



Your independent community newspaper

WALTHAM FOREST ECHO

Free
April 2022, No. 85

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Local club Walthamstow FC have won the Essex Senior League, their first title in 37 years – turn to p15 for more Credit Andrzej Perkins

Waltham Forest stands with Ukraine

By Victoria Munro

Whether it's volunteering at the border or raising thousands for charity, the people of Waltham Forest have stepped up to support Ukraine.

The borough is home to more than 1,000 Ukrainians according to the most recent census, alongside people of all nationalities horrified by the Russian

invasion in late February.

Collection points for donations quickly popped up all over the borough, including at Peeld Poke & Acai in Orford Road, whose owners travel regularly to the Polish border to help refugees.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian-born local Ihor "Kris" Burgy and his partner Hannah raised £3,255 for the Red Cross by organising a bake sale at Stoneydown Park School in Walthamstow.

Ihor told the *Echo*: "I couldn't predict [how Walthamstow would respond], I still sometimes find myself emotional about it. People reach out to me that are almost strangers, it's incredible.

"At the same time, it's very difficult to maintain my sanity... I feel it's my duty to do more, even to be there in Ukraine, but I know I also have a duty to my family here.

"[My family] are now in the west of the country, where it's relatively

safe, but I do not know what the situation will be like tomorrow. One of my cousins just had a baby three months ago; just to have a little baby is hard enough, I can't imagine having one in a warzone."

Peeld owner Gabriela Anisko, who grew up in Poland, said she was unprepared for the scenes in Warsaw when she first travelled to volunteer at the border on 3rd March, a trip she has taken on an almost weekly basis since.

She told the *Echo*: "I was not prepared for it, I had to go to the toilet and cry. There were people and kids everywhere [and] one of the saddest parts was seeing about 20 people cradling their cats.

"Polish people feel we have to help because... when we came out of WWII the country was just left to the Soviet Union. We won't let that happen again."

Read the full stories about these amazing acts of charity on our website

NEWS



FELLOWSHIP IS LIFE

APRIL 2022
No. 85

Waltham Forest Echo is the borough's free community newspaper. We publish monthly and distribute 15,000 free copies of each issue – and we will continue to do so during the ongoing public health crisis

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Walthamstow Garden Party over

After eight years, the annual Walthamstow Garden Party has come to a sudden and unexpected end.

Approximately a month ago, participants in the annual Lloyd Park festival, which began in July 2014, received an email stating it “will not be going ahead” this year.

The free summer event was the result of a collaboration between Waltham Forest Council and the Barbican and saw 30,000 people a year enjoy music, dance, spoken word and local food and drink.

A statement on both the council's and the Barbican's website reads: “The world looks very different now than it did back in 2019 and continues to be a time of real challenge for so many of us. We want to ensure that what we do is responsive and creates space for new ideas and positive change.

“We are delighted that the long-term creative partnership between the Barbican and London Borough of Waltham Forest will continue, and we are excited to see what will emerge through our continued collaboration.”



The festival in 2019 Credit Chloe Beale

Man banned from running restaurants after hygiene horror

A “brazen” owner who opened a second restaurant next door after his first shut down due to poor hygiene is now banned from running food businesses.

Sher Shah shut down Franco Pizza in Hoe Street in the summer of 2019 after failing two hygiene inspections in just over a year.

However, last year, while the council was still trying to take him to court, he opened a Pizza GoGo just next door.

On 28th February, he was finally sentenced at Thames Magistrates Court for the dangerous state of his first business

and fined £27,920.

This month the court also agreed to a Hygiene Prohibition Order (HPO), which forbids him from running another food business.

Waltham Forest Council deputy leader Clyde Loakes told the *Echo*: “That Mr Shah subsequently opened a second pizzeria next door to the first speaks to his brazen disregard for the health and safety of his customers.

“It’s not often we see hygiene breaches as egregious as this and it’s satisfying to know we played our part as a local authority in removing this risk to the public.”



Dead mice in a pool of grease in Franco Pizza Credit WF Council

Local police strip-searched nine teenagers last year

Waltham Forest police strip-searched at least nine teenagers in the last year, of which more than half were black.

The figure was revealed by the area's borough commander, Detective Chief Superintendent Richard Tucker, in response to a letter from Walthamstow MP Stella Creasy on 22nd March.

He wrote that there were nine incidents in which someone

younger than 18 was strip-searched in Waltham Forest over the last year, out of 271 incidents in London as a whole.

He added: “While I don’t have the gender breakdown of the searches conducted in Waltham Forest, out of the 271 London searches, six were female.

“The ethnic breakdown for the nine searches in Waltham Forest are three Asian, five black and one white.”

Chingford boy, 9, gets first GCSE

A Chingford nine-year-old has already passed his Maths GCSE, receiving the second highest possible grade.

Shipon Chowdhury says his son Zayn plans to take all his exams early, and now has his eyes on the sciences, to boost his chances of getting into Oxbridge.

Zayn attends Selwyn Primary School but studied in his own time while stuck at home during lockdown and took the exam independently last November.

Shipon said: “I don’t know where he gets his talents from. His mother and I are both educated but he’s surpassing above and beyond anything we did.

“He’s good at maths and science but really he’s good across



Zayn Chowdhury Credit Patrick Dowse

the board, I think he finds school quite easy. He’s not always studying either, he’s very sporty and loves BMX and football.”

The family celebrated Zayn finishing his exam with a trip to Disneyland in LA and by giving him a “yes day”, where he could pick the family’s activities.

NEWS

Soho Theatre Walthamstow opening early next year

By Victoria Munro

The highly anticipated Soho Theatre Walthamstow, once the EMD cinema, is set to open early next year after a £30million restoration.

Waltham Forest Council estimates the venue, originally meant to cost only £20m, will add £52m to the local economy over the next decade.

Willmott Dixon, with the help of Historic England, took an “arrested decay approach” to the building, preserving features from multiple points in its history.

Unveiling the venue’s new name on 16th March, future artist-in-residence, Leyton-born Alessandro Babalola, said he has wanted a theatre in Waltham Forest since he was 13.

He said: “I used to tell people Walthamstow was like New York. Growing up, this was Central London to me.

“We will be bringing world-class entertainment to people’s doorsteps and showing people this part of London really

means business.

“This all came from a 20-year campaign by local community members to ensure this breathtaking space remained an entertainment venue.”

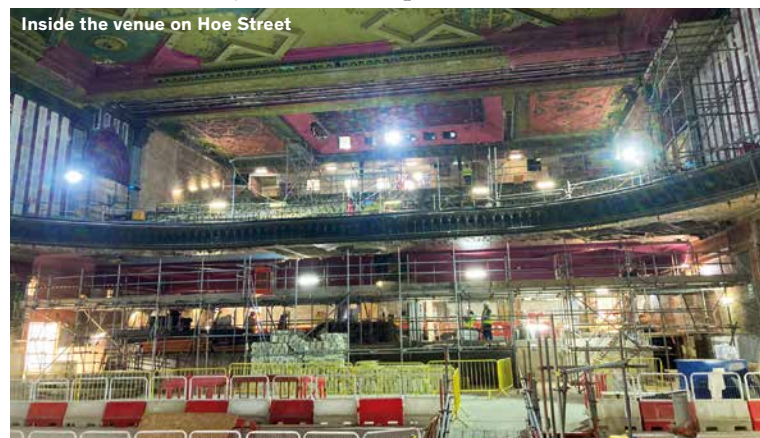
He told the *Echo* two of his plans for the space were “to put on amazing space play”, making use of the venue’s grand size, and a musical about grime, a genre that partly originated in Walthamstow.

Council leader Grace Williams added: “It’s brilliant you will be able to just get off the Tube and go to the theatre, as well as visiting the other

night time economy that will be here. People want reasons to go out in their local area on Saturday night – cultural destinations do not begin and end in zone one.

“I know Alfred Hitchcock would be proud if he could look down at us today. It was this cinema that inspired his love of film and that will form the next generation of creatives in Waltham Forest.”

While there will be space for a pub inside the building, it has yet to be decided if this will go to The Victoria, a queer-friendly pub that used to be on-site.



Inside the venue on Hoe Street

New hope for The Antelope

By Victoria Munro

A Leyton pub which shut down after 140 years is set to make a triumphant return – this time owned by the community.

After The Antelope in Church Road closed in 2014, neighbours were horrified to realise owner Tvzi Ltd was illegally converting it into studio flats.

Waltham Forest Council ordered the company to reverse the changes and successfully fought off an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate in late 2020, forcing Tvzi to put the lease up for sale once more last October.

Rather than wait for a chain to swoop in, the pub’s devoted neighbours are banding together to ensure it is run as a non-profit by and for the people of Leyton.

Michelle Connolly and Curran McKay, two of ten directors who will run the pub, told the *Echo* they have “a verbal offer” to buy the lease.

Curran said: “We got over one big hurdle stopping it being turned into flats and now the next step is, not just turning it from a derelict building into a pub, but making it a viable one.

“Our goal is to make it more than just a pub because nowadays those ‘wet-led’ businesses that are just about selling beers can’t really sustain themselves anymore.”

After surveying hundreds of local residents about what they’d most like to see – with the most popular option being a Sunday roast – the group are keen to ensure there is some-

thing for everyone.

Michelle said: “With the expansion of the ward, it will be crucial to have somewhere the community feels is their own space so they can come together and share good times, whether that’s getting a coffee after dropping the kids off at school or celebrating after a football game at Leyton Orient.

“We’d like to thank everyone for their patience with this, it’s been a really long slog but the momentum has stayed up.”

Previously, the estate agent told the *Echo* the lease was on the market for “around £50,000”.

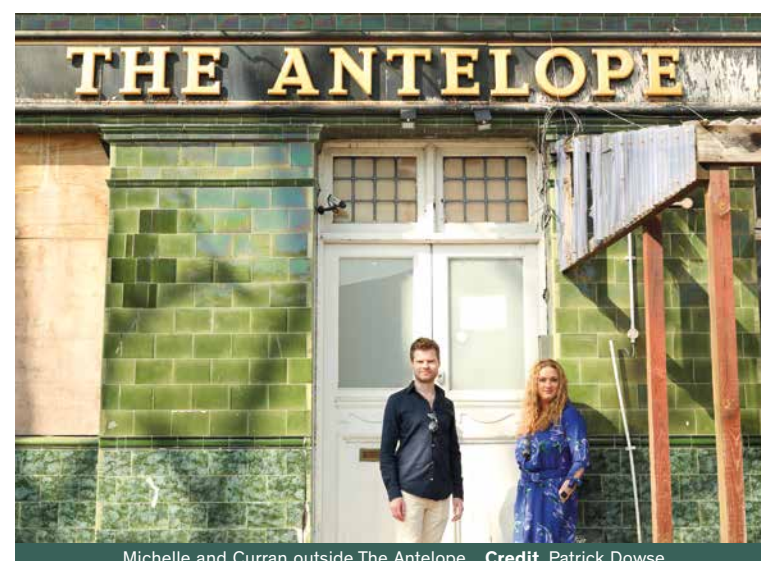
With support from the Plunkett Foundation, a charity that supports community-owned enterprises, the group plans to sell shares to the community and apply for grants to raise the funds.

First, however, a surveyor will need to assess how much work is needed to make the building usable, with one obvious fix being creating a new side entrance for the upstairs residents.

Curran added: “The space looks like a DIY shop inside, you wouldn’t know it was a pub, so we’re kind of starting again from scratch.

“But this is the first time living in London that I have felt like a part of a community. People don’t want to lose that because of all the high-rises [being built] in the borough and just become a sleepy commuter belt for people going into central London.”

Find out more by visiting The Antelope Pub E10 Community Interest Group on Facebook



Michelle and Curran outside The Antelope Credit Patrick Dowse

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NEWS



Owner Laura Almond preparing the next day's loaves



Beaten by a Whisker

Laura Almond's baking career began with an honesty box selling cakes outside her home and, nine years later, has produced Walthamstow's newest bakery.

Beaten By A Whisker, which she describes as "incidentally vegan", opened in Brunner Road on 22nd February.

The 31-year-old owner is in charge of bread, cakes and pastries, while chef-in-training Juliette Hirt, her "boyfriend's colleague's housemate", makes sandwiches and tarts for lunch.

Laura told the *Echo*: "We bake bread 12 loaves at a time so it's always really fresh and often warm because we're just baking through the day. I turn the ovens on at 6am so I leave the house at 5.30am but honestly, for a baker, I'm making it very easy for myself.

"Bread is actually my second skill, I am more of a pastry chef. I started selling cakes when I first moved to London and then worked part-time in a bakery and then a restaurant in Hackney.

"Business has been so good, much better

than I expected. I only knew Walthamstow as an outsider before so it's been great being here and getting to know the local people, they've been so welcoming."

Current breakfast options include cinnamon buns, cardamom buns and banana bread, using fruit too old to sell gifted by nearby Expa Planet, where they also buy their vegetables.

Laura is keen to expand this range into croissants, while Juliette is considering a supper club, but for now the day-to-day bustle keeps them busy enough.

Laura added: "The lay-out is open so people can see our processes and we thought we could split our time between baking and serving coffee as people come in.

"Actually we ended up with a stream of people needing coffee and no time to bake but we're getting a full-time barista soon, who will be more experienced making it to the standard [our supplier] Curious Roo expects."

Visit them behind Unit 2 Hops House, E17 7FJ from 8.30-3.30 Tuesday to Friday or 9-4 on weekends

Long-awaited investigation into fatal Chingford fire begins

By Nadoya Reid & Victoria Munro

A long-awaited investigation into the tragic death of a resident at a Chingford home for disabled adults has finally begun.

Ashlie Timms, 46, died on 20th April 2018 after a fire, thought to have been caused by an electrical fault, broke out in her room at 2B Connington Court in Connington Crescent.

The fire began around 2am and took more than three hours to control, with a neighbour remarking that the three-storey building burned "like a tinderbox".

All other residents and carers escaped the home, owned by Sequence Care, and a jury will now hear evidence about whether Ashlie could have been saved.

Neighbour Bernadette Cleere told the jury on 21st March that she believes staff present that night "obviously did not know" to call 999.

She said: "There were residents from the home being taken by staff across the road to the grass verge. One young man kept running back into the building, even though it was on fire, to try to get people out."

The jury later heard from Sequence Care support worker Howard Elburg, one of four staff present that night. He said that, after finding no fire in 2A and hearing from a colleague there was no fire in 2B, the thought of calling 999 did not cross his

mind, although he accepted he should have done so.

Yousouph Abiodun, an agency support worker, told the jury the night was his first night shift for Sequence Care, claiming no one had told him his role if the alarm went off. He insisted that he followed Howard's direction and never entered 2B, where Ashlie lived, that night.

However, East London Coroner Graeme Irvine expressed concerns about several direct contradictions between the two men's statements.

This includes Howard's claim that Yousouph peered into Ashlie's room through the window and told him she was already dead, while Yousouph is adamant he was busy comforting a resident and never saw her body.

The inquest is still waiting to hear whether a third support worker present on the night will attend to give evidence. Following several failed attempts by the police to contact this witness, Coroner Irvine said further measures have been taken.

The inquest at Barking Town Hall is scheduled to last until 14th April.



The fire in 2018 Credit @LAS_HART

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COMMENT

Walthamstow life in crisis

Walthamstow MP Stella Creasy as part of our MP column series

It's already possible to see the cost of living crisis starting to take hold in Walthamstow. Nearly 6,000 people in our area claim Universal Credit, a number that grows month on month. The cost of putting a three-year-old through nursery full-time has risen by £20 a week, while soaring rental prices are forcing those for whom Walthamstow has always been a home to leave London.

This situation was by no means inevitable and, after enforcing twelve years of austerity and cutting economic ties with our nearest neighbours, the Conservative government should step up to help make ends meet. Instead, we have a Chancellor who is more concerned with his Instagram and a Prime Minister too busy responding to police inquiries to take this seriously.

Things will only get worse as electricity and gas bills rise by

an average of 54% – at least. In response, the Chancellor intends to force every household to take a £200 loan to cover the cost of energy, which we will all be paying back for five years, while the companies setting these ever-growing prices make substantial profits. In the last year alone, the chief executive of Shell earned more than £6million.

Rishi's raid on the pockets of hard-working families doesn't stop there: his planned increase in national insurance will hit 27 million workers but leave other forms of income – like buying and selling property or dealing stocks and shares – untouched. Rather than saddling households with debt, the Chancellor should be asking energy companies to pay their fair share and investing in renewable energy to secure a sustainable recovery.



Stella Creasy
Credit Parliament.uk

It isn't just energy companies who are raking in profits at the expense of our community. The Buy Now Pay Later industry – namely companies such as Klarna, Laybuy and Clearpay – have taken full advantage of squeezed household budgets, offering loans to spread the cost

of purchases over a number of months. I'm sure we've all seen the Klarna ads lining the walls of stations on the Victoria Line and promising a better, more glamorous life free of financial stress. In glorifying unsustainable spending in this way, these companies are targeting young people and those

on lower incomes. Research from Citizens' Advice shows that 1 in 12 people turned to such loans to cover the costs of essentials in the last six months, while research from Student Beans shows 42% of 16–24 year olds used their services last year. With close to one in every ten of Walthamstow's 16–24 year olds claiming Universal Credit, I worry about the impact these services will have on their financial futures.

In February last year, the government agreed that this industry needs regulating; they are yet to act on this promise. As a result, these companies continue to make bumper profits, while the numbers of people reporting financial distress as a result of their loans grow. If we do not act now, unregulated services will continue to creep into the gaps left by the government's ignorance of the sheer scale of the crisis we face.

A local food bank has received a royal thank you after its "remarkable" efforts during lockdown



A local food bank has received a royal thank you after its "remarkable" efforts during lockdown. On 2nd March, Queen Elizabeth II's personal representative for Greater London visited the PL84U Al-Suffa food bank, supported by world food brand Tropical Sun, to pass on her gratitude.

Since 2013, the cross-community interfaith initiative has provided

food, companionship and clothes to the elderly, homeless and others in need, from all faiths, beliefs and backgrounds.

Earlier this year founder Saira Begum Mir received a British Empire Medal for her services to the borough, which she said was a "credit to each and every" person involved in the charity.

Royal representative Sir Kenneth Olisa OBE told gathered volunteers: "During the lockdown period, when

you rose up to help everybody, it was really remarkable. The work that you're doing, to me, symbolises so much that's great about our country.

"What was remarkable about the whole Covid experience was how communities just came together and helped each other.

"People who didn't know who their neighbour was asked themselves 'that old lady who lives around the corner, I wonder if she's OK?' and went to find out.

"It is really, really encouraging. So, on behalf of the Queen, a HUGE, HUGE thank you."

Sir Kenneth spent the rest of his visit chipping in alongside volunteers to help distribute food, including items donated by Tropical Sun.

The world food brand is owned by local company Wanis International Foods, one of the largest private employers in the borough, and thus was keen to help out a charity close to home.

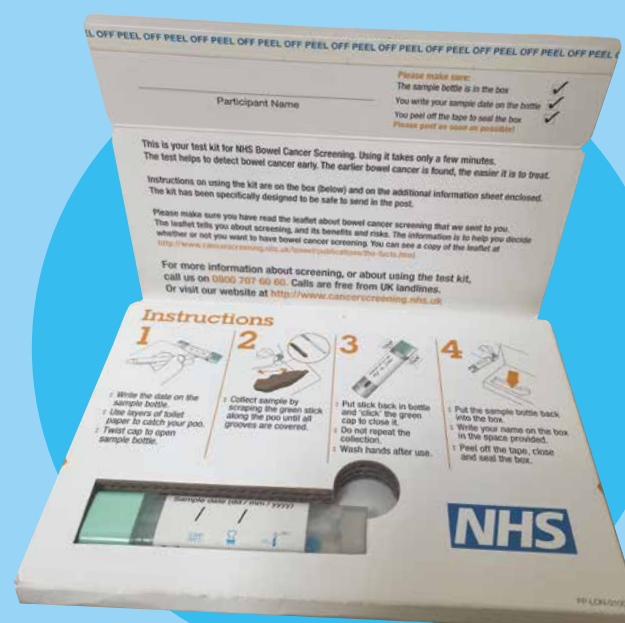
Wanis commercial director George Phillips, said: "It is an honour to be able to support this amazing charity and we are delighted that their hard work has been recognised by Her Majesty."

If you would like to help support the work of PL84U AL-SUFFA you can donate by visiting pl84ualsuffa.co.uk

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For more information or advice, contact your local Health Improvement Specialist - Leena Khagram on leena.khagram@nhs.net or go to the national programme website: www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-cancer-screening



LOCAL ELECTION

The future of Waltham Forest is in your hands

By Victoria Munro

Waltham Forest residents will cast their ballots on 5th May to decide who leads the borough for the next four years.

The borough held its first local elections in the 1960s and has been overwhelmingly Labour or “no overall control” ever since, with the exception of a brief Conservative majority from 1968 to 1971.

At the most recent election in 2018, almost 200,000 votes were cast and Labour maintained the majority it has held since 2010, winning 46 of a possible 60 seats.

However, 16 current councillors are not running for re-election, while changes to ward boundaries have dramatically altered the playing field.

In the next three pages, we outline the main parties vying for your vote – plus some of the scrappier challengers. Look out for more election coverage on our website over the course of this month.

New battles lines drawn

In December 2020, the Local Government Boundary Commission published its final recommendations for how to redraw the political map of the borough, since confirmed.

The LGBC is an independent parliamentary body that aims to avoid “electoral inequality” by ensuring all councillors on a council represent approximately the same number of voters.

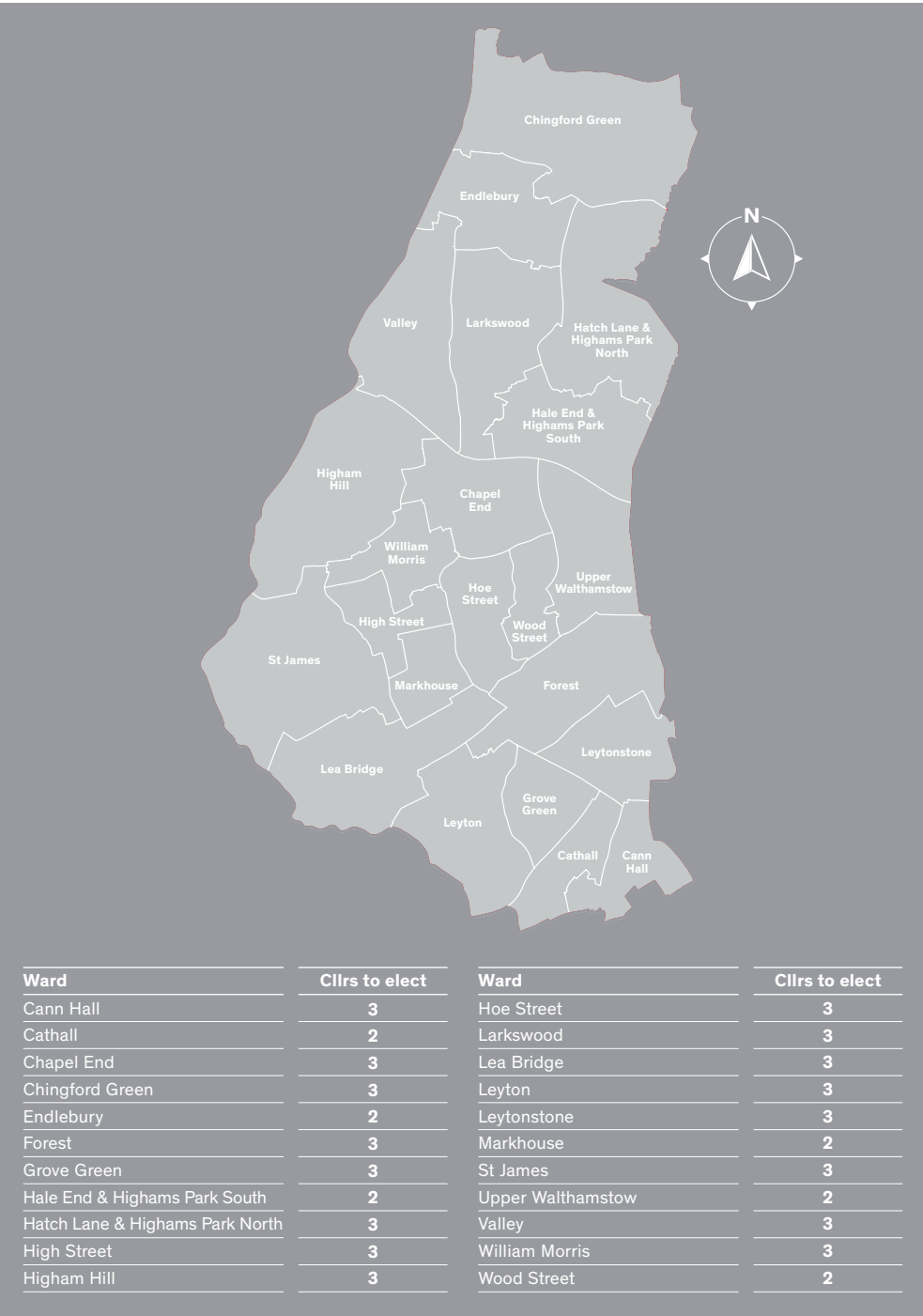
In Waltham Forest, this meant redrawing every ward boundary in the borough and creating two new wards: Upper Walthamstow and St James. Whereas previously every ward had three councillors, six with smaller populations now have only two.

Politically, the most significant change is the creation of Upper Walthamstow and the new shape of Hale End & Highams Park – now re-named Hale End & Highams Park South – just above it.

The old ward straddled the A406, which generally separates the borough’s Labour South from its Conservative North, and turned red in the last election after Labour won two new seats. The new ward now lies entirely in the borough’s traditionally more Tory area, giving the party a chance to recoup.

Candidates confirmed

Both main parties have decided their candidates – with Waltham Forest Labour confirming the last few on its Twitter as recently as 25th March – after a selection process dogged by in-fighting.



The tension on both sides is said to have resulted from leadership struggles: on the Labour side between Labour leader Grace Williams and cabinet member Liaquat Ali MBE and, for the Conservatives, between those backing leader Tim James and those who favour deputy leader Emma Best.

Last summer, the vote to pick former Labour leader Clare Coghill’s successor reportedly came down to 23 votes for Cllr Williams against 21 for Cllr Ali. Cllr Ali and his two relatives, Cllrs Hather and Umar Ali, were then rejected at interview when they applied to run again this year.

Two more current councillors, Masood Ahmad and Mohammad Asghar, were later deselected at ward level. Like the Ali family, both identify as Muslim.

The final decision for each ward is decided by a vote among local members; a process that reignited complaints made after the leadership vote about issues with the internal voting system.

The entire party has used an online system called Anonymvoter for internal ballots since 2020. As reported by the left-wing Labour news site Skwawkbox, it has attracted multiple complaints at a local level about technical issues.

Those within Waltham Forest Labour claim that, in a couple of wards, multiple members were unable to vote. This was particularly concerning in St James, where members claim five people were blocked from voting and the final choice came down to a margin of one.

Similarly, it is alleged that two councillors who took part in the leadership

vote last summer never received an email confirmation after voting. The final tally adds up to only 44 out of a total 46 Labour councillors.

The concerns about these internal votes were put to the local Labour party, who would only respond “on background”, meaning the *Echo* could only use the information provided if it was not attributed to the party.

Within the Conservatives, the selection process for all wards was restarted after former leader Alan Siggers handed the reins to Tim James. Some wards were later forced to restart a third time after successful complaints about the process.

These included Cllr James’ own ward, Hatch Lane, and Larkwood ward. In both cases, the final decision the third time around was made by a panel of Conservative members from elsewhere in the country, forgoing the usual ward members’ vote.

In Larkwood ward, this led to the deselection of Cllr Selina Seesunkur, chosen by members during the vote the second time the process was run.

According to those within the party, her deselection – along with the deselection of Cllrs Andy Hemsted and Nick Halabi and the resignation of Cllr Siggers – means the majority of councillors running again are those who favour current deputy leader Emma Best over Cllr James.

Both Labour and the Conservatives will automatically have a leadership vote at their first meeting after the local election.

A challenger (re)forms

In the last local election, Labour managed to win only one seat in Chingford, held by Cllr Elizabeth Baptiste in Valley ward.

In most parts of Chingford – with the exception of Valley and Hatch Lane, where the most popular Labour candidate lost by only around 300 votes – the Conservative hold has seemed unshakeable.

However, some suspect a new challenger may appear next month, amid rumours that Reform UK – previously known as the Brexit Party – may be planning to stand in the borough’s Tory strongholds.

The party has yet to publicly state plans to run but, if true, it could either present a credible threat to the Conservatives, or else split the right-wing vote and give Labour a chance to make gains.

The local elections will take place on 5th May. You must register to vote by Thursday, 14th April to have your say in our borough’s future. Do so here: walthamforest.gov.uk/council-and-elections/elections-and-voting/registering-vote

LOCAL ELECTION

A Fairer Future for Waltham Forest

By Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

While large new developments are rarely greeted with delight, Labour leader Grace Williams insists they are key to the council's ability to balance its books and maintain services despite decades of government funding cuts.

"We have to work with what we've got and we do a very good job of that," she said, "Some residents want to stay in a permanent position, but we can't just sit and wait for the government [to help]."

New developments create new homes, bring in money for upgraded public spaces and, most crucially, grow the council tax revenue stream. "Look at Walthamstow town centre," she said, "We've been able to build a new cinema, restaurants and a new theatre: that's been the result of developments."

The party's 2022 manifesto – titled 'A Fairer Future for Waltham Forest' – now promises a new set of facilities to come, including a lido, four youth hubs, a health centre in every neighbourhood and a new university campus, thanks to a deal with the University of Portsmouth. After dramatic flooding last summer, it also commits to "creating more surface water drainage systems" like rain gardens, alongside other green promises like introducing weekly food waste collections.

One goal that Cllr Williams is keen to emphasise is building 1,000 new social rent homes – the cheapest affordable housing, generally reserved for those on the housing waiting list – in the next four years. Since 2014, the number of social rent homes has grown by less than a hundred a year, doing little to chip away at the approximately 10,000 households on the waiting list. However, of the 3,300 homes currently in the pipeline of council-



Grace Williams Credit WF Council

owned developer Sixty Bricks, only a fifth are social rent.

"It's the best we can do now, given that we don't have any national government support," said Grace, "In London we have a city where people cannot afford to live, it's a national crisis."

This crisis has forced the council into one of its most controversial measures:

moving households in temporary accommodation hundreds of miles away, to cheaper areas like Stoke-On-Trent. Grace explained: "We have a policy of housing people where they can afford it and it's a scandal that this means not in London. We could place a family in the borough but they wouldn't be able to eat, to heat their house, to clothe their children. The

benefit cap means families can't afford to live here.

"We're particularly affected in Waltham Forest because we are on the edge of London and a small borough: we have less land and less social housing."

About 50 families every week come to the council facing eviction or struggling to buy food, which has led to an £1.3million overspend this year in discretionary housing allowances.

Grace asked: "The question is: how can we provide a safety net that's sustainable for them? Because we do not have it in our gift to get them more benefits, what employment support can we offer?"

To this end, the council recently created a £2million fund for struggling families, although details of how it will be used are, as yet, unconfirmed.

However, arguments about the housing crisis do little to comfort residents angry about the encroachment of huge new flat blocks, such as those recently approved in Lea Bridge Road. "The thing is we live in a city and space is very much an asset... we need to use the land we have got to the best effect we can," Grace said, "Lea Bridge is one example of a place where we can really deliver on our affordable housing target, we've been able to have 45% affordable homes there."

There was however, a tacit acceptance that residents are feeling powerless over how fast the borough is growing. "I do think one thing we need to do more as a matter of priority is work with hyper local communities," Grace said, adding: "[For example, we should] work with the residents of Lea Bridge, so they can get involved."

Read Waltham Forest Labour's 2022 Manifesto
at: issuu.com/walthamforestlabour/docs/manifesto_2022

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LICENCES FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT Public Notice

Notice is given that **Ms. Annabel Luyken** has applied to the London Borough of Waltham Forest for a Special Treatment Licence for:

- **Tattooing**
- **Licence for the premises: Unit 2, rear of 5 Argyll Avenue E10 7QE**

Anyone wishing to oppose the application must give notice in writing to the Licensing Officer, Resident Services, Licensing Service, 3 The Square, Leyton, London E10 5NR WITHIN 28 DAYS OF PUBLICATION specifying the grounds of opposition.

Persons objecting to the grant of a licence must be prepared to attend in person before a Committee of the Council.

LICENSING ACT 2003 Application for the Grant of a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that **Urban Initiatives Limited** has applied to the London Borough of Waltham Forest for the grant of a Premises Licence at Renegade Urban Winery, Unit 7, Lockwood Way, E17 5RB. The nature of the application is as follows:

- **To permit the sale of alcohol on/off premises: Mon-Sat: 09:00–23:00; Sun: 09:00–22:30**

The Licensing register listing full details of the application is kept by the Licensing Service, 3 The Square, Leyton, London E10 5NR. The application may be viewed Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am – 5pm (except Bank Holidays).

Any person wishing to make a representation in respect of the above activities may do so in writing to the Licensing Service, 3 The Square, Leyton, London E10 5NR or via email: Licensing@walthamforest.gov.uk.

Representations must be received no later than **22.04.2022**.

It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with this application. A person is liable to an unlimited fine on conviction should such a false statement be made.

LICENSING ACT 2003 Application for the Grant of a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that **Renee Williams** has applied to the London Borough of Waltham Forest for the grant of a Premises Licence at **DabbaDrop, Unit 11–12 Excalibur Works, 13 Argall Ave, E10 7QE**. The nature of the application is as follows:

- **To permit the sale of alcohol for takeaway from 14:00–20:00 on Thursday and Fridays**

The Licensing register listing full details of the application is kept by the Licensing Service, 3 The Square, Leyton, London E10 5NR. The application may be viewed Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am–5pm (except Bank Holidays). Any person wishing to make a representation in respect of the above activities may do so in writing to the Licensing Service, 3 The Square, Leyton, London E10 5NR or via email: Licensing@walthamforest.gov.uk.

Representations must be received no later than **15/04/2022**.

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LOCAL ELECTION

The blue bid for Waltham Forest



Conservative leader Tim James Credit Sarah Hyde

By Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

Waltham Forest hasn't been blue since 1971 but local Conservative leader Tim James insists they are "not going to be pushed out". Speaking to the Local Democracy Reporting Service over video call, he said: "I think we punch above our weight and get good outcomes. We're here to stay."

Since the Lib Dems lost all their spots on the council in 2014, the Conservatives have been Labour's only opposition, currently holding 14 of the borough's 60 seats. The group is down four councillors since 2010 but is determined to claw wards back, with Cllr James insisting it suffered smaller

losses than at other London councils because they're "not complacent" and "speak up".

After two terms under Labour control, Cllr James says he often finds the speed of changes to housing and transport frustrating when heritage projects like Highams Park's Regal Cinema or Walthamstow's EMD cinema are "very slow".

A Conservative vision for planning in the borough, he said, would see different "styles" adopted in different parts of the borough, adding: "In Walthamstow it's much easier to put things with more density than Chingford or Highams Park."

While the group is "very aware" of London's housing problem, he said: "We just don't agree in terms of the

breakneck speed of change. I think that every area ought to be considered in different local plans, which ought to be reconsidered at face value."

As an example, he pointed to the resident-approved plan for Highams Park, which guides the shape of larger planning applications. In March, this document contributed to a decision to reject plans for a seven-storey flat block near Highams Park Station, vehemently opposed by residents.

What about the borough's contentious low-traffic neighbourhoods? Laughing, he said: "[Waltham Forest's] traffic policy is gridlock, we just want to clog everything up as much as possible to pollute even more and stop people from getting from A to B. It just seems not to be not working really; Mini-Holland is not bringing us to Holland."

Cllr James has represented Hatch End ward since 2014 and took over the local party last year after former leader Alan Siggers stood down, allegedly under duress.

The 52-year-old senior recruitment advisor was born in Anglesea, north Wales, and left school at 16, working in Guernsey hotels before starting at the bottom in the island's infamous banking industry.

Explaining his politics, he said: "I've always been Conservative. For me, it wasn't necessarily about policies, it was about outlook and way of living, about the work ethic from my parents who had their own business, about patriotism and fairness and belief in law and order. So, without knowing it, I was groomed and brought up as one."

He felt excited and optimistic during the 1980s, after the "English disease" of strikes and nationalised industry a decade prior, and said he thought Thatcher was "by and large phenomenal", adding: "When I think of Canary Wharf, the Eurostar, Channel Four, I think 'these things are here because of this woman'."

For his fellow Conservatives in the borough, he hopes to "push back" against Labour rule and "find different arguments and perspectives", without "opposing for opposition's sake".

He added: "I have found it interesting that whenever anything is praised it's to [Labour's] credit and then when it's negative it's our fault. The reality is: they've been in power a long time, they've got [two] local MPs and the London Mayor, maybe it's time to look a little closer to home."

Candidate Sam O'Connell
Courtesy of WF Conservatives

Youngest ever Conservative runs for election

An 18-year-old Conservative is running in May after being chosen over the group's only current non-white female councillor.

Law student Sam O'Connell is running to represent Larkwood ward, where he grew up, alongside existing councillors Catherine Saumarez and John Moss.

He was picked by an interview panel over Cllr Selina Seesunkur, now the fourth Conservative councillor departing this year after former leader Alan Siggers chose not to run and Andy Hemsted and Nick Halabi failed at interview.

Sam was first selected to represent the area last November alongside Cllr Moss and Cllr Seesunkur but the party was forced to re-start the selection process after a successful appeal.

In a public Facebook post following her deselection, Cllr Seesunkur wrote: "I appreciate a large number of you are disappointed that I am not running but I would like to encourage you to vote for Sam and not blame him for my demise, it was not down to him."

A further statement on her official councillor's page states that, in November, she was voted for by 19 of the ward's 23 Conservative members but that, when the process restarted, candidates were re-interviewed and "for reasons unknown" she was not selected.

In a statement following Sam's first selection in November, former Conservative leader Alan Siggers said he was chosen because "members felt they needed someone with localised knowledge, a youth perspective and [that it] was important to have a candidate who lives in Larkwood."

The group's previous youngest-ever candidate was Cllr Mitchell Goldie, who won his seat at the age of 19 and is running again this year.

LOCAL ELECTION



Lib Dems

By Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

Homes, health and environment are the key issues for Waltham Forest’s Lib Dems this May.

The party, who have not had a seat on the council since 2014, is run locally by campaigns officer Arran Angus and branch secretary Naomi McCarthy, both running in Leyton’s Grove Green ward.

The pair are both parents who joined the party after the Brexit referendum, in what Naomi describes as “a fit of rage”.

The Lib Dem charter calls for a “fair, free and open society” and its members have an international outlook, but what would voting for one mean locally?

Arran said: “The biggest thing we pick up on the doorstep is people don’t feel

listened to and things just get done for the greater good.

“We’re... not [about] being part of a huge super majority which just follows the party line and obeys the whips.”

Naomi said the party also wants to keep the council “up to mark” on its environmental promises, such as protecting trees, which she isn’t sure it always does.

For example, despite recognising the need for more family homes, both criticised the imminent destruction of Orient Way Pocket Park near Lea Bridge Station to make way for new flat blocks.

Naomi said: “There is a lot of pressure to build homes, but... there’s been too much listening to developers. We need more family homes that people here can actually afford to live in.”

Despite failing to win any seats in 2014 or 2018, at least one in ten voters in the borough have supported the party in each election.

Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) insist no mainstream parties in Waltham Forest are standing up for working-class people.

They claim Labour and the Conservatives are “united in the idea that we have to maintain the rising profits of big business and the 1% first, while the majority suffer”.

Their candidates, who include trade unionists and community campaigners, pledge to vote against cuts and work to “build a mass campaign to win the government funding our borough needs”.

One of the group’s most vocal members is Nancy Taaffe, chair of Save Our Square, who battled for seven years to stop the Mall development in Walthamstow town centre. If elected for High Street ward, she promises to fight for more council homes, rent controls and investment in public services.

Among the other candidates is Len Hockey, a Whipps Cross porter who led a strike over unfair wage disparity, standing in Leytonstone.

He said: “Our strike victory shows that, if we fight, we can win. NHS trusts and



local councils have given millions to privatisers over the years. We need to bring all services back into public control, not waste public money on profiteers.”

Tube driver Glenroy Watson, standing in Chapel End, said: “At a time when household bills and the cost of transport and food are running out of control, it’s time to stand against the rot.”

And, teacher Louise Cuffaro, standing in Hatch Lane, said: “Education should be comprehensive, inclusive and state-run. Not a marketplace for making CEOs and related businesses rich!”

Find out more about TUSC on their Facebook: facebook.com/walthamforesttusc/

Independents

By Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

A number of independent candidates are running for election, with many citing new developments as their main concern.

These include online bookseller Ed Pond in Hale End and Highams Park South; fashion designer Solène Fabios in Lea Bridge and retired construction teacher Tom Quigley in Larkwood.

Ed Pond, a former Labour member, insists neither of the main political parties are able to “genuinely reflect the wishes” of residents.

Speaking to the Local Democracy Reporting Service, he said: “I think now is a time to present credible alternatives to both.

“[Party councillors] cannot genuinely reflect the wishes of local residents,

because they are answerable to their party, with its politics and tactics – ultimately, their hands are tied.”

Regarding his opposition to large-scale developments, he added: “I know we need some, it just shouldn’t be a real imposition on the community and I think a lot of people sense that.”

Lea Bridge independent Solène Fabios said she was inspired to run by fellow independent Claire Weiss, who was unsuccessful but secured 441 votes in last year’s by-election.

She said: “Local GPs and dentists are completely overwhelmed, our green spaces are at risk of destruction and air pollution is dangerously high.

“Mass overdevelopment [is] encroaching on our green spaces that need protecting and impacting our already polluted air.”

Tom Quigley, meanwhile, hopes to join local politics after successfully campaign-

ing to stop the Larkshall pub being developed last year.

His biggest priority is protecting the Larkhall Leisure Centre and Nursery, which has been proposed as a site for the

development of 280 homes in the council’s local plan.

He said: “[Independents] want what the majority of the residents want and the majority want the leisure centre left as it is.”



(From left to right) Ed Pond, Solène Fabios and Tom Quigley

HOUSING

An artist's impression of the tallest buildings in the scheme

Credit Hawkins Brown/Exterior Architecture



Huge 26-storey tower approved in Leyton

By Victoria Munro

A 26-storey tower in Leyton has won planning permission and will become the borough's second tallest building.

The scheme next to Lea Bridge Station will consist of four buildings across three sites and contain 345 new flats – plus “commercial and cultural spaces” – of which 160 will be “affordable” homes.

Residents are furious at losing the Orient Way Pocket Park and its 122 trees to make way for the buildings, while councillors have argued the affordable homes are still too expensive.

The developer London Square attracted controversy last year after it was announced in September that former council leader Clare Coghill had accepted a job at their subsidiary.

A resident of Elm Park Road, who asked not to be named, was one of six objectors to urge Waltham Forest Council's planning committee to reject the plans on 7th March.

She said: “I implore you to see the madness of building on these tiny plots of land. Everyone should have a safe and healthy home – these flats are neither.

“This is marsh land, it's a recognised flood risk... The grass and trees being removed act as natural flood prevention and a habitat for wildlife.

“[The tower will] cast a long shadow, affecting thousands of homes. It falls outside of the council's own Local Plan, which reduced the height of the nearest tower [at the Motion development] to 17 floors.”

Councillors also heard from Roger Montaut, co-founder of Capital Industrial, a company which owns a “significant” chunk

of the nearby Argall Avenue Trading Estate.

He said: “The Lea Bridge Road junction is extremely busy and also the only way into and out of the Argall Avenue Estate, which is a strategic industrial location.

“Our fear is that straining the junction will make accessibility even more difficult for our tenants... and will do a great deal of damage to lots of [more than 200] businesses that operate from our space.”

The committee then heard a response from the council's principal planner Matt Duigan, who explained the height was necessary to “make these sites work as hard as possible” towards meeting the borough's housing target.

Responding to concerns about the loss of the Pocket Park, an “informal green space” created by the council itself, he insisted the sites are “not designated as open space”, provoking outrage from those watching and forcing chairwoman Cllr Jenny Gray to intervene.

A representative from London Square, asked to justify the decision not to include social rent homes, insisted this was to make it possible to include more “affordable” flats while still generating a profit.

The four committee members, as the fifth and sole Conservative member Alan Siggers was absent, told those watching that they regretfully felt forced to accept the plans.

Cllr Marie Pye said: “Our job tonight is not to decide whether we like this scheme, it's to decide whether this scheme meets the requirements of planning policy.

“I'm not happy that this is not social housing and rents will be only 20% below market rent and I have a lot of concerns about the safety of pedestrians... but it is policy compliant.”

American firm wants to build 38 storeys high

By Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

An American company wants to build towers of up to 38 storeys in a business park in Blackhorse Lane.

Uplands Business Park was bought by BlackRock – the world's largest investment manager – for a reported sum of £51million.

BlackRock is now working with housing developer NEAT on plans to build up to 1,800 new homes on the 11-acre site, as well as industrial and employment spaces.

Draft plans, presented to residents for consultation, show a line of eight tall tower blocks, ranging from 27 to 38 storeys, alongside several mid and low-rise buildings. The area's current tallest flat block, approved in 2018, is just 21 storeys.

Existing industrial buildings would be demolished to open up a new park space, dubbed “Wetlands Waterside”, that would face Dagenham Brook and the reservoirs.

In Waltham Forest Council's draft local plan, Blackhorse Lane is earmarked as an area with opportunities “to significantly increase height”. However, a skyline study recommends building heights from 18–27 storeys.

The skyline study adds: “Well-considered height and spaces between buildings will help reduce the ecological impact and improve the visual impact from across the wetlands.

“Redevelopment of the site must avoid harmful overshadowing that would compromise the comfort and enjoyment of surrounding public open space, private or communal outdoor spaces and private amenity of any neighbouring properties.”

According to NEAT's website, the developer wants to “capitalise on the emerging creative sector” by building an industrial-led development.

Despite the strategic importance of protecting London's dwindling industrial space, a draft masterplan being developed for Blackhorse Lane by the council sees a significant portion of land used for living or shopping.

On its website, the council says industrial needs will be “protected through good design” and new homes “should be seen as a positive benefit” because they will fund the area's modernisation.

To find out more about the plan for Uplands Business Park, visit: futureofuplands.com



An illustration of the industrial area of the redevelopment Credit NEAT

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HEALTH

Walthamstow woman has months to live unless genetic match found



Yvette wants a chance to see her niece and nephew grow up (courtesy of family)

By Victoria Munro

A Walthamstow woman has only months to live unless a suitable bone marrow donor can be found.

Yvette Chin, 41, was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, a rare aggressive blood cancer, last May and has exhausted all forms of treatment except a stem cell transplant.

The transplant requires a 90% genetic match and sadly there were no suitable donors in her family, meaning she now has a race against time to find someone else.

Her loved ones are urging people of East Asian descent to join the bone marrow transplant register and complete a simple mouth swab test in the

hopes of saving her life.

Her family said: “Yvette is much loved and makes friends wherever she goes. She’s been asked to be maid of honour so many times, she finally had to say she’d never do it again!

“She’s deeply unmateriastic: motivated by fun, kindness, beauty, friendship and adventure, not money and status. Yvette has so much left to give and things she wants to do: seeing her niece and nephew grow up, new travels and projects.”

Sadly, because she is not white, Yvette has a far lower chance of finding a donor on the register, especially as she is of mixed Chinese and Jamaican descent.

Joining the register involves swabbing the inside of your cheek. New stem cells are constantly produced in the body, meaning the donor doesn’t

lose anything.

There are three main registers in the UK. People aged 18–30 can register with Anthony Nolan and people aged 18–55 can register with DKMS. The British Bone Marrow Registry accepts people aged 17 to 40, you register when you donate blood.

Yvette’s brother Colin said: “I hope if more people from the community know how quick and easy it is to do, and that it’s literally life saving, we can find a match. Not just for Yvette, but also for others who don’t have time to wait.

“I’m asking for everyone to sign up and share #SwabForYvette on social media to spread awareness that we all have the power to save lives with a simple mouth swab.”

Find out more at: swabforyvette.com

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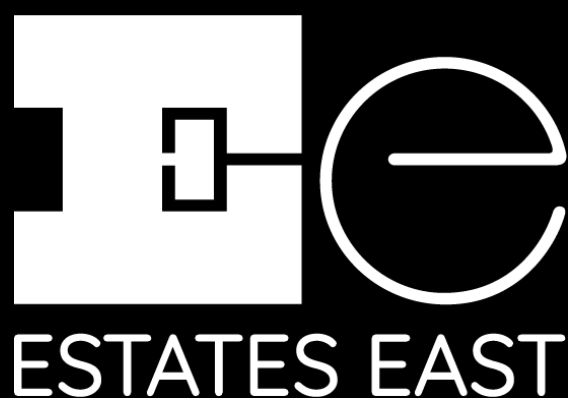
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SPORT

Beautifying the beautiful game

By David O'Driscoll

Football may be “the beautiful game” but, despite significant strides in the right direction, it still has its ugly side.

At a recent event in Walthamstow, ex-footballer Pat Nevin spoke about receiving homophobic abuse during his career, singled out for his “different” interests like attending the ballet, despite being straight. For the players who actually were gay, he added: “They couldn’t confidently trust all the players, the fans on the terraces or society in general not to persecute them.”

It was this atmosphere that led to the creation of Stonewall FC in 1991, following an advert in a gay publication. Today they are an established community, based at the ex-Olympic warm-up stadium next to the West Ham ground, with a men’s first team playing at a high non-league level.

I was keen to have the team I manage – the mens veterans squad at Coppermill Swifts, a



The mens veterans teams at Stonewall FC and Coppermill Swift FC Credit Stonewall FC

community club in Walthamstow – take Stonewall on. The club don’t normally have a veterans squad but formed one especially for our game, which ended in a hard-fought and competitive 1–1 draw.

After the game, I caught up with Tom Edington, a long-serving member. While the team faced “some hostile and homophobic opposition” in his early years, he said: “I can honestly say I absolutely loved every battle with that type of

opposition, supporting my mates and thinking ‘hopefully this makes them think and realise that we can play football too’.

“Stonewall FC is an incredible and life-changing place to connect with people and provides a safe place for each individual to be themselves. I was and am always totally and utterly proud to represent this club.”

View the highlights from our game here youtu.be/G53nSbVzfFY and find out more about Stonewall FC at stonewallfc.com

Stow FC win first title in decades

By Victoria Munro

Local club Walthamstow FC has won the Essex Senior League, its first league title in 37 years.

While the team has two more games to play this season, Stansted’s 3-1 loss against Redbridge on 29th March means they have already secured the trophy.

Chairman Andy Perkins credited the club’s success to securing “the right management team, who went out and got the right players”.

He told the *Echo*: “You have to have a team that stays together to win this league and... this season, we had eight or nine players that played throughout, that’s incredible at our level.

“It’s been brilliant over the past couple of years the way local companies have come on board. The MP, Stella Creasy, also comes to our games without even being asked – she just turns up.”

A spokesperson for the club added: “Just four years ago the club was days from going out of business altogether, so to be able to say we’re league champions is incredible. It’s a brilliant reward for so much hard work from our volunteers, players and management team.

“We’re proud to represent Walthamstow and be a part of its great community and we’re so grateful for the support of our brilliant fans.

We still have two home games left this season, on Saturday 2nd and Saturday 23rd April at 3pm, so why not come down and join the party!”

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The end of...
“the blame game”

The Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act 2020 will eliminate the need for blame in divorce proceedings and help to take the sting from formally ending an official relationship.

Now, after years of having someone take the moral responsibility of the end of a marriage or partnership, a person will be able to obtain a divorce or a judicial separation on the sole fact that the marriage “has irretrievably broken down”. The separation requirement has been removed as well almost eliminates the possibility of defending a divorce.

contact us for more information www.AronaStJames.co.uk



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