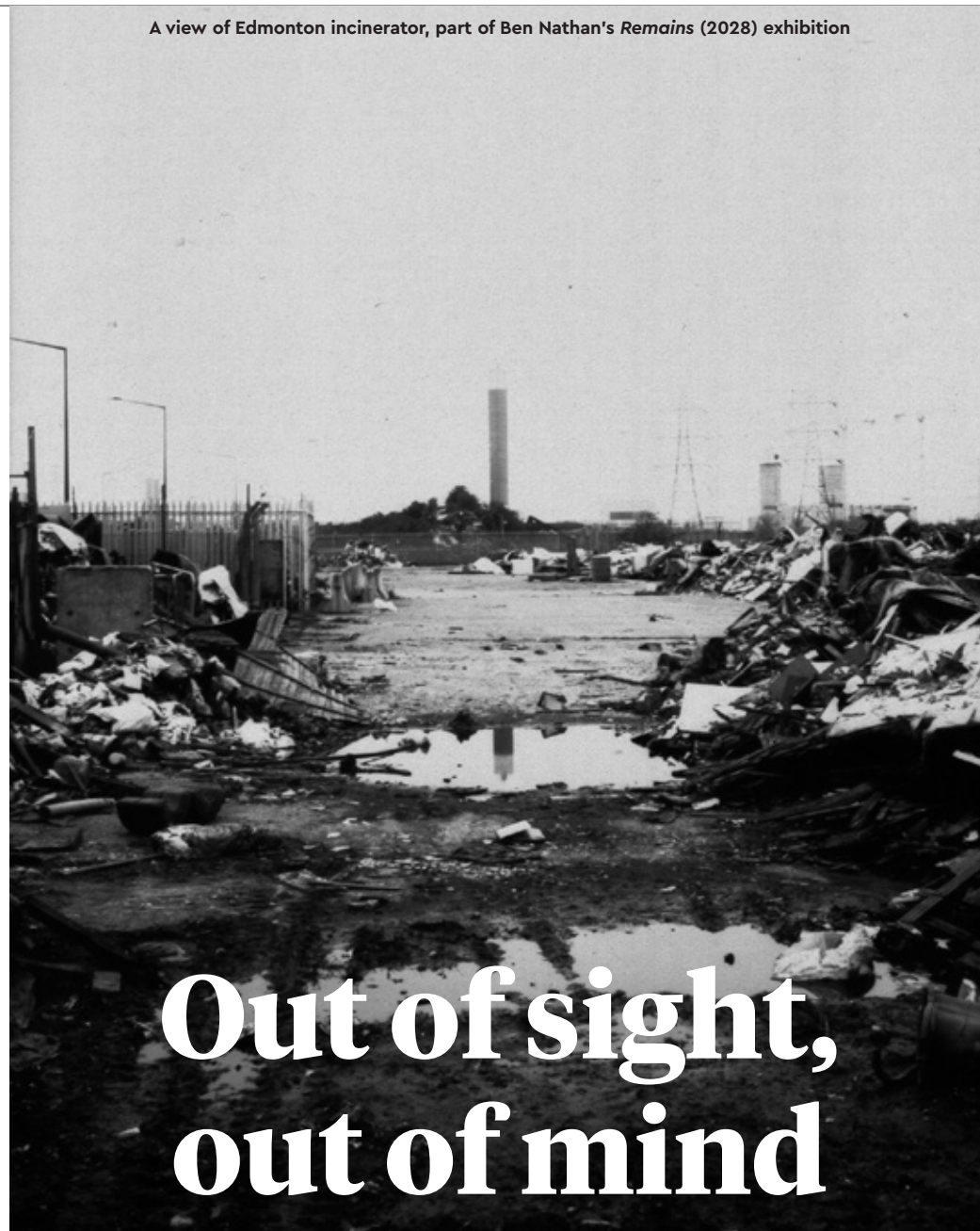
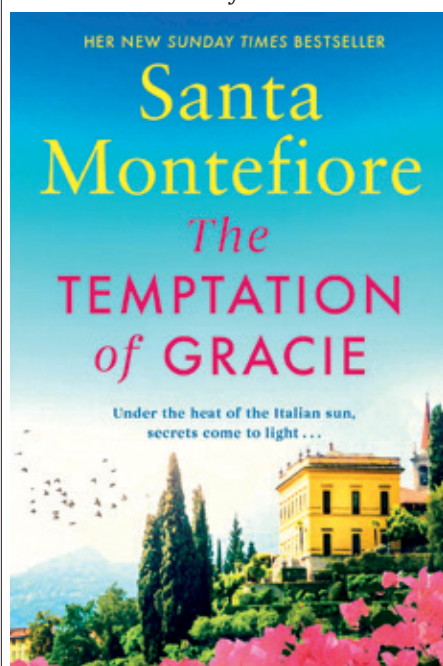
The Temptation of Gracie unveils a tale of varied lost love. Montefiore's book follows Gracie, whose life in Devon is marked by routine and familiarity. However, everything changes when she stumbles upon an article advertising a week-long cooking class at a castle in Italy. Against her usual nature, Gracie decides to embark on this adventure.

Unbeknownst to her, her workaholic daughter Carina and 17-year-old granddaughter Anastasia plan on joining her. Little do they know, Gracie has a hidden past in Italy, and the castle holds ties to her traumatic yet passionate history. Montefiore has a knack for immersing readers in the settings of her stories, whisking them away to seaside towns in England or lush, exotic locales in Europe.

"It offers a captivating portrayal"

In this book, she skilfully crafts a captivating portrayal of Italy that will sweep you into the sun-kissed landscapes of the Tuscan countryside.

Ultimately, *The Temptation of Gracie* is a feel-good read and an essential companion for your summer, or if you would like to feel as though it is summer! One downside? You'll likely find yourself longing to book a cooking class in Italy as soon as you turn the final page, ready to trade the drizzle of English rain for the drizzle of olive oil on freshly baked bread.



A view of Edmonton incinerator, part of Ben Nathan's *Remains* (2028) exhibition

Out of sight, out of mind

Photographer Ben Nathan on what has influenced his recent work capturing some of Edmonton's desolate landscapes

I'm sitting on the Superloop express bus flying over the North Circular bridge at Edmonton – looking south I can glimpse Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, the old Ikea, and Canary Wharf on the horizon.

Looking north, out of the opposite window, I see the Edmonton incinerator at 'Edmonton Eco Park' and, below, the River Lea, Lee Navigation and Pymmes Brook, all entombed in concrete, surrounded by vestiges of local industry and cleared development sites.

Earlier this year, I was the artist-in-residence with AiR, an artist collective based at Hastingwood Trading Estate next to Banbury Reservoir in Upper Edmonton. As a hybrid artist/industrial archaeologist I explored and photographed

this exploited area, now in a state of rapid transformation.

Climbing through gaps in fences and into contaminated sites, I made images with my pinhole and folding plate cameras, developing the views of industrial remains in a temporary on-site darkroom. The 100-metre incinerator chimney repeatedly appears in my photographs, hovering above the manifold fly-tips. The plant was opened in 1971 and is currently being replaced by an even bigger one. It is responsible for burning waste from seven London boroughs, including a staggering 557,094 tonnes of residual waste in 2022/23 according to the North London Waste Authority's annual report.

This is where our household waste in black bin bags goes – single-use plastics, dirty

nappies, polystyrene, juice and milk tetra packs. Out of sight, out of mind.

Buddleia and brambles push prolifically through concrete hardcore and rubbish mounds, reclaiming the polluted bottleneck for nature and revealing possibilities for an alternative rewilded landscape. Only instead, in the last few weeks, this growth has all been scraped clear again. Desperately needed homes also desperately need open public green spaces, like the old allotments and common lands. Not rubbish, but nature.

A free exhibition of Ben's photographs, *Remains* (2028), will be available to view at The Valley Room, Unit A29, Hastingwood Trading Estate, Harbet Road, Edmonton N18 3HT from Saturday 18th May, 12pm-4pm. For exhibition hours and more information about Ben's work:

Visit tinyurl.com/valleyroom
Visit bnathan.co.uk

Searching for the best Sunday roast in Enfield

Neil Littman takes on the arduous task of eating three roast dinners at three different Enfield pubs



Rose and Crown
beef roast

One of the most traditional, enjoyable, and sociable dining experiences is a Sunday roast at the local pub. At least, that has been my experience going back to when, as a seven-year-old, I walked into a pub kitchen and asked if I could have another portion of Yorkshire pudding, thinking I was eating at home!

This month's review features three roasts from around Enfield borough that I have rated as basic/better/best, in that order.

First up, The Stag and Hounds in Bury Street West, Edmonton. The pub is part of the Ember Inns chain and dates from the 19th Century, but was completely rebuilt in mock Tudor style in 1925.

I had my favourite pint, a Doom Bar, with my chicken roast. It was a good-size portion of food, but I felt the veg were a bit overcooked. The roast potatoes also looked and tasted processed like a well-known brand sold in freezer packs. On the other hand, it represents good value for money at £17.29, including my beer. Other roasts and veggie options are available. In conclusion – basic.

A few weeks later I visited my local, The Kings Head in The Green, Winchmore Hill. This pub, rebuilt in 1899, has a large dining area and is extremely

popular. They were very busy when I was there at 2.15pm and as I hadn't thought to book a table, I ended up dining in the main bar area, but this was perfectly acceptable.

I ordered the 'half a Somerset Hubbard chicken' advertised as served, with five vegetables and bacon and sage stuffing. It was a massive portion with a Yorkshire pudding precariously perched on top.

I could not find the 'sage fricasse' which I think was their description of the stuffing, but that didn't matter. Everything worked well. The roast potatoes were soft on top and very crunchy underneath and the Yorkshire pudding is best dipped in the gravy. The bill came to £26.50 including a pint of Young's. In conclusion – better.

Finally, I ventured up to The Rose and Crown in Clay Hill. After trying to book for three weeks I finally got a table on Easter



Stag and Hounds Sunday roast

Sunday. I had been informed at the time of booking that there was a dining time of one-and-a-half hours (although we were not rushed).

The Rose and Crown is one of the oldest pubs in the borough and is thought to date from 1706 – it was reputedly once owned by the grandfather of Dick Turpin, one of England's most notorious highwaymen (as my friend said: "If I had a quid for every pub associated with Dick Turpin...").

The pub is now run by Stef and Allan who previously worked at the Fat Duck with Heston Blumenthal, and it turned out to be well worth the wait.



Kings Head
chicken roast

Fortunately, the food didn't involve any chemistry experiments, for which Heston is renowned. We started with some mixed olives with garlic and chilli followed by the chicken roast for myself and roast beef for my friend. Both arrived with a selection of vegetables and a Yorkshire pudding. The roast potatoes were perfect. We somehow made the tough decision to find room for their homemade tiramisu.

The cost was £30 each, including a beer and the dessert. There are plenty of options for vegetarians. In conclusion – the best!

Find out more about The Stag and Hounds and book a table:
Visit emberinns.co.uk

Find out more about The King's Head and book a table:
Visit thekingsheadn21.co.uk

Find out more about The Rose and Crown and book a table:
Visit roseandcrownclayhill.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 enfelddispatch@socialspider.com by Monday 20th May.

TALK

County Lines Community Event
Saturday 4th May, 10am–1.30pm
Wilbury Primary School, Wilbury Way, Edmonton N18 1DE

Leo Powell is one of the UK's leading 'county lines' educators, demonstrating a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the area of gangs, grooming, exploitation and more. In addition to the training, Leo has invited some of his friends in the field to share what they do.

Free entry, booking required
Visit tinyurl.com/mr3z5uyt

DANCE

May Day Tea Dance
Monday 6th May, 3pm–5pm
Lancaster Road UR Church Hall, Armfield Road, Enfield EN2 0BS

This tea dance for the over-60s will be supporting Home Instead Charities, who are celebrating their tenth anniversary this year.

Tickets £17.50, available in advance
Call 020 3641 8870

CHARITY

Only a Pavement Away
Tuesday 7th May, 5pm–6.30pm
Firs Farm Community Hub, Firs Lane, Winchmore Hill N21 2PJ

This event will shed light on organisation Only A Pavement Away's mission to connect forward-thinking employers with charities dedicated to supporting individuals facing or experiencing homelessness, prison leavers and veterans. Our aim is to reach as many businesses and employers in the community.

Free entry, booking required
Email ffch@homecarepreferred.com

CULTURE

Edmonton Food Stories
Thursday 9th May 6.30pm–8.15pm
Fore Street Library, 109–111 Fore Street, Angel Edmonton N18 2XF

Celebrate Edmonton's food culture with a panel discussion and the premiere of a new documentary. Join us to celebrate Edmonton's amazing food heritage. London food writer Jonathan Nunn and journalist Tom Lamont will discuss Edmonton's food culture and heritage.

Free entry, booking required
Visit tinyurl.com/mtkf6ux8

FORUM

Building a Fairer Enfield Together
Tuesday 14th May, 7pm–9.30pm
Green Towers Community Centre, 7 Plevna Road, Edmonton N9 0BU

Come join us in person at this event where we'll delve into how to make Enfield a more just and equitable place to live. From discussing housing affordability to education access, we'll tackle the key issues head on. Get ready for inspiring talks, engaging workshops, and the chance to connect with like-minded individuals passionate about creating positive change in our community.

Free entry
Visit tinyurl.com/mryptvu2

WALK

Nightingale Night Hike
Friday 17th May, 6pm
Starting from Enfield Civic Centre, Silver Street EN1 3XA

Nightingale Night Hike is a big annual fundraising event for Nightingale Cancer Support Centre in Enfield. The welcome reception will start at 6pm outside the civic centre. For an hour there's music, a performance by Mumsing Choir, words from a Tottenham Hotspur representative, the mayor of Enfield and a warm-up before the klaxon sounds. At 7.05pm the 15km walkers will go and then at 7.15pm the 10km and 5km walkers will go.

Sign up to raise money for Nightingale
Visit nightingalesupport.org.uk/nighthike

COMEDY

Friday Night Funnies
Friday 31st May, from 8pm
Chickenshed, 290 Chase Side, Southgate N14 4PE

Join us for an uproarious evening, where Friday Night Funnies 'go large' and take centre stage for an unforgettable one-night-only extravaganza! Prepare for an unforgettable night filled with uproarious laughter as Resistance Comedy proudly presents a stellar line-up of the comedy world's finest talents, including headliner Rudi Lickwood, Michael Akadiri, and Junior Booker.

Tickets £15
Call 020 8292 9222
Email info@resistancecomedy.co.uk
Visit chickenshed.org.uk

AROUND THE BOROUGH

EDMONTON GREEN

Plan to reduce rush-hour overcrowding

PLANS BY TRANSPORT FOR LONDON (TfL) to reduce peak-time overcrowding at Edmonton Green Station are “long overdue” according to a local campaign body.

In response to questions by Enfield Transport User Group (ETUG), TfL says it is considering ways to provide a more regular London Overground service between Edmonton Green

and Liverpool Street by the end of this year.

Since a timetable change last year, Edmonton Green is no longer served by peak-time services from Greater Anglia, a move TfL opposed. But TfL now says a more even spacing of services should mean reduced crowding on trains, thanks to a regular ten-minute spacing bet-

ween services.

Kit Montague from TfL said: “This withdrawal of services [by Greater Anglia in May 2023] does give us the opportunity to provide more even intervals on the trunk section of the route between Edmonton Green and Hackney Downs.”

While the changes now being proposed won’t see any increase in the number of trains at peak times, TfL does say it is considering more services during weekday off-peak times – with potentially three trains per hour being introduced on the Enfield Town and Cheshunt branches, which are currently served by half-hourly services.

This would then mean six trains per hour being provided through Edmonton Green throughout the whole day. A further change could see additional late-night services into London.

Phil Ridley, from ETUG, said: “It is long overdue that there will be a balanced peak service of a train every ten minutes between Edmonton Green and Liverpool Street. However, as a result of more trains not being provided, this will be at the expense of Enfield Town having uneven services.

“We welcome plans for three trains per hour to both branches during off-peak times during weekdays but believe this upgrade should also apply at weekends.”



ENFIELD TOWN

New interpretation boards on New River

NEW INTERPRETATION BOARDS have been installed along the 1.25-mile route of the New River Loop in Enfield Town thanks to a partnership between The Enfield Society and Enfield Council.

Highly illustrated, the five new boards tell the story of the New River and Enfield Town’s historic watercourse. Together they create a New River Loop trail describing its history and heritage.

The New River was first opened in 1613 to provide fresh drinking water for Londoners, supplied by several springs in Hertfordshire

and later by the River Lea. The original course of the artificial waterway was a lot longer because the limits of construction methods at the time meant the route needed to wind its way around insurmountable obstacles.

After being straightened in the 19th Century using tunnels and aqueducts, many of the redundant ‘loops’ of the New River were filled in, but Enfield retained its section as an attractive feature of the town centre.

The Enfield Society trustees Sue Grayson Ford and John Cole

wanted to help bring this history to life and encourage visitors to explore the route with a series of new interpretation boards. They worked on the design and text for the panels with Martin Jones, senior landscape architect at Enfield Council.

One of the boards even tells the story of a “grisly murder” that took place after a drinking session in The Crown and Horseshoes Pub, while another explains how royalty, including Elizabeth I and James I, hunted their own deer on the nearby Royal Chase.

BOTANY BAY

Alpaca ‘experiences’ launch at farm



BOTANY BAY FARM IS NOW offering visitors the chance to meet and walk their alpacas.

Visitors to the farm in The Ridgeway can now lead the friendly animals on a walk around the farm and get their photo taken with the animals as part of a new experience.

The farm’s trekking alpacas are halter-trained so they are used to being walked by humans and can even be led by children. They are

described as “friendly, gentle and curious animals who love a fuss from people”.

Botany Bay’s alpacas include Bill, Boycott, Nuzzle and Scratch. The herd is now twelve strong. Vickie Keeble from the farm says: “We’re delighted to announce after years of planning and training we are starting our Botany Bay Farm alpaca experiences.

“This will enable us to offer a unique experience for the public in Enfield and is a great way for us to engage with the public.”

Alpacas are native to South America. They are sought-after for their wool, and Botany Bay Farm Shop even stocks beanie hats made from its own alpaca wool.

Bookings can be made on a new dedicated website with prices starting from £15: Visit botanybayalpacas.co.uk

OAKWOOD

Post office reopens

ENFIELD SOUTHGATE MP BAMBOS Charalambous cut the ribbon to reopen a refurbished post office.

Bramley Road Post Office has undergone a “major transformation” under new postmaster Sathiaselalan Easwarakuma. The reopened branch boasts a new shop front, shelving, lighting and ceiling, with added convenience retail. It has also now open seven days a week.

Bambos said: “I want to thank new postmaster Sathiaselalan Easwarakumar for his big investment in Bramley Road Post Office, which looks excellent. It’s a real boost to



Bambos Charalambous cuts the ribbon

this area. The impressive opening hours from early until late will help the community.”

Sathiaselalan added: “People find it hard to believe it’s the same shop as before.”

ANGEL EDMONTON

Bank branch closure

BY KINGA PLATA

NATWEST HAS ANNOUNCED THE closure of its bank branch in Angel Edmonton later this year.

Customers of the branch located in Fore Street are being told to use other branches in Palmers Green, Wood Green or Stoke Newington after the closure goes ahead on 4th September.

The reasons behind the move are

a 50% decrease in the number of counter transactions for personal customers, with 79% said to also use online or mobile banking and only 18 personal customers using the branch on a weekly basis last year.

In a statement NatWest said: “Banking has changed dramatically, with an increased demand for mobile and online services. Closing a branch is a decision we take very seriously.”

Towners on brink of glory – at home and in Europe

Andrew Warshaw speaks to Towners boss Gavin Macpherson ahead of a thrilling finale to the season



Enfield Town fans are preparing for the Italian leg of their European tour

A coveted play-off place and a post-season trip to Italy for the climax of the Fenix Trophy.

Things could hardly have gone much better in Gavin Macpherson's first season in charge of Enfield Town with promotion to step two of the non-league pyramid still a distinct possibility as the *Dispatch* went to press at the end of April.

At the start of this campaign, 'reset' was very much the byword following last season's disappointing ninth-place finish. But while a raft of so-called heavyweights have been unable to turn their tag as favourites into reality, despite their financial superiority, Gavin and his backroom team have proved exactly why they were the right choice to take over the reins last summer.

It helps, of course, to have a couple of proven goalscorers. Marcus Wyllie, a natural finisher, is

top of the division's scoring charts, and he and the hugely experienced Sam Youngs have scored a staggering 52 of Town's 76 league goals going into the last three games of the regular season.

All over the pitch, however, Gavin and his staff have managed to find the right blend. He is understandably delighted at how the players have adapted and how the fans the welcomed him.

"I had to get used very quickly to the way the club is set up in terms of being fan-owned," Gavin told the *Dispatch* as he looked back on his first year in the hotseat.

"The support I've received from the fans has been absolutely immense – from minute one. I've had to embrace this football club and what it means and the passion has helped me drive things on."

Finishing well above supposed big hitters like Dulwich Hamlet,

Lewes and Billericay is a source of huge pride.

"To be in this position is quite frankly phenomenal but our narrative from the start was that we were not here just to make up the numbers."

Gavin arrived at Enfield with a reputation for getting his teams to punch above their financial weight.

"Budgets are something that



Gavin Macpherson joined the club last summer

have never fazed me," he says. "It's a massive achievement for the players to have embraced our values and methods so quickly in terms of style of play. It's also a huge achievement for my staff."

And, the fans would doubtless add, for himself too.

"We did work very hard in pre-season to get our message across," Gavin explained. "Players fell by the wayside if they couldn't compute what we wanted them to deliver, but that's football."

"The support I've received from the fans has been absolutely immense"

"Of course there have been bumps in the road. Losing to Cray Valley Paper Mills in the FA Cup when we had a dream tie against Charlton Athletic in our grasp was certainly one of them. But I expected ups and downs. We've had to learn about the players as much as vice-versa but the play-offs were always our goal, however realistic some might have viewed that."

And the season won't be over, whatever the outcome of Town's play-off dreams. That's because the second weekend in May sees Enfield Town take part in the finale of the Fenix Trophy, a European competition for non-league clubs that has generated the kind of nationwide media exposure that money can't buy.

Well over 200 Town fans travelled to Copenhagen during the group phase – remarkable for a step three non-league side – and similar numbers are expected to make the trip to Lake Garda for the semifinals and final.

"It's been brilliant for the club," said Gavin. "I would ideally have preferred the group games to have been in first half of the season but we've embraced the competition and it's a great way to round the season off."

"We are going there to try and win it."

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LICENSING ACT 2003

Notice of Application for a Premises Licence to be Granted

Notice is hereby given that **Mr Cara Gazmend** has applied on this day **17th April 2024** to the London Borough Of Enfield for the grant of a Premises Licence to permit:

- The retail sale of alcohol on premises Monday to Sunday from 10:00 until 22:30
- 355 Coffee Bar & Lounge situated at: 738 Green Lanes, London N21 3RE

The public register where applications are available to be viewed by members of the public can be accessed online by visiting <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/business-and-licensing/> and following the link to the Licensing Register. Email licensing@enfield.gov.uk to request a copy of the application within 28 days from the date of this notice.

Any person wishing to submit relevant representations concerning this application must give notice by emailing licensing@enfield.gov.uk, giving in detail the grounds of the representation no later than: **15th May 2024**

Representations received by post will not be accepted. Representations must include your full name and address. Representations must relate to one or more of the four Licensing Objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm. It is an offence, under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application for a premises licence. A person guilty of an offence is liable on summary conviction to a fine unlimited.

Advertise your licence

If you need to advertise your licence application in Enfield your local newspaper can help you

Email licences@socialspider.com
Call 07732 000430

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OUR CURRENT SUPPORTERS

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