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Local news that matters to you

Haringey initiative pushes for answers

Local community organisation demands inquiry into UK BAME COVID-19 deaths



Yvonne Field, Ubele Initiative Credit Giya Makondo-Wills

By Luchia Robinson

Community organisation, Ubele Initiative is seeking answers from the government by demanding an independent, public inquiry into the disproportionate UK BAME deaths from COVID-19.

The African Diaspora led social enterprise, based in Wolves Lane, Wood Green, has written an open letter to the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson calling for an inquiry.

The letter, which has more than 400 signatures, followed on from a petition: BAME communities and the impact of COVID-19, which was started in April, amassing over 5,000 signatories. Both calls to action were led by Tottenham resident, Yvonne Field, Managing Director of The Ubele Initiative.

The open letter demands transparency by requesting that the following be explored: the cultural and systematic treatment of BAME staff by their employers; the level of exposure NHS staff and key workers across the care (public and private sectors) had to COVID-19; the government's level of preparedness in factoring the needs and requirements of BAME communities in line with Public Sector Equalities Duty; the impact of social distancing measures on BAME communities, and the examination of levels of funding and social investment in local authority areas where COVID-19 BAME deaths have been disproportionate.

Although making up only 14% of the population, recent evidence from the Intensive Care National Audit and Research Centre reveals BAME communities made up 34% of those critically ill with confirmed COVID-19 in the UK. Ethnic minority communities are particularly overrepresented in the health and transport sectors, with these frontline workers having increased risk of exposure to the virus.

Yvonne said: "We feel the govern-

ment needs to be held to account. This is an almighty mess where nearly 40,000 people have lost their lives, and we felt that we needed to really make a statement.

"We're trying to bury loved ones, but we can't. Loved ones are dying but we can't be there."

"It's just horrendous the whole situation, and the government comes on TV every day, talking about the numbers of the dead as if count-

"This is an almighty mess where nearly 40,000 people have lost their lives"

ing sheep. It feels like that there's a lack of emotional connection with the people. We're trying to raise community voices around this.

"Community confidence is low. BAME community confidence is particularly low."

The Ubele Initiative has started the Majonzi fund to raise £10,000 which will pay for BAME therapists and bereavement counsellors to support those affected. Donations will also fund memorial events so that people can have a way of remembering their lost loved ones once lockdown measures are fully eased.

Yvonne said: "At the moment communities are in real shock, they're trying to deal with living under lockdown, they're trying to put food on their tables, and they're trying to think about how they're going to educate their kids.

"There's a big mental health issue that's rising, and it will get even worse over the coming year once we've got some semblance of normality – but I don't know what

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WELCOME

Steadfast In Difficulties

June 2020
N°. 35

At Tottenham Community Press we believe that Tottenham deserves a newspaper that is written by and for local people, and which celebrates community in all its diversity.

We believe that local news brings people together around the issues that matter most to them and ensures everyone can have a voice in local decision-making. Now more than ever we believe that the media should be responsive and accountable to the community it serves

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Ducks in Lordship Rec Credit Julian Zerressen (Instagram @julianzerressen)

Left in limbo

The Liberal Democrats are calling for EU citizens to be given the automatic right to stay in the UK, as new official figures show 29,070 EU nationals living in Haringey have not been granted permanent Settled Status to remain in the UK.

Of the 57,140 EU nationals across Haringey who have applied for perm-

anent residency, only 27,400 have been granted settled status.

5,540 EU nationals living in Haringey have applied to the Home Office scheme but are still waiting for a final decision to be made. Another 23,530 have been given only temporary Pre-Settled Status, meaning they will have to reapply within five

years or be forced to leave the UK.

Although the Home Office has announced a one-year visa extensions for certain health and care staff, the Liberal Democrats have secured cross-party support for their campaign to give all health and social care workers on the frontline of this crisis indefinite leave to remain.

Cllr Nick da Costa, Haringey Liberal Democrat spokesperson on Brexit, said: "Too many EU nationals in Haringey are deeply anxious about their right to stay. With the uncertainty of Brexit, it's disgraceful to leave them in legal limbo like this."

"Families and children must not be made to live under a cloud of uncertainty any longer."

An introduction from the editor of TCP

Hello, welcome to issue 35. We head into June, another month of living life amidst the coronavirus health pandemic.

The harsh effects of the virus are evident, with many communities affected and lives lost (front page), the financial cost of tackling COVID-19 felt by the Local Authority (p.4), and the surge in need, which local bikers Red Army Riding Club are

helping to address (p.6).

Nevertheless, steps are being taken to transition us out of the lockdown we've been living under, as central government begins to phase children back to school (p.3).

Whilst not being at school, student Dennis Delice gives us an insight into his perspective of the pandemic in his poem *Glimpse* (p.14), and we take a look back in time to a log book entry written in 1918

at the time of the previous global pandemic – 'Spanish Flu' (p.12).

I spoke to Niranjan Namatkar, the Artistic Director of LGBTQI+ charity, Wise Thoughts about how the lockdown period has led to new ways of working and celebrating Pride (p.7). Katy Newman shares how she's been looking after her mental health whilst being furloughed and Lloyd Gee a naturopath and herbalist, offers ways

in which we can boost our immune system whilst in this period of lockdown and beyond (p.15).

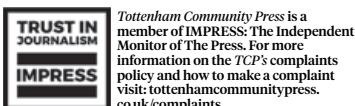
As always, we want to hear from you. What's your perspective of Tottenham? Tell us in words, photography and illustrations by getting in touch: tcp@socialspider.com

Luchia Robinson



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NEWS

Continued from Page-1
that's going to look like.”

Yvonne urges Tottenham residents to sign the letter and tell others about it, raising the issue with local councillors, whilst asking them to do the same. She also encourages the community to write to central government, telling the stories of what has happened to them in the pursuit of answers.

This demand for transparency from the Prime Minister has been supported by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan who last month called upon the Mayor’s Advisory Group to better understand and mitigate the driving factors causing the high death rates in the capital.

With London’s population being more than 40% BAME, City Hall says it is committed to ensuring that tackling structural inequality remains a priority. The mayor has lobbied the government to begin registering the ethnicity of COVID patients, and to record this data on death certificates in the case of fatalities.

Sadiq Khan said: “A person’s ethnicity should not mean the difference between life and death and yet COVID-19 has exposed major health inequalities in our society. “I’ve been clear that this pandemic



Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan

must be a wake-up call for our country and a catalyst for fundamental change. Once this crisis is over, we will need to forge a new social contract based on advancing the twin causes of racial and economic equality.

“That means the government taking action to address the root

causes of this injustice to ensure every Londoner, regardless of their background or the colour of their skin, has the opportunity to live safe, healthy and happy lives.”

For more information and to sign the open letter:
Visit ubele.org/weneedanswers
To donate to the Majonzi fund:
Visit gofundme.com/f/majonzi-fund-covid19-bereavement-fund

Council responds to government guidance

By Simon Allin,
Local Democracy Reporter

The cabinet member for children and families at Haringey Council has said reopening schools must be based on when it is safe to do so, in line with government guidance and when five “key tests” set out by a teaching union have been met.

Schools across the country were closed to most pupils in March following the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic – although many have remained open to the children of key workers.

The government has now asked primary schools to start readmitting some cohorts of pupils from June 1st at the earliest as the COVID-19 lockdown eases.

Dozens of local authorities have raised concerns over the government’s advice, with some – including Blackburn, Brighton and

Hove, Bury, Calderdale and Leicester – telling a BBC Breakfast survey they would not be advising schools to open their doors to more pupils.

Cllr Zena Brabazon, Haringey Council’s deputy leader and cabinet member for children and families, said: “Everybody must put public safety first. Education is a vital tool in reducing inequalities and one of the many travesties of this crisis has been that those children and young people who need school most have not been able to attend.

“But, as a parent, grandparent and the deputy leader of the borough, I believe that reopening of our schools by governing bodies must be predicated on the basis that it is safe to do so and the government guidance is met, which includes a list of key issues and actions.

“In addition, I believe that the National Education Union’s five tests must also be met. Our hard-working teaching staff, parents and

children deserve to know that it is safe when they go to school.”

A Department for Education spokesperson said: “The evidence published today [May 22nd] shows we looked at a range of options in drawing up this phased approach to reopening schools, which is in line with the government’s overall ‘roadmap.’

“As in other countries across Europe, the first phases of the wider opening of schools will prioritise younger children. Advice from SAGE shows there is a lower overall risk from opening schools and nurseries to younger children, and that they are less likely to become unwell if infected with coronavirus compared to adults.

“This cautious, phased approach for allowing a limited number of pupils back into classrooms has been, and will continue to be, informed by the best possible scientific and medical advice.”

Help is available if you need it

Useful information

- **Haringey Council’s Connected Communities:**
Call 020 8489 4431
(open Monday to Friday 8.30am–6.30pm)
- **The latest information council advice for residents:**
Visit haringey.gov.uk/news-and-events/haringey-coronavirus-covid-19-updates
Visit haringey.gov.uk/covid-19/i-want-help
- **For information about domestic violence services Haringey Domestic Abuse Helpline:**
Call 030 0012 0213 (Monday to Friday, 10.30am–5.30pm)
Visit www.haringey.gov.uk/vawgcovid19
- **Mind In Haringey. Emotional and well-being support service:**
Visit mindinharingey.org.uk
Call 020 8340 2474 (9–5pm, Monday to Friday)
Email dmin@mih.org.uk
- **Government advice relating to Coronavirus:**
Visit gov.uk/coronavirus
- **NHS advice:**
Visit nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19
- **The Samaritans. Listening support service, help available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year:**
Call 116 123 (free)
- **Shelter. Urgent housing advice, open every day. 8am–8pm on weekdays, 9am–5pm on weekends**
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NOTICE OF APPLICATION
FOR A PREMISES LICENCE

Notice is hereby given that **Anthony Robert Buck & Seth Elton** have applied to the Licensing Authority of London Borough of Haringey for a Premises Licence to permit:

- 1) **Supply of Alcohol:**
12:00–23:00 Monday–Thursday
11:00–00:00, Friday and Saturday
- 2) **Provision of late night refreshment: Friday & Saturday, 23:00–00:00**

For the premises **Ten to One – Restaurant & Cocktail Bar**
Situated at **276 Philip Lane, Tottenham, London N15 4AD**

A register of licensing applications can be inspected at **Licensing Team, River Park House, Level 1 North, 225 High Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HQ**

Any person wishing to submit relevant representations concerning this application must give notice in writing to the London Borough of Haringey, Licensing team at the above address, giving in detail the grounds of the representation no later than: **30.06.2020**

Copies of all representations will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Authority’s Sub Committee and will therefore pass into the public domain. Representations can be emailed to licensing@haringey.gov.uk

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 liable on conviction to a fine up to £5000 under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003 knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application.

Dated: Tuesday 26th May 2020
Signed: Anthony Buck & Seth Elton

NEWS

Haringey council calls for financial help from government

By Simon Allin,
Local Democracy Reporter

Council leaders have called on the government to commit to covering the costs of the coronavirus pandemic.

Haringey's leader Cllr Joseph Ejiofor called government funding so far provided to cover the costs of dealing with COVID-19 a "drop in the ocean", while Enfield's leader Cllr Nesil Caliskan has warned of a financial "catastrophe" facing local authorities as a result of the crisis.

Both council leaders have asked for reassurances from the government it will provide the necessary funding.

Campaign group the TaxPayers' Alliance has called on the government to avoid hiking taxes to cover the cost of the pandemic. It wants council tax to be frozen while the country tackles COVID-19.

Haringey Council said it cannot meet the extra costs of dealing with the pandemic, and it is for the government to address how to provide councils with the necessary grant funding.

Cllr Joseph Ejiofor, leader of Haringey Council, said: "The initial message from Westminster was unequivocal: 'We have to protect our residents. We have to slow the spread of this global pandemic. Local government should spend what is necessary and national government will reimburse you later.'"

"From delivering food parcels, to support with finances and adapting social care and mental health and wellbeing services, we're doing all we can to make sure residents have the help they need. I'm really proud of the work we have been able to do, particularly in partnership with the community.

"The government has allocated £15.5 million to Haringey, but it's going to be a drop in the ocean compared to what we have committed – and must commit – to keep this vital work going. The biggest concern – which I'm sure council leaders across London share – is that the government keeps its promise and stands financially behind us.

"This is public money and we're

spending it wisely, but we are simply not funded to cover the cost of all the emergency measures we are rightly putting in place and we still have to balance our books.

"Rather than guaranteeing that we'll get that money back, the government now seems to be talking about 'burden sharing' and 'prioritising'. I'm not happy about that. Councils must focus on delivering services on the front line now – we can't be looking over our shoulders worrying about how we pay for it tomorrow."

On April 20, after providing £1.6 billion of support for local authorities dealing with the pandemic, communities secretary Robert Jenrick said: "I promised local government would have the resources they need to meet this challenge and today demonstrates my commitment to doing just that.

"We stand shoulder to shoulder with local government and my priority is to make sure they are supported so they can continue to support their communities through this challenging time."

Haringey Council named in High Court case for child services failings

Council severely criticised for inadequate safeguarding

By Luchia Robinson

Haringey Council has been criticised by the High Court for failing to protect two vulnerable children in a case involving 'fundamental errors' by the local authority.

The Honourable Mr Justice Hayden overturned a ruling to keep the council's identity anonymous, in a case where two children were at risk of harm because of their mother's relationship with a convicted sexual offender. It was ruled that the council, who at the time, had been informed of this relationship via an anonymous phone call, had not adequately acted to assess the potential harm posed to the children.

Mr Justice Hayden said: 'I regret to say that social services failed in any way adequately to assess the information that was at their disposal, or easily attainable, in order to conduct a risk assessment.'

The decision to name the council last month was made following representations from members of the media who presented evidence from an Ofsted inspection outlining further ineffectiveness in Haringey's Children with Disabilities department.

The press had been barred from the court proceedings (which concluded in March) as the judge had ruled that the children's identities may be revealed through jigsaw identification (the piecing together of information regarding the case). However, the risk of identification was deemed minimal when outweighed by the public's right to be informed, in light of the overwhelming evidence of the council's shortcomings.

The court ruling, (published online in May), found the local authority to be responsible for a series of failings which included: not having child protection measures in place; inadequate

sharing of information between professionals; having an inexperienced social worker assigned to the case; inadequate monitoring; no proper risk assessment undertaken, and failure to inform the children's father of the risk posed to his children.

Mr Justice Hayden stated that the council not telling the father of the risks posed 'created difficulties of a different kind and contributed, in due course to the Local Authority making some fundamental errors in which they fell considerably short of their obligations to safeguard and protect the children subject to these proceedings.'

Cllr Zena Brabazon, Deputy Leader of Haringey Council and cabinet member for children and families said: "The most important thing for me to note is that the children remain safe, and their well-being is our primary focus.

She added "We firmly believe that this judgment is not a reflection of our wider practice in children's social care.

Opposition Spokesperson for Children and Families, Cllr Tammy Palmer (Liberal Democrats), said: "It's appalling that such severe failings from a local authority should happen anywhere, but this is especially alarming in a borough with such a catastrophic history of failing to protect our most vulnerable children.

"Haringey's residents need urgent answers from the senior leaders of this council about what went wrong and whether this is a one-off or indicative of a systemic failure.

"In order to rebuild trust and confidence in the light of these damning findings, any investigation or inquiry must be prompt and it must be public."

Haringey Council is carrying out a review into this case, and an independent assessment is to be commissioned.

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NEWS

Environment
Local residents adopt
some nearby trees

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London boroughs collaborate to secure PPE

Haringey Council co-leads a PPE partnership

Haringey Council has co-led a pan-London partnership to secure emergency supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during the coronavirus pandemic – to support care homes and other crucial local services on the COVID-19 frontline.

The pan-London approach, coordinated and led in a partnership between Haringey and Ealing Council, offers local authorities an additional route to secure the vital PPE. This stock is intended to act as a contingency measure to support business as usual supply chains.

To date, Haringey Council has been receiving stocks of PPE from the NHS, London councils' supply chain, as well as additional supplies through local procurement. However, the council seeks additional procurement methods to ensure there are enough supplies of PPE in the borough.

The collaboration builds on a supply chain established by the West London Alliance (WLA) which has previously been successful in utilising this model on a sub-regional basis.

The initiative is expected to result in approximately 48 million PPE items becoming available for all London local authorities to distribute, avoiding over-reliance on delivery from the government's

“Joining together during this time for our pan-London approach helps us to strengthen our resilience against the pandemic”

emergency stocks while supply chains recover to meet demand.

Cllr Joseph Ejiofor, Leader of Haringey Council said: “Local authorities across London have, quite rightly, led this initiative to secure critical PPE for use across our boroughs – a testament to each council's

commitment and dedication to protect those working on the front line and our most vulnerable people.

“Joining together during this time for our pan-London approach helps us to strengthen

our resilience against the pandemic. Whilst we cannot predict when this will end, we can now rest assured that, should we need it, there are emergency supplies of PPE available to those in London who need it.”



Credit: Stephen Furner

Haringey and Enfield: Affordable housing starts

More than 1,000 new affordable homes begun in Haringey and Enfield

Joanne McCartney, London
Assembly Member for
Enfield and Haringey



By Simon Allin,
Local Democracy Reporter

Work began on more than 1,000 new affordable homes in Haringey and Enfield under City Hall-led schemes during the last year.

Figures show there were 1,217 affordable home starts on Greater London Authority (GLA) housing

programmes in the two boroughs between April 2019 and March 2020.

That breaks down to 798 in Haringey and 419 in Enfield.

It represents three times as many in Haringey and twice as many in Enfield compared to the same period during the previous year, as the London-wide figure – more than 17,000 – climbed to the highest since records began in 2002–03.

Many of the homes – 44% in Haringey and 62% in Enfield – will be available at social rent or London Affordable Rent, with the rest at other affordable rates and tenures such as London Living Rent and shared ownership.

London Assembly Member for Enfield and Haringey, Joanne McCartney welcomed the figures but called on the government to boost funding in City Hall's affordable housing schemes.

Ms McCartney said: “These new record-breaking figures are very promising and show that City Hall is making strong progress in its efforts to turn the tide on our housing crisis.

“The COVID-19 outbreak has thrown our need for more genuinely affordable homes into even sharper relief, with too many in our community facing lockdown in wholly inadequate overcrowded or temporary accommodation, having to pay exorbitant rents, or whilst left out on our streets.”

A GLA report published in 2019 stated government investment in City Hall affordable homes projects would need to rise seven-fold to meet the scale of housing demand.

Meanwhile, a briefing from London Councils showed the

capital's allocation of funding for affordable housing fell from £3.72 billion between 2008 and 2011 to just £627 million from 2011 to 2015.

Ms McCartney added: “Big obstacles lie ahead for our housing market and construction industry. As we begin

to come out of the first wave of this pandemic, we need to be able to rely on the government to make the right strategic choices

about how we rebuild our society.

“This is why I am urging the government to seize the initiative and properly invest in City Hall's affordable housing schemes, which are still underfunded seven times over. Since 2016, City Hall has proved year after year that it is best placed to get to grips with the housing crisis, even in the midst of turmoil and uncertainty.”

In 2018, the government lifted a cap on borrowing to allow local authorities to provide more council homes.

It has also invested £9 billion

through its Affordable Homes Programme to provide around 250,000 new affordable homes across several tenures, including social rent and shared ownership.

A spokesperson for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government said: “Building

“Big obstacles lie ahead for our housing market and construction industry”

the homes the country needs is a priority for the government. We've removed the borrowing cap, freeing up councils to build

more, but this report ignores building by housing associations who deliver the vast majority of new affordable homes.

“Since 2012, the social housing waiting list has decreased by 37%, and since 2010 we have delivered over 464,500 new affordable homes, including affordable and social rent homes.

“We're also investing £12 billion to build affordable homes between 2021 and 2026 – the biggest cash investment in affordable housing for a decade.”

NEWS

Tottenham bikers saving lives in the coronavirus pandemic

Haringey's motorcyclists ride to the rescue



Motorcycle volunteer Anton Shelupanov ready to deliver oximeter test kits



Karen Neill with her Harley Davidson after transporting PPE

Haringey's motorcyclist volunteers have been delivering PPE, food, medicines and urgent oximeter tests to those in need during the COVID-19 health crisis.

The motorcyclists, including several members of the Red Army Riding Club (RARC), have stepped up as part of the nationwide Motorcycle Community Volunteer Response initiative, organised by the Bike Shed

and Team Rubicon, the disaster relief charity run by veterans.

The Red Army Riding Club (RARC) is a social club of motorbike enthusiasts with several members based in Haringey who raise money

for good causes, by providing hours of volunteer time to various local charitable organisations.

In all, hundreds of motorcyclist volunteers around the UK have been transporting PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) from volunteer makers to NHS staff and care home workers, food and prescriptions to members of the community who cannot obtain these items themselves, as well as delivering lifesaving blood oximeter tests to patients in distress. Tottenham has been no exception.

RARC member Karen Neill, proprietor of Tottenham's Zenith Motorcycles and the only woman in Britain who owns and runs a motorcycle garage said: "At Zenith we have always been here for our community in Tottenham and beyond.

"This pandemic is the biggest test Britain and the world has faced in decades. Of course, Haringey's motorcycling community members were among the first to volunteer.

"We are honoured to be part of the wider Bike Shed and Team Rubicon initiative: here in Tottenham and beyond saving lives in our own community."

Haringey-based RARC President, Anton Shelupanov said: "As one of my motorcycle volunteer tasks, I've just delivered an oximeter test kit from Royal Free Hospital to a patient in respiratory distress right here in Haringey.

"The test kit is supplied by a brilliant charity called Covid Crisis Rescue set up by Dr Sharon Raymond. Without us and our motorbikes there is simply no way to get the tests to the patients at home urgently enough at all hours and in all weather conditions. No other vehicle is suitable, and motorcyclists as the most skilled and responsible road users are the ideal people for the task.

"This is an incredible example of communities coming together to fight a complex and powerful enemy which is this virus."

Karen added: "A major worry for the motorcycle community response volunteers are the road closures which seem to be springing up around London. A delay in getting an oximeter test to a patient in distress, caused by an unexpected road closure, could cost someone's life."

A fire won't put out our spark

Fundraiser launched to rebuild a playground destroyed by a fire | By Luchia Robinson

A fire has partially destroyed an adventure playground at a Tottenham community hub.

The fire, which happened last month, has ruined play equipment at the charity, Markfield, an inclusive community centre, in Markfield Road, N15.

The accessible playground is used by disabled and non-disabled children and young people from across Haringey, but the recent fire has meant that play and respite services, which include socially-distanced play sessions, are now on hold until the playground can be made safe.

Markfield was founded more than 35 years ago by parents of disabled children wanting to create a space for inclusive play. The charity aims to enable disabled and autistic people to live life to the full by providing a range of services for disabled children, young people, and adults.

A fundraiser has been launched to raise £60,000 to rebuild the playground. Sarah Miller, Director of Markfield said: "The fire

has destroyed a large part of the wooden play structures including our popular tango swing, that was designed specially to be usable by children with physical disabilities.

"Fortunately, some parts of the playground were saved because of the quick response of the Fire Brigade who came and put out the fire in the early hours, after being summoned by a local park walker who saw the fire.

"We are working hard to be able to get the playground up and running again within a few days. The full restoration work will take longer – and we are determined to use this as an opportunity to build an even better play space for the community."

The fundraiser received donations totalling over £8.5k from more than 250 people in just three days, and Markfield is seeking further donations to help reach the overall target.

Sarah said: "We are hugely grateful for the fantastic show of support from the community."

For more details please visit: markfield.org.uk
To donate to the fundraiser: t.co/vwa1u9e0Hm



The ruined playground equipment Credit Dominique Wicks

INTERVIEW

Health

Ways to support the body's immune system

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New ways of celebrating Pride

This Pride month, Luchia Robinson talks to Nirnanjan Namatkar, the Artistic Director of Wise Thoughts

By Luchia Robinson

On the other side of quarantine, is the rainbow – the Rainbow Hub, that is – a safe, chillout space for LGBTQI+ people in Haringey to meet.

Niranjan Namatkar, Artistic Director of Wise Thoughts, (a leading LGBTQI+ and BAME arts charity based in the borough), is looking forward to the hub and what it represents – better well-being in a physical meeting space.

Speaking of the quarantine experience, Nirnanjan said: “It’s not clear, in terms of how long all of this will last, and how future activities will take shape, so in that sense the uncertainty is challenging.

“Overall, I think LGBTQI+ people in Haringey are trying to cope well, but at the same time it’s a stressful time dealing with individual, specific needs – generally everybody is facing uncertainty in the same fashion.”

Wise Thoughts, which operates out of a work space in Wood Green Library, (and also with a meeting hub at Sophia House in Antill Road N15), provides arts activities, advice, support, weekly drop-in services and opportunities for Haringey’s LGBTQI+

communities to express themselves.

These services moved online with the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, and the charity’s twice weekly virtual drop-ins have been vital in providing ways for local LGBTQI+ community members to keep in touch throughout the quarantine period.

There has been an increase of people seeking one-to-one advice services since social distancing measures were mandated, and the average working day at Wise Thoughts now stretches from 6.00am to past 9.00pm

human connection and contact, and the best person who you can rely upon would be a member of your community.”

Studies show that people identifying as LGBTQI+ are at risk of experiencing poor mental health, with members of the community more likely to face problems such as self-harm, depression, suicidal thoughts, and alcohol and substance misuse. These health concerns can often be attributed to a variety of factors, including incidences of isolation, homophobia and discrimination.

“Pride is important in terms of visibility, and that visibility addresses specific needs individuals may have”

most evenings to meet the demand.

Niranjan believes there’s a number of reasons for this, but finds they often include a mix of anxiety about lockdown (for specific, individual reasons), and people’s desire to keep in touch with one another.

He said: “If you are isolated in your home as a single individual, you need to have that

Whilst the lifting of the coronavirus social distancing measures, which have kept people in their homes over the past few months has begun, a full return to pre-COVID-19 living is still uncertain and not quite guaranteed.

For Nirnanjan, lockdown has ushered in what he describes as ‘new modified ways

of working,’ and with this in mind, plans to host an online Pride event are currently in the works for Wise Thoughts.

“People are celebrating elements of Pride – it’s not exactly Pride as it has traditionally taken place in the past, but people are still being a part of that Pride process online via social media, and by volunteering for a number of good, local initiatives. There are lots of Facebook and Whatsapp groups spreading knowledge and information as is needed,” says Nirnanjan.

“That’s where Pride can be best celebrated, with LGBTQI+ communities being at the forefront of developing local help and support programmes.”

“Pride is important in terms of visibility, and that visibility addresses specific needs individuals may have. If you have a proud visibility around Haringey or in Tottenham, you’ll [likely] have your voices heard and your needs met with your local councillors or local community members – and your participation in local society is much more rewarding in that sense.”

For more information about the virtual drop-ins: Visit wisethoughts.org

PHOTOGRAPHY



Tottenham's Vanishing Landscapes

Words and Photographs by Stephen Furner

These are a selection views of a disappearing industrial landscape from around Tottenham Hale.

The traditional manufacturing base is in transition. Manufacturing is being replaced by the service industry or creative design and craft production. The infrastructure needed for yesterday's manufacturing will inevitably be replaced to make way for today's new industries.

New urban landscapes will emerge as these industrial manufacturing areas become part of Tottenham's rich history and cultural heritage.





COMMUNITY

Saving a vital community hub

Leyla Laksari, CEO of Living Under One Sun shares why the frontline community service needs to be saved



Members of the Living Under One Sun with Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan (second left)

It's taken over two years of hard work from volunteers, and our local team of staff and sessional workers who we've trained and supported, to transform a disused bowling club in Down Lane Park, into a unique, welcoming community hub and café that provides free community led services.

With the coronavirus lockdown the council closed all centres and cafés in parks – meaning we had to shut our doors at Living Under One Sun (LUOS), losing all our bookings and income.

We are a frontline neighbourhood charity, and all our projects are led by local residents who were trained and supported to deliver services to others which they had initiated (including sewing, cycle repairs, and refugee mothers peer support), creating pathways to their own employment. We've started a Crowdfunder campaign to raise £30,000 to save LUOS because we aim to survive, keeping all of this going, and supporting those on the margins!

Local residents and community groups who've worked hard to get this place set up, use the services or can see their value to the neighbourhood. So too, do local businesses, partners, and the council – it takes all of us to make regeneration meaningful, and we want to gain support from those who understand our cause.

Tottenham Hale more than ever needs this community hub, and without this campaign there is a serious risk of losing it. That means people we've reached and who come together to support each other won't have the safe welcoming place and free service they've helped create, need and deserve. For some individuals and families this would be critical.

Tottenham is facing major changes, the effects of austerity, and large-scale developments which some people do not

feel involved in, or is for them, and now the effects of COVID-19. We are in one of the most deprived parts of Haringey, lacking basic investment and facing poverty, poor health, violence, polarisation and social isolation.

Our community is too often divided, and despite the richness of its cultures, the skills and heritage so many are invisible and many residents have no voice.

Our aim to save the community hub is not just about now, it's about the future of our neighbourhood, and all the love and trust invested in this place to create a positive visible presence for our community talents and heritage – such as the wonderful 'Celebration of Tottenham's Windrush Heritage' last summer, which was attended by 900 people.

We do not qualify for government loans or grants, and the Government Job Retention scheme (furloughing) makes it very difficult for small charities. By raising urgently needed funds we could survive this heart-breaking pandemic and be able to pay urgent bills, pay our staff, and deliver safe activities.

Alongside this crowdfunding we're making every effort towards get funding from other sources, but this is very competitive and geared to larger charities, often leaving just crumbs for small frontline and BAME groups.

The bottom line is without sufficient funds to support staffing we will not be able to reopen safely and all the hard work from the community will be wasted.

We need to keep frontline community-led services going in order to be a safe presence and voice in this crisis, that supports the community to recover and rebuild.

For more information about Living Under One Sun, how to donate and the rewards available to those who pledge support:

Visit crowdfunder.co.uk/livingunderonesun

Advertisement

NHS

**CORONAVIRUS
GOT SYMPTOMS?
GET TESTED**

**HIGH TEMPERATURE
OR NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH
OR LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?**

No one in your household should leave home if any one person has symptoms.

Find out how to get a test, and how long to isolate, at nhs.uk/coronavirus

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES

LICENSING ACT 2003

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE

Notice is hereby given that **Roses World Limited** has applied to the Licensing Authority of London Borough of Haringey on 21st May 2020 for a Premises Licence to permit:

Regulated Entertainment (Recorded Music) and the sale by serve Alcohol, Sunday to Thursday, 08:00–23:00 and Friday to Saturday, 08:00–23:30, and the provision of late night refreshment, Sunday to Thursday, 23:00–23:30 and Friday to Saturday, 23:30–00:00, as more particularly set out in the application. For the premises **MERLOT GARDEN**, Situated at 33-35 Park Road, Crouch End, N8 8TE

A register of licensing applications can be inspected at **Licensing Team, Level 1, River Park House, 225 High Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HQ.**

Any person wishing to submit relevant representations concerning this application must give notice in writing to the London Borough of Haringey, Licensing team at the above address, giving in detail the grounds of the representation no later than: **17th June 2020.** Stating the grounds for making said representation.

Copies of all valid representations must include your name and address and will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Authorities Sub Committee, these will therefore pass into the public domain. Representations can be emailed to licensing@haringey.gov.uk

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 liable on conviction to a fine up to £5000 under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003 knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application.

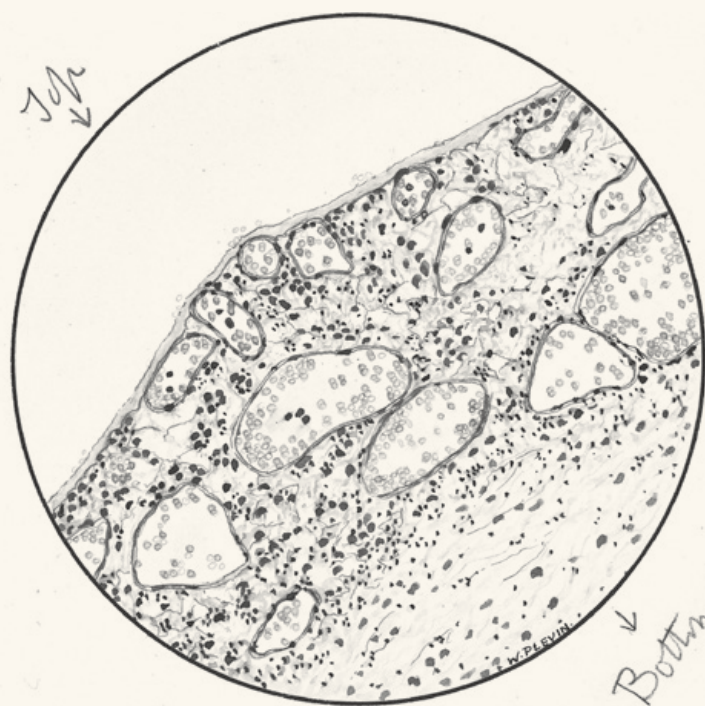
Dated: 22.05.2020

Signed: Mohsen Jaderipour

Advertisement

COMMUNITY

HISTORY



Drawing of the 1918 Influenza: Showing congestion of vessels
Credit Wellcome Trust

Legend
main bronchus
Fig. 10. Section from one of Claude F. French's influenza lungs in the Museum at Guy's Hospital. showing complete denudation of epithelial coat with great hyaline thickening of basement membrane and congestion of inter layers of submucosa. X 250

The previous pandemic

Influenza, also commonly known as 'Spanish flu' (1918–1920) was the last global pandemic to impact the world's population.

This extract from the Medical Officer of Health reports, at The Wellcome Library, gives some insight into the impact it had here in Tottenham.

Miss Vernon, Headmistress of Parkhurst Girls recorded in her log book on 18th November 1918

'Cookery and laundry classes discontinued for about two months on account of the death of Miss Owen the cookery mistress'

The entry is cold and stark, but for the girls attending the cookery centre from Parkhurst and Coleraine schools, the sudden loss of this young and popular teacher was keenly felt.

Miss Owen was a victim of the second, more deadly wave, of the flu pandemic that had been sweeping across the world from the beginning of the year, carried along by the massive troop movements crossing from country to country. Its origins are

obscure, but possibly arising first in overcrowded troop encampments where hygiene was poor, close to piggeries where the infection possibly came from birds.

Its effect was devastating on the exhausted and malnourished populations in Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia, affecting young and old and particularly otherwise healthy young adults. Most of the deaths arose from secondary pneumonia, but there were also cases of death occurring with days, or even hours, of contracting the virus probably as a result of strong immune systems setting up a cytokine storm as the body tried to fight this new enemy.

The statistics are overwhelming, with an estimated 500 million infected worldwide, and a death toll of at least 50 million. The disease particularly affected Tottenham from July 1918 through to the spring of 1919, with over 500 deaths. 50 were children under five and 42 children up to age 14.

There were also 110 deaths recorded in the first wave of infections. A greater number than this suffered from the virus, and at one stage the epidemic was so great the schools had to close for a week with staff, as well as children, absent through illness.

Two wards, accommodating 50 patients, were requisitioned at the Prince of Wales Hospital, and further accommodation for 12 patients was provided at Bruce Castle, then used as a Health Centre as well as Museum.

Tottenham Hale: Awash with great organisers



Cllr Ruth Gordon focuses on what's happening in Tottenham Hale ward

Almost anything that can be said about the times we're living through will seem like understatement. The tragedy of thousands of deaths from Coronavirus is devastating to contemplate, as is the fear of so many people who are deeply worried about their health and their families' well-being.

In Tottenham Hale deprivation and inequality will see the effects of the pandemic hit even harder with the economic outlook looking severe.

I'm working alongside council staff to see that residents are getting access to the services they need; taking up individual case work and volunteering to support those who may be isolating or vulnerable.

Volunteering with the NHS COVID-19 Hot Hub, delivering monitoring equipment to patients, has allowed me to see close-up, what a fantastic service our NHS is providing in such difficult circumstances.

Likewise, it has been inspirational to meet residents (at least virtually) who have come together in Mutual Aid Groups, using social media to coordinate tasks such as shopping, collecting prescriptions, walking dogs for owners trapped indoors, or simply making a friendly phone call.

Tottenham Hale has always been awash with great community organisers: The Friends of Hartington Park, members of Ferry Lane Action Group and the residents' associations such as Chesnuts or Devon Close testify to that.

Our own Living Under One Sun (LUOS), usually operating from the Down Lane Park café, has been invaluable in creating a welcoming space for community-led projects. From gardening or bee keeping, to sewing classes or English lessons, LUOS has provided vital support for the community. In a forced shut-down voluntary-sector organisations such as LUOS will suffer and they need the solidarity of the community now.

I like to see my role as a critical friend to the council but I think credit is due to officers who have performed a mammoth organisational feat in the pandemic outbreak. The council has ensured that care homes and home care providers have adequate PPE and that care staff have access to testing, the homelessness unit has been successful in providing emergency accommodation for rough sleepers, and resources for helplines have been bolstered.

Of course, the council won't get everything right and that's when residents can contact me, and I'll do my best to help.

Meanwhile, stay safe and keep well.

Cllr Ruth Gordon, Tottenham Hale Ward

Email ruth.gordon@haringey.gov.uk

Twitter @HaleTottenham

Call 07976 974532

To support Living Under One Sun:

Visit crowdfunder.co.uk/livingunderonesun

ENVIRONMENT



An adopted tree Credit: Quentin Given

Protect your local trees

Residents on a local estate adopt some nearby trees

By Quentin Given, Coordinator,
Tottenham and Wood Green
Friends of the Earth

Friends of the Earth Tottenham and Wood Green is urging people to look after your local trees, especially young ones, in your street but also in parks and gardens.

On Ferry Lane Estate in Tottenham Hale, the residents' association has asked people to adopt some of the 80 trees planted in the last year, and so far over 30 have been adopted.

Residents have tied a tag or ribbon on their trees so we know which ones are being cared for, and the council has loaned the association a trolley and canisters to help transport the water.

Trees help reduce local air pollution, and give us shade during the heatwaves that climate breakdown is making more com-

mon. In Tottenham we suffer from serious air pollution that affects people's health, and we need the shade that the trees provide.

Our trees are threatened by drought, and trees stressed by drought are also more vulnerable to disease. Young newly-planted trees are especially vulnerable because they haven't had time to build up their root network.

"Our trees are threatened by drought, and trees stressed by drought are also more vulnerable to disease"

We had a very wet winter but we've had very little rain since February, so the ground is drying out. We need to start watering trees now before the hottest months so they are in good health to survive any heatwaves.

Can you adopt one or more trees? So far about 15 households have adopted trees on the Ferry

Lane Estate. Anyone can do so provided it is safe – some of the trees on the estate are across a road, so people have to take care of traffic, especially when taking their children to help.

People don't need permission to water trees but it's a good idea to put a marker on your trees so other neighbours know someone is looking after them.

Johannes and Annelie Kops who live in Erskine Crescent on Ferry Lane Estate, said: "It was heart breaking to see 200 mature trees being cut down along Jarrow Road, to allow for Network Rail's track extension. Now we want to do our bit to help the few replacement trees survive the hot summers."

For more information:
Visit friendsoftheearth.uk/groups/tottenhamwoodgreen

If it's a street tree that you'd like to take care of, let the Haringey Tree Officer know:
Email alex.fraser@haringey.gov.uk

COMMENT

COVID-19 means mass shift for travel

Changing our travel habits will improve health outcomes

By Cllr Mike Hakata,
St Ann's Ward

The need for social distancing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated just how limited some of our existing pavement space is.

Haringey Council is rolling out a programme of pavement widening across the borough, this will play a critical role in ensuring safe social distancing, as public transport capacity is expected to reduce by 85%. But we must do much more.

The vast majority of residents in Tottenham do not own a car, we must consider how they will travel around the borough as lockdown eases if public transport space is limited. TfL estimates that even a slight increase in car use will lead to gridlock. At the same time, many thousands may opt to drive through the borough to make journeys across London, bringing congestion, pollution and the increased risk of road deaths and serious injuries.

Some of Haringey's most polluted schools, for example, lie along the A10 in Tottenham. At a time when clean air for vulnerable lungs is absolutely critical, the idea of air pollution in our borough getting worse as the lockdown eases is not acceptable. It is vital that part of our COVID-19 response also ensures we build back with cleaner air for all residents after lockdown.

The health discrepancy between the east and west of Haringey has resulted in a 15-year gap in healthy life-expectancy – diabetes, heart and respiratory diseases being major contributing factors. In the time of COVID-19, bad air quality, which contributes to respiratory conditions, alongside a massive reliance on public transport (65% of Haringey residents, mostly in Tottenham, rely on public transport), we

can see that urgently addressing the question of transport infrastructure is essential if we are to protect the lives of residents, especially those from the poorest neighbourhoods.

The Department for Transport and TfL have both recognised the need for a massive transformation in how we use our street space after lockdown. Emergency transport plans are now being drawn up by Haringey Council to consider how we can support this process.

Studies by TfL have revealed a third of all journeys in the capital are under 2kms and could be completed easily by walking or cycling. Just 20 minutes a day of exercise could transform the health outcomes of thousands of Tottenham residents.

We must immediately provide a network of protected cycling and walking routes so that those who can walk and cycle have safe routes to do so, enabling those who are mobility impaired to use uncrowded public transport or their car along safe, uncongested roads.

Local groups like Haringey Living Streets and the Haringey Cycling Campaign are campaigning for urgent action on these issues and I wholly support their view that this is one of the most critical health and social justice issues our borough is facing over the coming weeks and months.



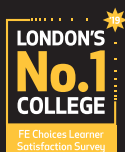
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Create Your Future



HEALTH

Looking after my mental health at home

Katy Newman discusses the challenges she's facing, coping with the changes during lockdown



Credit: Finn Souter

I used to work five, sometimes six days a week, so being out of work for over a month has affected my life drastically. With so much time at home, I have had to establish a new routine, to help abate my anxiety and depression, while staying safe.

My job was enjoyable, and it served as a good distraction from some of my negative emotions and internal issues. With a pretty abrupt end to work, I was overwhelmed by lots of difficult emotions. I can't even keep track of how much I've cried within the space of a week.

I'm finding social isolation very difficult, as I'm an extrovert. I draw on other people's energy to help boost my own, so being by myself has been a shock to the system.

I know it helps me to calm down if I read

a good book, put pen to paper and make an effort to surround myself with simple stuff I like. Pretty flowers make me happy. I have only just started to read more, and write down my thoughts; it feels good.

I miss hugging my loved ones, and going out with them during my free time. I miss going clubbing in the gay scene, and feeling connected to the LGBTQI+ community for emotional support and love. I'm still developing an understanding of myself and who I actually am, and my friends help me explore that.

Like everybody, I have had all my social events – which give me so much to look forward to – cancelled. It's totally gutting. However, I suppose it will make me cherish the parties, gigs and festivals more, once

they start again.

In these last weeks, it has been much harder to renew the prescription for my antidepressants. According to my pharmacist there is a national shortage of Sertraline, the medication I take. It's tricky even to request a prescription from my GP, because the phone lines are constantly busy. This doesn't fill me with confidence. How is the NHS going to manage to provide for all the vulnerable people after the pandemic, if there are such difficulties already?

My mother is a key worker. I'm very nervous of her extra exposure to the virus. Lots of her colleagues are regularly not able to work at the moment, so she feels obliged to do double shifts, and has weeks of working without a break.

I feel awful for her, and wish I could take her place so she could take a rest. Sadly, due to my furlough agreement, I'm not even allowed to volunteer free of charge to assist anyone.

One of the most difficult aspects I'm finding during furlough is being paid a lot less. I used to work plenty of overtime to make ends meet, so that I could contribute to my family. I had the highest wage in my household. With my overtime I used to work between 40 and 60 hours, but my contract was for only 16 hours per week. So the 80% of my wage I receive, is based on just the 16 hours. This is barely enough to pay my bills. I'm still receiving some money, which I'm thankful for. A few of my colleagues have actually had their contracts terminated.

“My mother is a key worker. I'm very nervous of her extra exposure to the coronavirus”

So, I've been relying on my mum to cover my end on rent, food and toiletries. Obviously, this makes me feel terrible. I really don't think she gets paid enough for the hard and essential work she is doing.

I've gone from being totally independent, to relying on my mum's wage to put food on the table, and keep a roof over our family's head. She doesn't expect anything in return, although I still feel like a bad person for depending on her, even though I'm nearly twenty. Sometimes I do feel unhappy and like I'm a burden.

Taking responsibility for the cooking and cleaning has given me a routine, and helped me have a sense of purpose. Hopefully it has eased things for my mum too. Even if I just make her favourite meal, clean up, buy her some flowers, or pop out to post a letter; I think she appreciates it.

Never have I been so grateful or aware of how strong and resilient my mum is. I only wish I could do half the things she does.

I have definitely become more conscious of my family, and what is important to me. Perhaps with this time in isolation at home, I will become stronger and more self-reliant.

Expressing myself through *Exposure* has been a good way to manage some tough emotions.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, why not try and get your thoughts and feelings down on paper?

For more information:
Visit exposure.org.uk

Diet and immune health

Supporting the body's immune system

By Lloyd Gee,
Naturopath and Herbalist

We are all being told how to shield ourselves and others from COVID-19 which is of course good advice to stop the spread of the virus. But I believe it is also important to keep our immune systems in tip-top condition.

48% of all deaths in the borough between 29th February and 8th May involved COVID-19.

The immune system is the body's natural defence against harmful viruses and other pathogens, so having an immune enhancing diet is a great way to start.

A healthy diet does not need to be expensive but takes a little bit of effort.

Vegetables

Fresh vegetables should make up a large proportion of what you eat. They contain most of the nutrients that your body and immune system need, and are also great for a healthy gut as they are high in fibre. They improve your circulation and most help reduce inflammation.

A good range of vegetables should include a whole variety of colours on the plate (red, orange, yellow, green, white/brown and blue/purple) – each bringing their own health benefits. Carrots, sweet potatoes, kale, spring greens, red onions, broccoli, peas, and salads are all good examples. Add in some spices like turmeric and ginger. Raw garlic is a good addition to sal-

ads and cold dishes as it is believed to fight infections and supports a healthy cardiovascular system.

Fats

Many fats are not good for us, but some are essential. So rather than a fat-free diet, go for healthy oils. My favourite is extra-virgin olive oil which I use for cooking as well as drizzling on salads and vegetables. Other good oils are in avocados and especially in oily fish. I also enjoy some butter which is healthy in moderation.

Fruit

Dark berries do not only taste fantastic, but they are packed full of nutrients and antioxidants that will help your immune system,

blood vessels, liver and brain.

Most fruits are good, but don't have too many especially in juice form as this may spike your blood sugar. Too many foods that are high in sugar, or those that quickly convert to sugar like white bread and most junk food, can be damaging to health, increasing the risk of diabetes and other illness.

Starch

Starchy foods like rice, bread, chips and pasta form a very large part of most people's diets. I promote reducing this to say a quarter of your plate or even less. Choose whole grains where possible, add good quality protein to fill up another quarter and simply fill the rest of your plate with vegetables. This is also a great way

towards a healthy weight.

One vitamin that is difficult to get entirely from your diet is vitamin D and this is essential to an effective immune system. Getting out in the sun is the best as vitamin D is produced in the skin through direct sunlight. So, while social distancing – soak up the sunshine. Otherwise it is a good idea to take a vitamin D supplement.

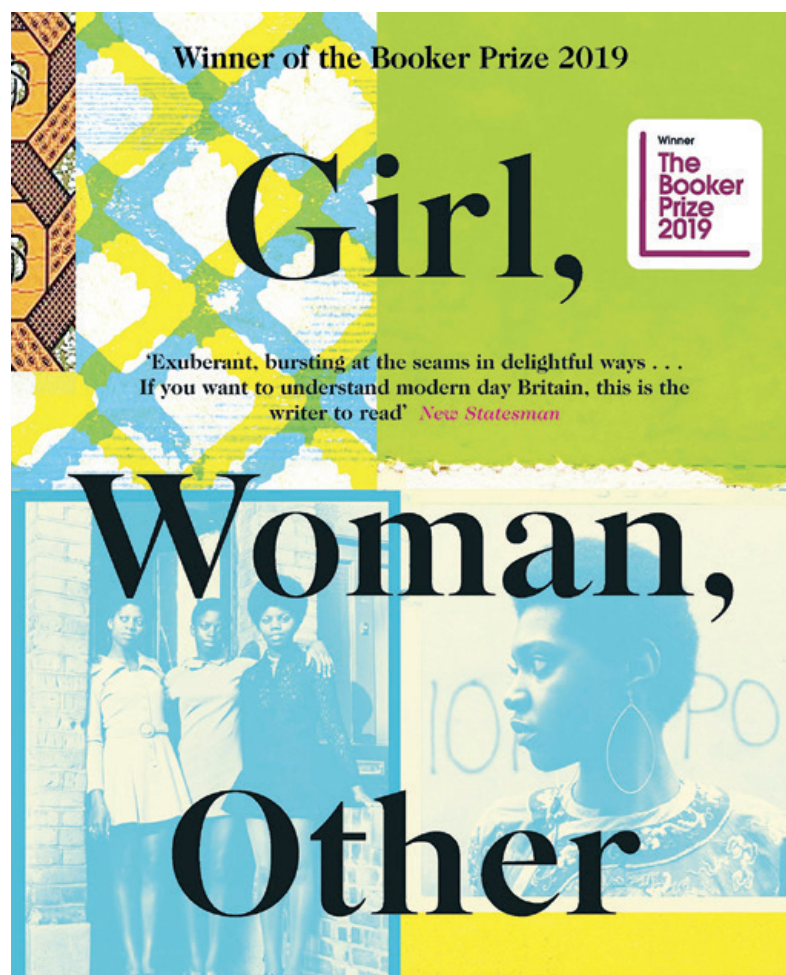
Healthy eating may not stop you getting coronavirus – handwashing and social distancing are the most important preventative measures. But, with such a pandemic I certainly want my immune system to be working as best as it can.

More information: lloydgee.co.uk

LITERATURE

Challenging the literary status quo

Karin Lock reviews Girl, Woman, Other by Bernardine Evaristo



As we work out what this 'new normal' means for our future, we may as well reappraise and transform our present. This could include dusting off that old bike and finally getting fit or it might involve learning something new and useful. One thing that will definitely improve our state of mind is to escape into a good book.

Girl, Woman, Other is not your average escapist fiction however. It begins as a refreshing and spirited novel, infused with the multifarious colours and sounds of our city, and Peckham in particular. We are thrown back into the heady 70s and early 80s decades of UK protest – Greenham Common, Clause 28, the squat battle of Kings Cross – a time of action, empowerment and self-expression.

Coming from the heart of these radical feminist and queer political movements is our first narrator Amma, a playwright. Fast forward a few decades and she has finally 'made it' with the

opening of one of her plays at the National Theatre. As she recounts her journey, the novel opens up to introduce another eleven mainly black female characters who are all somehow connected.

The book's descriptions and locales are authentic and meticulously observed whilst the characters' thoughts, desires and dreams are carefully and lovingly depicted – warts and all. Using various mythical types – the hard-nosed baby mother, martyr schoolteacher, stush high-flier, overworked and underappreciated homemaker – the author portrays the struggles these women experience as they try to assimilate in, or fight against, the mainstream.

By exploring her characters' delusions, disappointments and traumas in detail, Evaristo shows us the constraints that family and society's expectations have had on their potential, and the sacrifices made to rise above them. She identifies the incidents of self-sabotage

and then subverts these mythical identities to make them agents of generational change.

Here the writer is making familiar the feminist theory of 'kyriarchy', which proposes that domination, oppression and submission are produced by interconnected social systems (race, gender and class). By using experimentation of form (mixing prose, poetry and punctuation), she challenges the literary status quo, creating space for new ways of seeing.

Girl, Woman, Other features the near ubiquitous narrative structure that so many contemporary novelists now embrace – the poly-vocal, multi-perspective, multi-narrator story. Evaristo is an expert storyteller who cleverly makes the reader the confidante of her characters' conflicting emotions and realisations. The beautiful cadences of each characters' speech give a raw fluid realness that is instantly recognisable and highly pleasurable to read.

This is a novel about the cyclical nature of life where, as one character points out: "The future is in the past and the past is in the present." It is also about injustices, small and large, and about the importance of knowing when to speak up and when to let go. Indeed, no matter how hard some characters try to escape their roots (often behaving badly along the way), there is always the chance for redemption and an understanding that wrongs can be righted.

Evaristo is no novice to creative writing as this eighth novel testifies. It has dominated bestseller lists since co-winning last year's Booker Prize alongside Margaret Atwood, the feminist Canadian writer's book, *The Testaments*.

An increase in non-white artists getting published today in Britain is a testament, in part, to Evaristo's hard work behind the scenes mentoring young writers and judging on awards panels. Currently, the vice-chair of the Royal Society of Literature, she has proved her character Amma's motto: on her own terms or not at all.

POETRY CORNER

Glimpse

Awakened like embers; melting hinges,
In spite of bleeding lips, to strive ahead,
With haste, to shoot the tortured crows in cages;
The painful pursuit reaches an end!
To shake the rusty shackles from shoulders,
To cherish warmth unearthed by sudden joy;
As only then, I carry heavy boulders,
But the darkness reigns over to destroy.

Upheaval on paths to destined glory,
Back baring books, it bounded my sold soul;
'The heart shall prosper' – my mother's decree,
The hunt for happiness starts with a fall,
Skin-carving chains coiled my tamed body,
Mind's shores erode as we grasp onto fate;
Deafened – cannot hear your heart's melody,
Fickle feelings, the mind does aggravate.

To dream of revolutions in my mind,
Unable to reach the unattainable mark;
I fear my own reflection – light does blind,
Afraid of endless nights, reign of the dark.
The future's ghost, upholds my sinking chin,
On the edge of dawn, I am not to kneel,
Killing the crows was a saddening sin,
Agitations in my flesh, I still feel.
Marching alongside soldiers lifts my mood,
Clasping strength – but with ruins, to crumble,
Engraved within: darkness does intrude,
Doubt pierces like bullets – must not tumble.

A peak through the keyhole to tomorrow;
My skin is frail and beginning to wither,
My feelings evaporated; left with sorrow
Before isolation, as we shiver.
Towering streetlamps shine on the evening;
We beg for the virus to halt, arms loose,
The souls burning to ashes – we are leaning,
Tears fall from my flaming eyes onto shoes.

Our minds were seized by uncertainty;
During catastrophe to graduate,
This state of despair: teared prosperity
Meant that we were forever to contemplate.
Takes pain to move on – my system broke down
At the final glimpse of my friends,
Nails to the flesh are oppressively sewn.
I'm pondering now; is this how it all ends?

by Dennis Delice

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Slimming World Enfield and Tottenham



To become an organisational member email:
klaudia@socialspider.com