ENFIELD DISPATCH

N°98 THE BOROUGH'S FREE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

NOV 2026



THE MAYOR OF a German town twinned with Enfield visited the borough for the first time last month – and enjoyed a meal at an award-winning pub. Gladbeck mayor Bettina Weist (fifth from left) dined with Enfield counterpart Emma Supple (fourth from left) at The Rose and Crown in Clay Hill, where one of the licensees (Stefanie Herrick, left) is also German. Mayor Weist described the borough as "beautiful" and "wonderful" during her historic visit. To read the full story, visit enfielddispatch.co.uk

Backlash over school closures

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

An Enfield headteacher and a group of parents claim proposals to close their "wonderful" primary school are based on flawed figures – and the impact the closure would have on children with special needs is being ignored.

Suffolks Primary School in Brick Lane is one of three Enfield Council is proposing to close, with a public consultation on the move potentially launching in early November – depending on the outcome of a vote by councillors on a scrutiny committee.

Headteacher Andrea Cassius pleaded with senior Conservative councillors last month to reconsider closing her school, addressing them directly at a council cabinet meeting. She later told the *Dispatch*: "The key justifications given for our inclusion [in the closure proposals], such as pupil numbers, our financial position, and parental preference, are based on inaccurate data.

"It is deeply concerning that a decision of this magnitude has not even been built on factual information, a point I formally raised at the cabinet meeting."

While the headteacher does not deny that mainstream pupil numbers have declined and are far below capacity, with further declines forecast, she said the closure proposals overlook the school's recent expansion of provision for special educational needs and disabilities (Send).

As recently as this summer, the council agreed to double provision for autistic children at Suffolks, from 20 to 40, with a further expansion of another 20 pupils earmarked for September 2027.

"Suffolks is not just a mainstream school, it is leading the way on what true inclusion is," said Andrea. "Our integrated approach, combining mainstream education with specialist support, directly mirrors the vision set out in the education white paper and supports the council's manifesto pledge to increase provision for children with Send."

Last month the *Dispatch* met three parents of pupils at Suffolks, all of whom spoke passionately about the positive impact the school's "unique" approach to special needs has had on their children.

Hollie Welch, whose son Indie has autism and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), said: "My son went to several other schools, but when I went into Suffolks they were so warm and friendly and supportive, and I thought straight away I want him to get into this school. He was so behind [in his education] but within six months he could read and write.

"He used to say 'I am not good enough' but now he knows it is just because he needs support."

Hollie explained that the approach from Suffolks – allowing Send children to attend mainstream classes but recognising when they need to be given a break and taken to the autism unit – was hugely beneficial.

She added: "Our children are thriving – but so are the mainstream children. Before, they were ignored. We want this to be recognised as a specialist mainstream school with Send provision. It is such a unique school, it is a wonderful place."

Another parent, Katherine Gorman, whose son Max has autism and global development delay, said that he had started taking part in school trips and sports that he would never have been able to before joining Suffolks.

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Parents (from left) Katherine Gorman, Hollie Welch and Rachel Stutter outside Suffolks Primary School

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"He now eats at school, drinks at school, and uses the toilet," said Katherine. "He wasn't doing that before, but now he does all of those things."

Rachel Stutter, whose daughter Ellie has not yet been formally diagnosed but likely has autism, said: "They will let her call me. Before she would never go on a trip, but then she went on it because she could call me. She had an injection in school because they let her call me. It is these small things they do that make such a difference.

"There are things in place for them that you don't get elsewhere. Ellie has her own chair which the other kids don't sit on because they know it helps with her anxiety. When you have got a school like Suffolks, you can make these arrangements."

Regarding the council cabinet report which set out reasons for proposing Suffolks be closed, the three parents agreed it does not adequately explain what will happen to Send children currently at the school – because none of them have severe enough needs to justify transferring to a Send-only school, while Send provision at other mainstream primary schools is insufficient.

Katherine said: "There is nowhere else in Enfield with that many Send pupils in a mainstream setting.

"What [headteacher] Andrea has done is recognised; there is a market for this, where children need the best of both worlds, but most schools don't have the staff to allow that to happen. Suffolks does."

"He was so behind, but within six months he could read and write"

She added: "The information they have put out there in the report is about the mainstream, it is not about the Send, and where the children are going to go.

"So many children are being homeschooled now because there isn't the provision. Suffolks gives that opportunity."

The two other schools proposed for closure are Bishop Stopford's, a Church of England secondary school which sits adjacent to Suffolks in Brick Lane, and Starks Field Primary School in Church Street, Edmonton.

"It is deeply concerning that a decision of this magnitude has not even been built on factual information"

The decision to consult on proposing all three schools for closure, however, has been 'called in' for further debate by councillors on the overview and scrutiny committee, at their meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 3rd November.

The opposition Labour group's call-in request claimed that the Conservative administration's school closure report contains "material inaccuracies and inconsistencies" and "does not adequately explain why Bishop Stopford's School, Suffolks Primary School and Starks Field Primary School were selected for potential closure or repurposing rather than other schools experiencing falling pupil numbers".

It added: "The methodology appears to have focused primarily on financial and operational viability, without sufficient consideration of educational standards, Ofsted assessments, recent examination results, school improvement performance or the particular needs of the pupils served."

A protest by parents, staff and pupils is expected to take place outside Enfield Civic Centre prior to the overview and scrutiny meeting.

If the committee votes to reject the call-in request at that meeting the consultation will launch the following week, but if councillors back the request, senior Conservative councillors will be required to reconsider the decision before going forward. The committee comprises four Tory councillors, four from Labour, and one Green – who chairs it.

Asked to respond to the concerns raised, Chris Dey, the council's Conservative cabinet member for children's services, said: "No decisions have been made about the future of any individual school. Any proposals would be subject to the appropriate statutory process, including a full consultation with schools, parents, staff and other stakeholders before a decision is taken.

"At this stage, the council's proposals have been called-in, which means they will be presented to the overview and scrutiny committee on 3rd November. If the council is permitted to proceed, the consultations should begin on 9th November and will remain open for six weeks.

"We would encourage everyone to take part. We also intend to host face-to-face sessions in each of the three schools, where questions can be asked directly to our education team.

"We are committed to conducting a fair, transparent and evidence-based consultation and ensuring that all views are fully considered before any decision is taken."

Pub shooting

A man was shot dead at an Enfield Wash pub last month – in what police suggested was a targeted assassination.

Erdem Mustafa, aged 35, was killed at The Sun & Woolpack Pub in Hertford Road at around 9.30pm on Monday, 19th October.

Detectives investigating the fatal shooting named a suspect they "urgently need to trace" as 35-year-old Abreham Woldegiworgis. He is an Ethiopian national with links to Enfield, Haringey and Brixton.

A 23-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to commit murder.

Anyone who sees Woldegiworgis is urged not to approach him but to contact police immediately.

Detectives continue to appeal for anyone with information about the incident. Chief Inspector Allam Bhangoo said: "We remain committed to securing justice for Erdem as our thoughts remain with his loved ones at this unimaginably hard time.

"While I am pleased my team have made an arrest, our work continues at pace."

Anyone with information should contact police on 101, quoting *CAD 7050/19OCT26*, or contact the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 to remain anonymous.

Road deaths

Three people were killed on the borough's roads within a fortnight.

A 17-year-old boy died while riding his e-bike in Bullsmoor on Sunday, 4th October. Ishmael Sankoh was killed in Elsinge Road shortly before 11pm, after being hit by a car driven by a 60-year-old man.

The driver was arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving and driving while unfit through drink. He was later bailed pending further police enquiries.

Meanwhile, car passengers William and Patrick Cassidy both died in hospital from injuries sustained in a collision between their vehicle and a pedestrian in Chase Side, Southgate, in the early hours of Saturday, 20th September.

William, 48, died two days after the crash, while his brother Patrick, 31, died ten days later. Three other passengers, as well as the pedestrian, suffered non life-threatening injuries.

A 32-year-old woman was arrested on suspicion of causing serious injury by dangerous driving, driving with a specified controlled drug above the prescribed limit, and failing to stop. She was released on bail while enquiries continue.

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Sacha Donnelly (left) and Kath Cowen (right) are the co-founders of The Friendly Space

A friendly place to connect

Kath Cowen and Sacha Donnelly on why they decided to launch a new community service for young people in Edmonton

After more than 25 years working as qualified teachers in Enfield schools, we've seen many changes in education.

One thing hasn't changed, however – young people need to feel connected, valued and part of something.

Throughout our careers, we've supported young people with a wide range of needs, drawing on trauma-informed approaches and our experience supporting emotional wellbeing, parents and carers.

We've seen how difficult life can become for young people who, for many reasons, aren't accessing school. Anxiety, additional needs and difficult experiences can leave them isolated, with fewer opportunities to build friendships and confidence. Families can feel isolated too.

That's why we created The Friendly Space.

We're building a welcoming community where young people can connect, make friends and develop social and life skills.

Our creative and social sessions are particularly for those not currently accessing school, including young people with special educational needs and disabilities (Send) or experiencing anxiety. Through games, creative activities and practical projects, we encourage communication, teamwork, confidence and independence. We draw on our drama education backgrounds, but there's no pressure to perform or be put on the spot. Young people can join in at their own pace.

We're hoping to bring back something of the youth clubs we remember growing up; somewhere to try something new and feel part of a community. We also want young people to help shape The Friendly Space.

We're developing supported volunteering and work experience opportunities, from organising games and art activities to helping with table tennis or welcoming others.

Parents and carers matter just as much. We want to offer opportunities to meet, share experiences, build supportive relationships and access information and guidance.

Now we'd love Enfield to help us build something special.

Donations of board games, art materials, sports equipment or suitable furniture would be very welcome, as would financial contributions towards resources. Local businesses could sponsor activities or equipment, and people with skills in art, music or sport could share their interests.

We'd love to hear from sixth-formers and college students interested in volunteering, and from local schools, Sencos (special needs co-ordinators) and community organisations keen to work together.

Being out of school shouldn't mean missing out on friendship, connection and opportunities to grow.

The Friendly Space is based at the 10th Edmonton Scout Hut in Churchfield Recreation Ground. Creative and social sessions are held on Thursdays during term time, 11.30am–3pm, for young people aged 11–25 years. The cost is £35 for a three-hour session; shorter introductory sessions can take place by arrangement. To register interest:

Call 07956 566 389
Email enquiries.thefriendlyspace@gmail.com
Instagram @thefriendlyspace.2026
Visit forms.gle/bAbTamqbUvyPwHzq9

Return to Send

Elena Kyriacou on how a simple coffee morning turned into something much bigger

I've lived in Enfield for 45 years and worked in a local primary school for twelve years as a special educational needs and disabilities (Send) teaching assistant and play leader.

My biggest inspiration has always been my 18-year-old son who is autistic and has additional learning needs. As a Send parent myself, I understand how overwhelming and isolating the journey can feel.

Three years ago I started my SEN Coffee Mornings to create a welcoming space where parents and carers could connect, share experiences and feel less alone. It has grown into a wonderful community supporting families across Enfield and North London.

Today I organise three different coffee mornings at local venues, all completely free for parents and carers. I also invite Send professionals and organisations to share helpful information and support.

One lovely collaboration is with Better at Southbury Leisure Centre, where I host my monthly SEN Coffee and Play Morning alongside their inclusive soft play sessions. It's encouraging to see schools arranging small group visits so their children can enjoy these opportunities too.

Looking ahead to 2027, I have exciting plans! I'm developing a local Send directory to help families find local services, activities and support all in one place. I'm also planning professional networking events and new school services, including adapted sports days and inclusive discos. I believe children with additional needs should have the same opportunities as everyone else.



Credit Clem Onojeghuo via Pexels

Another project close to my heart is working with local cafés, restaurants and businesses to help them become more friendly for neurodiverse people. My vision is to develop a 'Recommended by SEN with Elena' recognition scheme for businesses making meaningful changes to welcome people with additional needs.

I'd love to connect with more local businesses, schools and organisations interested in working together. I want to share my experience, community connections and knowledge to help create more inclusive opportunities. My SEN Coffee Mornings will always remain free for families because supporting our Send community is at the heart of everything I do.

My dream is simple: I want every Send family to feel welcomed, supported and included. Together we can make Enfield a more inclusive place for everyone.

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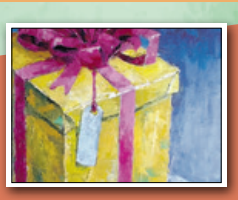
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LocalMotion Enfield is part of a UK-wide movement for community-led change

Young People Are Our Future – Let's Listen

Ensuring young people's voices are heard

Jim Wasswa on how he intends to help Edmonton's youth shape the decisions of a new neighbourhood board

Last year I wrote in these pages about my journey, the people who helped me along the way, and how I was learning to turn my experiences into something that could make a difference for others.

What mattered to me was not simply being invited into a room where decisions were made – it was being trusted to help shape what happened in that room. That idea has stayed with me. Too often, decisions about young people are made without young people being involved. Our experiences might be discussed, our challenges analysed and our futures debated, but how often are we genuinely trusted to help decide what happens next?

Through LocalMotion, I have seen the difference it makes when people with lived experience are listened to, valued and given the opportunity to lead. Real change happens when communities are not simply consulted about solutions designed by others, but are involved in creating those solutions themselves.

Now, through the Lower Edmonton South Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board, I have an opportunity to take that principle further. I believe its greatest potential lies in how decisions are made, not just in how the money is spent.

What do local people want their neighbourhood to look like? What would make young people feel more hopeful about their futures? And what needs to change so that everyone, whatever their background or circumstances, feels they belong and can contribute?

These are not questions that any single organisation can answer on behalf of the whole community – we need to listen to the people who live here.

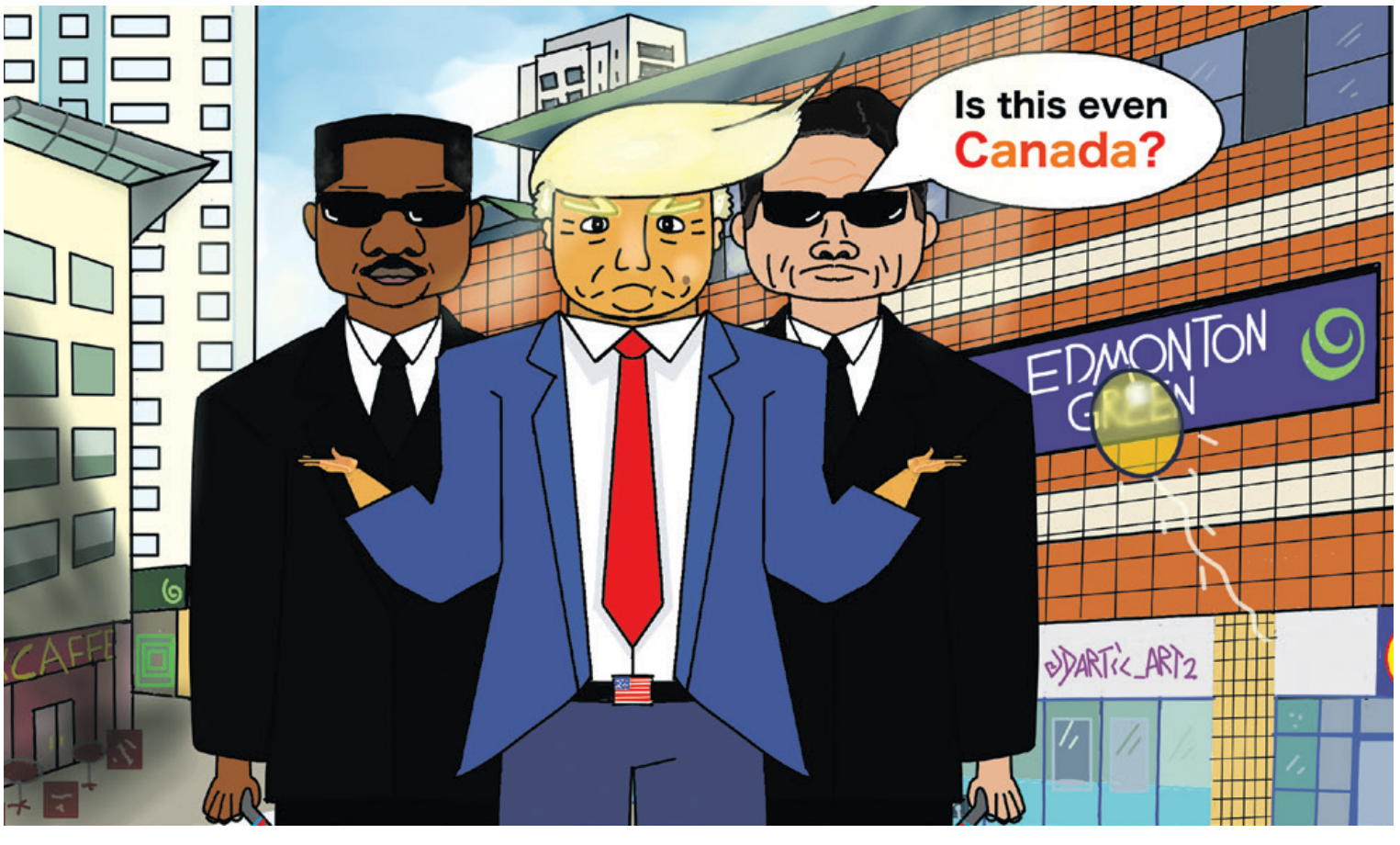
That is where I see a strong connection between Pride in Place and LocalMotion's work to shift power towards communities. Both recognise that people are not simply recipients of services or investment; they have knowledge, experience and ideas that are essential to making change work.

Being on the board gives me a responsibility to help ensure that local voices influence the decisions being made. As chair of the Youth Advisory Board, I want to create opportunities for young people to speak openly, challenge assumptions and shape the priorities that affect their lives.

I am one young person, with my own experiences and perspective. I cannot speak for everyone. My responsibility is to help make sure that other young people — particularly those who are often overlooked or excluded from decision-making — have the opportunity to be heard, and that their contributions carry real weight.



Jim Wasswa is part of the newly-launched Lower Edmonton South Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board **Credit** Kai Images



Helping to shape the future

I know that trust cannot be demanded. It must be earned. Young people need to see that when they share their ideas, something happens as a result. If a proposal cannot be taken forward, they deserve an honest explanation. Being listened to must mean more than being given the opportunity to speak.

I also want young people to see themselves differently. Not as the next generation waiting for their turn, but as people who can lead, influence decisions and make a difference today.

To the young people of Edmonton and youth everywhere, I want to say this: your experiences matter, your ideas matter. You do not need to wait until you are older, more confident or more established to have something valuable to contribute.

And to the adults and organisations making decisions about our community; give young people opportunities, trust us with responsibility, listen to us and allow us to lead. Last year, I wrote about being invited to the table and asked to help shape it. Today, I have a greater responsibility to make sure that the table is open to others, too.

Because the real measure of success will not be whether I have a place in the room. It will be whether I have helped more young people get into the room, influence what happens there, and leave the door open for those who come after us.



The Lower Edmonton South Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board, including chair Vivienne Aiyela (seventh from left) and Kate Osamor MP (ninth from left) **Credit** Ash Emritte

How Edmonton's future will be shaped by residents

Kate Osamor MP and Lower Edmonton South Pride in Place Neighbourhood Board chair Vivienne Aiyela speak to fellow board member Jim Wasswa about their hopes for the project

The government's Pride in Place Programme will see up to £5billion given to nearly 250 areas across the UK. Each area will receive up to £20million of funding and support over the next ten years – to make long-term improvements that residents want.

Lower Edmonton is one of those areas. For an area facing significant deprivation, this represents a major opportunity. But for Kate Osamor MP and neighbourhood board chair Vivienne Aiyela, the programme's success will depend on whether local people have the power to shape what happens next.

Both believe Edmonton is too often defined by its challenges, while the strengths of its community are overlooked. "What makes Edmonton special is its people," says Kate, the MP for Edmonton and Winchmore Hill. "We are fortunate to have a diverse community, a strong network of local organisations and a real culture of people looking out for one another."

Vivienne, who has lived in Edmonton for more than 30 years, shares that pride. "What makes me proudest is the people. Their generosity, creativity, enterprise and determination to support one another."

For Vivienne, those relationships are the starting point for change. The task is not to arrive with a ready-made plan, but to build on what already exists and understand what residents want for their neighbourhood.

Putting residents in the driving seat

Pride in Place offers the opportunity to do things differently. Rather than the government, the council or the board deciding what Edmonton needs, residents will help establish the priorities for investment. "Putting local people in the driving seat means recognising that residents are the experts in their own community," says Kate. "The board's role is not to tell people what Edmonton needs, but to create the opportunities for local people to shape the priorities for this investment."

That commitment brings responsibilities. Community-led cannot simply mean asking residents for their opinions and then carrying on as before.

Vivienne believes people must be involved before priorities are settled, given clear information and supported to influence difficult choices. The board will explain its decisions publicly and be honest when an idea cannot be taken forward. "Listening creates a responsibility to respond," she says.

For Vivienne, that requires meeting people where they are. Through conversations, community events, accessible venues, face-to-face and paper-based opportunities, as well as digital engagement. Nobody should need to feel confident speaking in a formal meeting to have a say in Edmonton's future.

> *"We are putting local people in the driving seat"*

More than buildings and streets

So what might Pride in Place achieve? Vivienne hopes residents will see lively community spaces, stronger local businesses and attractive, well-maintained areas. She wants young people to have opportunities to progress, older residents to have welcoming places to go, and disabled people to find local spaces easier to use.

But she also warns against assuming that physical improvements alone will transform a community. "A building achieves very little if nobody can afford to use it or there is no support for activities inside it," she says.

Investment should strengthen the organisations, relationships and activities that bring people together. It could also create opportunities for local people through training, employment, apprenticeships, enterprise and community leadership.

Kate hopes the £20m will act as a catalyst, bringing businesses, charities, public services and other partners together around priorities identified by residents. Her role as MP is to champion Lower Edmonton, build partnerships and open doors that help turn local ambitions into action. Vivienne's responsibility as chair is to build an effective team, maintain momentum and ensure community leadership is reflected in decisions.

Neither believes one organisation or one project can transform Edmonton alone.

Earning trust over ten years

Both Kate and Vivienne recognise that residents may be sceptical. Previous initiatives have come and gone, and promises of change do not automatically create confidence.

Vivienne says residents do not have to feel positive about Pride in Place for their views to matter. The board needs to hear criticism, acknowledge delays, explain decisions and follow through on commitments. Kate agrees that the biggest mistake would be deciding the answers before properly listening to the community.

Ultimately, the test of Pride in Place will be whether residents can recognise their own priorities in the changes around them — and feel they have a lasting stake in what happens next.

Kate's ambition is simple. Ten years from now, residents can look back and say, "we asked for this, and it was delivered". Vivienne puts it equally powerfully: "We helped make that happen — and we are still involved in what comes next."

That is the promise of Pride in Place. Not change done to Edmonton, but a future shaped with the people who call it home.

For more information about Lower Edmonton South Pride In Place Neighbourhood Board:
Email hello@loweredmontonprideinplace.co.uk
Website loweredmontonprideinplace.co.uk

To find out about the Pride In Place programme:
Visit gov.uk/government/news/what-is-pride-in-place

Nearly 6,000 homes with planning permission remain unbuilt



The plans for 100 homes in Moorfield Road **Credit** HTA Design LLP

New analysis reveals the full scale of stalled housebuilding across the borough

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

More than 5,700 homes that have planning permission remain unbuilt across Enfield borough – enough to meet the borough's annual housing target four times over.

Delays with Enfield Council's flagship housing development, Meridian Water in Edmonton, have been well documented, with 3,025 homes there having planning permission without getting started. Several other major housing schemes also remain unbuilt, however, with work yet to start on a further 2,535 homes.

When small sites with permission are also added to the equation, it means there are 5,710 homes in total awaiting construction across Enfield.

This figure doesn't include various estate redevelopments being led by the council – such as Joyce and Snells – where work is underway, nor schemes that were only approved in the past year. Also omitted are schemes where permission has lapsed – such as Colosseum Retail Park.

The borough's annual housebuilding target, as set by the London Plan, is 1,246. However, this has never come close to being met, with 260 new homes completed last year – just 21% of the target. Since the current London Plan came into force, the highest housebuilding total reached in Enfield was 740, in 2024/25, representing 59% of the target.

But the council's consistent failure to meet its London Plan target comes amid long delays to several major schemes across the borough.

Construction yet to start

The single biggest privately-led development site with permission is Edmonton Green Shopping Centre. Crosstree Real Estate Partners, which bought the site for £72million in 2018, won permission in 2022 for 1,438 new homes.

The development is designed to regenerate the town centre and would see the existing 1960s-era shopping mall knocked down and replaced. The last significant update on the scheme's progress came in March 2024, when Crosstree confirmed it would be adding second staircases to the tall buildings included in its plans.

Crosstree has not responded to a request for comment from the *Dispatch*.

Further south along Fore Street, a 100% affordable housing scheme in Angel Edmonton was approved by councillors at the fourth time of asking in 2023.

Developer Social Capital Partners won permission to demolish The Gilpin's Bell Pub and build 110 social-rent homes plus commercial space that could be used to provide a replacement public house. But there's still no sign of any construction work starting, and the pub continues to trade.

Plans by the same developer for another 100% affordable development in Enfield Highway won permission in 2024. It is set to provide 100 homes for social rent in Moorfield Road. But two years later, construction hasn't begun.

Invited to comment, Shane O'Neill, principal of Social Capital Partners, said: "We remain wholly committed to bringing these developments forward and firmly believe they represent an important opportunity for Enfield to address its housing challenges.

"With the continued support of the Greater London Authority, we remain confident in the merits of both schemes and look forward to working constructively with all stakeholders to translate this shared ambition into much-needed homes.

"Our commitment to these developments has not diminished, and we remain ready to progress them as soon as the necessary arrangements are in place."

Another Enfield Highway site, where The Black Horse Pub once stood in Hertford Road, won permission in 2024 for 38 new flats. But the site remains vacant, as it has done for nearly a decade. According to Companies House, developer White Gold Properties entered administration in August.

At another former pub site, The Cart Overthrown in Edmonton, plans for 61 homes were first approved on appeal in 2022, before bring amended in 2025 to reduce their scale. Developer Ercan Ucur could not be reached for comment.

In Windmill Hill, near Enfield Chase Station, Windmill Hill Properties won permission on appeal five years ago to build 49 homes, but work has yet to begin. According to its website, the site is now being developed by RGK Properties, but the company did not respond to a request for comment.

A modular housing scheme in Bullsmoor also remains unbuilt, despite obtaining permission in 2023. Developer Zed Pods had planned 29 "factory built" homes in Bullsmoor Lane, at the junction with the A10. The company did not respond to a request for comment.

Last year the council agreed to purchase a site in Clay Hill where 58 affordable homes are planned to be built. The proposed development on a former aquatic plants supplier in Strayfield Road won approval three years ago. Another council-owned site is due to see up to 120 new homes added to Exeter Road Estate. Permission was won back in 2022, and revised in 2025, but work has yet to begin.



The plans for 373 homes next to Cockfosters Station **Credit** Places for London

A revised scheme by Places for London – Transport for London's development arm – to build 373 homes on the car parks at Cockfosters Station was given the go-ahead in February, four years after the original plans for 351 homes were approved.

The same developer admitted earlier this year that another stalled housing scheme next to Arnos Grove Station was still a long way from construction. Plans for 162 homes were approved on appeal in 2022, and later amended in 2024, but a spokesperson said "changing market conditions" meant there was still no construction timeline.

Regarding the Cockfosters scheme, a spokesperson said: "Currently the site for our Cockfosters development is being used by colleagues at Transport for London as part of the programme to deliver the new Piccadilly line trains, however, we are looking forward to starting on site in late 2027 and hope to complete the delivery of these vital homes in 2031."

Enfield Council was invited to comment and explain what progress it had made with the Clay Hill and Exeter Road schemes, as well as the overall difficulties it faces with meeting housing targets as private developers fail to deliver on other consented schemes. However, no response was received before the *Dispatch* went to print.

Regarding small sites, of 20 homes or fewer, the council last month agreed a new strategy which aims to "support schemes that have the potential to make an immediate contribution to housing supply, recognising that securing delivery on consented sites can often bring forward new homes more quickly than progressing entirely new planning applications".



The plans for Edmonton Green **Credit** Crosstree Real Estate Partners

Developments ditched

Meanwhile, in the past couple of years, four major housing schemes in the borough have been ditched entirely.

At Colosseum Retail Park in Southbury, Neat Developments had won approval for 1,800 homes in 2020, but the planning permission expired in 2024. The same developer has since submitted plans for 1,150 homes at Southbury Leisure Park, on the opposite side of the A10, where Cineworld Cinema would be demolished.

In Brimsdown, developer Stonegate Homes won permission in 2021 for a 148-home scheme in Green Street, before plans were amended in 2023, and finally ditched in 2025.

At Southgate Office Village, plans by Viewpoint Estates to build 216 homes were granted permission on appeal in 2021, but were cancelled last year in favour of an alternative proposal to convert existing offices into flats.

And in New Southgate, City and Suburban Homes won permission to build 182 homes on a former gasholder site in Station Road near the North Circular, but it was confirmed in 2025 the plans had been axed.

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Illegal parking by parents 'dangerous'



Cars parked on the pavement outside Wren Academy

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

CCTV will be installed outside two Enfield schools to help combat the "parking behaviour" of parents – amid local concerns over illegally-parked cars creating a "dangerous" environment for children.

The pledge from enforcement firm Parking Control Management (PCM) came after a recent visit by the *Dispatch* to Hunters Way, the road which runs between One Degree Academy and Wren Academy, two newly-built primary and secondary schools situated on land previously occupied by the former Chase Farm Hospital buildings.

As parents arrived in their cars for the school pick-up one Friday last month – including many in SUVs – it became clear that illegal parking was widespread and was not being enforced. Over a period of just half-an-hour, scores of vehicles parked on double-yellow lines and pavement kerbs to collect their children.

At any one time, up to 30 vehicles were parked illegally along a single stretch of Hunters Way. It meant pupils were forced to squeeze between cars where little room had been left for them to safely pass – or get a clear sight of incoming traffic before crossing the road.

There was no sign of any enforcement taking place.

One concerned resident, who did not want to be named, said: "It is dangerous. Because you have got people driving from both sides, kids crossing the road, it is chaos. It is manic and no-one is policing it."

Parents also regularly park or otherwise obstruct designated spaces for residents on the nearby housing estate – sometimes leading to verbal and even physical confrontations.

Neither school has a designated drop-off area for children arriving by car, but two bus routes also pass along Hunters Way, and while the *Dispatch* was in the area one double-decker bus was held up as the road had become blocked.

Because the local roads have not yet been 'adopted' by Enfield Council, enforcement remains the responsibility of property firm Trinity Estates, which in turn uses a contractor, PCM.

A spokesperson for PCM said: "We recognise concerns regarding parking behaviour around the schools during busy drop-off and pick-up periods.

"Patrol officers have been monitoring and enforcing the parking controls on Hunters Way for some time, but school-run parking can be particularly challenging to manage on foot due to the volume of vehicles arriving and leaving over a short period.

"To address this, CCTV is being installed next week and will support more consistent enforcement throughout the day, including during peak drop-off and pick-up periods. Drivers parking in breach of the restrictions will receive a parking charge notice.

"We are also supporting the schools in reminding parents and visitors of the restrictions [...] our aim is to help ensure safe and unobstructed access for everyone using the area."

A council spokesperson added: "The council is currently working on road safety plans that can be implemented in the future and council enforcement activity can begin as soon as the roads are adopted. In the meantime, the council urges people to park safely to avoid endangering others."

Foodbank's van stolen

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

An Enfield foodbank is appealing for donations to help replace a van that was stolen last month.

The vehicle belongs to Cooking Champions, which supports vulnerable people in the borough with freshly-cooked meals from its base in Ponders End, but was stolen from outside the home of founder Clare Donovan on Tuesday, 13th October, during daylight hours.

An online appeal aims to raise £6,000 to "bridge the gap" between the charity's insurance and the cost of a replacement van, as well as a temporary vehicle to rent and to replace lost cooking equipment.

Clare told the *Dispatch*: "The response has been amazing. "Thank you to everyone who has messaged, it is really heart-warming during a really stressful time to have so many people reach out."

The vehicle was last seen by Clare in John Gooch Drive, in the Gordon Hill area of Enfield, at around 7.45am on Tuesday 13th. She discovered it was missing at 4pm. As well as the van, there was catering equipment stolen – which may have been dumped by the thieves afterwards.

Clare said that the van is clearly marked with 'Cooking Champions' and that it would have been obvious to the thieves that it was owned by the charity.

Anyone with information on the theft should contact police on 101, quoting crime reference *01/8181250/26*.

Clare added: "Not having the van severely limits what we can do. There was a report the cooking equipment was dumped – large catering pots and pans which we use to cook our lunches."

Cooking Champions was founded by Clare in 2020, during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, and has helped thousands of people since then. Last year alone, the charity welcomed more than 600 visitors, provided 12,744 food parcels, and cooked 7,128 meals.

Donate to the fundraising appeal:

Visit peoplesfundraising.com/fundraising/help-cooking-champions-replace-stolen-van



The Cooking Champions van pictured before it was stolen

Growth plan launched

Enfield Council has launched an economic growth plan that it claims marks a "major new approach to boost jobs, skills, business growth and investment" across the borough.

The Enfield Economic Growth Plan 2040, snappily titled *Enfield Delivers*, sets out an ambitious aim for Enfield to become, by 2040, "London's leading industrial and entrepreneurial borough, harnessing its strategic location and regional growth opportunities, industrial past and present, unique green assets and dynamic communities to drive growth and prosperity".

The plan highlights the borough's economic strengths, with "many of the ingredients needed for success" such as having the fourth-largest amount of industrial land of any London borough and around 14,000 businesses – with most being small-to-medium enterprises – as well as boasting a "young, diverse and entrepreneurial population".

However, rising unemployment represents one of the borough's toughest economic challenges, with Enfield's above-average rate rising from 4.4% at the start of 2025 to 7% by 2026, according to the latest data from Trust for London. It means Enfield has the joint fifth-highest unemployment in London.

Recent setbacks have included the decision by Greggs last month to close its Brimsdown factory where 181 people are currently employed – *read more on page 14.*

The borough's new economic growth plan is built around three priorities: building a productive and resilient economy; creating thriving places; and developing a skilled and work-ready population.

It also identifies four key growth sectors where Enfield has a competitive advantage and strong future potential: future-facing manufacturing; construction and net zero; logistics and wholesale and creative industries.

It's hoped that Enfield's major regeneration programmes, town centre investment and improvements to transport, digital and energy infrastructure will also help unlock future growth and create opportunities across the borough.

Council leader Alessandro Georgiou said: "Through this plan, we are setting out a clear plan to attract investment, create better jobs, support local businesses and help residents gain the skills they need to succeed.

"Most importantly, it is about delivery. This is our commitment to building a stronger economy and a brighter future for our borough."

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Divisive politics won't help Enfield residents

Labour's Ponders End councillor Niamh O'Brien criticises the approach taken so far by the new Conservative administration at Enfield Civic Centre

People deserve a stake in their own communities, a voice in decisions that affect them.

For me, being a local councillor means helping them to do that – working with residents, fighting alongside them for the issues that they care about.

Whether it's attending estate walkabouts, helping residents with casework, or sitting on big council committees, I am proud to show up for residents and to fight for Ponders End.

Since the election I've been working with residents on tackling a whole range of issues, including dangerous driving in Nags Head Road, antisocial behaviour in Ponders End Park, and securing resident parking in the Electric Quarter.

Ponders End is also home to a huge regeneration project, and I'm working with residents to ensure that everyone benefits.

This is why I wanted to be a local councillor; to do some good and make my home town an even better place to grow up.



Niamh O'Brien was elected to represent Ponders End in May **Credit** Enfield Council

I think we all know that in politics, and in life, we can't always see eye-to-eye. When I'm out and about in Enfield – meeting community groups, local businesses, school leaders, faith communities – I know that we won't always agree with our neighbours on everything.

But if my time as a councillor so far has taught me anything, it's that even when we disagree, we mostly all want the same thing – the best for each other, and the best for Enfield.

That's the Enfield I love.

But it's not the spirit that I see reflected in how this Conservative administration speaks about our home, or how they speak about the difficult business of running a council.

Complicated, sensitive decisions around school closures affecting parents of Send [special educational needs] children? These were announced by the leader via TikTok and couched in political spin, denying headteachers the chance to speak to families themselves.

"Even when we disagree, we mostly all want the same thing – the best for each other and for Enfield"

The administration's own apparent miscommunication around new police hubs? An opportunity to call other local councillors "nasty" and "useless". Councillors asking legitimate questions about potential cuts to local services? All "communists", of course.

The list goes on.

But while the leader of the council is busy firing gutter-press pot shots, divvying out blame for the mistakes he's not even made yet, residents are left wondering: does this administration actually care about the people its choices impact?

Our neighbours in Enfield don't want divisive politics.

When I meet residents on the doorstep, at surgeries or my ward forum, they don't want to talk about petty blame games played out in Facebook comments. They tell me they want families in Enfield to have somewhere secure to call home, clean parks to play in, great schools and local leisure centres. These are the priorities for people in Enfield.

Instead, this administration is too busy assigning blame to seek solutions. The politics of division says 'them, not me'. It is more worried about distractions than decisions. It makes us more polarised, more suspicious of each other, and it certainly doesn't deliver anything concrete or helpful for our communities.

So, if the Tory administration wants to play at divisive politics that's their prerogative – but that's not why I ran to be a local councillor.

And let's be frank: it's the reason no-one trusts politicians.

Labour councillor Niamh O'Brien was elected in May to represent Ponders End, alongside Aziz Yildiz of the Green Party. Ward residents can get in touch:

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Economic growth plan is welcome

Dear Enfield Dispatch

I am writing to once again cross the aisle and praise a policy enacted by Enfield's new minority Conservative administration, namely the *Enfield Delivers* economic growth plan that seeks to re-ignite the entrepreneurial council mindset which drove my own actions when I had the honour of exercising cabinet regeneration responsibilities between 2014 and 2018 – a growth dynamic that sadly went missing during the barren business illiteracy years of Caliskan-Erbil [former Labour council leaders Nesil Caliskan and Ergin Erbil].

I'd probably try to wangle higher tax receipts out of companies than [current leader] Alex Georgiou would, but otherwise I totally support the proactive approach that he and [deputy leader] Mike Rye are taking in terms of both leveraging Enfield's current comparative advantages while also fostering new, higher value-added specialisations.

I have one piece of friendly advice to Alex (which he probably already knows) which is that intensive place marketing is super helpful in attracting inwards investment, including foreign direct investment. Asides from that, well done! It's reassuring to see politicians once again paying attention to our borough's economic future.

Alan Sitkin
Former Labour cabinet member

Town revamp must not be car-centric

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Angela Evangelou [*Get revamp right*, Issue 97] seeks a practical revamp for Enfield Town, which is a traffic-through route as well as a business/leisure destination, a typically unhappy mix.

Public space is finite and much is already given over to roads and parking. Both are under pressure as demand rises and vehicles grow larger. Congestion follows, damaging productivity and potentially bringing health problems.

Knowing what a revamp seeks to achieve, the sustainable travel hierarchy can then be applied. This is in place via planning law, transport legislation and national policy frameworks, so no wheels need to be reinvented.

Unexpected consequences must also be assessed; taking the quieter neighbourhood in Palmers Green, an expectation of world-ending congestion conversely saw local businesses and residents repeatedly calling for action to slow traffic down on the boundary roads – two vehicles even recently driving into shop windows.

Congestion, had it been a consequence, would solve that issue.

Karl Brown
Palmers Green

Knit in November

Dear Enfield Dispatch

Could you knit or crochet a little hope this festive season for people affected by bowel cancer?

Bowel Cancer UK is inviting stitchers to get sponsored to knit or crochet a star a day or do your own thing, every day in November. You can attempt our star, knit a Christmas jumper, crochet tea cosies, sew a special 'Star of Hope' symbol or anything in between! If you can't stitch every day, then you can choose a challenge that suits you.

Your donations could help save lives through earlier diagnosis, improve the quality of life of those affected by the disease and bring us one step closer to a future where nobody dies from bowel cancer.

Sign up today and receive your free online welcome pack including your knitting and crochet patterns. Just visit our website at *bowelcanceruk.org.uk/knitting*.

Genevieve Edwards
Chief executive, Bowel Cancer UK

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AROUND THE BOROUGH

ARNOS GROVE

River reconfiguration plans axed



Pymmes Brook in Arnos Park

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Enfield Council's Conservative administration has axed previous plans by Labour to reconfigure the course of Pymmes Brook through Arnos Park.

The contentious scheme would have seen the "polluted" river released from its concrete channel and meandered to make it more "natural". The goal was to reduce flooding downstream and improve water quality.

However, members of the Friends of Arnos Park and the Arnos Park Preservation Society objected to the plans, with several hundred residents signing a petition against it. A member of both groups, Matthew Pierce, claimed last year the scheme would "split the park into two".

Arnos Grove is represented by two Conservative councillors, including Paul Pratt, who argued strongly against the proposal.

Welcoming the recent decision of the minority Tory administration, which took power in May, Cllr Pratt said: "I, like many park users, was not convinced about the justification for this scheme.

"Most concerning for me was how a new river would be maintained. What I was told by council officers was that volunteers would be relied upon for this, which is totally unacceptable, especially because other schemes in the borough have failed due to lack of maintenance."

The Arnos Grove councillor added: "This is not only a victory for residents, who organised and petitioned against the scheme, but also for common sense."

However, the news comes as a setback for local environmental campaigners such as those from Pymmes Brookers, which campaigns for improvements to the heavily polluted river. Writing for the *Dispatch* two years ago, the group had endorsed the council's plans for Arnos Park and said it would have allowed the river to "flow" more naturally and provide habitats for invertebrates which "are crucial to the food web".

Edward Smith, the council's cabinet member for council assets and culture, said: "The proposal was originally initiated to look at flood risks and improve the natural environment. However, we want to proceed with a plan that ensures residents are happy with their green spaces.

"We will continue to explore alternative options with our partners and work towards making the borough flood-resilient, protecting habitats for wildlife and creating parks that are more enjoyable for visitors."

COCKFOSTERS

Wildlife rescue charity launches appeal

A long-running wildlife rescue charity in Trent Park is appealing for help raising £40,000 as it struggles to cover its costs.

Wildlife Rescue and Animal Service (WRAS) has been caring for sick, injured and orphaned animals – ranging from herons and owls to foxes, hedgehogs and deer – for more than four decades.

But thanks to rising costs and declining visitors, the charity is currently losing thousands of pounds per month and may not be able to continue beyond next spring if the situation doesn't significantly improve.

WRAS was founded in 1985 by Barry and June Smitherman, who still run it today with help from daughter Diane. Both Barry and June were made MBEs in 2005 for services to wildlife.

Barry told the *Dispatch*: "Everything has gone up in price; animal feed, rubbish removal, wages. We are getting fewer visitors as well, and the number of people giving donations has dropped.

"Each month the bank balance is dropping, so we need to act before it is too late."

The charity employs four staff in total. Barry says its now costs around £12,000 per month to keep the wildlife rescue centre running, but "our income is now only about half of that".

If the winter hits particularly hard, with poor weather leading to a further decline in visitors, the charity could run out of money by spring.

A Go Fund Me page launched last month has so far raised around £10,000 but much more is needed.

Barry said: "There is no way to reduce out costs, we can't lay off staff. The appeal is to build a nest egg and help us through the winter."

Donate to WRAS's fundraising appeal:
Visit gofundme.com/f/please-help-save-the-trent-park-animal-centre-95gyt



Squeaky the muntjac deer was rescued by the charity in 2018

WINCHMORE HILL

Library conversion plans

Plans have been submitted to convert a former library building into a children's nursery.

Little Learners Nurseries Ltd is applying to Enfield Council to repurpose Winchmore Hill Library into a "day nursery and early years childcare facility".

The building in Green Lanes is set to be sold by the council to Little Learners Nurseries, which is named in planning documents as the "preferred purchaser" for the site after it was put up for sale by the council earlier this year.

Winchmore Hill was one of seven libraries closed by the former Labour administration at Enfield Civic Centre in July 2025.

The plans recently submitted by Domenech Designs Ltd, on behalf of Little Learners Nurseries, state: "The proposal would respond to an identified local need for additional early years and childcare provision.

"The Enfield Council childcare sufficiency assessment identifies a shortfall in childcare places within the Winchmore Hill and Palmers Green areas. The proposed nursery would therefore contribute towards addressing an identified local demand for early years childcare provision and increase the availability of childcare places within an accessible local centre."

BRIMSDOWN

Greggs to close factory

Up to 181 jobs are at risk after Greggs announced it would be closing its bakery in Millmarsh Lane.

The Greggs bakery site is one of four factories across the UK that the popular high street chain – famed for its sausage rolls – is proposing to close, with a total loss of 740 jobs.

However, Greggs does have another site in Brimsdown, a distribution hub in Brancroft Way, which will remain open and could be used to relocate some staff.

A consultation process with affected colleagues and their union representatives is now taking place. Chief executive Roisin Currie said: "To continue building a successful business for the future, we must keep evolving alongside changing customer expectations. We want to ensure Greggs remains a strong, sustainable business for decades to come."



Greggs employs 181 people at the factory in Millmarsh Lane

Sarah Woolley, general secretary of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union, said: "Our immediate priority is our members, their jobs, their families and the communities that could be affected by these proposals."

HADLEY WOOD

Police officer stabbed

A man has been charged with stabbing a police officer who was taking part in a large-scale series of dawn raids targeting organised crime suspects.

Charles Charalambous, aged 56 and of Claremont Road, was charged with wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm (GBH) to resist arrest.

The victim was executing a warrant as part of a wider operation on Tuesday, 29th September, targeting a suspected organised crime group, when he was stabbed in the leg. He was taken to hospital and is expected to make a full recovery.

A total of 18 people were arrested as part of the operation. The offences for which they were arrested are complex in nature and require extensive investigative work and the detailed examination of evidence. All were bailed.

Published: 30th October 2026

Goods vehicle operator's licence

IK Haulier Ltd of 5 Evesham Way, Clayhall, IG5 0EQ is applying for a licence to use **Clasic Labour Services Ltd, 18–20 First Avenue, London, N18 3PH** as an operating centre for **1 goods vehicle and 1 trailer.**

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) 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 top of this notice.

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

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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: **20/11/2026.**

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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 not exceeding level five on the standard scale.

Dated: 23/10/2026

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Headlining this year's show is Aurie Styla

Ready to jingle

Simon Rothstein speaks to performers at Resistance Comedy's annual festive showcase of comic talent

A very special evening of laughter is coming to Dugdale Arts Centre this month when Resistance Comedy, Enfield's leading independent comedy company, hosts its annual *Jingle Bell Funny* event.

Headlining this year's Christmas show on Saturday, 21st November is award-winning comedian, actor and broadcaster Aurie Styla.

Winning fans around the country for his stand-up – which has been broadcast on the BBC, ITV and Comedy Central – Aurie says Christmas is his favourite time of the year.

"Christmas can be sincere, funny, a family tradition, a time to enjoy your favourite food, a chance to give and receive, a day to relax and lots more – whatever it feels like to you," Aurie tells me.

"I'm a Christian, so in my house, Christmas is mainly a celebration of the birth of Christ. In addition to that, it's nice to see families get together, people wrap up warm in big winter coats, hats and scarves, and just enjoy the season. All of this is so special to me."

Comedian Jason Patterson, winner of the Loaded Laftas Rising Star Award, is another top talent on the bill but has a slightly more cynical take on the festive season.

"I love that my birthday is three days after Christmas," says Jason. "Some people try and get out of buying me a birthday present, telling me 'well, this can be your Christmas and birthday present all in one'.

"Nah mate! Get a job and buy me two presents."

A South Londoner, Jason says the hardest thing about playing the Dugdale will be finding it.

London-born Aurie, meanwhile, knows Enfield well, joking: "It was initially full of Londoners that still want the London title to their location, but not the cost of living. So they moved to the outskirts.

"And now, it's full of people who regretted not just making a real location jump outside the M25, and heading to Hertfordshire, because that cost of living quickly followed them up to the EN postcode like the stink on a baby's unchanged nappy.

"Merry Christmas ya'll!"

The other acts on an eclectic bill include Junior Booker, Muhsin Yesilada, Chantel Nash, Josh Faulkner and Nicole Harris.

The evening's MC is Lateef Lovejoy, who has performed all across the world. He says fans are in for a treat as the festive event is a highlight of the year.

"The Dugdale is our home, Enfield is our family and this is our Christmas party," says Lateef.

"Our mission is to bring high-quality live stand-up to the area, showcasing established television names and international performers like Aurie alongside the next generation of comedy talent.

"It is going to be a very special Saturday night."

Resistance Comedy: Jingle Bell Funny **plays at the Dugdale Arts Centre in London Road on Saturday, 21st November from 8pm. For more information and to buy tickets for £19.50:**

Visit dugdaleartscentre.co.uk/whats-on

All aboard in Bowes

Sarah Richardson from New River Shanty Crew on the folk group's recent adventures

New River Shanty Crew meet weekly in Bowes Park to sing sea shanties under the direction of our 'skipper' Ailsa Mainwaring and 'first mate' Nick Siepmann.

Sea shanties were originally working songs for sailors enduring long weeks at sea. Some are fast and funny while others are slower and more reflective.

We have had several successful local gigs so far this year. We started with a standing-room only performance at Bowes Park Folk Club and were then welcomed at Muswell Hill Methodists' Church picnic and a 125th anniversary tea at Trinity-at-Bowes Methodists' Church.

This summer we went on tour for the first time, with festival bookings at 'Pirates in the Port' in Newport and the 'International Sea Shanty and Folk Music Festival' in Weston-Super-Mare.

In Newport, 20 of us opened the weekend at The Corn Exchange – a handsome, wood-panelled building formerly used for trade on the River Severn. We sang on a brightly-lit stage to a full house. A comic song, *The Wreck of the Nancy Lee*, went down particularly well. In the afternoon, we sang at Le Bar, a smaller venue, and stayed to listen to 'Odds and Sods' who were barefoot and sang Cornish independence songs. At Sips Café on Sunday, families stopped to listen on their way into the beautifully-restored wrought iron Victorian market hall.

Many of us signed up to sing again in sunny Weston-super-Mare. We appeared at the opening event following the festival organisers, 'The Steepholmers', at the Italian Gardens. Food stalls, pop-up bars and ice-cream vendors lined the square and gave it a real festival vibe.

On Saturday we performed to a friendly crowd at The Old Colonial, when the pub was decorated with pirate flags and bunting, and the MC dressed in a tricorn hat and tail-coat. After this, we packed into The Three Brass Monkeys, a lively bar near the town centre. On Sunday, after a walk on the pier, we had a great final performance in Brunello's Lounge. It was wonderful to look out and see people's smiling faces and children dancing.

We all enjoyed singing at these festivals. It's boosted our confidence, while spending more time together has been fun and also helped our performances. We are back in rehearsals now and look forward to our upcoming performances!

New River Shanty Crew rehearse on Thursday afternoons at Shaftesbury Hall in Herbert Road – new members are welcome. Their next performance is on Thursday, 10th December from 7.45pm at Bowes Park Folk Club, 143 Myddleton Road, Bowes Park N13 8NG. For more information:

Visit newrivershantycrew.co.uk



New River Shanty Crew on tour in Weston-super-Mare

Andrew Hull with Barney



Inspired by Whitewebbs

Andrew Hull has published a children's book based around pet pooch Barney and his walks across Whitewebbs

After thinking long and hard about getting a dog, Barney the springer spaniel joined me and my wife Jan – and our lives have changed dramatically. I now walk four to six miles a day!

Understanding Barney's behaviour is fascinating, amusing, and often shocking. I wondered what Barney would say if he could talk. I would have conversations with Jan pretending to be Barney, and it was then I decided to write a children's book based on our adventures.

I wanted the book to be humorous, with a few facts, and something children would enjoy. But as well as an editor, I also needed to find an illustrator.

I walk around Whitewebbs Park every day and often pop into the café for a coffee, where I bumped into Hajer Djoudi, who was just finishing her shift, carrying a large sketch pad. I asked what she had been doing, and Hajer showed me a drawing of a dog, which I instantly recognised from her drawing.

I asked Hajer if she would like to illustrate my book, *The Adventures of Lord Barney*. Fortunately, Hajer accepted! She has great talent and is often now commissioned to draw people's pets.

Thank heavens for people like Sean Wilkinson and the Guardians of Whitewebbs who have saved this great park. Barney loves the ancient woods.

We plan to do a series of books, and the second book has already been accepted by two publishing houses. *The Further Adventures of Lord Barney* will tell the story of his first Christmas and how Barney nearly drowned in the river at Whitewebbs Park, as well as meeting his new friends Ziggy and Milo. A third book will be about his first holiday in Devon.

To order a copy of *The Adventures of Lord Barney*:

Visit pegasuspublishers.com/book/the-adventures-of-lord-barney

The Poseidon food adventure


Swordfish with salsa verde

Neil Littman enjoys a seafood extravaganza at a new Southgate fish and pasta restaurant

Why are some restaurants not drawing in customers? The reason more often than not is location. Just being a bit off the beaten track can be an issue, although sometimes we also like the kudos of telling our friends about some 'out of the way' place we've discovered.

I remember reading a review a few years ago about a pop-up restaurant inside a shipping container in the middle of a trading estate in a dodgy part of North London. Unsurprisingly I never heard about it again.

I mention this because it was something that concerned me and a friend regarding Poseidon, a new seafood restaurant in Chase Side, Southgate, on a small shopping parade away from the main town centre.

On a first visit one evening midweek, we were the only diners there. But location aside, I think Poseidon is one of the best new places to eat in Enfield – if you like fish and pasta dishes with a Mediterranean twist.

It brought back memories of meals I have eaten on holiday in places like Madeira and Corfu, which I found encouraging. They stick to what they know and keep it simple, but do it well with nice touches, such as the Italian style salsa verde sauce that accompanies a generous piece of swordfish. Other plus points include not overcharging for drinks – £4.20 for a bottle of beer or £7 for a glass of wine.

The menu is interesting and concise; eight starters, several of which are vegetarian, plus ten fish dishes and eight pasta mains, half of which feature seafood.

For starters we ordered calamari (£7.90) coated with panko crumb which was crunchy, tender and succulent all at the same time, plus burrata cheese (£6.90) which arrived sitting on a pile of cherry tomatoes covered with a balsamic dressing.


Seabream with roasted veg

For mains, I ordered bluefin tuna steak with creamy mashed potato and roasted vegetables and my friend had sea bream (three fillets) with the same sides. Both mains were £18.50. We were too full for dessert! The bill was £63.40 plus service.


Lobster and prawn pasta

On a second visit with another friend, we ordered a couple of beers followed by a shared starter of 'smoky eggplant' usually known as baba ghanoush. I couldn't tell if the topping of walnuts, which added a rich crunchy texture, had been toasted as in some recipes, but otherwise it tasted good with a charred nutty flavour and was dressed in good olive oil.

To follow, I had lobster and prawn pasta with linguine in a herb cream sauce (there is a choice of three types of fresh pasta plus ravioli dishes) which I thought was exceptional and very good value at under £15. I have eaten similar dishes costing nearly twice that price elsewhere.


Calamari in panko crumb

My friend had the sea bass with roasted potatoes and vegetables and cleaned his plate in record time, depriving me of the chance to take a photo. The bill came to a grand total of £50.20, plus service.

I hope readers will seek Poseidon out – let me know what you think using the email below. Also, a belated thank you to Karl Brown for recommending Tandir, which featured in the August issue!

For more information about Poseidon Fish and Pasta including opening times:
Call 07949 750 308
Visit poseidonfishandpasta.com

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 16th November.

FIREWORKS

The Walker Ground Fireworks 2026
Saturday, 7th November, 5pm–10pm
The Walker Ground, 175 Waterfall Road, Southgate N14 7JZ

Join us for an explosive night at The Walker Ground, with a dazzling fireworks display you won't want to miss, plus a return of the drone show! With live entertainment, food and drinks.

Tickets £14 adults, £9.50 children up to 16
Visit eventbrite.co.uk

MEMORIAL

Remembrance Sunday
Sunday, 8th November, from 10am
Services in Southgate, Edmonton, Enfield

To mark this year's Remembrance Sunday, in Southgate a service at St Andrew's Church starts at 10am; in Edmonton a parade will arrive at Edmonton War Memorial for a service from 10.40am; and in Enfield Town a march to Enfield War Memorial arrives for a service at 3pm.

Collections by Royal British Legion
Visit enfield.gov.uk/news-and-events/2026/10/remembrance-sunday-commemorations-confirmed

FAIR

Enfield Volunteering Fair
Wed, 11th November, 10am–1.30pm
Dugdale Arts Centre, 39 London Road, Enfield Town EN2 6DS

Volunteer Centre Enfield invites you to their annual Enfield Volunteering Fair to find out how you could support your local community. The event provides an opportunity to speak to local organisations about the support they need and how you could help.

Free entry, no booking required
Visit volunteerenfield.org.uk

CONCERT

Enfield Choral Society's Autumn Concert
Saturday, 14th November, 7.30pm
Enfield Baptist Church, Cecil Road, Enfield Town EN2 6TG

Our autumn concert features performances of *Requiem* by Brahms, *Stabat Mater* by Schubert, and *Toward the Unknown Region* by Vaughan Williams.

Tickets £17 in advance, £20 on the door, £7 for under-25s in full-time education, free for accompanied under-16s
Call 07864 061 755
Visit enfieldchoralsociety.co.uk

MARKET

The Little Children's Market
Saturday 21st November, 10.30am–12pm
Enfield Grammar Upper School, Market Place, Enfield Town EN2 6LN

Come and grab yourself a bargain! Our baby and children 'nearly new' sales are big, family friendly events with thousands of pre-loved toys, clothes, books and equipment.

Entry is £2 per adult, children enter for free – all stalls are cash only
Visit thelittlechildrensmarket.com

JAZZ

An evening with English Jazz Orchestra
Wednesday, 25th November, 8pm
Dugdale Arts Centre, 39 London Road, Enfield Town EN2 6DS

Featuring all your swing-era favourites performed by a full-scale orchestra and talented vocalists. From the timeless sounds of Count Basie and Duke Ellington to the modern classics of Michael Bublé and the legendary vocals of Ella Fitzgerald.

Tickets £20 adults, £18 concessions
Visit dugdaleartscentre.co.uk/whats-on

EXHIBITION

***My Enfield* photography exhibition**
Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th November
Palace Gardens Shopping Centre, Enfield Town EN2 6SN

Shortlisted entries from The Enfield Society's photography competition *My Enfield* will be available to view.

Free entry
Visit enfieldsociety.org.uk/myenfield

COFFEE

SEN Coffee and Play Mornings
Every second Monday of the month, 9.45am–11.15am
Southbury Leisure Centre, 192 Southbury Road, Enfield EN1 1YP

A coffee morning for all parents and carers of neurodiverse children with additional needs.

Free, no booking required
Email info@senwithelena.co.uk

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

Visit enfielddispatch.co.uk

Spurs eye up historic buildings

Tottenham Hotspur entered into discussions with Enfield Council and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority over purchasing Whitewebbs House and Myddelton House respectively

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

Spurs made moves to buy two historic buildings in the vicinity of the club's Bulls Cross training base, emails seen by the *Dispatch* confirm.

Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (THFC) entered negotiations with Enfield Council about purchasing the freehold of locally-listed Whitewebbs House – currently occupied by Toby Carvery – between July 2024 and April 2025.

This move was followed a year later with an approach to Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA) over a possible purchase of Myddelton House, a Grade 2-listed Regency villa surrounded by award-winning gardens – designed by renowned horticulturalist Edward Augustus Bowles – which is one of Enfield's top visitor attractions.

While emails obtained under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act confirmed that discussions took place with THFC regarding both properties, these moves were ultimately unsuccessful and both the council and LVRPA told the *Dispatch* they were not considering the sale of either building.

It remains unclear why THFC would want to acquire the buildings.

It comes as the Premier League club remains in a protracted legal battle with the council over the future of Whitewebbs Park, after a judge recently quashed the previous Labour administration's decision to grant planning permission for a women's training centre.

THFC is now applying to appeal this verdict – and the club's chief executive said last month the plans remained "unchanged" despite the judicial review verdict. The club had previously struck a deal with the council to take control of around half of the park on a 25-year lease, worth £2million in total, which was dependent on planning permission being obtained.

But the emails seen by the *Dispatch* show that less than a day after Labour councillors voted to approve the Whitewebbs Park plans, in February 2025, an unknown person at THFC sent an email to senior people at the council asking for an update on an offer for Whitewebbs House made in July 2024. The email stated the offer was "at valuation level" but that Spurs had received "no response since".

Later emails, in April 2025, show James Raven, the council's then-director of property, responded positively to enquiries from THFC and suggested they arrange "a time after Easter to meet up". He also wrote: "Last place we left the Toby Carvery building was that you were going to ask the valuers to end a vacant possession value to their report. That was going to guide us on a potential marriage value between that and the valuation already provided."

It was around this time that Mitchells and Butlers, the owner of Toby Carvery, cut down an ancient oak tree near Whitewebbs House without the council's permission, sparking a controversy that ended a year later with an out-of-court settlement. The Whitewebbs oak felling is mentioned briefly in an email from THFC to Raven, as something they had "heard about".

These conversations took place under the previous Labour administration, which was ousted from Enfield Civic Centre in May following the local election, after which the Conservatives took minority control.

Responding to revelations about Whitewebbs House, a council spokesperson said: "Discussions took place between Enfield's previous administration and Tottenham Hotspur in 2025. Since the change of administration in May 2026, no proposals have been presented to the cabinet, and no proposals are currently under consideration."

Further emails show THFC made a move earlier this year to buy Myddelton House, as part of a larger deal to acquire the freehold for the existing Tottenham Hotspur Training Centre from LVRPA. However, LVRPA did not go as far as the council in negotiating a price for its own historic property, with an unknown official writing in one email to a colleague on 7th May: "Please note that in the context of our wider business the disposal of Myddelton House is not a priority currently. I just don't want you at this stage to build expectations at THFC."

A month earlier, a meeting took place between THFC and LVRPA, at which Spurs set out that "any freehold sale" of the training centre would "have to include Myddelton House and the gardens" with "the upkeep and liability passing on to the club to maintain and keep open to the public as and when required".

An LVRPA spokesperson said: "Lee Valley Regional Park Authority is not considering the sale of Myddelton House or its gardens."

Caroline Day, a campaigner with the Guardians of Whitewebbs who obtained the Spurs emails, told the *Dispatch*: "These documents illustrate that Spurs is interested in acquiring as much property as possible in the Whitewebbs/Bulls Cross area, including valued heritage assets, and their development ambitions don't end with taking Whitewebbs Park away from the public for their own private gain."

THFC declined to comment.



Myddelton House is the HQ for Lee Valley Regional Park Authority



Construction of 274 'affordable' homes at Meridian Two is due to be completed early next year

New homes on sale at Meridian Water

BY JAMES CRACKNELL

New homes on the second phase of development at Meridian Water have been put up for sale – even while some properties on the first phase remained unsold after four years.

Construction of 274 homes at Meridian Two – designated as 'affordable' housing and located in Leeside Drive to the south of the former Ikea store – is due to finish "in early 2027".

Ahead of the high-rise scheme's completion, Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing (MTVH) has begun promoting the sales of shared ownership homes at the site, under its brand SO Resi, described as a "collection" of "contemporary one, two and three-bedroom apartments".

A 25% share of a one-bedroom apartment is available for £91,250 – meaning these flats are valued by MTVH at £365,000.

Across Enfield borough as a whole the average price of a one-bed flat is currently around £271,000 – meaning the new-build flats at Meridian Two are being marketed at nearly £100,000 above the average local value for similar-size homes.

Sarah Ellis, director of sales and marketing at MTVH, said: "We're committed to helping more people overcome the barriers to home ownership and access high-quality homes in places where they can build their future.

"As one of London's most ambitious regeneration projects, Meridian Water is transforming this part of Enfield into a vibrant new neighbourhood, with thousands of new homes, green spaces, amenities, jobs and excellent transport connections."

The move to promote new homes at Meridian Two comes despite some homes at Meridian One remaining unsold more than four years after they were first put on the market.

In terms of the private sales at Meridian One, last month developer Countryside Homes (now part of Vistry) was still marketing the "last remaining" property at a £20,000 discount from the original price, with the two-bed flat being marketed at £395,000 – around £19,000 above the average for a two-bed in Enfield.

There are an unknown number of shared ownership properties which remain unsold at Meridian One, with one two-bed currently being advertised at £140,000 for a 25% share, meaning the full price would be £560,000.

Earlier this year, the *Dispatch* revealed some Meridian Water homes were being marketed to overseas investors, breaking a promise made by former Labour council leader Nesil Caliskan in 2018.

The new Conservative administration at the council was approached for comment about the continuing slow sales of homes at Meridian One but did not provide a statement.

Backroom staff give balance for boss Billy

Andrew Warshaw speaks to the trio of coaches who have helped spur Enfield Town's push for promotion back to National League South



Coaches Charlie Gregory (left) and Spencer Harrison (right) either side of boss Billy Holland **Credit** Tom Scott

"We speak every day so that I can take their insight on board"

More often than not, behind every successful manager lies a high-quality backroom team.

Enfield Town boss Billy Holland may have put smiles back on the faces of Towners fans with the club riding high in the Isthmian Premier Division, but without his assistant Spencer Harrison and first-team coach Charlie Gregory, Billy admits the job would be considerably harder.

All three worked together at Waltham Abbey before making the move to Town. Spencer and Charlie are two extra pairs of ears and eyes, and Billy can't speak highly enough of them.

"I've worked with Spencer for seven years," said Billy, who used to play in the same team as his number two. "He's a very bubbly character and says things as he sees them.

"Charlie has been with me for three seasons, loves to put the work in on the training pitch, and wants the same back from the players. They're both invaluable."

While managers invariably get the credit when things are going right, Billy – whose football brain and style of play have been embraced by Town fans as the club chases promotion – is humble enough to give credit to his staff.

Spreading the load around may not work at some clubs but it certainly does under Town's current management setup.

Billy told the *Dispatch*: "Charlie is the more serious, technical one and sees every detail, whether in training or in matches, like the players' positioning on the pitch and the opposition's strengths and weaknesses.

"Spencer is more of an emotional type and helps, for instance, with who may or may not be a good fit in the changing room or which player isn't doing the business for whatever reason.

"He likes to have a laugh and lightens the mood. I can't work to my full capacity without the pair of them."

Trust is all-important. "As people as much as football people," Billy explained. "That's so important. We speak every day so that I can take their insight on board. Do we occasionally disagree? Of course. Sometimes I have to go with my gut feeling but it's all about the end goal. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't."

The mutual respect works both ways. "I would trust Billy with my life," Spencer told the *Dispatch*. "When we played together, we would call each other every name under the sun but purely from wanting to win. We became huge mates. He knows he gets a straight answer from me about anything, without any sugar coating. With some managers, stubbornness is their downfall but Billy is a great listener and, excuse the pun, is no Billy big boots.

"None of us are scared of saying something that might upset the other. Billy obviously makes the big decisions but not a day goes by without us speaking. Every player we sign we have an in-depth conversation. I love being the go-between."

If Spencer is the 'ying', Charlie – obsessed with the coaching side and improving players' ability – in a way represents the 'yang' in the management team.

Explaining why the chemistry works so well, he told the *Dispatch*: "There are obvious similarities in how we want to play, but also diversity of ideas. It can help when not everyone is nodding their head in agreement.

"You get different perspectives and makes you question what you're thinking."

But all, it seems, in the spirit of teamwork and getting the best out of the players. "Everything at this level has pros and cons and it's about finding the right balance," Charlie continued.

"We've grown as a management team, learning about each other. It's a collective. We're just trying to improve every week and every season.

"Three heads doesn't always work. You have to be open-minded and be able to communicate with each other and speak your mind.

"You have to be able to accept other peoples' opinions, otherwise there's no point in having three minds. It's my fourth year working with Bill. At the end of the day, me and Spencer know he's the gaffer. Maybe that's another reason it works so well."

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