

ENFIELD DISPATCH

Nº 87

THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

DEC 2025

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A COMMUNITY VEG bag scheme has been donated a delivery van by Enfield Council – after a previous vehicle was damaged beyond repair. Capel Manor College runs Enfield Veg. Co, with most of the produce grown at Forty Hall Farm by the horticultural college's staff, students and volunteers. Unfortunately, the college's delivery van was recently written off following a traffic collision. After learning of the college's difficulties, council leader Ergin Erbil and cabinet member for transport Rick Jewell arranged for the local authority's fleet service to donate a replacement van.

Enfield set to win big from government funding review

BY JAMES CRACKNELL,
FINN LOGUE, AND GRACE
HOWARTH, LOCAL
DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Enfield looks set to be one of the biggest winners in London from a local government funding review – helping to correct decades of “unfair” grant allocations from Whitehall.

While the final figures will not be announced until mid-December, the *Dispatch* understands that the government's Fair Funding Review has identified Enfield as one of the boroughs most in need of additional cash.

For years and even decades local leaders in Enfield have complained the borough has been massively “underfunded” – blamed on “outdated” government funding formulas that did not take account of

rising deprivation levels.

Last month Enfield was ranked within the worst 15% of local authorities across the country for deprivation and, perhaps most shockingly, the government's latest Index of Multiple Deprivation report showed that 55.5% of Enfield children live in income-deprived households.

Council leader Ergin Erbil said: “Enfield Council has faced years of unfair underfunding due to an outdated system that punished councils with areas of high deprivation and deepened inequality. The Institute for Fiscal Studies ranked Enfield as the seventh most underfunded authority in the country under this unjust system.

“While we will not know our exact funding allocation [until mid-December], we welcome the Labour government's pledge to fix this broken system and base future

funding on real local needs – using up-to-date deprivation data, population forecasts and service demand.”

Cllr Erbil added: “This won't undo years of damage overnight, but a fairer funding system will give us the tools to deliver the services our residents need and deserve and tackle inequality to create a fairer Enfield.”

Speaking about the Fair Funding Review last month Alison McGovern, the minister for local government, said: “It's simply wrong that where you live determines the quality of services you get and ultimately determines your life – from birth to old age. These reforms end that injustice. By using up-to-date data and targeting funding to areas with greatest need, we're reversing years of unfairness and unlocking opportunity in every part of the country.”

The local government funding review comes at a crucial moment for Enfield Council's finances – which still remain in a perilous state.

The civic centre needed £10million-worth of ‘exceptional financial support’ from the Treasury to balance its 2025/26 budget – and now further warnings are being made ahead of the 2026/27 budget being finalised early next year.

At a full council meeting in November Paul Dossett, a partner at auditors Grant Thornton, told councillors the firm had identified “significant” issues that required finance chiefs to “take action”.

The council's debt is forecast to rise to £1.5bn by April, with the cost of servicing this debt expected to be £35.4m in 2026/27. The council's risk reserves, at £32m, have

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Published on 28/11/2025

Outrage over Spurs floodlights erected without permission

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

New floodlights installed at Tottenham Hotspur Training Centre have been slammed as “devastating” for wildlife and “blinding” for visitors at Forty Hall. Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (THFC) recently installed six new floodlights without prior planning permission – but is now seeking retrospective approval from Enfield Council.

The Premier League club states that the 15-metre floodlights are needed in order to host European youth fixtures at the training ground this season, following qualification for the Champions League.

As well as the floodlights, the club has installed a new stand overlooking one of its pitches, which lies adjacent to both Forty Hall Estate and Myddelton House Gardens.

While the training ground already has floodlights to illuminate some of its other pitches, the new ones are brighter, as they must comply with UEFA regulations for competitive games. All floodlights must be switched off by 8.30pm.

Sam Tillbrook, an Enfield resident and member of the Guardians of Whitewebbs group which has been campaigning against the new Spurs women's academy at Whitewebbs Park, has objected to the floodlights after being “shocked” to see them on a recent visit to Forty Hall.

Forty Hall often hosts evening events, so public access sometimes remains even after dark. The

floodlights are also needed during daylight hours on cloudy days.

In his objection to the council, which will shortly decide the THFC planning application, Sam wrote: “I was shocked to walk into Forty Hall Estate on 14th November and to be struck by industrial-size, blinding, telescopic floodlights, which not only completely detracted from the heritage setting, but must surely also be devastating to bats, other nocturnal wildlife and most animals in general.

“It actually looks rather dystopian, and I couldn't quite believe my eyes. That's quite something, considering I was standing nearly 800 metres away from the floodlights. I note that in the planning application's ‘lighting assessment’, it mentioned that the floodlights emit 134,000 lumens, which is an extreme level of brightness.”

He added: “I cannot object more strongly to this application, and very much trust Enfield

Council will reject it, and will fine the applicant for their outrageous actions.”

THFC states in its planning application that the floodlights are “temporary” and will be removed after 31st March 2026 – suggesting the club is not planning on qualifying for the Champions League again in 2026/27.

It also states the training centre pitch “sits within a viewing corridor from Forty Hall” but that “it is screened by an established area of trees which limit any views” of the pitch where the floodlights have been installed.

A THFC spokesperson said: “We can confirm the application relates to the mandatory provision of temporary facilities to stage UEFA Youth League matches at our training centre this season – matches which are predominantly played during the day time. We remain open to engaging directly with our local residents on any concerns they may have around operations at the training centre.”



The Spurs floodlights as seen from Forty Hall Credit Sam Tillbrook

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

also fallen below the minimum threshold of £43m.

In a report published last month the auditor explained that urgent work was needed to reduce the financial risk of Meridian Water, the council's flagship housing development project, as well as two council-owned companies.

Dossett told councillors: “Obviously this council has made a number of investments over a period of time [...] the Energetik company has been set up, the Housing Gateway company, and

the Meridian Water project [are all] significant investments. This takes your debt position, as the report shows, to a significant level.”

Giving a wider picture, Dossett explained that Grant Thornton audited 36% of UK local authorities and that 14 out of the 175 councils in its profile were in a similar position to Enfield. Mentioning Woking Council, which declared effective bankruptcy in 2023, Dossett said Woking's investments “became toxic” and the debt unrecoverable, but said he didn't think Enfield was in that position yet.

Reacting to the report and Dossett's

comments, James Hockney, the opposition Conservative group's shadow councillor for finance, said: “The auditors have said the debt is too high and must come down and for years the Conservatives, the opposition, have said the debt is too high and we've been mocked, jeered and heckled – but tonight we're vindicated.”

However, deputy leader and cabinet member for finance Tim Leaver said the sky “hasn't fallen in” and the report “didn't speak against [the council's] prudence”. He said: “When the report does touch on it, it actually welcomes what we are already doing.”

Pensioner dies after robbery

A pensioner attacked outside Ponders End Post Office has died in hospital from his injuries.

Jalal Khan had been withdrawing money from a cash machine when he was ambushed and robbed at around 11am on Thursday, 30th October.

The 76-year-old was found with serious head injuries and was taken to hospital in a life-threatening condition. It was later confirmed he had died on Wednesday, 19th November.

Jaesis Boatswain, aged 40 and of Swan Walk in Ponders End, was previously charged with grievous bodily harm, assault, robbery and threatening a person with a knife. These charges are now being reassessed by the Crown Prosecution Service, following Jalal's death.

Boatswain is next due to appear at Wood Green Crown Court on Wednesday, 10th December.

Mural vote

BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A divisive mural on the side of a library will now stay – after Enfield Council's retrospective planning application was approved by councillors.

The *To Autumn* mural was unveiled in June on the side of Enfield Town Library, with the artwork having been co-designed by artist Albert Agwa and students from St Anne's School, using a John Keats poem as inspiration.

However, it later emerged the council had not sought prior planning approval for the artwork, and more than 600 local people signed a petition calling for the “eyesore” mural to be removed.

During a planning committee meeting last month, Conservative councillors raised concerns over the mural's aesthetics and maintenance, but it was voted through by the committee's Labour majority.

Separately, the *Dispatch* has seen evidence released under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act to show that the *To Autumn* mural was originally intended to be installed on a wall in Little Park Gardens, overlooking the new Saddlers Square, before being switched to the library without a fresh retendering exercise.

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Supporting good causes and people in need

Bindya Amin from The Old Enfield Charitable Trust on the help the charity offers locally



Old Vestry Office in Enfield Town, home to The Old Enfield Charitable Trust

The ancient parish of Enfield was once the largest in Middlesex, dating back before the Domesday Book and covering over 15,000 acres – more than half the present borough of Enfield.

From Tudor times until the mid-19th Century, the parish and its vestry acted as the local authority, caring for the poor and maintaining roads and bridges.

Enfield was remarkable for its generosity. By the late 18th Century nearly 40 local charities had been founded – more, it is said, than in any other Middlesex parish. Many benefactors left land or money to provide bread, clothing and relief for the poor. In 1772, the growing list of gifts was recorded on two large boards in St Andrew's Church, which can still be seen today.

Over time, several smaller charities were merged to simplify administration. In 1888, seven were united as the Enfield Parochial Charity, later joined by others to support both welfare and education. The final public

vestry meeting was held in 1979, and in 1994 The Old Enfield Charitable Trust was created, combining the Enfield Parochial Charity and the 100 Acres Trust.

Today, the trust continues its centuries-old mission to support local people in need. We are fortunate to be self-funded through income from property, investments, and by Enfield Market, which is owned by the trust. This enables us to help individuals and organisations without the need for regular fundraising.

Following a recent review, our grant-giving criteria have been updated, and we now provide support to individuals and organisations living in the EN1, EN2 and EN3 postcode areas.

Our personal grants are for individuals facing financial hardship and typically used for essential items such as white goods, furniture, or clothing.

Our community grants are for local organisations running initiatives that benefit our community – while we do not usually fund individual schools

or religious groups, we welcome applications from projects with a broader community impact.

Finally, our educational grants support access to vocational training and education, particularly for those not eligible for state funding or loans. We may also assist with related costs in certain cases.

Since April, the trust has awarded community grants to local organisations such as Love Your Doorstep; 1159 Edmonton Squadron, Royal Air Force Air Cadets; One to One Enfield; Enfield Christmas Parade of Light; 11th Enfield Boy's Brigade; Learning for Life Charity; Happy Days Children's Charity; and Cooking Champions.

For our personal grants we regularly receive referrals from agencies such as social services, health visitors and the Citizens Advice Bureau, but we would like to reach even more people who could benefit from our support.

For more information:
Call 020 8367 8941
Email enquiries@thetrustenfield.org.uk



Zoe White with the bus advert promoting Enfield BIPC

Representing Enfield's business community

Zoe White on how a business support group in Enfield can help entrepreneurs thrive and grow

I am a local business leader and entrepreneur and I am now proud to serve as an ambassador for BIPC Enfield, part of the Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) network connected to the British Library.

The BIPC network provides advice, inspiration, and practical support to entrepreneurs, start-ups, and small businesses across the UK, helping people turn ideas into thriving enterprises.

I'm absolutely delighted to volunteer my time and use my 20-plus years of business experience to support others here in Enfield. It's a real privilege to help those who are at the pre-start-up stage, running start-ups, micro businesses or community interest companies (CICs) to grow, develop, connect and make their dreams a reality.

I am a designer-maker and the owner of Zinfinity, which sells inclusive jewellery and runs creative workshops. Having joined BIPC Enfield during the first week of manager James Baxter's appointment, it's been a joy to work together on building a vibrant local business community.

tution as prestigious as the British Library choosing to bring this initiative right here to Edmonton. Starting a business and keeping up skills in a business can be very expensive, paying for various programmes, workshops or even advice. BIPCs provide free help, advice and workshops, so you can get as much help as you need without pressure and explore opportunities.

I have now become the face of BIPC Enfield's latest publicity campaign. This means I am now appearing on buses across more than 20 routes! It's completely surreal, but an absolute thrill to see myself on the side of buses promoting the British Library and BIPC Enfield. To think that a normal person like me is up there in the same space where there are images of film stars and theatre promotions, is just incredible.

Keep an eye out for more promotional material around the Enfield area and, if you're curious about what the BIPC and Enfield Council can offer, pop into Edmonton Green Library.

To contact Zoe and for more information about Enfield BIPC:
Email zinfinity@zinfinity.co.uk
Visit enfield.gov.uk/bipc

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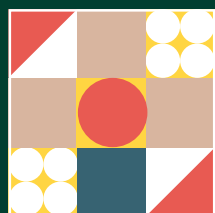
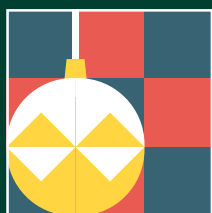
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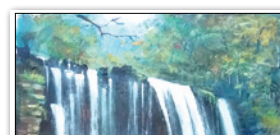
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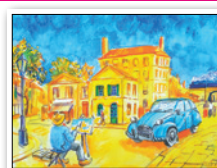
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Young People Are Our Future – Let's Listen

Reimagining creative spaces in Enfield

Mamusu Jabbie
Credit Kai Images



BY MAMUSU JABBIE, ENFIELD
YOUNG CREATIVES NETWORK

As a designer of West African heritage, born in the Netherlands and raised in Enfield, I have always been interested by creative identity; both personal and local.

Growing up, studying, playing and exploring in Enfield, you quickly realise that spaces designed to develop creativity were often private and expensive, limiting access for many young people.

As an architecture graduate, you start to understand that the industrial landscape of Enfield has an uneven distribution of creative

spaces; ultimately creating social disconnection from modern creative expression.

This awareness informed my own theoretical and artistic research; developing a body of work that explores people, places, and the formation of identity through placemaking design. My research led me to discover and engage with various grassroots initiatives, exploring council initiatives, local workshops, organisations, and even contributing to the delivery of public art murals. This deepened my understanding for how placemaking design can be used as a tool for public engagement and storytelling.

As an Enfieldian, I believe Enfield has the potential to become a vibrant creative hub that truly represents its diverse communities. It's encouraging to see initiatives and funding emerging, most notably 'Enfield of Dreams', which provides a framework for local arts organisations, designers, artists and young creatives to work collaboratively on creative projects.

The project presents ideas and design concepts that inform the future of culture in Enfield, while supporting young creatives to remain and thrive locally. It helps to ensure that the wider community benefits from inclusive public spaces.

Designing spaces where diverse communities can feel valued and find connections is a key motivator for me. My dream is to be a part of the development of inclusive placemaking projects, not-for-profit creative youth centres, and annual creative festivals that will showcase Enfield's culture.

Enfield of Dreams is not just about art or design; it's about developing spaces within our current environment that reflect the energy, diversity and imagination of the community, small businesses and, most importantly, the youth.

Sheniz Zehra Akanay
Credit Kai Images



From words to wellbeing

BY SHENIZ ZEHRA AKANAY,
ENFIELD YOUNG CREATIVES
NETWORK

I was born and raised in Enfield, and as a Turkish Cypriot young woman, this borough has always been more than just a place to live – it's home.

Enfield has shaped me by allowing me to celebrate and share the diversity of cultures and faiths within its community. Growing up here taught me the value of connection, collaboration, and creative expression, things that continue to guide my work today.

My journey started through poetry and spoken word, using rhythm, language and honesty to make sense of my world. Over time, that love of expression turned into something bigger: a desire to create spaces where others could experience that same freedom.

Having worked in the NHS and across healthcare settings for over five years, I have seen first-hand how vital self-expression is for mental health and emotional wellbeing. So much healing happens when people are given permission to be creative, to speak, to move, and to be heard.

As a creative facilitator, my dream for Enfield is to see creativity at the heart of community life. With twice-monthly poetry and expression workshops open to everyone, not just young people but all ages and backgrounds. I hold creative sessions which blend creative writing and spoken word artistry, offering a space to slow down, share, and connect which nurtures emotional regulation.

I'd like to inspire as many people as possible to come together, to rediscover their confidence, and to find joy in simply creating.

Beyond workshops, I imagine an Enfield that celebrates creativity in every corner; poetry nights in local cafés, art in our parks, open mics in community halls, and collaborations between artists, schools, and businesses. I want a borough where creativity is not a luxury but a shared part of everyday life.

Enfield has so much untapped talent and potential. My dream is for it to become a place where creativity connects us, where expression supports wellbeing, and where every voice, no matter how quiet, is valued.

That is the Enfield I want to help build.

Join Enfield Young Creatives Network on
Instagram: @enfieldyoungcreatives



Local Voice, Local Stories

Introducing 'Enfield of Dreams'



Enfield Young Creatives Network Credit Nat Gee

BY EMMA UNDERHILL, FOUNDER & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, UP PROJECTS

Every young person in Enfield has a right to access inspirational art and culture.

Evidence shows that having a creative life significantly improves wellbeing. Kings College London found that just seeing art in a gallery can reduce stress by 22%, while participating is even better; a recent government study showed that young adults participating in theatrical and musical activities felt that their lives had more meaning.

This is why we, at UP Projects, are thrilled to be leading Enfield of Dreams, an ambitious new two-year initiative inviting Enfield's young people to not only get involved but to also actively shape the future of arts and culture in the borough.

Over half-a-million pounds will be invested into this project, which will empower local young people to gain cultural leadership skills, collaborate on a range of ambitious public art projects, and shape creative learning in schools.

The funding has come from a major grant of £500,000 from Arts Council England with additional support from LocalMotion Enfield, whose co-ordinator Paul Everitt says: "Real change only happens when the people most affected are the ones

leading it and this project gives young people the tools, confidence, and platforms to lead, create, and reimagine what Enfield can be."

Over the last year, UP Projects has been collaboratively developing the project alongside the growing network of Enfield's artists, cultural organisations and young creatives. It has been inspirational to see the vision for the project growing out of workshops, meetings and ideation sessions with the community.

Themes that came out of this process included making the most of Enfield's biggest assets, which are our parks and green spaces, bringing together collaborations across different artforms, and encouraging everyone involved to raise the bar, be ambitious and dream big!

Enfield of Dreams will see a cohort of local young people selected to undertake a Young Cultural Leaders programme, where they will gain skills, experience, and confidence in arts programming and leadership. These young people will also co-create a series of arts projects working with local artists and six of Enfield's creative organisations: Border Crossings, Chickenshed Theatre, Face Front Inclusive Theatre, High Rise Entertainment, and UP Projects.

All these groups will be showcased to Enfield residents in public spaces, drawing visiting audiences to the

borough. Border Crossings' artistic director Michael Walling says the aim is "to open dialogue between our global performance-making and young people who inhabit the borough we are proud to call home," adding: "I'm sure we'll be learning as much from them as they from us."

Enfield's population is among the youngest in London and England, with 27% of residents under the age of 20. By empowering them to lead, we hope that Enfield's young population will become the cultural leaders of tomorrow.

UP Projects is a pioneering public art organisation that relocated from central London to Enfield in 2020. A core part of our programme is dedicated to working with children and young people, and we strongly believe that taking part in creative activity can empower young people to grow in confidence and have agency in their communities.

At UP Projects we have been taking artists and creative activities into schools across Enfield for the past five years. Now we will be taking Enfield of Dreams into secondary schools and youth groups, creating opportunities for teenagers to engage in creative learning programmes designed by young people in collaboration with teachers and creative educators. These programmes will be tailored to the students' needs and aspirations, enabling thousands of school-age young people to participate.

Co-creation is fundamental to this project. We are trying to share power equitably between all participants and remove hierarchies to ensure that everyone's voices are heard and respected. One of the most important ways we're doing this is by ensuring that everyone is paid equally to participate. We can't wait to see how this project unfolds, as young people's voices are placed at the heart of Enfield's cultural landscape, with a shared vision that prioritises access to high-quality creative lives for all.

If you're a passionate Enfield based creative who wants to get involved as either a creative practitioner or a young cultural leader, get in touch! Join the Enfield Culture Network newsletter and be the first to hear how to apply: Visit enfieldculturenetwork.co.uk

Monique Fenton
Credit Kai Images



Living with a hidden disability

BY MONIQUE FENTON, EMPOWERING
DISABILITY IN ENFIELD

I'd like to tell you my story; the mental toll, isolation, and even hiding that can come with a hidden disability.

I was born with a genetic condition but wasn't diagnosed until I was an adult. I had been suffering with the symptoms all my life, so the diagnosis didn't change my life as much as it made sense of all the different difficulties I'd endured.

For example, everyday movements always felt difficult, and I suffered many sprains, strains and tears. So, when I was finally diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (EDS) aged 38, everything made sense.

EDS is a connective tissue disorder that can cause frequent dislocations. My shoulder can dislocate when leaning on my elbow in bed, and my wrists and fingers can dislocate when I'm writing. I no longer know what it feels like to not be in constant pain or fatigued.

But when people look at me, they often don't see anything 'wrong'. That's the thing about hidden disability: it isn't visible, and neither is the constant struggle.

I mask my symptoms to avoid judgment or to spare others the helplessness my condition can make them feel. Constantly having to cancel plans on the day led to people no longer inviting me.

Boarding a bus is overwhelming. Once, the driver drove off before I got to a seat, and I dislocated joints; other passengers didn't understand, saying: "There's nothing wrong with you!"

Employers have dismissed me because my attendance was inconsistent. I tried going part-time, but my joints didn't respect that it was a day I was due to go to work when one of them slipped out while I tried to get dressed.

The financial strain is only one aspect of not being able to work; there's also the embarrassment of being looked upon as a benefit scrounger. The first thing people ask is: "What do you do?" Having to say "nothing" in response robs me of my self-esteem.

Eventually, I hid not only my disability, but also myself, with a huge mental and psychological cost. But I didn't hide because of my disability. I hid because transport, workplaces, and people's attitudes made life harder than it already was!

So, my message to everyone is please recognise that hidden doesn't mean non-existent when it comes to disability.

Disgraced ex-mayor finally apologises over misconduct in office

Mohammad Islam had previously refused requests to apologise after it was ruled he had “brought office into disrepute”

BY JAMES CRACKNELL & GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Former Enfield mayor Mohammad Islam has finally apologised for breaching Enfield Council’s members’ code of conduct – more than three months after being ordered to.

Cllr Islam, who served as mayor for a year prior to standing down in May, wrote in a letter to councillors that he recognised his actions “did not meet the standards expected of an elected member”.

The council’s conduct committee ruled in August that the Cllr Islam breached the code by “bringing his office into disrepute” after he used his position as mayor to support visa applications for friends and family in Bangladesh, against the advice of council officers.

Last month, the conduct committee met again to urge Cllr Islam to apologise for his behaviour, as well as comply with other requests such as attending training and not using his ‘past mayor’ badge, which he was seen wearing just two weeks after the original committee ruling in August.

The Ponders End ward councillor – now serving as an independent after being



Mohammad Islam at his mayor-making ceremony with (right) director of law and governance Terry Osborne
Credit: Enfield Council

“I recognise [my] actions did not meet the standards expected of an elected member”

kicked out of the Labour group – finally wrote his letter of apology on Friday, 21st November, 14 weeks after being ordered to.

In his 138-word letter, Cllr Islam said: “I would like to offer my sincere apology to the council for the conduct in relation to the invitation letters to attend council programs [sic]. I recognise that the actions did not meet the standards expected of an elected member and may have affected confidence in the council.

“I have already written to the governance team requesting that they provide a date for me to undertake the code of conduct training, and I look forward to completing it at the earliest opportunity.

“I remain committed to ensuring that my future conduct reflects the responsibilities and expectations of public office.

“While I accept the findings of the committee and comply fully with its decision, I will be raising some separate concerns

about aspects of the process through the appropriate channels.”

At the conduct committee meeting held three days prior to the letter being sent, chair Bektas Ozer said he was “baffled” Cllr Islam had not yet apologised, while Terry Osborne, the council’s director of law and governance, admitted there was “not much we can do”.

Cllr Ozer also said he believed the committee had been “quite lenient” with its sanctions, pointing out it did not ask Cllr Islam to return his past mayor badge, only to stop wearing it.

Osborne explained that the Labour government was consulting on re-introducing a standards board, a non-departmental public body abolished in 2012 that was previously responsible for promoting ethical standards in local government – and had the power to suspend councillors deemed to have used their position for personal gain.

Despite not wanting to see “more processes and bureaucracy” Osborne said in some cases there were “many complaints” and there was a desire for a “more robust system”.

Separately, the Home Office continues to investigate Cllr Islam over suspected immigration offences. He has not been charged with any crimes, however.

Under current laws, councillors can only be forced to resign if they receive a three-month prison sentence following a conviction.

Another former Labour member in Enfield, Nesimi Erbil, was able to continue serving as a councillor for nearly four years after being convicted for fraud in 2014, and was even convicted a second time during his term, for a public order offence in 2016, before he finally stood down in 2018.

Hundreds of homes approved for ex-hospital site

BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

The final phase of a decade-long plan to redevelop the original site of Chase Farm Hospital has been approved.

Enfield Council’s planning committee last month discussed the latest application submitted by Fairview New Homes for the hospital, which was relocated to a modern building on an adjacent site in 2018.

Previous phases of the redevelopment saw 138 homes built, plus two new schools. Now, another 369 new homes are set to be constructed on the remaining part of the former hospital site in The Ridgeway.

Mark Jackson, director of planning at Fairview New Homes, said the proposal

fulfilled the “final piece of our vision”. It includes a revised affordable housing offer, subject to grant funding, of 50% social rent, calculated by habitable room.

Funding for the affordable housing element, Fairview said, has been secured from a registered social housing provider and the Greater London Authority (GLA).

Compared to the original outline plans, two residential blocks will be seven storeys rather than six.

The committee was further told that the scheme treated the site’s locally listed buildings “with care”. A porter’s lodge, clock tower, and post-graduate building would all be “retained, restored, and returned to active use”.

The clock tower at the old hospital will be restored and converted into housing.

However, Conservative councillor Edward Smith raised concerns about the “low level” of three-bed properties and car parking on the scheme.

Cllr Smith also expressed his fears the two tallest blocks, at seven storeys, would look “massive” compared with the rest of the site.

The plans consist of 91 one-bedroom homes, 193 two-bedroom homes, and 85 three-bedroom homes.

The proposals also provide a total of 138 car parking bays, plus 704 cycle parking spaces.

The council’s head of planning and building control, Karen Page, said the increase in height from six to seven storeys for the two tallest housing blocks was considered “very minor and minimal”.



Plans by Fairview Homes for new housing at Chase Farm
Credit: Formation Architects

Following the discussion, ten of the eleven members voted in favour of the application with only Lee Chamberlain, a Conservative member, abstaining.

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Local Plan hearings conclude – for now

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

The inspector charged with determining whether Enfield Council’s new Local Plan is “sound” last month wrapped up the third stage of hearings – but warned there could be more to come.

Steven Lee has overseen a mammoth process of hearing evidence from various stakeholders on the 585-page document’s various policies and site allocations. Those contributing have included developers, local groups and experts as well as council officers and legal counsel.

In his closing remarks at Enfield Civic Centre on Wednesday, 12th November, Lee thanked everyone for their contributions and said they’d “followed the rules” better than in any examination he’d presided over. The next step is for any “main modifications” to the plan to be agreed, after which point a final round of public consultation will take place.

The Enfield Local Plan sets out where the council wants tens of thousands of new homes built up

to 2041. It’s been several years in the making, having previously gone out for consultation in 2021 and 2024.

After being submitted in August 2024 to the Planning Inspectorate for assessment, the first stage of public hearings took place in January and looked at broad issues such as housing targets and the Metropolitan Green Belt. The big news at this stage was the “bombshell” announcement from City Hall that Sir Sadiq Khan was ending his previous opposition to building on the Green Belt – a major boost to Enfield Council’s own desire to allocate 9,651 homes on four Green Belt sites.

The second stage, between June and August, examined site allocations. It saw the council admit it intended to issue compulsory purchase orders to any Crews Hill businesses refusing to sell to developers – sparking controversy over the loss of a “golden mile” for garden centres.

In a session on Meridian Water the council admitted it didn’t have a plan for meeting its own 10,000 homes target, and instead allocated



Planning inspector Steven Lee

6,700 homes for the area in the Local Plan. This number was later raised to 7,400, however, after it was pointed out some smaller sites were omitted.

Ahead of the third stage of hearings in October, the government dropped its own bombshell when it announced that Crews Hill and Chase Park were set to form a ‘new town’ of at least 21,000 homes – more than doubling their Local Plan allocations.

In his closing remarks, Lee explained that, after the final consultation, his “preference” was to “proceed straight to my issuing my report”. He added: “But the process does allow for me to have additional hearing sessions, if issues arise from the consultation that need to be dealt with.”

“The process does allow additional hearing sessions if issues arise”

Row over tall buildings

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Enfield Council has been accused of “ignoring its own advice” on tall buildings.

Evidence collated by the council suggested any new buildings at Palace Gardens Shopping Centre in Enfield Town should be capped at 27 metres to protect the conservation area.

However, the tall buildings policy in the draft Enfield Local Plan instead states a higher maximum of 39m at Palace Gardens. This higher number is equivalent to around 13 storeys, while the lower height equates to nine storeys.

Although the difference is only four storeys, The Enfield Society has strongly opposed the higher level and was unable to get a clear answer from the council, on why it had rejected the lower number, when the subject was debated at length during a Local Plan hearing on Thursday, 30th October.

Explaining why the lower maximum was more appropriate, archaeologist Dr Michael Shapland said: “Beyond a certain height, obviously a tall building will start to impact upon heritage assets and many other things as it gets taller and the degree of harm

it will cause will start to go into the realms of substantial.”

Within Enfield Town Conservation Area the tallest buildings at present are five storeys, although on the edge of the town centre there are examples of some twelve-storey blocks. The Enfield Society commissioned Dr Shapland to undertake a heritage impact assessment on Enfield Town. He explained that “of all the battles The Enfield Society wishes to fight, they’ve picked this one”.

Four years ago plans by Palace Gardens owner Deutsche Bank for a 26-storey tower block were ditched after a furious backlash. However, it’s understood the German company is now preparing fresh plans.

Dr Shapland added: “The council is not following its own advice, which I think it is quite strange.”

In response, council barrister Matthew Reed KC said any plan for a tall building at Palace Gardens would still be subject to detailed consideration when it comes forward.

Reed said: “You can take comfort from the fact that the London Plan itself only requires the identification of maximum heights [in local plans] that may be appropriate.”

Water main dampens hope of 10,000 homes

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Enfield Council was told about a major water main running through development sites at Meridian Water at least six years ago, emails and planning documents show.

During a discussion on Meridian Water as part of the Enfield Local Plan examination at the end of October, a council representative explained that during recent investigations “they came across some quite significant underground water mains running diagonally through” and that the discovery meant a bus garage site couldn’t be developed as previously planned.

But the *Dispatch* has seen an email sent to the council’s planning

department in November 2019 by Thames Water, providing advice about strategic infrastructure works on the Orbital Business Park site directly across the River Lee Navigation from the bus garage. In the email, the council is warned directly about the water main.

The email said: “The proposed development is located within 15m of Thames Waters underground assets, as such the development could cause the assets to fail if appropriate measures are not taken.”

A report drawn up for councillors on the planning committee a few months later, in March 2020, also highlighted the water main. It stated: “They [Thames Water] note that there are public sewers crossing or close to the site and advise that

the applicant [the council] should read their guidance on working near or diverting pipes.

“They also note that the proposed development is located within 15m of a strategic water main. They therefore request the imposition of [a] condition requiring the submission of a piling method statement.”

Richard Pestell, a planning consultant from Rapleys who represented the council at the Local Plan examination, told the October hearing that the strategic water main essentially means the council doesn’t currently have a workable strategy for meeting its long-term target of building 10,000 homes across Meridian Water, its flagship housing development.

But the emails and planning

Construction is continuing at Meridian Water



documents from six years ago raise the question of why the issue was not tackled sooner. Lee Chamberlain, the Conservative group’s housing spokesperson, told the *Dispatch*: “This thing is being claimed as a surprise – but someone must have known about it. So much money and time has been wasted.”

Matt Burn, from campaign group Better Homes Enfield, added: “The

delivery of the 10,000 homes and 6,000 jobs is now in doubt and it shows the council is out of its depth as master developer.

“A considerable amount of time and money has been wasted. The mayor or government should step in to take control of this project.”

The council was asked to explain the discrepancies around the water main but a spokesperson said it could not address the issue directly. Instead, council leader Ergin Erbil said: “Big projects always bring big challenges. We’re making smart choices to keep things on track. Our goal is to build as many much-needed homes as soon as possible.

“By the end of March next year 301 homes will be completed [at] Meridian One, with 50% being affordable.”

We love reporting on Enfield borough but the business of local news publishing is really hard

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coverage of the borough's Local Plan hearings. We also publish positive features on local charities and campaigns, regular reviews of the borough's restaurants, and ongoing coverage of Enfield Town FC.

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Council climate promises must be scrutinised

Enfield Climate Action Forum's land use working group members Matt Burn, Carol Fisk and Vicki Pite explain how targets are being missed

Enfield Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and adopted the first Enfield Climate Action Plan the following year – promising a carbon-neutral borough by 2040.

There was initial progress but, five years on, scrutiny has all but disappeared, key targets have not been met, and the data doesn't add up.

Transport is one of Enfield's biggest sources of carbon emissions. In 2020 the council pledged that, by 2022, most journeys would be made by walking, cycling or public transport ('sustainable travel'), and that transport emissions would fall by a third by 2025. But instead, sustainable travel in Enfield is falling, car use is increasing, and traffic levels are at their highest for 30 years.

All outer London boroughs have managed to increase walking rates, but Enfield's progress is among the lowest, lagging behind the likes of Redbridge, Havering and Brent. Looking at sustainable travel, Enfield is the only outer London borough to have gone backwards. Yet the council's proposed Local Plan is unapologetically car centric. It aims to remove hundreds of trees to widen roads for thousands more cars, a move that directly undermines Enfield's climate goals.

The pattern repeats with waste and recycling. Enfield Climate Action Plan aimed to cut household waste and increase recycling rates to 49% – but neither happened. Waste per home has increased, and recycling remains stuck at around 33%.

As a result, Enfield is unnecessarily burning vast amounts of recyclable waste at Edmonton incinerator. But these huge carbon emissions are completely left out of the borough's climate action planning, which removes the incentive to reduce waste and improve recycling. Missing recycling targets is also expensive; by the council's own estimate, every 1% of waste recycled saves between £85,000 and £95,000 per year.

There is a clear lack of joined-up thinking. The new Enfield Local Plan has cost over £7million to develop but does not include adequate policies for reducing waste and improving recycling.

A new incinerator is being built at Edmonton Eco Park while the old one continues to burn the borough's rubbish



Heating homes is another major contributor to carbon emissions. The 2024 version of Enfield Climate Action Plan promised Energetik would reduce emissions by connecting 36,000 homes to the council-owned district heat network by 2030, and 78,800 by 2040. But this year, the council approved Energetik's new business plan, which shows a drastically reduced number of connections. It means the action plan now rests on unrealistic assumptions.

Since 2020, the council has also systematically reduced oversight of its climate work. Last year, the environment forum and the environment and climate action scrutiny panel were scrapped, removing key opportunities for public challenge and accountability. Without scrutiny, plans and targets do not get implemented.

So what must change? Firstly, count all carbon emissions. The council must include Enfield's share of emissions from the Edmonton incinerator in its climate action planning. It cannot claim progress towards net zero while a major source of pollution is kept off the books. Targets are needed to drastically cut incinerator emissions.

Secondly, bring back scrutiny. Responding to a climate emergency requires openness and transparency about failures as well as successes. The council should create two dedicated scrutiny panels; one to monitor delivery of carbon-reduction targets and the other to oversee adaptation measures such as managing flooding and overheating. These panels should meet monthly and publish annual reports to

full council which make clear, costed recommendations showing how Enfield will meet its climate goals.

Residents deserve a council that takes climate action seriously. Empty promises

and warm words won't cut emissions. Only evidence, transparency and sustained determined action will. These are not radical demands – they are the basics of honest, competent democratic governance.

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Fighting for Whitewebbs

Conservative councillor Reece Fox vows to continue opposing council plans for building thousands of homes on the Green Belt

Representing Whitewebbs ward as a councillor has been an honour.

Whitewebbs is unique. From Whitewebbs Park to Crews Hill, Forty Hall and Bulls Cross, there is no other ward like it in Enfield borough.

The ward is blessed with sweeping countryside, cherished parks, and rich biodiversity. These spaces are more than pleasant backdrops; they are part of Enfield's identity. Indeed, Enfield prides itself on being a mix of town and country.

That is why one of my greatest passions on the council has been standing up for our Green Belt. Over recent years, our green spaces have come under unprecedented threat. The government's proposals for a 'new town' of at least 21,000 properties at Crews Hill would transform rural Enfield into an enormous construction site. It would tear up fields, destroy habitats, increase congestion and irrevocably change the character of our borough. Once the Green Belt is gone, it is gone forever.

Following the felling of a beloved oak tree by Toby Carvery, neglect for our cherished Green Belt areas has been put into sharp focus. Enfield Conservatives are calling on Enfield Council to prevent future harm to this historic forested area by designating areas of the park west of the old golf course as a 'Whitewebbs Park Conservation Area'. This designation would ensure that any future development of the area preserves or enhances this historic parkland's special character and appearance.

Being a councillor also gives me the platform to fight these plans and stand with residents who want to protect our Green Belt. The truth is simple: Enfield's housebuilding targets could be met by focusing on brownfield sites, such as finishing the Meridian Water redevelopment in Edmonton.

Conservatives in Enfield have a real plan to improve our com-

Reece Fox has represented Whitewebbs ward since 2022 Credit Enfield Council



munity; stopping the new town, saving Whitewebbs Park, removing low-traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs), redesigning the Traveller Local Plan, strengthening our local economy, and working with the police to cut crime.

"Over recent years, our green spaces have come under unprecedented threat"

But it is my experience of knocking on doors, speaking to local people across Whitewebbs and listening to residents that has taught me the most. Every week I go out knocking on doors across the ward and every door I knock on reminds me why I love this job. Being a councillor is not about titles or committee rooms – it is about service. It is

about standing up for the people who placed their trust in you.

Representing Whitewebbs is a privilege I never take for granted, and I am grateful for the opportunity to work for this remarkable community.

Reece Fox is one of three councillors representing Whitewebbs ward, alongside Hannah Dyson and David Skelton (all Conservative). Local residents can get in touch:

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Immigrants welcome

Dear Enfield Dispatch

After 38 years in business, I've never written anything political – until now. I can no longer stay silent while parties like Reform UK spread fear and division, preying on people's insecurities and blaming immigrants for problems they didn't create.

I employ care workers, many from overseas, who dedicate their lives to supporting our elderly and vulnerable. They work long hours with patience, kindness, and respect – the very best of humanity.

Yet after a day of helping others eat, wash, and live with dignity, they go home to headlines calling immigrants a "drain" or demanding they "go back". Imagine how that feels.

The majority of immigrants make an enormous contribution to this country. Instead of scapegoating them, we should be thanking them. Compassion, decency, and truth – not hate and fear – must guide the Britain I'm proud to call home.

Ken Waterhouse

Managing director, Home Care Preferred

New town

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Thank you for your new town feature in November [Enfield reacts to government 'new town' announcement, Issue 86, Pages 10–11], and the quotes from [Housing Secretary] Steve Reed and [Enfield North MP] Feryal Clark.

One vital aspect of the new town which nobody mentioned is how it will be supplied with drinking water, and what the wastewater and sewage arrangements will be. When Steve Reed was environment secretary he vowed to fix the pollution of rivers and seas, but now he is in a new job!

Presumably, the new town will be supplied by the nearly bankrupt Thames Water. There have been protests elsewhere over building new housing where the sewage already overflows. This is a nationwide scandal and I hope you will monitor the implications for the new town.

Jess Yates

Bush Hill Park

Vicarage Farm homes fears

Dear Enfield Dispatch

I have lived in my house bordering the fields [of Vicarage Farm] for 50 years and my kids used to play by Salmons Brook – they are now 55 and 57 years old. To lose the Green Belt vista would be devastating, and there would be nowhere for all these new householders to enjoy except the disused land, waste land and brownfield sites that are plentiful.

Of course we need extra housing, but in the right place. I have spoken to [Enfield North MP] Feryal Clark about this but, while very courteous, she was not very sympathetic.

William Dent

World's End

Crews Hill homes fears

Dear Enfield Dispatch

There has been a lot in the news about the proposed housing development for Crews Hill. While this proposal will be devastating for businesses and the character of the area, what has been far less discussed is its community value to the wider borough.

As a father of two young children, Crews Hill is a place we regularly visit. With its wonderful variety of garden centres, pet stores, soft plays and aquariums it's a wonderful place to have on the doorstep – somewhere that is inclusive, doesn't cost an extortionate amount of money during the holidays, and allows young residents to engage with nature.

In a financially stretched climate, this is a godsend for many Enfield residents – particularly those on lower incomes. I know that I am not alone in this; many parents with school-age children within Enfield Town, Palmers Green and Winchmore Hill can often be heard saying similar things.

Crews Hill should be considered an invaluable community asset.

Chris Bryant

Palmers Green



Cllr Erbil (third from left) and Cllr Greer (centre) joined faith leaders at the 'Prayer for Peace' event Credit Saray Karakus

Faith leaders make appeals for unity

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Faith leaders from across the borough issued passionate appeals for unity and togetherness at a 'Prayer for Peace' event at Enfield Civic Centre last month.

Leaders from community groups with a wide range of religious affiliations came together in a united stand against hate and division.

The event was organised in response to recent attacks such as the one on a Manchester synagogue which killed two Jewish people. As well as numerous speeches, the civic centre event also saw efforts to relaunch Enfield's multi-faith forum.

Enfield mayor Margaret Greer opened the event before inviting council leader Ergin Erbil to speak. Cllr Erbil said: "The mayor has spearheaded this campaign, following the vile attack in Manchester on a synagogue and an attack on a mosque in Sussex.

"We have visited as many faith places as possible to say that we will not stand for hate and we will stand united as a borough [and show] we are stronger as a borough because of our diversity."

Cllr Erbil also talked about trying to steer young people away from "hateful ideologies" and "dark paths" but that the council

couldn't do it alone and needed help from volunteers and community leaders. "We need you to work with us," he added.

Faith leaders from religions spanning Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Alevism and various Christian denominations, as well as a Humanist and other non-religious leaders, all addressed the meeting.

Reverend Ruth Dewis, the minister of three United Reformed Churches in Enfield, said: "People of faith work alongside each other really well. When people come together in peace, we realise we have a lot more in common than we think.

"Our differences melt away and our common interests become the focus [...] we all need to feel connected and part of something bigger."

Rabbi Mendel Hurwitz, from United Synagogue in Bush Hill Park, warned: "If people only stick within their own groups, they go down the rabbit hole."

Imam Adam Kantar, from Rumi Mosque in Edmonton Green, said:

"We need not to fear one another, not to divide one another, but to recognise our shared values. London is a living example of that vision – we worship in different ways [but are] united in harmony."

Archbishop Costakis Evangelou, known as the 'boxing bishop' thanks to his role running Edmonton Eagles Boxing Club, said: "Young people often get a negative press, but we want to change that and show them what they can achieve and to be the best version of themselves."

Pastor Nick Chanda, of Revival Church in Enfield Town, said: "Ignorance is what divides us – when we have knowledge of what is going on, with each faith group, that is when there is unity, and that gives us power."

Vanessa, a Humanist, added: "We want to be part of the things you do in the borough to build peace. I hope you continue to include that wide ring of people."

Following the contributions from faith leaders, Jonathan Toy, Enfield Council's head of community

safety, gave an impassioned speech and said: "When points of division show in our community we have to come together and call it out."

A reformed multi-faith forum and resilience group will start to meet regularly in Enfield in the new year, Cllr Greer confirmed. "Let's move forward in peace and partnership together," she said.

"We will not stand for hate"

Ex-Reform candidate slams 'negative rhetoric'

Neville Watson left Reform UK last month after what he described as "harmful" conversations around migration

BY FINN LOGUE

The former chair of Reform UK's Enfield branch has left the party after criticising the political group's "negative rhetoric".

Neville Watson – a former parliamentary candidate in Enfield who had been Reform UK's only black chair – left the party after what he described as "harmful" conversations around migration.

Watson stood as a parliamentary candidate for the UK Independence Party (Ukip) in Edmonton as well as the London Assembly, before leaving the party. He then stood as Reform UK's candidate in the Edmonton and Winchmore Hill constituency in the 2024 General Election and again in the Jubilee ward by-election for Enfield Council last year.

Speaking to the *Dispatch*, Watson said he joined Ukip originally to "campaign hard" for the UK to leave the European Union. He said he thought Nigel Farage was a charismatic leader with the country's best interests at heart. He added that Reform UK – currently led by Farage – offered a "breath of fresh air" for those disillusioned with the main two parties.

However, Watson made headlines in *The Guardian* after commenting on Reform's approach to migration. Explaining his feelings further, Watson told the *Dispatch*: "There is some negative rhetoric and that is why I moved away from Reform. There was a certain language being used that I was getting uncomfortable with.

"It starts to sound like they are attacking one group of people who are immigrants. We're not talking about immigrants who

are white from Ukraine, we are talking about immigrants who are dark skinned."

Watson claims he is "very pro-immigration, as long as it's controlled" and added that he thought Britain's coastal towns were suffering and that immigration could "breathe new life into these towns".

He added: "There's a perception that we're overrun, but we do have space. I'm a product of immigration and it would be very hypocritical to support this."

Watson, born in Hackney, is the son of Windrush-generation Jamaican immigrants, and previously wrote to Reform party chair Zia Yusuf to campaign



Neville Watson

for reparations to be paid to Afro-Caribbeans, after Yusuf made negative comments about Deputy Prime Minister David Lammy for talking about the slave trade.

Writing in Reform UK's magazine *The New Reformer* he said it was on Reform to "strengthen black voices" and "push back" on the marginalisation of ethnic minorities.

Watson made it clear that he had not personally experienced any racism in the party himself, but was "alarmed" by the rising tide of anti-migration rhetoric, both from the party and outside. He said that politicians such as Nigel Farage and Robert Jenrick were "stoking a fire".

The former Reform UK general election candidate is now set to defect to the Christian People's Alliance, a minor Christian right party. Watson plans to stand again locally in Enfield and work with the party to bring Christian values to the area, with an overall enforcement of positivity in the party's politics.

Published 28th November

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 13 OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Proposed development at:

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Property number or name

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Locality

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Postal town

Postcode

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Gramplan House

North Mall

Edmonton Green

Edmonton

London

N9 OEG

Take notice that application is being made by:

Organisation name

Applicant Title

Applicant Forename

Applicant Surname

U,DAB Ltd

Mr.

Martin

Spencer

For planning permission to:

Description of the proposed development

Install a mast (less than 6 metres tall) with DAB antenna atop the roof of Gramplan House

Local Planning Authority to whom the application is being submitted:

Enfield

Local Planning Authority address:

Enfield Council, Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield EN1 3XA

Any owner of the land or tenant who wishes to make representations about this application, should write to the council within 21 days of the date of this notice.

Signatory:

Title

Forename

Surname

Date

Mr

Martin

Spencer

20-08-2025

Statement of owners' rights: The grant of planning permission does not affect owners' rights to retain or dispose of their property, unless there is some provision to the contrary in an agreement or lease.

Statement of agricultural tenants' rights: The grant of planning permission for non-agricultural development may affect agricultural tenants' security of tenure.

'Owner' means a person having a freehold interest or a leasehold interest the unexpired term of which is not less than seven years. 'Tenant' means a tenant of an agricultural holding any part of which is comprised in the land.

This notice is for publication in a local newspaper.

LICENSING ACT 2003
Notice Of Application For A New Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that: Ilir Popa has applied to the Licensing Authority of London Borough of Enfield for a Premises Licence to permit:

• Sale of alcohol (on and off the premises): Monday to Sunday: 11:00 to 23:00 hours

• Opening Hours: Monday to Sunday: 11:00 to 23:00 hours

• For the premises: Daniel's Grill House situated at: 66-68 Green Lanes, London N13 6JU

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: 11th December 2025

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.

Dated: 13th day of November 2025

LICENSING ACT 2003
Notice of Application for a Variation of Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that Poppy's Bakery Limited have applied to the Licensing Authority of London Borough of Enfield for a Variation of Premises Licence to permit:

• To extend the sale of alcohol hours to 09:00–22:30 Monday to Sunday

• For the premises Pistachi Café & Bar situated at 46 Church Street, Enfield EN2 6AZ

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Dated: 25th day of November 2025

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A year of celebrating young voices

Regan O'Mahony, director of Enfield-based YTA Performing Arts, looks back on a successful year

With Young Notes Choir, the Enfield-based youth ensemble from YTA Performing Arts, we are using voices to create change – both in their community and on national stages.

Our talented group recently performed outside the Houses of Parliament as part of Women's Aid's 'Hear Them or Grieve Them' campaign – a powerful national movement calling for stronger action to protect women and children affected by domestic abuse.

The performance, which featured a striking arrangement by Mark De Lisser and taught to the choir by Zola Joseph, brought an emotional and thought-provoking dimension to the event, which was covered by national television.

We were so proud to support such an important project. It was a privilege to stand alongside Women's Aid in raising awareness and to use our platform to

Young Notes Choir outside the Houses of Parliament



"We were so proud to support such an important project"

support a campaign driving social change and standing up for women and children.

Just weeks later, Young Notes had another reason to celebrate, being crowned overall winners of the Breakout Youth Talent All

Stars Contest. Based in Edmonton, Breakout is a long-standing youth talent competition that has showcased some of North London's brightest emerging performers over the past decade.

Young Notes first won the contest back in 2019, and our return this year for the 'all stars' tenth anniversary event – which brought together previous champions from the past ten years – saw the choir again take home the top title as overall winners.

This success adds to an impressive list of achievements during 2025. Earlier this year, Young Notes collaborated with Nimino Music on the house track *Better*, which is currently charting across streaming platforms. The choir also took part in the Royal British Legion's national VE Day project, honouring veterans through music, and were proud national finalists in the Barnardo's National Choir Competition.

YTA Performing Arts runs several choirs, with groups ranging in age from four years to adult. Young Notes rehearse every Monday evening at Studio YTA in Chase Side, Enfield, where singers of all abilities come together to learn, grow and perform in a supportive and inspiring environment.

From Parliament Square to packed performance venues, Young Notes continues to show what's possible when young people are given a platform to express themselves! Their voices are not only making music – they're making a difference.

For more information about YTA Young Talent Academy:
Call 07961 782 864
Email info@youngtalentacademy.co.uk
Visit youngtalentacademy.co.uk

Enfield's diverse cultures invited to 'share experiences'

Enfield Racial Equality Council is leading on a new lottery-funded project which aims to foster stronger connections between different cultures

BY LOLA FALLON

A celebration of the borough's vibrant and diverse communities will be held this month. Hosted jointly by Enfield Racial Equality Council (EREC) and Rumi Mosque in Edmonton, the event is part of a new project called 'Culture Connect' that will feature four events over the coming year.

This programme builds on the success of EREC's previous initiative, United for All Seasons, and is designed to bring communities together through the arts.

The continuation of this work was funded

by a £20,000 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund, with the goal of fostering stronger connection within Enfield's communities.

The first Culture Connect session will take place on Tuesday, 2nd December, from 11am–1pm at Rumi Mosque in Fore Street, and will feature discussions on different cultural traditions, performances of poetry and music from around the world, as well as a speech from Enfield Council leader Ergin Erbil on the importance of community cohesion.

Attendees will also be able to access information and support on pressing matters such as the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

Chandra Bhatia, EREC chief executive, told the *Dispatch* it would be "great for people to come together to learn about each other's cultures and share experiences, focusing on similarities rather than differences in a safe social setting where everyone belongs".

To find out more and register your interest in taking part:
Email info@enfieldrec.org.uk

Rumi Mosque in Fore Street, Edmonton Green



Southgate's own Chinese dynasty

Neil Littman visits one of the borough's oldest surviving restaurants



Duck Chinese style

Before I get into my visit to a Chinese gem in Southgate – which may lay claim to being one of the oldest surviving restaurants in the borough – I want to take the chance to look back over the year.

A few long-established restaurants have gone that I think will be missed. Although I cannot say exactly why some places have pulled their shutters down, given the (still) uncertain economic climate, rising costs, and inflation that has affected the hospitality sector, I believe these factors have all contributed to the current situation.

So far, I've noted nine closures during the year, including the long-established Highland Angus in Southgate and several restaurants in Palmers Green. Some have closed due to owner retirement or lack of business, but others have reopened on the same locations after changing hands, including new Korean restaurant Ahra-Ne in Palmers Green. L'Arte in Cockfosters is also opening a new branch on the site occupied by Giovanni's in Winchmore Hill since 1991.

Hopefully all this change will bode well, but I think we could still do with more variety. Good additions during 2025 included Roti and Spice in Winchmore Hill and Shere Khan in Ponders End (both pan-Asian), plus Stan's Kitchen, a food court in Enfield Town offering Thai, Korean and

Italian cuisine. Meanwhile, Stage reopened at a new site in Palmers Green while also expanding with a separate Austrian restaurant at its original location, across the road in Green Lanes.

For this month's review, I visited one of the few Chinese restaurants in Enfield where you can dine in. Honeymoon is located behind Southgate Station, in Crown Lane. The present owners, originally from Hong Kong, have been working there for over 50 years.

Their extensive menu, with over a dozen starters, is mainly Cantonese with a lot of familiar dishes, plus a few surprises such as ho fun flat noodles (not to be confused with chow mein!) served in different combinations with meat, seafood or vegetarian.

There are also Peking-style dishes such as kung po. They don't serve dim-sum, however, which I think would be a good addition to their menu. The windowless exterior initially seemed a bit off-putting but, once inside, the dining area



Ho fun noodles with chicken

is welcoming and service is friendly. I visited twice midweek and both times they were busy. My impression was that most of the diners were regulars.

We ordered sesame prawn toast and spring rolls to start, which looked and tasted home-made. However, the lack of any dipping sauces was disappointing. There is at least a section on the menu for special sauces for an extra cost.

For mains, we had chicken ho fun ('wet fried', but missing out on its signature savoury flavour), beef in black bean sauce, salt and pepper deep-fried tofu (which was crunchy though not as spicy as I would have liked) plus egg fried rice. Portions are generous and better value for two or more people to share.



Salt and pepper deep fried tofu

I returned a week later on my own and ordered two of my favourite dishes, salt and pepper fried squid (which I would have preferred with more chilli) and duck 'Chinese style', which was one of my highlights, plus rice.

There is enough variety on the menu to ensure repeat visits. The price per person, not including drinks, is about £30 – unless you order crab, lobster or other exotic fish dishes. What I like about Honeymoon is its extensive menu, authenticity, and flavours.

I'd like to say a big thank you to *Dispatch* readers for your tips and feedback during the past year and I wish everyone happy dining in 2026!

Do you have any suggestions for restaurants in Enfield to review or feedback on the places Neil has already reviewed? He would love to hear from *Dispatch* readers:
Email eatingoutinenfield@gmail.com

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 **Friday 12th December**.

DANCE

Balhalla Balboa Nights

Wed 10th December, from 7pm
The Southgate Club, Crown Lane,
17 Chase Side, Southgate N14 5BP

The Sam Virdie Quintet are here to help you get down and boogie. Music played at all tempos for dance styles including balboa, shag and lindy.

Tickets £12 on the door

Visit southgateclub.com

PANTO

Rapunzel and the Revengers

Thursday 4th to Tuesday 30th
December, various times
Millfield Theatre, Silver Street,
Edmonton N18 1PJ

Platinum Productions presents a traditional pantomime with a tangled twist! Come for the fairytale, stay for the laughs, leave with your spirit soaring!

Tickets £23.50 adults, £19.50 children

Call 020 8807 6680

Visit millfieldtheatre.co.uk

The Elves and the Shoemaker

Tuesday 16th to Wednesday 31st
December, various times
Dugdale Arts Centre, Enfield Town
EN2 6DS

Exeter Northcott Theatre and Paddleboat Theatre Company are excited to present a brand new version of this beloved fairytale. This inventive and highly interactive 50-minute adventure is full of clowning, puppetry and a magical miniature world.

Tickets £16 adults, £13 children

Call 080 0640 3928

Visit dugdaleartscentre.co.uk/whats-on/the-elves-and-the-shoemaker

Chickenshed presents Red

Running throughout December, various dates and times
Chickenshed Theatre, 290 Chase Side, Southgate N14 4PE

A magical twist on *Little Red Riding Hood* set in a snowy mountain village filled with secrets, spirits, and a legendary wolf. With 200+ performers, original music, and breathtaking design – this festive show is full of mystery, magic, and unforgettable moments!

Tickets start from £12.50

Call 020 8292 9222

Visit chickenshed.org.uk

MUSIC

Rowantree Choir presents Mr Fezziwig's Christmas Party

Saturday 13th December, 7.30pm
Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road, Enfield Town EN2 6TG

Join Rowantree Choir for a wonderful evening of seasonal music! With conductor Jonathan Rathbone, baritone Paul Sheehan and orchestra The Sylvan Ensemble.

Tickets £17 adults, £8 children if booked in advance

Visit ticketsource.co.uk/rowantree-choir

COMEDY

Resistance Comedy presents Jingle Bell Funny

Saturday, 20th December, 8pm
Dugdale Arts Centre, Enfield Town
EN2 6DS

Resistance Comedy was founded in Enfield and has been building the local stand-up scene for over six years – running packed shows at the Dugdale and Chickenshed and proudly putting Enfield on the comedy map. Featuring Stephen K Amos, Olivia Lee, President Obonjo and Jason Patterson, this Christmas special is our biggest event yet!

Tickets £21

Call 080 0640 3928

Visit dugdaleartscentre.co.uk/whats-on/resistance-comedy-jingle-bell-funny

SOCIAL

LGBT+ Tuesday Social Group

Every Tuesday, 8.30pm
Various pubs around Enfield

Enfield LGBT Network hosts a weekly social gathering at various pubs and bars around Enfield every Tuesday evening. It is an informal meet-up where lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people can meet and socialise within the borough over a quiet drink. The members also arrange other activities during the year. Contact organiser Mark Riley for more details.

Free to join

Call 07706 453 845

Email info@lgbtnenfield.org

Read more about upcoming events in Enfield on the Dispatch website:
Visit enfielddispatch.co.uk

AROUND THE BOROUGH

EDMONTON GREEN

TfL 'sorry' over station lift breakdowns

Edmonton Green Station



BY FINN LOGUE & JAMES CRACKNELL

A LIFT AT EDMONTON GREEN Overground Station is sometimes being left out of service for more than a month at a time, according to new information obtained by the *Dispatch*.

Data from a Freedom of Information Act request highlights the frequency of lift breakdowns at

Edmonton Green Station, with the lift serving the London-bound platform often being broken for extended periods.

Since September 2024 there have been seven occasions when the platform one lift was out of action for more than 24 hours. On three of those occasions the lift went unrepaired for longer than a month, with the longest repair waiting time being 43 days.

Barry Hodges, Transport for London's head of infrastructure, said: "We understand how important reliable lifts are for our customers and we're sorry for the ongoing issues at Edmonton Green Station.

"Initial investigations indicate water ingress is affecting the lift's performance, and this is currently under urgent review by our lift engineers. The lift is currently operational and we are monitoring it to enhance its reliability."

In the most recent long-term breakdown, the platform one lift was out of service between 13th August and 23rd September this year. In total it has been out of service for 111 days over a twelve-month period.

London Travelwatch, a transport watchdog group, said the data was disappointing and clearly an indicator that a longer-term solution was required. A spokesperson said: "Many people are reliant on step-free access to station platforms and broken lifts cause them unnecessary stress and inconvenience.

WORLD'S END

Comer Homes digs up Vicarage Farm

BY FINN LOGUE

RESIDENTS NEAR VICARAGE FARM claim Comer Homes has begun preparing the site for housing development – despite no plans being approved.

A yellow digger with "Comer Homes" written on it was photographed on the farm last month, churning up parts of a field. It followed the unauthorised removal of a hedgerow which The Enfield Society suggested could be illegal.

However, Enfield Council investigated the site and ruled there was "not enough evidence" to demonstrate that the hedgerow was protected under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, and that there was therefore no legal grounds to prosecute the landowner.

Vicarage Farm has long been owned by real estate developer Comer Homes, which has made

its intention to build housing on the Green Belt land clear. The site is included in the council's draft Enfield Local Plan document as part of the wider 'Chase Park' area, with 3,700 homes allocated in total, although the plan is yet to be adopted. Planning permission is also still needed.

Nonetheless, according to some locals, the process of preparing the site for homebuilding has begun. One resident, Nikki Gee,

told the *Dispatch*: "Residents witnessed, through the windows of their homes, the mindless destruction of hedges and trees."

A council spokesperson said: "The council's draft Local Plan sets out an expectation that ecological surveys and appropriate consents are secured in advance of any future removal of trees or hedgerows."

Comer Homes did not respond to requests for comment.

A Comer Homes digger pictured at Vicarage Farm (courtesy of Park Way residents)



ARNOS GROVE

Attempted murder charges

TWO TEENAGERS HAVE BEEN charged with attempted murder after a boy was shot and seriously injured.

Police had been called at 5.04pm to reports of a shooting in High Road, Arnos Grove, on Thursday, 9th October. A 17-year-old boy was treated at the scene

for serious injuries.

Benjamin Marmah, aged 19 and of Richmond Road in Potters Bar, and Kitan Ojelade, aged 18 and of Creswick Court in Welwyn, have both been charged with attempted murder.

The investigation remains ongoing.

SOUTHBURY

Award for breakfast club

A PRIMARY SCHOOL BREAKFAST club has been named one of the best in the country.

Southbury Primary School was crowned 'Best Breakfast Club in South England' at the 2025 Kellogg's Breakfast Club Awards, recognising its "outstanding work" in helping pupils start the school day "happy, healthy and ready to learn".

The Kellogg's Breakfast Club Awards celebrate the important role played by before-school clubs, and the dedicated staff who run them, in ensuring that children are fuelled for learning every morning.

Since 1998, cereal brand Kellogg's has supported more than 5,000 breakfast clubs across the UK, providing grants, food and equipment to schools in disadvantaged communities.

Southbury Primary School's breakfast club was picked by award judges for "creating a safe,



Southbury Primary School pupils with staff members Penny Antoni (left) and Anna Wellbrook (right)

welcoming and nurturing space where pupils can enjoy breakfast, take part in games, reading and daily exercise, and begin their day with confidence and focus".

For many families, the club also provides vital childcare support that helps ease morning pressures.

The school plans to use its £1,000 prize to expand the breakfast club further, including creating a new breakfast club library, offering a wider range of fresh fruit, and hosting culturally diverse breakfast days.

BRIMSDOWN

Boost for rail users

LOCAL RAIL PASSENGERS ARE set to benefit from additional evening services starting from Sunday, 14th December.

Greater Anglia announced major timetable changes across its network, which includes the West Anglia Main Line serving eastern Enfield, with trains running from both Liverpool Street and Stratford.

At Brimsdown, multiple evening Cambridge services will start stopping at the station to provide better local coverage.

It will mean more regular services for commuters travelling home from Liverpool Street Station.

In addition, the Stratford to Meridian Water shuttle service will increase from three to four trains per hour during the evening peak.

Martin Beable, Greater Anglia managing director, said: "These timetable changes will improve punctuality and reliability across our network, helping customers enjoy faster and more consistent journeys."



Sam Youngs was given a 'guard of honour' last month before the Enfield Town game against Eastbourne Borough, after reaching the club's appearances milestone Credit Tom Scott

Forever Sam Youngs

Andrew Warshaw speaks to Enfield Town FC's new record appearance holder

Just over a year ago, Sam Youngs reached a landmark of 300 games for Enfield Town and was featured in these columns.

Now, the player who embodies the spirit and success of the borough's top team has achieved even greater iconic status – as the club's record appearance maker.

Sam broke the record when he played his 352nd game for the Towners at Horsham at the end of October, leading to a well-deserved 'guard of honour' just before kick-off when they met Eastbourne at home a week later.

"Of course I'm very proud of the record but I definitely thought I'd still be playing at this age," said Sam, 34, currently in his eighth year at the club.

"I joined at a time when I was very busy in my professional life and it suited me. It was a bit of a convenience thing to be honest. I didn't really know very much about the club but I've never really looked back. I was made to feel very comfortable very quickly."

Sam admits he has had several opportunities to move on during his time as a Towner,

but has always decided to stay. "I've never hidden the fact that my professional career is most important to me outside of football. Over the years I've had offers from higher clubs on better money, but the grass isn't necessarily greener."

Brought to the club by then-Towners boss Andy Leese, Sam admits he didn't know too much about current manager Gavin Macpherson and his management staff when they succeeded Leese in 2023.

"I've always been confident of my own ability and it didn't massively influence my decision whether to stay," said Sam. "When I met Gavin, he spoke very well and he's building something here."

That is undoubtedly the case. Although Town have struggled to put wins on the board at the start of this season, this is in part due to an unprecedented injury crisis which, at one point, denied them of no fewer than 13 players. A five-game losing streak was eventually snapped at the end of November with a morale-boosting 5–1 demolition of Farnborough on what was

Town's annual 'Whole Club Day'.

Reflecting on the past twelve months, Sam told the *Dispatch*: "I admit it was a bit of a challenge at times last season. It was tough physically in a higher league, results were not going our way and there was something of an upheaval in terms of the playing staff. But you want to play at the highest level you can so you just get through it."

"On and off the field, we are starting to feel like a step two [National League South] club, even if recent results may not reflect that."

Asked to identify his most memorable moment at the club, it's pretty much a no-brainer: getting promoted to National League South during that euphoric afternoon at Chatham, in the final of the Isthmian Premier Division playoffs.

"It's something we pretty much strove for every season and, the manner in which we did it, with the group of people we had at the time, it's probably the most enjoyable season I've had. The European trips in the same season were a lot of fun for everyone too. That whole season will stay with me forever."

Recently on the sidelines because of two separate injuries, before making a welcome return, Sam is a former Town skipper and very much one of senior leaders in the dressing room. For that reason he is keen to play his part in trying to push the team up the league, whether from attacking midfield or as a striker. He also recently became a proud father but, if you think that made him consider hanging up his boots, think again.

"I haven't had too many injuries in my career, so I really missed it when I was out. To be honest the baby hasn't made that much of a difference as far as my football is concerned. Because I work for myself, I can sort of make my own schedule. I genuinely feel as fit as ever."

"In my 20s I probably went out quite a lot, well more than quite a lot if truth be told! But the last few years I've really looked after myself, which has coincided with my best stats since my early years. That's no coincidence. I feel sharp and want to carry on for as long as possible."

I couldn't let Sam go without asking him about comparisons with Everton and England midfielder Jack Grealish, which has done the round for years thanks to his similar look. "Yeah it's normally something like 'you're just a shit Jack Grealish' from the away fans," he joked. "But listen, I'll take that any day. Who wouldn't?!"

Edmonton martial arts school claims seven world kung fu medals

Shaolin Temple Martial Arts and Culture Centre in Edmonton Green is one of the UK's leading centres for the sport

Martial artists who train in Edmonton at one of the UK's leading schools for the sport have returned from the recent World Kungfu Championships in China with seven medals.

Contributing to Team GB's total of 18 medals at the event – organised by the International Wushu Federation and held at Mount Emei, Sichuan, a world heritage site known as a cradle of Chinese Buddhism – members of Shaolin Temple Martial Arts and Cultural Centre picked up the seven bronze medals across tai chi, Shaolin kung fu and weapons disciplines.

The competition drew thousands of participants from 56 countries, with athletes from Turkey ultimately topping the medal table after winning 44 medals in total.

Shaolin Temple Martial Arts and Cultural Centre, now based in Fore Street having recently moved from its previous venue in Bush Hill Park, is one of the UK's top training centres.

Head coach Payam Ezad Panah said: "This result reflects steady training, clear technique, and real team spirit. Our members represented Enfield and Great Britain with pride, and they delivered when it mattered."

Payam gave a special mention to pupils Myrsini, Tyra, Amanda, and Chiara for their "standout performances on the international stage".

For more information about Shaolin Temple Martial Arts and Culture Centre:
Email support@shaolintemplecc.com
Visit shaolintemplecc.com



Medal winners Myrsini, Tyra, Amanda and Chiara at the World Kungfu Championships in China

Thanks for your support this year

Why 2025 was a big year for local news

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

As 2025 draws to a close I'd like to wish all *Dispatch* readers well for the festive season and the new year – and to thank you for your continued support!

I often use this space to talk about the challenges we face producing a local newspaper on a shoestring budget, but this month I'd like to briefly reflect on the many positive things we have achieved and reported on during the past year.

In terms of the paper itself, 2025 has seen us expand from 16 to 20 pages, creating more space for our important local journalism, as well as the excellent community-written articles that make the *Dispatch* a truly collaborative publication. In the summer we also invested in 15 new eye-catching stands that now help us distribute more free copies of the paper across most of the borough's railway stations and town centres.

In terms of our journalism, it's been a big year in many ways. Since January we have been reporting on the Local Plan public examination. This has been a very long, drawn-out process that has continued on-and-off for



almost 200 hours, during which planning officials, lawyers, developers and community representatives have debated various aspects of Enfield Council's mammoth 585-page document. Buried within these debates have been nuggets of incredibly consequential information – such as the council's admission that compulsory purchase orders would be used to clear Crews Hill of its garden centres.

In February, I asked *Dispatch* readers to help me investigate the extent of illegal pavement parking in the borough. I was completely overwhelmed by the response, receiving 150 examples of selfish drivers breaking the law across Enfield – persuading the council to beef up its parking enforcement.

In July, we received a tip-off about ex-Enfield mayor Mohammad Islam. This led to a front-page exclusive reporting that he was being investigated by the Home Office for suspected immigration offences – a scandal that has continued to rumble on ever since.

In September, we revealed the government was set to name Crews Hill as a 'new town' where 21,000 homes would be built – a development we'll no doubt be covering for many years to come.

Every month, we show why local journalism plays such an important role in our community. In a divisive age of social media disinformation and AI fakery, I'd argue our journalism is more important than it's ever been.

Sign up to The Weekly Dispatch, our regular e-newsletter:



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With continued support from Dispatch readers we aim to:
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This month, 278 supporters contributed 27% of our monthly costs. While the paper remains free to read in print and online, every penny of income is reinvested in our local journalism. Can you support us with £5 per month to help us do more?

Find out more at: enfielddispatch.co.uk/support-us

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