

ENFIELD DISPATCH

N° 93 THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

JUNE 2026

NEWS

Enfield's only young carers support service faces axe over funding shortfall

P. 8

ELECTION 2026

How the borough voted and what it means for the council

P. 10-11

ARTS & CULTURE

New writers' group launches at Dugdale Arts Centre

P. 16

NEWS

Fire destroys Crews Hill food supplier business

P. 18

SPORT

Cockfosters defeated at Wembley on penalties in FA Vase cup final

P. 19



Enfield Council's new cabinet, from left; James Hockney (finance), Maria Alexandrou (environment), Chris Dey (children's services), Lee Chamberlain (housing and technology), Alessandro Georgiou (leader), Andy Milne (adult social care), Michael Rye (deputy leader, planning and regeneration), Edward Smith (council assets and culture), Elisa Morreale (licensing) and Andrew Thorp (communications and customer service) Credit: Enfield Council

Conservative Party takes minority control of council

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

The Conservatives have formed a minority administration at Enfield Civic Centre after the Greens decided not to block the election of Alessandro Georgiou as council leader.

Following the inconclusive outcome of the local election on Thursday, 7th May – with the Tories on 31 seats falling one short of a majority and Labour reduced down to 27 – the balance of power was held by five new Green councillors.

But despite talks taking place, no formal coalition deal was reached with either the Conservatives or Labour, meaning everything hung on the outcome of a vote at the annual meeting of the council held on Wednesday, 27th May, shortly before the *Dispatch* went to press.

Both Cllr Georgiou and former

council leader Ergin Erbil put themselves forward to lead the council at the meeting but, in the end, the Greens abstained.

Their decision allowed Cllr Georgiou and his Enfield Conservative group to form a minority administration.

"The people of Enfield voted for change," Cllr Georgiou said in his first speech as leader. "Tonight that change has arrived."

Cllr Georgiou emphasised that "transparency" would be a key pillar of his administration and said he expected to be held to account for his decisions as "we won't be perfect".

But on day one, he said, "my very first act as leader of the council" would be to "formally sign a letter to the government and Mayor of London, officially withdrawing Enfield Council from the new town process".

Cllr Georgiou was referring to the proposed 21,000-home development being put forward by the Labour government for Crews Hill and an area of farmland dubbed 'Chase Park', which both Enfield Conservatives and Enfield Greens strongly opposed in the run-up to May's election.

"My second act," said Cllr Georgiou, "is informing Tottenham Hotspur FC they are no longer welcome to develop Whitewebbs Park".

Last year Spurs won planning permission from the council for a women's training centre at Whitewebbs, but the 25-year lease of the park had not been signed by the previous Labour administration prior to the election, giving the Tories a chance to scupper the deal.

It remains to be seen, however, how much difficulty the new

Conservative-led council might face in its efforts to block both of these schemes and, in doing so, fulfil the party's manifesto pledge to "protect the Green Belt".

At the meeting, Labour councillors were furious the Greens decided to allow the Tories back into power – shouting "shame" as they abstained on the vote. Cllr Erbil said they had "gifted power to the Conservatives through a back-door deal" and that local Green voters had "the right to feel betrayed".

In a statement issued afterwards Enfield Greens emphasised there was "no coalition or alliance" with the Tories. Sarah Jons, the group leader on the council, said: "We are not here to play games. We are here to do the work, scrutinise decisions properly, and speak for the residents who trusted us with their vote."

For a full report and analysis of the local election results, turn to page ten.



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Published on 29/05/2026

Letters opposing 'new town' to be delivered to 10 Downing Street

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

More than 3,000 signed letters opposing the Enfield 'new town' are set to be delivered to Downing Street this month.

Campaign coalition Action for Enfield's Future (AfEF) has spent the past few weeks encouraging local people to sign its open letter to Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, calling on him to withdraw his government's support for the proposed 21,000-home development on Metropolitan Green Belt land at Crews Hill and an area of farmland dubbed 'Chase Park'.

After AfEF hosted a number of campaign events where copies of the letter were available to sign, more than 3,000 letters will be delivered by hand to 10 Downing Street on Thursday, 11th June.

It comes after the government's public consultation on its new towns programme – which also includes six other shortlisted sites across the country – ended last month.

Prior to the deadline for comments, AfEF and other concerned groups sent an official letter of



An 'action day' in Crews Hill in April saw several hundred letters opposing the new town signed by local people

complaint to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) over their "serious concerns" about the way the consultation has been conducted.

The letter claimed that the consultation did not comply with the government's own principles and said: "A fair consultation should take place when proposals are still at a formative stage, provide enough information to allow intelligent consideration and response, allow adequate time for responses, and ensure that responses are conscientiously considered before any final decision is made.

"In particular, we are concerned that the consultation fails to meet

the requirements that consultations should be informative, should take account of the groups being consulted, should be properly targeted, and should not generally be launched during local or national election periods."

As well as AfEF, the letter was signed by representatives of Better Homes Enfield, Enfield RoadWatch, Enfield Climate Action Forum, The Enfield Society and Hadley Wood Neighbourhood Planning Forum.

Better Homes Enfield also posted a blog last month slamming the plans for the new town as "too vague" and the consultation as "premature".

The government has previously indicated that there will be further

rounds of consultation once specific proposals for Crews Hill and Chase Park are made public.

Asked for a response to the complaint letter, a MHCLG spokesperson said: "Our landmark new towns will restore the dream of home ownership in Enfield and across the country.

"We've been clear that community voices will continue to shape how any new towns are built throughout the process."

At this month's local election, more than 77% of voters backed parties that pledged to "protect the Green Belt".

The previous Labour-led administration at Enfield Civic Centre had enthusiastically backed the government's new town plans, with the council having also spent several years prior to the announcement trying to de-designate large areas of Green Belt land in the borough for housebuilding, via a new Enfield Local Plan document.

However, the council failed to get the Local Plan adopted prior to the election, and it remains to be seen what might happen to the major strategic planning document under the new council administration.

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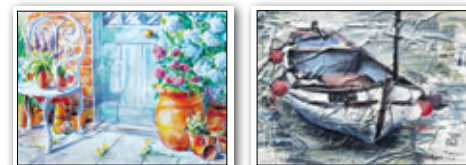
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Political chameleon

One of the five new Green Party councillors elected in Enfield last month had previously campaigned for three other parties.

In just over a decade Ratip Alsulaiman – elected in May to represent Enfield Lock ward – switched his party affiliation from Labour, to the Conservatives, to the Liberal Democrats, and finally to the Greens.

This included a failed attempt to become a Tory councillor at the 2018 local election in Enfield.

A photograph shows Cllr Alsulaiman campaigning with Labour activists in Edmonton in 2015 while, three years later, public records show he stood for election as a Conservative candidate in Jubilee ward, but lost out to Labour after receiving 746 votes. Shortly afterwards, another photograph shows Cllr Alsulaiman wearing a yellow Lib Dem rosette alongside two of the party's MPs.

It means Cllr Alsulaiman represented four different political parties within eleven years.

While switching parties is a common occurrence in politics at all levels and is not against any rules, Cllr Alsulaiman's frequent changes of political affiliation have raised doubts over his loyalty to the Greens.

The Green councillor, as well as his local party, declined to comment.



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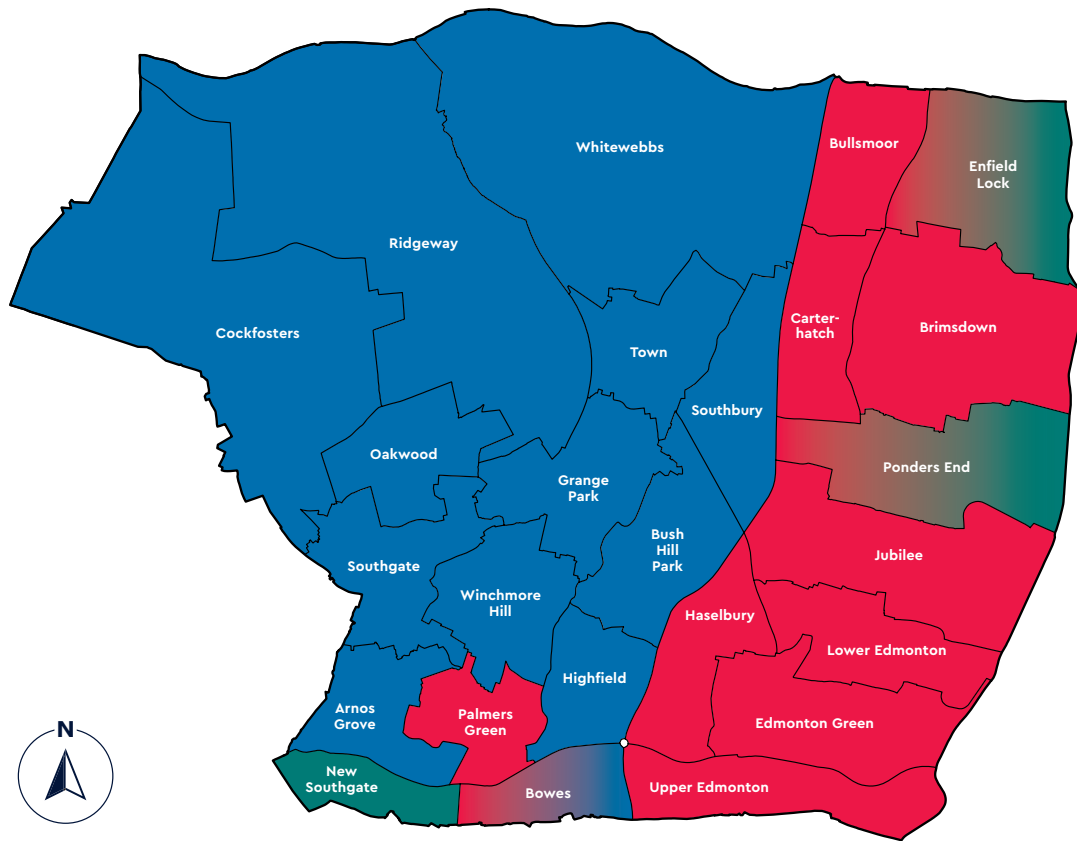
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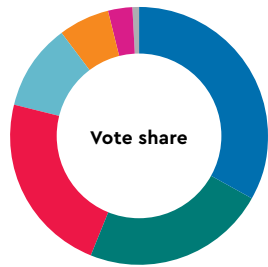
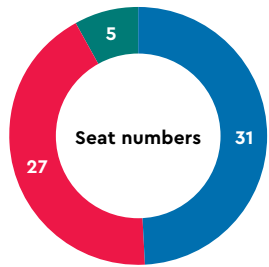
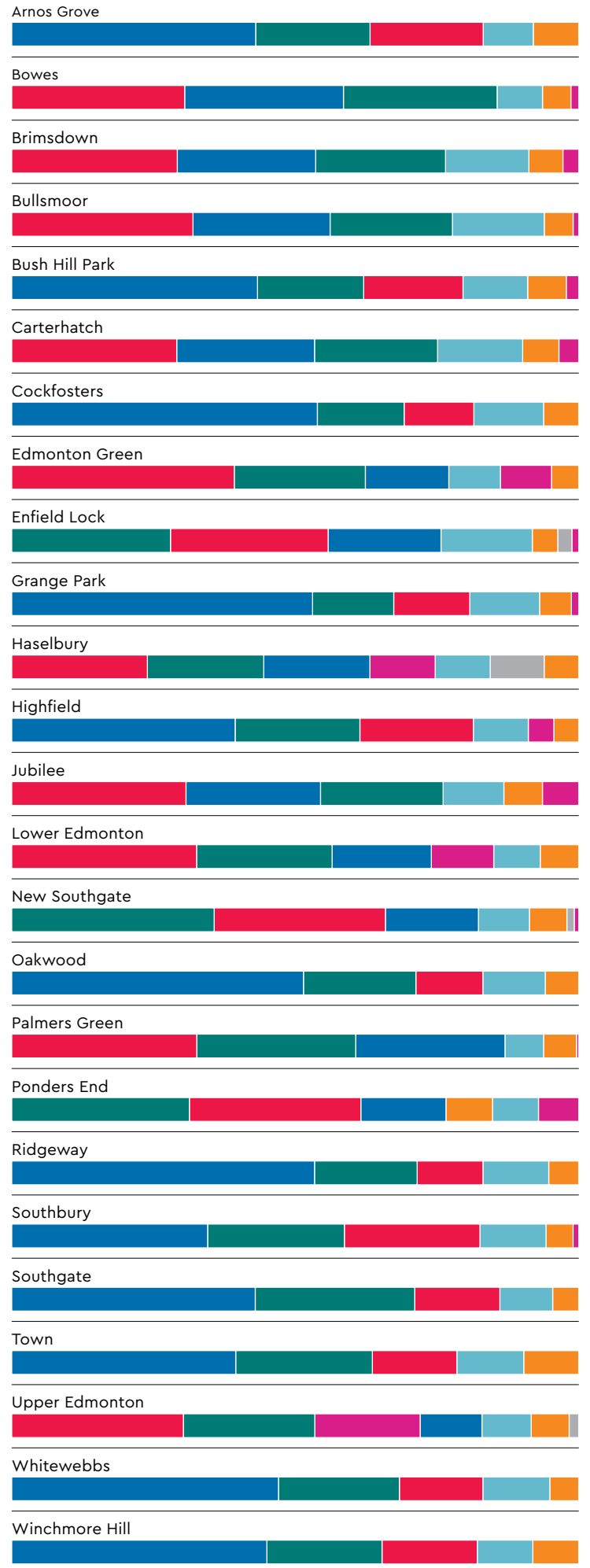


How Enfield voted at the local election



Ward-by-ward vote share

Overall turnout: 42.2%



Party	Vote share
Conservative Party	33.3%
Green Party	22.9%
Labour Party	22.8%
Reform UK	10.9%
Liberal Democrats	6.2%
ECI/TUSC	3.2%
Other	0.6%

Ward	Elected candidates
Arnos Grove	Paul Pratt (Labour), Shyamala Lennon (Labour)
Bowes	Alex Diner (Labour), Dino Lemonides (Labour)
Brimmsdown	Hivan Dalkaya (Labour), Ahmet Hasan (Labour), Bektas Ozer (Labour)
Bullsmoor	Destiny Karakus (Labour), Faye Nimoh (Labour)
Bush Hill Park	Pat Gregory (Labour), James Hockney (Labour), Peter Fallart (Labour)
Carterhatch	Ayten Guzel (Labour), Naushad Ali (Labour)
Cockfosters	Alessandro Georgiou (Labour), Alara Ayyildiz (Labour)
Edmonton Green	Ergin Erbil (Labour), Abdul Abdullahi (Labour), Gunes Akbulut (Labour)
Enfield Lock	Ratip Alsulaiman (Labour), Suna Hurman (Labour), Sarah Jons (Labour)
Grange Park	Chris Dey (Labour), Andy Milne (Labour)
Haselbury	Ibrahim Cam (Labour), Mahym Bedekova (Labour), George Savva (Labour)
Highfield	Bambos Charalambous (Labour), Peter Charalambous (Labour)
Jubilee	Ian Barnes (Labour), Alev Cazimoglu (Labour), Susan Erbil (Labour)
Lower Edmonton	Sinan Boztas (Labour), Siddo Dwyer (Labour), Elif Erbil (Labour)
New Southgate	Laura Davenport (Labour), Madeline Church (Labour)
Oakwood	James Bone (Labour), Thomas O'Halloran (Labour)
Palmers Green	Chris James (Labour), Doug Taylor (Labour)
Ponders End	Aziz Yildiz (Labour), Niamh O'Brien (Labour)
Ridgeway	Joanne Laban (Labour), Andrew Thorp (Labour), Edward Smith (Labour)
Southbury	Penny Heathwood (Labour), Betty Achayo (Labour), Benny Neza (Labour)
Southgate	Stephanos Ioannou (Labour), Chris Joannides (Labour), Elisa Morreale (Labour)
Town	Michael Rye (Labour), Emma Supple (Labour), Kiran Mistry (Labour)
Upper Edmonton	Margaret Greer (Labour), Tim Leaver (Labour), Chris McCoy (Labour)
Whitewebbs	Reece Fox (Labour), Maxwell Day (Labour), Eralda Qirjo (Labour)
Winchmore Hill	Maria Alexandrou (Labour), Lee Chamberlain (Labour)

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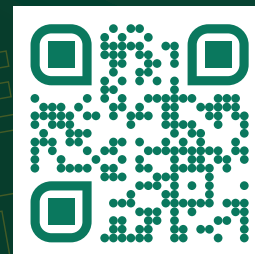
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Young People Are Our Future – Let’s Listen

Using social media ‘wisely, safely and meaningfully’

In the final article of a three-month series about government regulation of social media, local school students Megan Ledain, Jessica Ampong and Charlotte O’Donoghue sum up their thoughts on the issue and how it impacts them

Over the past few months, we have explored one big question: should social media be banned for under-16s in the UK?

If you’ve been following this series, you might remember that we shared our own experiences as young people growing up online in our first article. In the second, we spoke to students, teachers, parents and other adults to hear a wider range of perspectives.

Now, in this final article, we want to share our closing thoughts – and explain why this issue is far more complicated than simply banning or allowing social media.

During the three months we were working on writing these articles, MPs voted against introducing a full social media ban for under-16s, at least for now. It means that the conversation is moving more towards safety, regulation and education.

For many of us, this decision felt like a relief. Social media is important to our daily lives, not just for fun but for connection. It’s how we communicate with friends, learn new things, express ourselves creatively and

even get support when we need it.

But, through this project, we have also begun to understand why some adults strongly support stricter restrictions.

For many parents, teachers and even some young people, calls for a ban do not come from wanting to control us, they come from wanting to protect us.

In our interviews, concerns about online bullying, harmful content, unrealistic beauty standards, addiction, slop channels, shortened attention spans and mental health challenges came up repeatedly.

We hear those fears. We feel them too.

Adults are witnessing how constant digital exposure can affect young minds and many are understandably worried about the long-term consequences. So, while we may not all agree with a full ban, we believe it’s important to acknowledge that those who support stronger restrictions are

acting from a place of care.

Even social media companies are showing that they are aware that pressure is growing. Platforms like Instagram have introduced teen accounts, designed to offer safer privacy settings, more parental controls and tighter content restrictions. They see that if they don’t adapt, they

risk losing younger users in the long run.

These changes may be presented as safety measures, but they also raise an important question: are companies making these changes primarily to protect young people, or are they offering controls now to avoid losing

younger users and future profits?

Regardless of the answer, we have learned that social media is not just about personal choice. It is shaped by governments, schools, parents and major companies.

As the next generation, we believe that education, guidance and balance are more

“We want you to trust us and support us, without simply limiting us”



Jessica, Charlotte and Megan Credit Kai Images

realistic than an outright ban. We need honest conversations about online safety, stronger parental tools and support, and a clearer understanding of the opportunities and risks of online spaces. At the same time, we also need space to connect, create and communicate responsibly.

Completely banning social media may not deal with the root issues, especially when technology is such a major part of modern life, but leaving young people unsupported online is not the answer either.

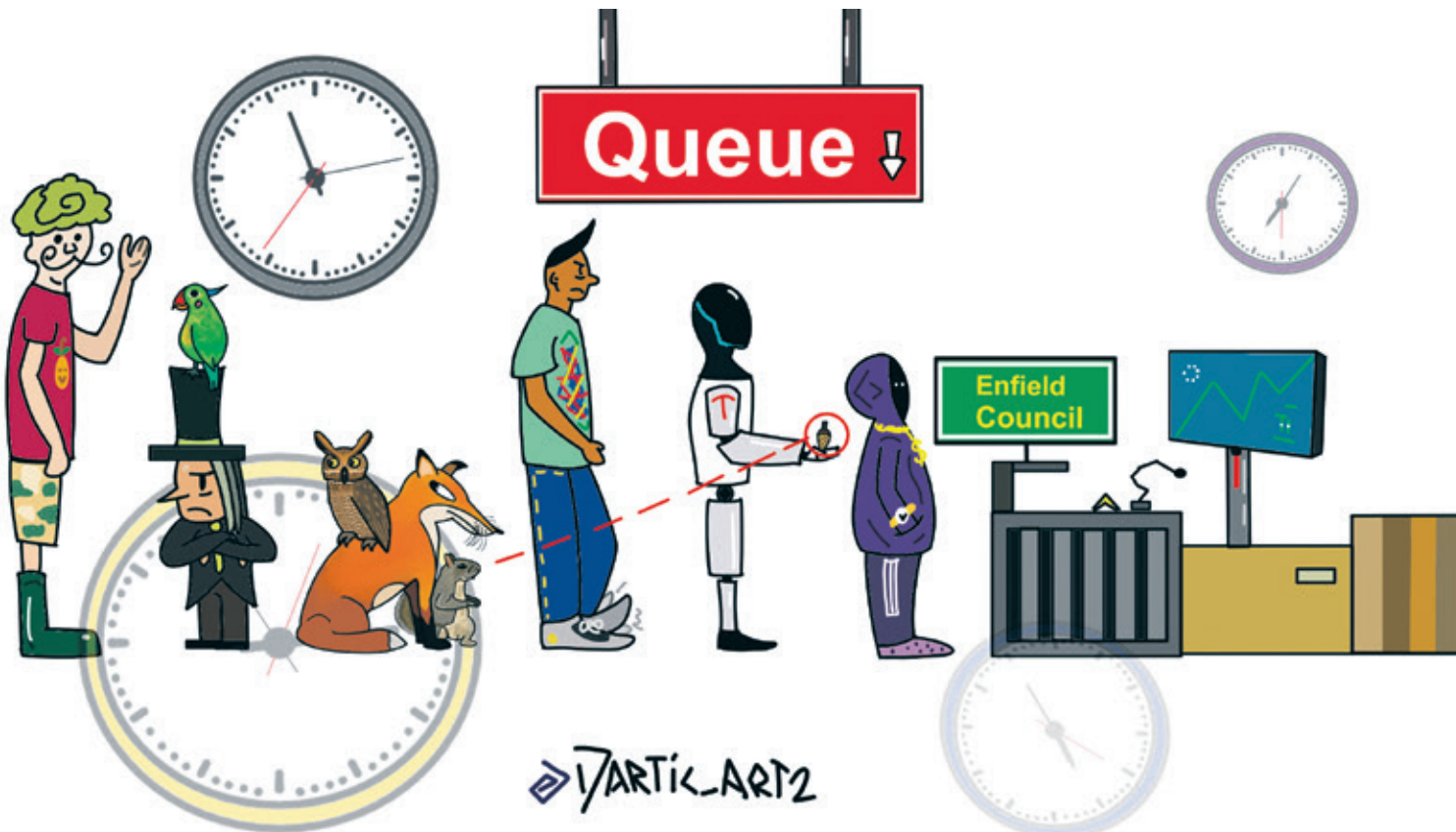
Throughout this journey, there were many opportunities for our minds to be changed.

We listened carefully, considered many perspectives, and genuinely reflected on the concerns people shared. But ultimately, we ended where we began: we want you to trust us and support us, without simply limiting us.

If this series of ours has shifted your perspective, we hope it encourages you to let the young people around you know that you understand them more deeply now. Together, we can work towards balancing safety and access to one of the most powerful tools for communication and connection the world has ever seen.

Our generation deserves the chance to learn how to use social media wisely, safely and meaningfully.

Who knows, maybe we’re the future or something :)



Local Voice, Local Stories



Credit Kai Images

Embracing who I am

BY FRANKIE BRADY

Who am I? People say I am a genuine, honest and positive person. I'm a singer, songwriter, published poet and I've got a YouTube channel.

I love baking cakes, am a good dancer, and I have registered as a Zumba instructor. I volunteer at my gran's care home and with The Alzheimer's Society.

I am good at self-care, can reflect, and I try to make people feel good about themselves.

So that is who I am.

But my life hasn't always been so positive. I struggled alone for a long time, and so I want to be honest now and share my story for other people in similar situations.

I always knew I was different from a young age. I have albinism – so I look white, yet my parents both come from the Caribbean.

My type of albinism means I lack melanin, a natural pigment for

skin, hair and eye colour. My skin and eyes are light sensitive and I always have to wear glasses and a hat. I am registered as severely sight impaired.

My parents didn't know much about albinism. I used to say to my parents: "I'm white but you're black, why am I like this?"

Mum would say: "No, you are black."

It was a lot for my mum to cope with, as people pointed and stared at me. Mum didn't like to take me out without one of my aunts, because of all the abuse.

I was bullied a lot by kids at school and my whole life has been quite turbulent.

My dad did not want to be with me. Not only was I "too white" but I was also disabled.

My mum loved me and did the best she could, but she was facing her own challenges. I just wanted a positive role model to say to me: "You are great as you are."

But I learnt very early on about rejection. It's hard enough being

rejected by society, but when your own father rejects you, that really hurts.

I had mobility training at school with a white cane to help with independence, but my dad said I couldn't use the cane, as he couldn't accept that I had a disability. This denial meant that I couldn't ask for help, be angry or upset and express my feelings – so I became insular and alone.

Due to an unhappy childhood, by the time I was eight years old, I became depressed.

I didn't go to college; I tried, but was bullied. Due to the many challenges that I was facing, I was self-harming.

Finally, I was diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in 2012 and obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) in 2014 and have recently been referred for an autism diagnosis. I have experienced regular bouts of mental ill

health and have been hospitalised.

But that's not all!

As a small child, I knew I wasn't like other boys. I liked playing with dolls; yet another way that I was different. I used to dress up in mum's clothes in secret because my dad would never have approved.

As I grew up, I became suicidal as I was so ashamed, and it was only after a breakdown that I finally started to get the help I needed.

After years of therapy, I have to be honest. I came out in 2016 and decided I wanted to live as a woman even though some family members disapproved and would not accept me.

Being LGBTQIA+ is still a taboo among many of the older generation within the black community.

"It was only after a breakdown that I finally started to get the help I needed"

My dad said: "Don't bring shame upon our family."

I respect my family, but I refuse to be ashamed any more and change who I am.

So who am I?

I have many different identities, but most importantly, I am a person just like you. We all have challenges, some more so than

others, and you don't know what someone else is going through.

Be compassionate – I would love to create a world where we can all just be ourselves.

So, what do I want?

Please don't make assumptions; I may look different to you, but get to know me and others like me, before you judge. Some of my family still don't accept me, but I don't want your pity, I just want to be treated with dignity and respect. It's taken a long time, but I have finally been able to embrace who I am.

Now my dream is to help anyone who is struggling to 'fit in' to get help. You're not alone; don't suffer in silence, you need to learn to love and embrace who you truly are and, when you do that, you will not be so affected by what other people think.

If I can offer even one person hope that they can overcome their challenges like me, then I know I've made a difference and paid it forward.

Frankie is part of Empowering Disability In Enfield (EDIE), a group supported by LocalMotion Enfield.

The Samaritans are available to help if you need someone. They are available to talk to for free: Call 116 123 Visit samaritans.org

Enfield's only young carers support service faces axe

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

The future of the borough's only support service for young carers is in doubt – with the current funding agreement expiring later this year.

Enfield Carers Centre has run its young carers service for almost six years, with the last four years of the project being funded by the National Lottery – but this is now set to end in December.

The Enfield Young People in Caring (EYPIC) service supports almost 600 children in Enfield who provide care and support for a family member or friend, often for a parent or sibling with a long-term condition.

Many of these young carers report struggling with chronic tiredness, anxiety and isolation, and often fall behind at school, so the help offered by Enfield Carers Centre is seen as vital. The charity has warned of “serious and negative consequences” if it cannot continue, with no alternative available locally.

Unlike similar services in other London boroughs, EYPIC has never been supported directly by the local authority, and the charity is now calling on Enfield Council to step in and cover the £125,000 annual budget to ensure young carers can continue



Enfield Young People in Caring supports nearly 600 children in the borough who act as carers Credit Enfield Carers Centre receiving support next year.

Pamela Burke, chief executive of Enfield Carers Centre, said: “Young carers manage complex, adult responsibilities every single day – often hiding them from friends and teachers due to embarrassment or lack of awareness that what they do isn’t usual.

“Many provide practical care such as cooking, cleaning, administering medication or looking after younger siblings, while also offering emotional support to family members with physical or mental health needs. It’s not uncommon for young carers to manage household finances, or act as

translators for their parents.

“These pressures have a direct impact on their daily lives. Many report struggling with chronic tiredness, anxiety and isolation, and often fall behind at school.”

Asked to comment, a council spokesperson said: “The council can confirm that a meeting between the local authority and Enfield Carers’ Centre took place [on 13th May] and discussions are ongoing regarding the future of the young carers service.

“We remain committed to supporting young carers in Enfield and will continue to work closely with partners to explore

all options.”

A recent government survey states that as many as one-in-five children in the UK may be a young carer, yet only a fraction are formally identified – and the majority are going without support.

Enfield Carers Centre points out young carers can miss weeks of education each year, are often in trouble for constant lateness or absence, and may be unable to complete homework due to lack of time or quiet space. They can often suffer from loneliness, low self-esteem and bullying.

Over the past three years, EYPIC has delivered more than 5,800 services and interventions, including help with benefits and debt; grants for food and household items; advocating at meetings with schools and social services; referrals for counselling and wellbeing services; academic support for 490 young carers, with more than 240 regularly attending weekly homework clubs; organising respite trips and activities; and providing 92 in-school staff training and awareness sessions across 50 schools in Enfield.

Young carer Toby, aged twelve, is one of those supported by EYPIC. He said: “I really enjoyed getting to leave the house and having a break from caring so I can see my friends.”

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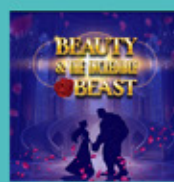
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An election of change for Enfield

Dispatch editor James Cracknell provides analysis and commentary on a big moment in the history of Enfield politics

A large group of Enfield Green Party's election candidates began their morning on Friday, 8th May at Jolly Beans Cafe in Silver Street, where they gathered for coffee with alternative milks – totally oblivious to the *Dispatch* enjoying a fry-up on the table next to them.

The caffeine would be needed, as five Green candidates were set to end their day as the most powerful people in the whole borough.

Bowes was the first ward result to be declared, at around 1.30pm. One Labour and one Tory were each elected – representing the first Conservative gain of the day – as the Greens missed out by just 24 votes.

Even though Bowes is often a marginal ward, it was a warning to Labour of what was to come.

"I think they put their own self interest first," newly-elected Bowes councillor Dino Lemonides told the *Dispatch*, as he explained his decision to quit Labour and stand for the Tories instead.

Both Labour and Reform UK candidates kept tight-lipped during the election count, rebuffing requests for public comment, but the Tories and Greens were keen to talk up their chances.

"It's too too early to tell but I hope by the end of the day we have a new Conservative administration," said group leader Alessandro Georgiou.

Also feeling optimistic was Green candidate Katie Knight. "I think we might get some surprise councillors in non-target wards," she said.

Her comment proved prophetic. The New Southgate declaration was met with huge cheers from the Greens as they comfortably defeated Labour to win their first elected councillors in Enfield.

Earlier, Labour celebrated their successful defence of the crucial Palmers Green ward, with ex-leader Doug Taylor and his party colleague Chris James rewarded for their local campaigning efforts, despite strong challenges from both the Tories and Greens.

But this was pretty much the only point of the whole



There wasn't much to celebrate for Labour leader Ergin Erbil (right) nor his party colleagues Credit Anna-Louise Adepegba



Votes being counted at the civic centre Credit Basil Leaf Ltd

"The east of Enfield is Labour's heartland, having been a solid wall of red for the past two decades – until now"

day when Labour were given any reason to celebrate.

Instead, the Tories surged. In most of the seats they already held, the Conservatives increased their majorities, while picking up crucial gains in wards where they had come up slightly short last time. Highfield was a good example – after losing by just 29 votes in 2022, the Tories won comfortably this year, with Labour even pushed into third place behind the Greens.

The east of Enfield is Labour's heartland, having been a solid wall of red for the past two decades – until now. While the party did still win fairly comfortably in the south-east, the north-east was a different story, as the Greens and Reform UK ate into what had previously been big majorities.

Shortly after 4pm, the declaration of Enfield Lock ward – in which two Green candidates finished first and third, sandwiching Labour – showed nowhere was safe. Sabri Ozaydin, a Labour cabinet member, was the big loser here.

Even in Brimsdown, where each of Labour's three councillors were around 1,000 votes ahead of their Tory rivals in 2022, the highest-placed Conservative this time was just 72 votes short of causing a huge shock.

Another upset did materialise, this

time in Ponders End. The Greens had only fielded a single candidate, Aziz Yildiz, since the idea of winning here seemed fanciful. But win they did.

By 6.45pm, with two wards left to declare, the Tories were closing in on the finishing line, needing to win four more seats to form a majority.

In Southbury – seen as a pivotal ward for this election – the Conservatives comfortably won three seats. Everything then rested on Haselbury, another traditionally safe Labour seat in the east. Here, the Tories needed just one candidate to win – but fell short by 146 votes.

It meant that the Conservatives ended the day on 31 seats, and Labour on 27 – with five new Green councillors needing another round of soya lattes to understand the powerful position they now found themselves in.

Conservatives prove doubters wrong
While most psephologists were predicting Enfield Council would move into 'no overall control' at this election – as it duly did – precious few thought the Conservatives would finish as the largest party, or even make any gains.

The fact the Tories ended up just one seat short of a majority, having won six seats off Labour, was therefore seen as a "victory" for many people of



Enfield's five new Green



Triumphant Tory candidates



borough

a blue political persuasion, not least Cllr Georgiou himself.

Talking to the *Dispatch* soon after the final result came in, the Enfield Conservatives leader said: “Of course I would like to have won outright, but this is still a brilliant, brilliant victory for us, given we have not won this borough in 16 years.

“Yes, we are one seat short, but no-one can say this isn’t a victory.”

Cllr Georgiou was an unknown quantity when he became leader of the then-opposition group on the council in May 2022, shortly after the local election that year. Taking over from Joanne Laban, Cllr Georgiou sought to set himself apart through his frequent use of social media and regular dialogue with the press. Some would call him outspoken and even “populist”, but the strategy worked, and it was one that his Labour rival Ergin Erbil would eventually try to imitate – without success.

What likely worked for Enfield Conservatives more than anything else, however, was the clear policy direction they were able to set out – and then hammer home repeatedly. Opposition to building on the Green Belt, saving Whitewebbs Park, a pledge to “rip out” two controversial low-traffic neighbourhood schemes, as well as reintroducing weekly bin collections, were all clear positions that left no room for any doubt



en councillors Credit Anna-Louise Adepegba



or Southgate with Cllr Georgiou Credit Basil LeafLtd

on where they stood. Frequently, but not always, they also happened to align with local public opinion.

The disappointment for the Tories, of course, was that they finished one short of a majority – ultimately paying the price for their failure to win any seats east of the A10.

Greens make historic breakthrough

Riding a wave of national popularity the party had never enjoyed before, Enfield Greens won five seats – having never before won an election in the borough.

The party previously gained representation on the council back in 2021, when two former Labour councillors joined the Greens, until both lost at the subsequent election. But this year was always likely to be different, and it was no surprise to see Enfield Greens make a historic breakthrough with their first-ever batch of elected councillors in the borough.

“We aim to put the hope back into Enfield, creating a prosperous and affordable green borough,” they said in a joint statement.

Some wondered why the Greens would seek to prop up a minority Conservative administration, but given the shared desire to reject Labour’s new town and protect the Green Belt, as well as Whitewebbs Park, such a deal was always likely.

Should Enfield Greens have won more than five seats, however?

The numbers suggest poor strategy let them down. With resources limited, ward targets were needed, but Conservative-held Southgate was an odd choice – as Palmers Green, Bowes and New Southgate seemed more favourable. As a result, only the latter of these wards ended up returning any Green councillors.

Then there were the shock wins in the north-east of the borough. Had the Greens stood two candidates in Ponders End instead of one, they would surely have claimed another Labour scalp, while Enfield Lock could have also been a clean sweep had the party put more effort into campaigning there.

Ultimately, a big vote share of nearly 23% for Enfield Greens in 2026 certainly makes the 2030 election one for the party to look forward to.

Labour suffer first defeat in two decades

The alarm bells had been ringing for several years, but successive leaders of Enfield Labour decided to stick fingers in their ears.

When, at the 2022 local election count, the *Dispatch* asked then-leader Nesil Caliskan why her party had lost eight seats to the Conservatives at a time when the Tories were hugely unpopular, she blamed “boundary changes” and refused to accept responsibility.

When, at the 2026 local election count, the *Dispatch* asked Ergin Erbil whether his support for the government’s new town played any part in Labour losing eleven seats to parties promising to protect the



Dino Lemonides returned as a councillor in Bowes ward Credit Basil Leaf Ltd

Green Belt, he claimed the issue “hasn’t actually come up that much in the conversations we’ve had on the doorstep”.

Well, they do say that denial is the first stage of grief.

Just eight years ago, Enfield Labour – led at the time by Doug Taylor – enjoyed their best-ever election result in the borough, winning 46 seats. Few could have predicted what would happen next. Caliskan was voted in by the Labour group as the new council leader just a few weeks later, shocking local voters, as concerns were raised over how many newly-elected Labour councillors were related to each other.

In 2019, Labour’s ruling executive committee issued a rebuke to the local party over its selection process for the 2018 election, suggesting proper membership checks were not being made at meetings.

Meanwhile, Caliskan’s adversarial leadership style alienated Labour veterans who served under Cllr Taylor, eventually prompting nine councillors to either quit the party or leave the civic centre. At one point Caliskan was even found to have breached the code of conduct, including over behaviour said to have “amounted to bullying”.

After Caliskan left Enfield to become an MP and was replaced as leader by Ergin Erbil in September 2024, there was an opportunity to draw a line under what had happened before. Instead, Enfield Labour were hit by one scandal after another – including an ex-mayor investigated by the Home Office over suspected immigration offences.

Fresh concerns were also raised about the local party’s selection process ahead of the 2026 election, prompting London Labour to take it over – but no public explanation for the move was given.

When it came to policy, a bunker mentality frequently clouded Enfield Labour’s judgement. Wanting to build thousands of homes on the Green Belt was one thing, but embracing the Crews Hill new town without offering understanding or sympathy for the local people and businesses raising concerns over it was quite another.

At the election count, Labour activists looked shell-shocked as their party lost

control of the council. Among them was Nesimi Erbil, the ex-Labour councillor handed a five-year suspension by the party following two convictions (in 2014 for fraud and in 2016 for a public order offence). After serving the suspension, he was readmitted to the party and rose to become chair of Edmonton Constituency Labour Party.

But while many of Erbil’s family members were again elected to serve Enfield last month, they will no longer enjoy anything close to the power they once had. Fresh leadership will surely be necessary for Labour to challenge again in 2030.

Reform UK fail to win representation

The big national story on election day was the rise of Reform UK, as the right-wing party won hundreds of councillors up and down the country.

None of them were in Enfield, however.

In fact, Reform slumped to a distant fourth place in terms of vote share and did not come close to winning in any ward, despite putting up a full slate of 63 candidates.

Perhaps the party’s hardline anti-immigration rhetoric was simply too unpalatable for a London borough with many different cultures and communities living alongside each other.

“It didn’t go as well as we would hope,” admitted Reform’s Enfield branch chair Stephen Bird afterwards.

Left-wing independents overshadowed

Enfield Community Independents (ECI) founder Khalid Sadur received backing from Jeremy Corbyn during the campaign and talked of a potential “Portillo moment” in ousting Ergin Erbil from Edmonton Green. Sadur’s face even appeared on a huge billboard overlooking Fore Street, such was his determination to win in Upper Edmonton.

Unlike parts of the country where similar independent groups have enjoyed success, however, ECI fell well short. Had they agreed a pact with the Greens, and persuaded them to stand down in one or two wards, things might have been different. As it was, the two left-wing parties cancelled each other out in the south-east, allowing Labour to defend their Edmonton seats comfortably.

“We want to thank all our supporters for believing in us and for helping us try to bring real change to our borough,” a disappointed Sadur said afterwards.

Liberal Democrats go backwards

It was also a poor election for the Liberal Democrats, who didn’t come close to winning any seats and even saw their vote share decline.

Matt McLaren, the local election agent for the party, said: “We are proud to have contested every seat on Enfield Council this time, ensuring all residents had the opportunity to vote Lib Dem [...] But there’s no avoiding the fact these results are far from what we’d hoped.”

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LETTERS

Send us your letters

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

Thanks Ruby

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Last month, Ruby Sampson ended her term of office as one of the two Cockfosters ward councillors, after standing down at the election.

On behalf of Merryhills Court Residents Association, I wish to put on record the association's profound gratitude to Ruby for sterling service during her term of office. Ruby was an outstanding case worker, taking up issues of concern to many of the residents – tenants and leaseholders – who live at Merryhills Court, an Enfield Council housing estate.

We wish to thank Ruby for her care and concern over the past four years. Her involvement with residents and their issues will not be forgotten. We feel fortunate to have had Ruby as our representative on Enfield Council and all our good wishes go with her.

Tom Devine

Secretary, Merryhills Court
Residents Association

Data centres

Dear Enfield Dispatch

There are underlying factors that affect the viability of major housing schemes that don't get mentioned very openly, such as the issue of water scarcity in the UK due to under-investment by water companies, and the supply of electricity from the national grid.

The past 30 years have seen no new reservoirs built in the UK yet, at the same time, there has been a massive increase in the construction of data centres which use enormous amounts of power and water.

There are over 500 such centres in the UK, of which 270 are in the London area, including several either in Enfield or the surrounding areas of North London – with many more planned.

The big question is, if energy resources are in short supply, then how will it be possible to ensure that even if new housing developments are built they will be viable?

Neil Littman
Winchmore Hill

Vaccinations

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Vaccine hesitancy is said to be a significant contribution to the measles outbreak in Enfield. One reason for measles vaccine hesitancy is that the vaccines are no longer available on the NHS as separate injections. If there is a problem reaction, how is the cause identified from a multi-vaccine?

I spoke with a lady who blames a miscarriage on multi-Covid-19 injections. Hence, she is declining multi-vaccine injections, particularly MMR, for her young child. She rejected the reported benefit of combining vaccines. This hesitancy will also have an influence on her peers.

The measles outbreak in the Enfield area is partly attributed to avoidance of the MMRV vaccine. It could be that offering the vaccines separately and apart would encourage hesitant parents to have their children vaccinated. This does not have to be at every surgery.

Perhaps the cost of this provision would be less than the costs and worry created by the recent measles outbreak?

G S Dove
Bush Hill Park

Poseidon praise

Dear Enfield Dispatch

I would like to submit a small letter of interest in relation to the Poseidon Fish and Pasta Restaurant in Chase Side, praising their food and services.

Since going there in February 2026 when they opened, I found them and their food absolutely amazing; fantastic taste and flavour and a truly flexible menu.

They have wonderful and attentive staff with amazing customer service manners and response to their customers.

And all absolutely reasonably priced too!

Steven Hawkyard
Southgate

PUBLIC NOTICE

London Borough of Enfield

NOTICE OF DESIGNATION OF AREAS FOR SELECTIVE LICENSING

Section 80 Housing Act 2004

The London Borough of Enfield Designation of Areas for Selective Licensing 2026.

The London Borough of Enfield in exercise of its powers under section 80 of the Housing Act 2004 ("the Act") hereby designates for selective licensing the areas described in paragraph 5.

CITATION, COMMENCEMENT AND DURATION

1. This Designation shall be known as the London Borough of Enfield Designation for Areas for Selective Licensing 2026. All privately rented residential accommodation situated within the designated areas must be licensed with the Council unless subject to statutory exemption as set out in paragraph 5.
2. This Designation was approved by Cabinet decision taken on the 22 April 2026 and thus made on that date and will come into force on 01 September 2026, (not less than 3 months after the decision date).
3. This designation falls within a description of designations in relation to which the Secretary of State has given a general approval under section 82 of the Act: namely the Housing Act 2004 Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Selective Licensing of Other Residential Accommodation (England) General Approval 2024 which came into force on the 23 December 2024.
4. This Designation shall cease to have effect on 31 August 2031 (not more than 5 years) or earlier if the Council revokes the scheme under Section 84 of the Act.

AREAS TO WHICH THE DESIGNATION APPLIES

5. This Designation shall apply to the following areas of the London Borough of Enfield. Designation One is delineated and edged in pale red on the map, and Designation Two is delineated and edged in green on the map in Annex A.

Designation One:	Designation Two:
Bowes	New Southgate
Brimsgate	Palmer's Green
Bullsmoor	Southgate
Carterhatch	Town
Edmonton Green	
Enfield Lock	
Haselbury	
Jubilee	
Lower Edmonton	
Ponders End	
Southbury	
Upper Edmonton	
Whitewebbs	

APPLICATION OF THE DESIGNATION

- 5(a) This designation applies to any house¹ which is let or occupied under a single tenancy or 2 or more tenancies or licences in respect of different dwellings contained in it within the area described in paragraph 4 unless: the house is a house in multiple occupation [HMO] that falls within the nationally prescribed category of HMO that is required to be licensed as a 'mandatory HMO' under section 55(2)(a) Part 2 of the Act²;
- (b) the house is a house in multiple occupation that falls within the prescribed category of HMO that is required to be licensed under the London Borough of Enfield Designation of an Area for Additional Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation 2020 made on 12 March 2025 under Section 56 of the Housing Act 2004³;
- (c) the tenancy or licence of the house has been granted by a registered social landlord⁴;
- (d) the house is subject to an Interim or Final Management Order under Part 4 of the Act;
- (e) the house is subject to a temporary exemption under section 86 of the Act; or
- (f) the house is occupied under a tenancy or licence which is exempt under the Act or the occupation is of a building or part of a building so exempt as defined in Paragraph 5(f): Exempted tenancies or licences, Selective Licensing of Houses (Specified Exemptions) (England) Order 2006 SI 370/2006.

EFFECT OF THE DESIGNATION

6. Subject to sub paragraphs 5(a) to (f) the Designations will apply to any residential building, house, maisonette or flat if it is in the areas specified in paragraph 5, and that is occupied under a tenancy or licence shall be required to be licensed under section 85 of the Act.⁵

7. The London Borough of Enfield will comply with the notification requirements contained in section 83 of the Act and shall maintain a register of all houses registered under this designation, as required under section 232 of the Act.⁶

If you are a landlord, managing agent or a tenant, or if you require information regarding this designation, or to apply for a licence, further information and assistance is available from the Council's Private Rented Housing Team by telephone on 020 3821 1761 or by email to PRSH@enfield.gov.uk or by writing to Private Rented Property Licensing Team, London Borough of Enfield, Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield, Middx, EN1 3XH. The Designation may be inspected at the above address during office hours.

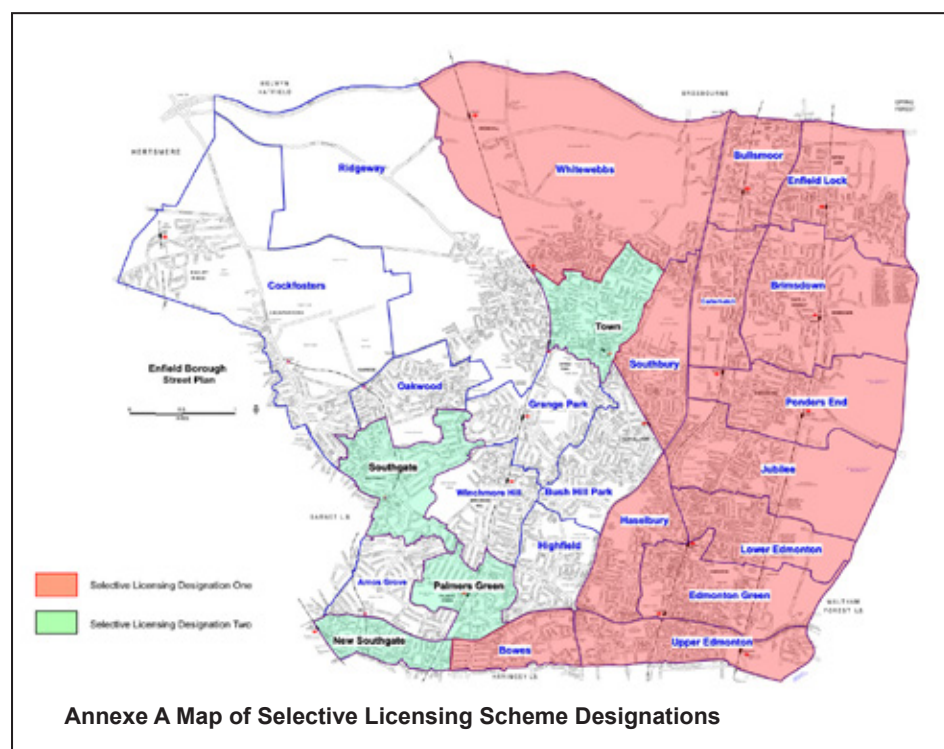
All landlords, managing agents or tenants within the designated areas should obtain advice to ascertain whether their property is affected by the Designations by contacting the Council's Private Rented Housing Team.

Upon the Designations coming into force any person having control of or who manages a licensable property without a licence is liable to prosecution and upon summary conviction is liable to an unlimited fine pursuant to the provisions of section 95 of the Housing Act 2004. A person who breaches a condition of a licence is liable upon summary conviction to an unlimited fine. The Council, as an alternative to initiating a prosecution, may pursue one or more of a range of other enforcement actions including the imposition of a financial penalty of up to £30,000 (increasing to £40,000 from 1 May 2026 pursuant to the Renters' Right Act 2025) and/or taking management control of the unlicensed property. Further, where an offence has been committed an application may also be made by the Council and/or tenant under the provisions of 96 and 97 of the Act and section 41 and 42 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 for a Rent Repayment Order to pay back up to 12 months' rent, Housing Benefit, or Universal Credit. The Authority will also add any relevant offences to the Greater London Authority Landlord and Agent Register unless it considers that there are valid reasons for not so adding, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Signed

Portfolio holder and elected Cabinet Member
For and on behalf of London Borough of Enfield,

22 April 2026



¹ For the definition of "house" see sections 79 and 99 of the Act
² Section 55 of the Act defines which Houses in Multiple Occupation are required to be licensed under the Act. See also The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Prescribed Descriptions) (England) Order 2005 (SI 2006/371)
³ Additional Licensing covers HMOs that are not within the scope of Mandatory HMO Licensing where tenants share one or more 'basic amenities' i.e. a WC, personal washing facilities or cooking facilities. 'Section 257' HMO buildings would need a selective licence assuming they are occupied by a single household. If an individual flat was itself multiply occupied, it would need an additional or mandatory HMO licence depending on the number of persons accommodated.
⁴ Section 79 (3) of the Act. For the definition of a Registered Social Landlord see Part 1 of the Housing Act 1996
⁵ Section 232 of the Act and paragraph 11 of SI 373/2006
⁶ See the Selective Licensing of Houses (Specified Exemptions) (England) Order 2006 SI 370/2006

Published 29th May 2026

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Yoni Leitner trading as Phoods Limited of 5 Elstree Gate, Elstree Way, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, WD6 1JD is applying for a licence to use 5c Picketts Lock lane London, N9 0AS as an operating centre for 1 goods vehicle and 0 trailers.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centres who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice.

Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice.

A Guide to Making Representations is available at www.gov.uk/object-hgv-operator-licence.

LICENSING ACT 2003

Notice Of Application For A Variation Of Premises Licence/Club Premises Certificate*

Notice is hereby given that **Fit Parks Ltd** has applied to the Licensing Authority of London Borough of Enfield for a Variation of Premises Licence to permit:

- The variation of the premises licence to reflect the change of trading name from **Country Club** to **Layali Restaurant & Lounge** and the change in style of operation from ticketed/promoted events to a restaurant and lounge operation. The variation seeks to permit the existing outside terrace area, already shown within the red-line licensed boundary on the premises plan, to be used for the sale and supply of alcohol during the existing authorised hours for the supply of alcohol. The variation also seeks to permit recorded music in the outside terrace area during the existing authorised hours for recorded music, limited to background music ancillary to the restaurant/lounge use of the premises only. The variation seeks to vary and replace existing conditions 24, 25 and 26, which relate to ticketed events and the outside bar area, to reflect that the premises will no longer operate ticketed/promoted events. The variation also seeks to vary condition 16, insofar as it restricts use of the patio doors, to reflect that the premises will no longer operate loud music, club-night style events, or ticketed/promoted regulated entertainment events, for the premises **Country Club, Trent Park Golf Club** situated at **Bramley Road, London, N14 4UW**

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: **05/06/2026**.

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: 8th day of May 2026

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New writers' group launches in Enfield

Plot Potatoes is a relaxed and informal writing group

BY ANNA-LOUISE ADEPEGBA

An award-winning writer from Los Angeles has started a creative writing club at Dugdale Arts Centre.

In an effort to bring some of her American creativity to Enfield Town, Sara Kapadia started 'Plot Potatoes', a relaxed and informal writing group open to people of all ages and experience levels.

Sara, who has a background in academic writing, now writes fiction and non-fiction across science, fantasy and culture. Living in Los Angeles for 20 years, a city with a strong writing scene and creative culture, inspired her to create a similar space after moving back to London in 2025.

She said: "In LA, there are writers everywhere, especially scriptwriters and authors. We have a culture of sharing creativity boldly and loudly; I became passionate about bringing something similar to Enfield after realising the nearest writers' group was in Walthamstow.

"I put up posters all around town, and posted about the group on every local Facebook group I could find.

"The club is open to everyone,

of all ages and to all levels of writing, whether people want to write seriously or just for fun. I want it to feel un confrontational, silly and encouraging."

At a recent session there were three attendees, including a baker, a successful screenwriter and an NHS worker.

Lucy Dwyer, a scriptwriter from Jersey and now based in London, was recently selected for the UK's Women in Action mentoring and pitching initiative. She has worked across a variety of screen projects and worked her way up to producer level on productions including *Eurovision Song Contest* and *The Weakest Link*.

Lucy said: "Being a writer can be lonely. It's always good to try and get out there and talk to others of all writing levels. I saw the group and thought it would be a great chance to do just that and hopefully with my experience I have some valuable stuff to share."

Sara was selected for a six-month mentorship with Macmillan Publishers in 2020, where having her work professionally critiqued significantly developed her understanding of creative writing. She's designed the sessions to help attendees learn the writing fundamentals.



The Plot Potatoes writing group at Dugdale Arts Centre
Credit: Anna-Louise Adepegba

Sara said: "It was an eye-opening experience when I received that level of feedback. In my sessions, I give attendees worksheets and activities to learn the ins-and-outs of different techniques. At other times, discussions often drift into conversations about books, films and television."

NHS worker Caroline was encouraged to join the group by a friend. She became more invested in the hobby during lockdown. "I've always enjoyed writing, and often thought poems write me," she said.

"I end up with poems scattered around the house on scraps of paper or kitchen roll. The ideas in my head never stop.

"I wondered whether people would actually want to read them. Since joining, I've learnt valuable things and, most of all, I'm happy

to have found a place with like-minded people."

Similarly, baker and chef Rob Thomas, from Edmonton, developed writing as a hobby during the pandemic. Currently, he is working on a thriller-style novel. "Exercising your brain is just as important as exercising the body, and this group is a great brainstorming exercise," he said.

"I'm not sure where my book is going to go, but being in the group definitely keeps my creativity alive, and I've been looking for something like this for a while."

Sara hopes the club can become a welcoming space for people to meet, write and exchange ideas. "I'm sure there's lots of creative talent that can be nurtured in these sessions," she added.

The Plot Potatoes group meets every Thursday from 5pm to 7pm.

The local dance club where everyone belongs

Danny Hockman from Winchmore Folk Dance Club on how the group brings people together

From the moment you arrive at Winchmore Folk Dance Club you feel you are in a warm friendly welcoming place – and you are!

It doesn't matter if you turn up on your own, if you're shy, bold, quiet, loud, or somewhere in between.

It doesn't matter whether you think you can dance or whether you're convinced you have two left feet.

Everyone is welcomed with the same warmth, and that makes all the difference.

One of the things I appreciate most is that there's never any pressure. You don't have to worry

about asking someone to dance, because someone always will. People look out for each other.

If you're new, someone will guide you through the steps. If you go the wrong way, people laugh with you, not at you. The whole atmosphere is built on encouraging people to join in and not to worry if they get the steps wrong or make a mistake.



Winchmore Folk Dance Club meets on Tuesdays at Winchmore Hill URC and on Saturdays at Trinity Church Hall in Enfield Town

The group is also wonderfully inclusive. It isn't aimed at men or women specifically, nor at any particular age group. It's so refreshing to be part of something where everyone is treated as an equal, regardless of their background and experience.

The caller plays a crucial role by explaining the steps clearly and guiding the group through each dance. Even if you've never done folk dancing before, you never feel lost for long. If the dancers need to go through a dance twice or three times then that's what the caller will do, just to make sure everyone does as well as they can and feels they get the most they can out of coming to the club.

There is a long tradition of English folk dance music and the club dances to some of the oldest traditional music as well as to more recent compositions.

During our weekly Tuesday

meetings, the club uses CDs and often has guest musicians who enhance the occasion, to say the least!

However, at our Saturday night dances the music is provided by Chris Carpenter, whose keyboard and accordion playing are second to none. She is a really great musician and we feel privileged to have her play for us.

There is something incredibly uplifting about dancing to live music, no matter how tough the week's been.

Most of all I feel at home in the club because it's a space where people can simply enjoy being together. It's welcoming, lively, and full of good humour. In a world that often feels rushed and disconnected, the club offers a place where everyone belongs.

For more information about Winchmore Folk Dance Club and how to get involved: Visit wfdc.co.uk

Literary festival returns to Forty Hall

Valerie Darville from Enfield Poets on how the group hopes to build on the success of last year's event

Following the success of Enfield Poets' Literary Festival at Forty Hall last year, we are now hoping to make this an annual event.

The next edition of the festival will be held on the weekend of Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th September – earlier than last year to improve the chances of having good weather for outdoor events!

The 2025 festival included poetry readings by local and well-known poets, headlined by Simon Armitage, plus talks on local author Florence Dugdale and Jane Austen, and workshops varying from advice on writing poetry to neuro-diversity and psychological influences.

Last year, an impromptu workshop on writing with a quill pen proved very popular, so it will be repeated again this year. For those interested in Greek myths, three young actors from E15 Drama College helped perform my short play about the Minotaur, and the open mic sessions run by the indefatigable Mary Duggan were also very popular. The headline poet this year will be Patience Agbabi.

"Forty Hall has been the saviour of Enfield Poets," explained Anthony Fisher. "Since we lost our home at the Dugdale under [former council arts boss] Paul Everitt, and after Covid, we haven't held our monthly meetings, though we are hoping to start these again at some point.

"So many poetry groups folded during Covid – we are thankful we have kept going. The staff of Forty Hall have gone above and beyond in hosting our popular evening events which have included music, such as the lute and sitar, as well as poetry."

Anyone interested in running a workshop in September can apply for consideration directly via the Forty Hall website – the deadline to fill in the form is Sunday, 7th June.

A poetry competition judged by Hannah Copley is also being run, with a closing date of Monday, 31st August, and details for entering online can be found at enfieldpoets.com.

The winners of the competition will be invited to read their poems at the festival. Look out for programmes in local libraries.

For more information and to get in touch: Email info@enfieldpoets.com Visit enfieldpoets.com

Enfield's hot new Chinese restaurant



Kung po chicken with rice

Neil Littman visits Guangzhou in Southgate Green to sample a delicious – if spicy – menu

It wasn't my intention to review three Chinese restaurants in the space of six months. However, Guangzhou is one of several new openings and is a good addition to the area that is well worth a visit.

I wouldn't have known about Guangzhou if I hadn't been stuck in traffic one day and spotted the site formerly occupied by Highland Angus Steakhouse in Southgate Green displaying a sign announcing they were "opening soon".

I subsequently received a couple of emails from *Dispatch* readers recommending the restaurant, for which I would like to say a big thank you.

Guangzhou's cuisine is Cantonese, but their menu also offers some Sichuan and Malaysian-style satay dishes. The interior

has had a makeover, replacing some tables with smart dark blue banquettes, improved lighting, and updating the former tartan check carpet in favour of a more contemporary wood flooring.

According to their Facebook page, the kitchen is run by head chef Pak-Sum Lee, who has over 30 years' experience. The menu is concise compared to other Chinese restaurants I've been to, although I hope in future they might offer dim sum which isn't just a staple of Chinese cuisine, but also from the Guangzhou (Canton) region.

My first visit was during the week of Chinese New Year. Complimentary prawn crackers arrived first, and I ordered a bottle of Lucky Buddha, a crisp and light Asian-style lager. My starter of salt and pepper soft shell crab was the size of a main course (£16.80) and reduced me to tears after a few mouthfuls – the chilli was 'ma-la' (numbing hot) and took my breath away. Despite this, it tasted very good!

I followed this with something a bit milder, a classic kung pao chicken dish (£17.50) with

yellow bean paste and roasted cashew nuts, plus a portion of egg fried rice.

I paid a second visit a few weeks later, at the weekend, when the restaurant was very busy. There were several groups of families and I could tell that most of the customers were not making a first visit. I ordered a quarter of crispy duck with cucumber, spring onion and hoisin sauce (£22.50). The duck was listed as a starter for two or main course for one, and the lemon-scented wet wipe came in handy after assembling the pancakes by hand!

As I was recovering from the tail-end of a bad cold, I ordered Chinese tea (refilled at no charge) and – forgetting the soft-shell crab experience – I ordered the salt and pepper squid (£17.90), again underestimating the power of the red chillies.

Incidentally, the restaurant has posted videos on their Facebook page showing how they prepare their squid and their other culinary skills, such as their sizzling dishes. Considering the short time they have been open, there is a confidence in the cooking and service that already makes the place feel well established.



Salt and pepper squid

The service is also good and very attentive, and the cost per person is about £30–£50, not including drinks. But note that at present, they don't offer take-away or home deliveries, and booking is advisable on Fridays and Saturdays.

Guangzhou Chinese Restaurant can be found at 43 Cannon Hill, Southgate N14 6LH. To see opening times and menus: Visit guangzhourestaurant.co.uk

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

LISTINGS

Submit your listing

We can include low-cost community events taking place in Enfield. For next month's listings, email the details of your event to enfielddispatch@socialspider.com by **Monday 15th June**.

HEALTH

Wellness Month

Wednesday 3rd June and Monday 22nd June
Ruth Winston Community Centre, 190 Green Lanes, Palmers Green N13 5UE

Ruth Winston's 'Wellness Month' programme continues with two events aimed at helping people stay fit and healthy. A weight loss advice session hosted by Nilton Mandelli takes place on Wednesday 3rd from 10am–12pm, while a talk on prostate cancer led by Errol McKellar takes place on Monday 22nd from 2pm–5pm.

Free to attend but booking required

Call 020 8886 5346

Visit ruthwinstoncentre.com/wellness

CHARITY

Wonder Walk

Sunday 7th June, from 9.30am
Chickenshed Theatre, 290 Chase Side, Southgate N14 4PE

Raising money for Chickenshed Theatre, this annual fundraising walk is filled with heart, energy, music and community spirit.

Adults £14.50, under-16s £7.50, under-fives free

Email louiset@chickenshed.org.uk

Visit chickenshed.org.uk/support-us/wonder-walk-2026

CLIMATE

People's Emergency Briefing

Saturday 13th June, 2pm
Dugdale Arts Centre, 39 London Road, Enfield EN2 6DS

Join Enfield Climate Action Forum for a free community screening of the People's Emergency Briefing. This new 45-minute film brings together nine leading UK scientists and experts with the latest evidence and insights on issues, including extreme weather and food security.

Free entry, booking required

Visit dugdaleartscentre.co.uk

Read more about upcoming events in Enfield on the Dispatch website:

Visit enfielddispatch.co.uk

MUSIC

Blues @ The Park

Friday 19th June, 8pm
Firs Farm Community Hub, Firs Lane, Winchmore Hill N21 2PJ

One of the UK's leading blues guitarists, Mete Ege, returns to Firs Farm Community Hub for a powerful night of live music that blends blues with rich jazz and funk influences. This is a show you won't want to miss.

Tickets £15

Visit firsfarmcommunityhub.com

COMEDY

Edinburgh Previews

Thursday 25th June, 8pm
Dugdale Arts Centre, 39 London Road, Enfield EN2 6DS

The next Edinburgh Festival preview at the Dugdale features the debut fringe show by Cecily Hitchcock, a rising star with over 25 million views on social media, and focuses on growing up in the 2000s. Previous Edinburgh Comedy Award nominee Glenn Moore will also be performing.

Tickets £13.50

Visit dugdaleartscentre.co.uk

BUSINESS

Enfield Business Expo

Tuesday 30th June, 10am–4pm
Dugdale Arts Centre, 39 London Road, Enfield EN2 6DS

A day of information, inspiration and innovation. Whether you are a visitor or an exhibitor, it is a day not to be missed. There will be networking taking place throughout the day and you will also have the opportunity to attend educational seminars and panel debates.

Free to attend, booking required

Call 020 3973 6343

Email info@yourbusinesscommunity.co.uk

SINGING

Gospel workshops

Every third Wednesday of the month, 7.30pm–9.30pm

Learn gospel singing techniques and a fun, inspiration gospel song! Includes refreshments.

£15 per session

Visit vocallysound.co.uk

AROUND THE BOROUGH

ENFIELD TOWN

Latest construction works begin

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

CONSTRUCTION WORK HAS BEGUN on the next phase of a major revamp for Enfield Town centre.

With the first phase of works for the 'Enfield Town Liveable Neighbourhood' project completing in 2024 and the first part of the second phase being finished last month, Enfield Council is now moving ahead with the second part of the second phase – having secured additional funding from Transport for London (TfL).

The upcoming set of works include changes to the layouts of London Road, Genotin Road and the eastern part of Cecil Road, as well as a revamp of the area outside Enfield Town Station to create new seating and planting, plus new traffic restrictions for St Andrew's Road meaning only emergency vehicles and cyclists will be able to access it from Southbury Road in future.

Bus stops and pedestrian crossings on London Road and Genotin Road will be moved, as well as the



pick-up point for vehicles outside the station. New sections of cycle lanes will be created in Southbury Road, Genotin Road, London Road and Cecil Road, while access to New River Loop Car Park will be restricted to Southbury Road.

Pavements will be widened in places and the new red route in the town centre will also be extended further east.

Multiple rounds of public consultations on the works have previously taken place and the council officially signed off on the works in February this year, following confirmation that TfL would be contributing an additional

£3.65million.

The full set of works will take 28 months to complete, according to the council, and will also involve lengthy road closures. These include a major six-week closure of London Road between The Town and Genotin Road, starting from Tuesday, 21st July to coincide with the school summer holidays.

In an update posted on the council project page last month, community engagement manager Duncan Bain said: "Our contractor will be writing to residents and businesses with further information about the construction plan specific to their area, but signage should also be checked as changes may occur should any unforeseen circumstances arise.

"Some works will require full road closures, and diversions will be put in place. This may result in temporary night closures of sections of roads and footways, and any impact will be kept to a minimum."

For updates on the project:
Visit letstalk.enfield.gov.uk/enfieldtown

CREWS HILL

Fire destroys food supplier



BY JAMES CRACKNELL

A LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPLYING shops around the UK with food and drink lost an estimated £500,000-worth of stock in a fire last month.

The stock was being kept in a row of storage warehouses at Tile Kiln Farm in Crews Hill, owned by Leo's Import Export.

The fire on Saturday, 2nd May destroyed almost the entire business

and was visible for miles, but fortunately no-one was injured.

London Fire Brigade (LFB) spent three days at the site, ensuring the blaze was fully extinguished before finally leaving the scene. LFB has yet to establish what caused the fire.

On a visit to the site, the owner of Leo's allowed the *Dispatch* to photograph the extensive damage caused. Although he did not wish to be named, he said: "No-one was here [when the fire started], we came down in eight minutes but we had to let the fire brigade tackle it.

"The fire went on for three days." The owner explained that his business supplies products such as sauces, olive oil, sweets and various dairy products to shops all across the country.

While he said that "everything" linked to Leo's had been destroyed, including his office, other adjacent warehouses linked to another business on the farm were left unscathed.

He is now waiting for his insurance company to confirm the extent of his losses, but estimates it will be £500,000.

EDMONTON

New park café opens

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

A BRAND NEW CAFÉ HAS OPENED at Pymmes Park in Edmonton – repurposing what used to be a toilet block.

Pymmes Park Café is described by leaseholder Baran Korkmaz as "open and inclusive" and offers hot and cold drinks, pastries, sandwiches, burgers, salads, jacket potatoes and ice creams.

There are also new toilets included within the refurbished block which are now maintained by the operator.

It comes after the council issued invitations to tender to run brand new cafés at Jubilee Park and Pymmes Park in Edmonton, plus Enfield Playing Fields, back in 2023. Pymmes Park Café is the first of these new businesses to open.

When the *Dispatch* last month

visited the café for lunch and met Baran, who won the tender to run it, he explained he decided to quit a career working with computers and artificial intelligence to move into catering.

"I decided the computer work was a drain on my lifestyle and running a café was more sociable and more meaningful," he explained.

"There was this sense of achievement in repurposing an old building, and it is a fun business to run."

Having not previously had a

background in running a café, Baran said he had leant on the experience of his uncle who has been working in the catering industry for many years.

He also said that he had commissioned local artists to design the café's logo, colour scheme and other features. Hanna Benihoud designed "beautiful artwork", George Lewis created "incredible branding", and Amy Betty Heff worked on the interior design.

Baran said he was also grateful to Sumishta and the Pymmes Park Friends group for "all the ongoing work they do to care for and bring life to the beautiful park".



BUSH HILL PARK

Pub closes down

A PUB IN LINCOLN ROAD HAS become the latest in the borough to close down – but is set to be replaced with a new boozer as part of a wider redevelopment scheme.

The Lincoln called 'last orders' for the final time on Monday, 4th May. The pub has long been slated for redevelopment, with planning permission being granted in August 2023 for a new five-storey block of flats on the site. This scheme includes a replacement pub on the ground floor.

The Lincoln has been owned by Logini Pubs Ltd since July 2017, after being sold by Greene King.

With the redevelopment now set to commence, The Lincoln announced on its Facebook page that it would be closing down over the early May bank holiday weekend. One drinker, Madelaine



Connolly, replied: "Sad times, many great memories of that pub. Another one bites the dust."

The scheme had originally been rejected by Enfield Council back in April 2022 over concerns around its size and "incongruous" design, as well the impact on local parking. However, following an appeal to the government in August 2023, planning inspector MJ Francis ruled permission should be granted as living conditions of neighbouring residents "would be preserved".

Cockfosters defeated at Wembley

A disappointing end to the season could still prove a positive turning point in club's history, writes Tommy Rose



Cockfosters line up against AFC Stoneham at Wembley Credit els_photo_graphy

There was heartbreak for Cockfosters at Wembley as their remarkable FA Vase journey ended in the cruellest fashion, as AFC Stoneham lifted the trophy after a penalty-shootout victory.

For a side that had made a habit of holding their nerve from twelve yards throughout this historic run, this time fortune fell the other way.

The final whistle after a goalless 90 minutes brought

one last test of composure, but Cockfosters were unable to find the decisive touch as Stoneham claimed the FA Vase trophy, winning 4-2 on penalties beneath the arch.

Yet, despite the pain of defeat, there was overwhelming pride among the 3,500 travelling supporters who made the journey to Wembley for the greatest day in the club's history.

Cockfosters matched their Hampshire opponents throughout a tight and hard-fought

contest. Chances came at both ends, with Kendall Gyamfi going close for the Fosters and Connor Sansom producing important saves to keep the scores level.

The crossbar denied both sides during a nervy second half, as the game edged inevitably towards penalties.

When the decisive moment came, Stoneham held their nerve. Cockfosters, who had already survived four shootouts during this unforgettable FA Vase campaign, could not conjure one final escape.

The disappointment was evident at full-time, but it should not overshadow what has been a season of extraordinary achievement for Gavin Kelsey's side.

Only days earlier, Cockfosters had also suffered heartbreak in the league play-off final, narrowly missing out on promotion. To fall short twice at the final hurdle would be enough to crush many clubs. Instead, this campaign feels more like the beginning of something significant.

Over recent months, the club has captured the imagination of supporters, not only in Cockfosters but across Enfield and beyond. Crowds have grown, local interest has surged, and the team's run to Wembley brought new attention to the club.

At Wembley, that community spirit was impossible to miss. Flags, scarves and songs echoed around the national stadium as supporters embraced an occasion many thought they might never see. For younger fans especially, these are memories that will last a lifetime.

While there is no trophy to show for it, Cockfosters have earned belief and will look to continue building stronger ties with the local community.

The hurt of Wembley and the play-off final will linger, but when players and supporters regroup in July for the new season, they will do so knowing they were part of a historic campaign that could yet be the foundation for even greater days ahead.



Sign up for Enfield's big 10km fun run

Anthony Plewes from Trent Park Running Club on why local runners should get involved with Triffic Trail at Trent Park

Were you cheering on the almost 60,000 runners in the London Marathon in April, or were you even one of those taking part?

If you want to keep that running inspiration going, then why not take on a new challenge closer to home – Triffic Trail!

This is Enfield's very own 10km trail race, which takes place in Trent Park on Sunday, 21st June.

The race is held entirely within the beautiful surroundings of Trent Park and takes you through a picturesque blend of ancient woodland, rolling meadows, and hidden country paths. Licensed by the Trail Runners Association, the fully marshalled route has clear signage throughout and water stations to keep you hydrated.

The undulating natural terrain provides a soft-surface challenge that rewards you with shade, birdsong, and some of the most 'triffic' scenery London has to offer.

The Triffic Trail welcomes all levels of runners from first timers to experienced trail runners.

The race aims to bring the whole community together and is a bronze partner with the Black Trail Runners, which targets wider participation of people with black ethnicity in trail running.

You can bring the whole family along too. In addition to the 10km trail race for over-16s, the Triffic Trail hosts a 4.5km junior race and a 2km fun run for under-twelves.

Whether your little ones are sprinting their first few hundred meters or tackling a junior trail, the atmosphere is electric! It's a full day of family fun where everyone gets to feel like a champion.

Trent Park is easily accessible by public transport (via Cockfosters Station on the Piccadilly Line or local buses) but, for those driving, the race offers marshalled parking areas.

Triffic Trail is a community event and has been organised by volunteers from Trent Park Running Club for nearly 40 years, with many runners returning every year. The race is community focused, raising money for local charities Nightingale Cancer Support, North London Hospice and the Wildlife Rescue and Ambulance Service, a charity based in Trent Park itself.

Ready to keep the momentum going? Don't let that marathon inspiration fade – join the Triffic Trail for a great day out.

Sign up for Triffic Trail:
Visit trentparkrc.atwevents.co.uk/e/triffic-trail-london-9138

New boss arrives at Enfield Town

BY ANDREW WARSHAW

New Enfield Town manager Billy Holland admits that Gavin Macpherson will be a hard act to follow – but is keen to put his own stamp on the club as soon as possible.

Billy was appointed last month to take over The Dave Bryant Stadium hot seat after Town were relegated back to the Isthmian League Premier Division, leading to the resignation of his hugely popular predecessor.

With pre-season due to get under way in early July, the new man at the helm, who arrived from nearby Waltham Abbey FC after a 23-year association as a player and manager, recognises that expectations will be far greater than last season.

Billy is not fazed by the challenge, however, even if he's never managed at this level. "I get that more people are going

to judge me than I'm used to and put pressure on me if we are not winning," said Billy.

"But I want to challenge myself out of my comfort zone and let my work do the talking."

Having tasted two seasons of National League South, many members of last season's Enfield Town squad have moved on. But some key figures are likely to stay, including club captain Mickey Parcell and all-time appearance record holder Sam Youngs.

"It was really important for me to try and keep them," Billy told the *Dispatch*. "They've played at a higher level, are aligned with my own ambitions and know how the club works from the inside."

Before turning to management, Billy faced Enfield Town as a player (he remains Waltham Abbey's all-time record goalscorer and appearance maker) and kept tabs on the club's rise.

"Everyone I spoke to, inside

and outside the club, could not have been more complimentary," said Billy, who will be assisted by his former backroom team and is also bringing across a number of Waltham Abbey players.

"I'll have several weeks in pre-season to see who is good enough at this level and who isn't, who can adapt and who can't. I like to try and find young gems and see people in person before I sign them."

However, non-contract players can leave whenever they like. "That's true but I never lost a single one of my top players at



Billy Holland previously managed Waltham Abbey FC

Waltham Abbey," Billy responds. "They liked playing for us."

But Billy is also realistic. "There are some massive clubs we won't be able to compete with financially, even at step three, but we will have an ambitious target in mind and work our socks off to hit that target."

As far as playing style is concerned, he hopes the Town fans will buy into his attacking, possession-based 4-3-3 philosophy. "I guess I'm something of a risk-taker but that doesn't mean I can't or won't adapt if necessary. Believe me, I don't just want to look pretty, I want to win football matches."

Enfield Town will be hosting a programme and memorabilia fair on Sunday, 14th June, from 10am-4pm. The fair covers a range of programmes – from the Second World War onwards – plus sports books, magazines, old tickets, pin badges, cards, and signed items.

INDIE

news

Week

**15-21 JUNE
2026**

GET TO KNOW THE FACES BEHIND YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Indie News Week is the celebration of independent news. In 2026, we would like to give our readers the chance to celebrate Indie News Week by learning more about the faces behind their local community newspaper and what goes into covering local stories. Here our staff and some of our valued contributors/volunteers introduce themselves:



James Cracknell
Editor

For nearly 20 years I have witnessed first-hand the steep decline of the local news industry. Several newspapers I've previously worked for no longer exist – including Enfield Gazette and Advertiser. When that paper was shut down suddenly in July 2017 I told my boss, Social Spider director David Floyd, that we should try to launch a publication to fill the gap. A year later, we did, providing Enfield with a vital news service while promoting the many great things going on in our community. I hope we can continue to serve the borough for many years to come!



Klaudia Kiss
Head of advertising

I am a creative strategic thinker with a sales and marketing background, a new mum, and a huge cat lover. I also love to work on projects I can 100% put myself behind. The high-quality local news coverage that my colleagues do day-by-day is worthy of the best support they can get. My job is to ensure the financial sustainability of the Dispatch and our other titles, making sure we have enough money to keep building our papers and bringing people the news.



Joe Ives
Local Democracy Reporter

My school teachers told me I'd never be a professional footballer. They were right. Still, being a BBC Local Democracy Reporter means making headlines in a different way. I cover three councils: Barnet, Enfield and Haringey. These local authorities make key decisions for roughly one million people on everything from health to housing. Yet the decline in local news over the past two decades has meant the level of scrutiny they receive has dwindled. More often than not my colleagues and I will be the only ones covering hugely important decisions. It's a huge responsibility – and privilege.



Neil Littman
Food writer

As a resident of Enfield for twelve years, I've had a long-standing interest in community issues and the borough's history. During the pandemic, recognising its severe impact on the hospitality sector, I began writing about local places to eat out – and the food column has continued ever since. I also serve on Winchmore Hill Residents' Association and am active in various neighbourhood initiatives. Professionally, I work as a graphic designer and play in bands. I value the independence of local journalism and see the Dispatch as an essential platform for informing and engaging residents through positive, impartial reporting.



Sangeeta Waldron
LocalMotion contributor

As a media professional and published author, I believe that local press matters. In Enfield, we have a thriving local newspaper, the Dispatch, with a real editor who understands the community and its landscape. Every month I work closely with the Dispatch on content for two pages that are part of the newspaper and sponsored by LocalMotion Enfield, a grassroots organisation working alongside the local community. These two pages focus on youth and community stories, shining a spotlight on diverse, local voices. Local newspapers are a valuable, trusted source, fostering community cohesion and countering misinformation.



Andrew Warshaw
Sports writer

I write a monthly column about Enfield Town FC for the Dispatch as well as the occasional cultural/music article. Having started my journalistic career in local newspapers (I am now retired) I have first-hand experience of how vital they are in terms of serving the local community. The Dispatch is an invaluable example of this, an eagerly-awaited read covering a multitude of issues. It is imperative, in an age of social media where too often fact and fiction get blurred, that local newspapers not only survive but thrive – and that print versions remain instantly accessible.



Enfield Dispatch has 294 readers who are supporters of the work we do

in covering local news and highlighting issues that are important to our community. We are independent, and we write the facts without bias.

Can you spare £5 a month? Not much, but sometimes it is what we need. Enfield Dispatch exists because our readers are backing us up.

Join and support: enfelddispatch.co.uk/support-us