



Your independent community newspaper

# WALTHAM FOREST ECHO

Free  
August 2022, No. 89

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The police cordon in Cheney Row Park  
Credit Penny Dampier



Sam Brown, 28  
Credit Met



# Man shot dead at 'innocent-looking' party with hired bouncy castle

By Victoria Munro & Nadoya Reid

A young man was shot dead at the tail end of an “innocent-looking” party with a hired bouncy castle in a Waltham-stow park last month.

Police were called to a party in Cheney Row Park, off Durban Road, in the early hours of Sunday, 24th July, after reports of gunshots.

A short time later, two men arrived at an east London hospital. One had “critical” gunshot wounds, while the other had been stabbed.

Tragically the former – 28-year-old Sam Brown – died from his injuries. The other man, in

his 30s, survived and has been arrested by police.

A resident who passed the party earlier that day – and has asked not to be named – told the *Echo* it looked like a birthday party and had a number of young children attending.

She said: “It looked quite innocent. There were maybe 100 to 200 people, mostly adults in their 20s and 30s. There were quite young kids there and they had hired a bouncy castle.

“[Later that night] I said jokingly to my friend ‘that sounded like gunshots’ but I thought it was something else like fireworks.”

Another resident in his early

50s, who also asked not to be named, told the *Echo* he didn’t know Sam personally but had seen him around the area.

He said: “I knew the party was going on because I heard the noise but, when I heard the loud bang and a lot of commotion, I knew something was wrong.

“I peeped through the window to see what was happening and could see people running around.”

He said it was common for people to have parties in that park and that he had organised a few himself there over the years.

He added: “I can’t recall hearing anyone being shot before in

the area but there is a lot of crime and loitering, especially among young people.”

DCI Kelly Allen of Specialist Crime, who is leading the murder investigation, said: “My heart goes out to the family of Sam, who has lost his life in this reckless act of violence.

“I can assure them of my total dedication, and that of my team, to ensuring that they get justice.

“I urgently need to speak with everyone who was at that event – even if you do not believe you saw anything significant.

“To anyone considering whether or not to come forward, put yourself in the position of

Sam’s grieving mother and father. They deserve answers.

“Whoever took a gun to a gathering like this does not deserve your protection, nor do they deserve to be free to inflict further harm on others.”

Chief Superintendent Simon Crick, who leads policing in Waltham Forest, added that local officers “will be on duty to offer reassurance and a visible presence”.

Anyone with information is asked to contact police on 101, quoting reference 267/24jul. You can also contact the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.



## NEWS



FELLOWSHIP IS LIFE

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**Publisher**

David Floyd

**Editor**

Victoria Munro

**Designer**

Jonathan Duncan

**Head of Advertising**

Klaudia Kiss

**Advertising Sales Manager**

Salima Sair

**Local Democracy Reporter**

Josh Mellor

**Reporter**

Nadoya Reid

**Engagement Manager**

Penny Dampier

**Contributors**

Mary Burnett, Sarah Fairbairn,  
Waltham Forest Tamil  
Sangam, Cats Protection  
Waltham Forest, Furnishing  
Futures, Street Angels UK, Steve  
Bainbridge, Christine Cullen

**The member organisations of WFWellComm CIC are:**

Community Transport Waltham Forest, Social Spider CIC, HEET.

**WFWellComm CIC Board:**

David Floyd, *Social Spider CIC*  
Tom Ruxton, *HEET*  
Helen Tredoux,  
*Community Transport WF*

**Contact**

Call 020 8521 7956

Email [WFEcho@socialspider.com](mailto:WFEcho@socialspider.com)

Post The Mill, 7-11 Coppermill  
Lane, Walthamstow E17 7HA

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A "topping out" ceremony at the ice centre Credit Steve Bainbridge Photography



## New ice centre almost ready

**T**he new Lee Valley Ice Centre is almost finished and will open "later this year".

The £30million facility, nearly double the size of the previous centre, will be the first of its kind in south-east England and boast two Olympic-sized ice rinks.

Though the rebuild was fiercely opposed by environmental groups for encroaching on protected marsh land, Waltham Forest councillors agreed the plans in October 2020.

A few months before construction started, council leaders were forced to agree a £1m cash injection for the project as it was in danger of not going ahead.

The building is owned

and run by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA), whose chief executive Shaun Dawson told the *Echo* they have made "incredible progress".

He said: "Our ambition is for an inspirational venue bringing world class facilities to communities in east London and across the region, aiding physical and mental wellbeing."

"The much loved old centre had reached the end of its operational life and could no longer cope with the high demand. But it lives on: we reused 95% of the concrete – 950 tonnes – from the old centre for the foundations of this exciting new building."

"We see it as a new community hub with programmes

for schools, under-represented groups and a host of community organisations. We want this to be a place for everyone to enjoy – from committed skaters to people who meet up in the cafe before exploring the fantastic surrounding green spaces."

In return for the council's financial assistance, LVRPA will provide a 10-year programme of community benefits through the centre, including schemes for targeted crime prevention, mental health and wellbeing and biodiversity awareness.

The LVRPA and the council hope the new, expanded centre will attract over half a million people each year, boost the local economy by £1.5m every year and create 45 new jobs.

## Council scraps court case over allegedly sub-par fire doors

**C**ouncil leaders scrapped legal action against a company they previously accused of installing defective fire doors after being offered a huge payout.

Osborne Property Services Ltd was awarded a contract to maintain the borough's more than 12,500 council homes from 2012 to 2019 but, last May, sued the council for £9.5million of unpaid fees.

Waltham Forest Council responded by countersuing Osborne for £2.2m and warned it was investigating thousands of fire doors installed by the company.

Following Grenfell, the council paid Osborne to install new fire doors in council blocks that could with-

stand flames for up to an hour.

However, it claims tests to 223 doors found they lasted only 31 to 45 minutes, while a further 75 doors failed to meet even the legally required 30-minute mark.

A High Court trial was scheduled for next May but, on 7th July, council leaders agreed behind closed doors to settle with Osborne, after the company offered them a settlement of more than £1million.

A council spokesperson said: "Both parties have agreed to end the litigation on commercial terms, and it has now concluded with no admission of liability by either party. We are unable to provide any further details of the settlement due to confidential-

ity obligations."

A report prepared for the cabinet meeting notes that refusing the deal would mean "being liable to pay both parties costs" if the council lost the court case.

Court documents obtained by the Local Democracy Reporting Service show that the council's counterclaim warned it was "currently investigating" 5,850 fire doors installed by the company.

The document reads: "Insofar as these are found to be defective, [Waltham Forest] may seek to amend its claim in due course."

At the time, Osborne denied any failures, insisting it "exercised reasonable skill and care in the choice of supplier and/or in the selection of doors".

## Council declares 'emergency' over cost-of-living

**W**altham Forest council has declared a state of emergency over the spiralling cost of living.

At a full council meeting on 14th July, they agreed new measures for struggling residents, including a jobs programme and vouchers for food and bills.

A Conservative amendment, which suggested extra measures like free parking, was rejected.

Cabinet member Vicky Ashworth told the chamber: "It's an absolute travesty that, here in Britain, we are experiencing a cost of living catastrophe like no other in the G8."

"We have a financial crisis so deep it's taking many residents and businesses down with it."

"More than 11,000 residents are regularly using foodbanks. I spoke to one man who has two jobs but recently began

using a food bank to feed his children. He described how humiliating it was and how it is affecting him and his mental health."

The council launched a £1million jobs programme on 27th July, aiming to help 3,500 residents gain qualifications, find work or start a business.

This month, it will launch a "new model of borough-wide food distribution" in collaboration with food banks, although details have yet to be announced.

It also committed to distribute £2.3m through its Household Support Fund by September and issue £250 vouchers for food and bills through Citizens Advice Waltham Forest.

Find out more here: [walthamforest.gov.uk/benefits-and-money-advice/worried-about-money](http://walthamforest.gov.uk/benefits-and-money-advice/worried-about-money)

## Changes to NHS IVF policy planned

**T**he NHS across north east London wants to change who is eligible for help conceiving.

The proposed new policy would allow slightly older patients to receive treatment but disqualify those with few or poor quality eggs.

A consultation document reads: "The aim of the new policy is not to reduce the treatments we fund or who is eligible. Depending on where you live, what we are proposing is likely to increase the amount of treatment you can have."

Under the proposed policy, patients of any age could not receive "assisted conception" if

tests show they have "low ovarian reserve".

NICE guidelines state only patients aged 40+ should be subject to "ovarian reserve" tests before they are deemed eligible.

The consultation document explains: "With limited NHS budgets, we have to make sure we're funding treatment where it is likely to result in [pregnancy]."

The new policy would raise the upper age limit for treatment from 39 or 41, depending on borough, to 43 years old.

Residents can give feedback until 22nd August here: [eastlondonhcp.nhs.uk/getinvolved/have-your-say-on-proposed-changes-to-nhs-help-to-try-to-have-a-baby.htm](http://eastlondonhcp.nhs.uk/getinvolved/have-your-say-on-proposed-changes-to-nhs-help-to-try-to-have-a-baby.htm)



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# INTERVIEW



Tyrone and Bella Credit Penny Dampier

## In the arms of street angels

Six years after first becoming homeless, a local 23-year-old has a roof over his head, thanks to Street Angels UK

by Victoria Munro

**A**fter months sleeping rough behind Walthamstow's Feel Good Centre, a local 23-year-old and his beloved dog finally have a roof over their heads.

Tyrone\* grew up in the borough and first became homeless at 17, running away from home after learning that his dead sister was actually his mother.

In the six years since, he has bounced from place to place around the south of England but always returned to the borough he knows best.

Now, Street Angels UK – an outreach service started by a Walthamstow mum – is helping him finally secure a stable home.

Tyrone told the *Echo*: “Being homeless, you don’t know what people will think of you. I didn’t want people to think I do drugs or that I’m a drug dealer and I didn’t want people to define me by my situation.”

“For anyone out there who’s homeless, I’d say: try to find something that keeps you connected to the world. For me, it’s my mum.

“When she died, so many people showed up to her funeral because she used to help them. I live my life based on what she would have wanted me to be.”

Tyrone’s mum died when he was only a year old but, until he was 16, he was told she was his sister and that his grandparents were his mum and dad.

While he had been a “bit rogue” as a younger teen, especially growing up in Leyton’s Oliver Road where “all the fights and dramas started”, finding out the truth sent him into a spiral.

He said: “I started retaliating. I was hanging around with the wrong crowd of people and falling asleep in lessons. I

didn’t even take my GCSE exams.

“I had been smoking [weed] and drinking before then but more for a joke. After that I started doing it harder and ended up addicted for a long time, although now I’ve been clean for 11 months.

“It was a bit too much for my [grand] parents because I was not the nicest of kids, I was angry and confused. It took me a long time to become the respectful man I am today.”

Tyrone spent two years in Suffolk staying with a friend and working four jobs a day but ended up homeless again after the pair fell out. Struggling with the lack of “trust and loyalty” in his life, he bought a German Shepherd – Bella – who remains his constant companion.

He said: “Having her pushed me forward because I knew my life was not just about me. [After that] I moved back to London because I didn’t want to be homeless in an area I didn’t know well, London is the only place I feel safe.”

However, he was quickly picked up by charity St Mungo’s, who moved him into supported living accommodation in Birmingham.

Tyrone said: “I picked up boxing, which was the start of me becoming a better man. My mum was a fighter – she came second in a karate championship in Wales – so I think there’s a fighter mentality in my blood.

“I was in Birmingham for two years but there was a lot of gang violence, someone even tried to stab me. He had mental health problems and Bella went for him. I ended up on [a suspended sentence] for six months and they took her away for a while.

“I ended up slipping back into smoking and drinking because, even when I saw

growth in myself, there was always that darkness in me that said I didn’t deserve to be good because of what I did in the past.”

Tyrone was offered a council flat in Birmingham but turned it down to go live with his birth father in Kettering after the pair reconnected. Unfortunately, this ended up being “the worst thing” to happen to him.

He said: “I expected him to push me forward and teach me everything he knew, like a dad would, but we had no real connection and we never did.

“He didn’t like me cooking so I just ate microwave meals and I lost so much weight, I lost myself even. Eventually, he decided he didn’t want me in his life.

“Seeing how he was at age 63 made me decide to quit weed, I didn’t want to end up old and alone like him. He never made up for the mistakes he made like I’m trying to do now.”

At the age of 22, Tyrone started his most recent stint sleeping rough in Waltham Forest, returning to his familiar spot outside the leisure centre.

He said: “The people working at the Feel Good Centre are very nice and always let me sleep there. I used to swim there really early in the morning when I was a kid and my nan would sleep in her car so I guess I kind of repaid her for that.

“I knew I needed to do something with my time so I started playing basketball on the courts in Lloyd Park. The younger people are very open-minded about who they let play.

“I don’t want those kids to make the same mistakes I have so, as soon as they step on that court, I consider them my responsibility. If there’s an argument, I’ll step in between them.”

It was after months of seeing him in

the park that someone tipped off Street Angels UK, an organisation which has spent four years supporting homeless people with donations from the community.

Anthea Joannou explained the project started after her friend bulk-ordered tracksuits to put his barbershop’s logo on, only to find they were not suitable.

She told the *Echo*: “I suggested we give them to the homeless and we ended up taking food and doing haircuts as well. I thought I couldn’t do that as a one-off because it would feel like teasing people.

“I was also frustrated that all the big organisations weren’t really doing the work. I used to donate to one of them until I needed their service myself and they just gave me advice I already knew. If I donate, I want it to be spent helping someone, not paying someone to give advice.”

Street Angels UK connected Tyrone to a housing charity, who moved him into temporary accommodation last month. With donations from the community, they were able to provide everything his new home needed.

Tyrone said: “If it weren’t for Anthea, I would have no plates, no cutlery, no duvet. There’s never been anyone as nice as her before.

“She had to be persistent with me at first because I didn’t want to take anything. I’ve got an old-school mentality so I don’t like people taking care of me, I’d rather provide for other people.

“In the future, I want to become a businessman so I can help the people who’ve helped me.”

Find out more about Street Angels UK on their Facebook: [facebook.com/streetAngelsukhelpingthehomeless/](https://www.facebook.com/streetAngelsukhelpingthehomeless/)

\*not his real name



## NEWS

The London Fire Brigade outside the block Credit Christine Cullen



## Youth centre staff race into burning building to save neighbours

Staff from a Walthamstow youth centre raced into a burning flat block last month to rescue their neighbours from a fire that gutted a family's home.

The fire in the flat block in Grange Road began shortly after 5pm on 19th July and destroyed most of the flat of a mother with three children, who were thankfully all out at the time.

Before emergency services arrived, three staff from the nearby Project Zero youth centre, including founder Steve Barnabis, rushed in to alert residents and help an elderly woman in a wheelchair evacuate.

The centre then sheltered and fed around 40 evacuated residents and stayed open late into the night until everyone was rehoused into hostels.

Yaa Pepera, whose home the fire started in, told the *Echo* the following day that she was returning home from work after picking up her kids – aged 13, 10 and 7 – and arrived to see the building in flames.

She said: "They told me it looks like the fire started on the balcony. It didn't reach the kitchen so they could see all our appliances were switched off in there."

"The kids had no jackets, no other clothes and no food and we didn't get to the hostel in Ilford until 2.45am this morning."

Around 35 firefighters from across London took until just before 8pm to get the blaze under control, after rescuing Yaa's neighbour with a ladder as the flames blocked his way out.

While the firefighters worked, escaped residents were looked after by Project Zero, who handed out food and water and entertained the children.

Nia Giche, a Project Zero staff member, said: "Everyone kind of just got together and figured out what to do. We got [everyone who was evacuated] into the car park in case the fire spread."



The balcony destroyed by fire

"The kids were all safe but everyone was quite distressed so we handed out ice lollies and played games and got the ice cream man to come down to relax them a bit, while we handled the actual situation."

"We opened up our hall for the residents who couldn't go back to their flats and gave them some snacks and chairs so everyone could be together to sort things out. The police and council used that as a mini-hub to give announcements and updates."

At around 12.30am, two families were still waiting at the centre to be rehoused by Waltham Forest Council, including Yaa's, and Project Zero booked an Uber and took them to the town hall to speak to someone.

She added: "We ended up staying there until 1.30am to make sure they had accommodation, a way to get there and clothes, toiletries and other essentials."

A spokesperson for the London Fire Brigade said flats and balconies on the first, second and third floors were damaged by the fire. They added that the cause of the fire is still "under investigation".

Readers who want to support Yaa and her family can reach her at [yaapepera@gmail.com](mailto:yaapepera@gmail.com).

## Staff at Leyton pub 'told not to serve Travellers'

by Victoria Munro

Staff at a new Leyton pub were ordered not to serve drinks or even be "friendly" to Travellers, a former employee claims.

Shonnette Byfield, a 33-year-old mother who grew up in the area, said she abruptly lost her job at The Spark House in Lea Bridge Road last week after complaining about the policy.

The Spark House was formerly The Drum, one of the first pubs opened by Wetherspoons, but reopened earlier this year after a makeover by new owner Laine Pub Company.

In a recording sent to the *Echo*, a voice can be heard instructing two people to refuse service to Travellers and not to treat them in a "friendly" way.

The voice says: "Otherwise they are going to fill this pub with 50 people, they are going to bring their own drinks, they're going to fight here, they are going to smoke inside."

"Don't be friendly. If you want to do that, you can do it outside the

pub but not inside or we are going to have a problem. That's what I've been told to do."

Shonnette told the *Echo*: "We were told to make up a lie and tell Traveller customers that we recognised them and they had caused problems previously, it gave me such a bad feeling."

"Having grown up with Travellers, I personally could not just sit down and take that. It's not right or fair. It's a shame because I really enjoyed working there because of the people that came in."

When contacted for comment, a spokesperson for the Spark House said the pub has "zero tolerance of discrimination in any guise".

They added: "Consequently, when we became aware of the situation... on Friday, we immediately launched an internal investigation."

"We have suspended all staff members implicated and are in continued and open conversation with the complainant, who we would like to thank for raising their concerns."

"Our primary focus is to ensure the pub is a safe and inclusive place for everyone."



Spark House in Leyton



# FEATURES

Highams Park charity founder Emily Wheeler **Credit** Furnishing Futures



## Turning emergency housing into homes

by Victoria Munro

**W**omen and children who have fled domestic abuse can have their homes redecorated with high-end furniture for free, thanks to a new charity.

Furnishing Futures aims to stop families from going into debt replacing belongings they left behind or even returning to their abuser out of desperation.

Founder Emily Wheeler, a former social worker and interior stylist from Highams Park, also gives them creative control and high-quality goods donated by brands like Selfridges.

After three years working to get the project off the ground, Furnishing Futures registered as a charity last November and hopes to one day be able to refurbish a new home every week.

Emily told the *Echo* women rehoused by their local council after fleeing abuse are given “completely empty properties” with “no flooring, curtains, appliances and definitely no furniture”.

She said: “It’s very difficult to look after your children in those circumstances. When I was working in children’s social care, I saw a number of women, whose lives were at risk, end up going back to the perpetrator because of that.

“It’s not enough to give people one or two basic items when they have lost

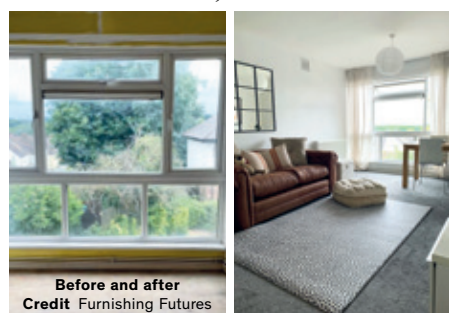
everything; they need a whole home, somewhere they can feel safe. We give them everything they need, including cutlery, towels and artwork, which takes away a whole layer of stress and breaks the cycle of poverty.

“It’s also really important that these women have got some choice about what we do because, when you have had all your choices taken away, it’s very disempowering. We ask them what they like and I try to match as many as I can with a volunteer designer.”

The *Echo* spoke to one woman supported by Furnishing Futures, who fled domestic abuse with her two daughters in August last year and was moved to the borough by another London council.

She told the *Echo*: “The help Emily has given me in such a small amount of time is absolutely shocking, she’s a godsend.

“Before we were introduced, I felt so down that my children had to live here. We were sleeping in the living room because the carpet in the bedroom was soiled with faeces, urine and blood.



Before and after  
**Credit** Furnishing Futures

“Emily got it cleaned and gave us rugs to put down and got me a washing machine, table and chairs, a hoover and lampshades. It’s only her that made me feel like this place could be liveable.”

Emily says the fledgling project has so far refurbished 20 full homes and is redecorating a seven-bedroom refuge owned by local domestic abuse charity Kiran Support Services.

Thankfully, her previous work in the interior design industry means it is not difficult to convince designers, brands and stylists to donate a continuous stream of surplus stock.

She said: “Our project really caught the imagination of the industry because it gives them a good, sustainable way to use things that would otherwise end up in landfill and they know we’re doing something really good with it.

“It’s really important that the women have nice things. When you’ve already been through trauma and somebody gives you something that looks shabby, it doesn’t do much for your self-esteem.

“What we really need now is a warehouse, a van and volunteers because we’re growing faster than I can keep up with things. The plan is to get to the point where we’re able to do one full home a week, plus support other families that just need bits and bobs.”

Find out more about Furnishing Futures here [furnishingfutures.org](http://furnishingfutures.org)

## Cats in crisis

by Victoria Munro

**A** “crisis” of abandoned and un-neutered cats in Waltham Forest has led to feral “colonies” of up to 45 animals running wild on the streets.

Natalie Talbot, coordinator of Cats Protection Waltham Forest (WFCP), said volunteers are called out on a daily basis to help abandoned pets, most often in Walthamstow and Leyton.

A surge in demand for kittens during lockdown – followed by a sudden crash once it lifted – means shelters and rescues are now “full to bursting”.

Meanwhile, un-neutered cats left on the street are breeding and giving birth to kittens that have never known domestic life, creating colonies of feral cats that can’t be rehomed.

Natalie told the *Echo* the charity drops food monthly for five colonies in and around Waltham Forest, the largest of which was found in the E17 area last summer.

Natalie said: “Someone told us they had seen a pregnant cat and a volunteer went to find her and then rang me in tears. There was some maisonette housing with a big communal garden at the back and it was like a big litter tray for around 45 cats and kittens, none of them neutered.

“There were two ladies who had been feeding them but the kittens were constantly getting carried off by foxes and some of the cats were quite sickly.

“We neutered all of them, rehomed the ones that were friendly and relocated some to working homes like stables, where they become mice or rat-catchers. But, even now, it’s still an ongoing job.

“A lot of the time even people that live here don’t see these problems, people don’t unless they know where to look.”

Natalie told the *Echo* neutering is also important because of the high rate of feline HIV in the borough and because it protects cats from numerous health issues, including some forms of cancer.

Un-neutered male cats are also more aggressive and likely to injure each other while fighting and she has seen some cats “with their faces hanging off” after developing infections from their wounds.

She added that the charity, which she has been a part of for five years on top of her full-time job, is always looking for more people to foster cats or volunteer, particularly when it comes to transporting animals.

Find out more about their work on their website: [cats.org.uk/waltham](http://cats.org.uk/waltham)



Part of the borough’s largest feral colony **Credit** WFCP



# ARTS & CULTURE

Dancers in traditional dress Credit WFTS



## Free Tamil celebration in Walthamstow

A free celebration of all things Tamil is coming to the centre of Walthamstow this month.

Tamil Cultural Day on 13th August will feature traditional dances and music, martial arts and street theatre, stalls selling saris and food and an exhibition of British Tamil history.

Tamils are a South Asian community that originated in India and Sri Lanka, are predominantly Hindu and speak one of the world's longest-surviving languages, which dates back to 300 BCE.

Their cultural celebration was organised by Waltham Forest Tamil Sangam (WFTS), a community group created in the 1980s to support the borough's growing Tamil population.

Thulasi Manivannan, a WFTS committee member and teacher from Walthamstow, told the *Echo*: "This day is very special to us

because the council has invited us to come celebrate our culture, so it's quite a big deal.

"The decor will be set up exactly as it would be at a wedding, with mango tree leaves and an entrance made out of part of a banana tree.

"There will be about five traditional dances, all in different styles and using different props and instruments. For example, one of the dances uses a kitchen utensil, which would normally be used to separate rice from the husks.

"We really want to make this an annual thing and have even asked for January to be recognised as Tamil Heritage Month, which is something they already do in Canada."

Thulasi added that WFTS was created in 1986 to help an influx of Tamil people fleeing the civil war in Sri Lanka.

Tamil people who had moved to the UK earlier for happier reasons, including her own late mother Krishnaverny Mageswaran,

wanted to help the new arrivals "integrate into the local community", helping them find jobs and housing and overcome the language barrier.

Thulasi said: "Once the second generation of immigrants started growing up, they didn't want them to forget their roots so they started a Saturday school, originally out of someone's house.

"Nowadays, the Tamil school is in Frederick Brenner and has almost 200 students. Children learn the language and about their culture and there's the opportunity to learn the traditional dances and instruments too.

"I used to be a student at the Saturday school and, for me, it was really important to understand our culture so I could easily connect to my relatives back in Sri Lanka."

Tamil Cultural Day will be held from 1-6pm on 13th August at Fellowship Square. Find out more here: [facebook.com/events/468283848360686/](https://facebook.com/events/468283848360686/)

## New Walthamstow comic debuts first hour-long special

A new local stand-up is debuting his first hour-long comedy special at Walthamstow's Project Zero centre this month.

Jonathan Campbell-Tavernier – or Johnny CT – says his show Manger Moi is his life story in comedy, touching on past jobs in the food industry and a brief stint playing for Walthamstow FC.

Despite having only just started, the 25-year-old has already headlined shows and shared the stage with professionals, as well as working as a comedy producer for Soho Theatre.

Johnny said: "Naturally, I'm a storyteller. I found I could make people laugh without actively trying and, from a young age, I always did well in English classes.

"I was just a joker in school. A lot of young people like me are class clowns and teachers say they are being naughty but, if you can make a whole class laugh, there's talent there.

"It's why I want to get more [people of colour] into comedy. It's important to give kids an actual outlet for their disruptive behaviour, rather than just tell them they are doing something wrong."

Johnny has done stints in a number of different jobs - including at Choice in 17&Central and Wilko in the High Street - but says his worst was probably his first: as a door-to-door salesman.

He said: "I was selling broadband and solar panels and I wasn't good at it. I have to care about what I'm selling, which is why comedy works. When I'm selling myself

and my jokes, I show a lot more enthusiasm.

"My best job was working as a comedy producer for Soho Theatre [during a six-month work placement], I built good connections and learned a lot about the behind-the-scenes."

Johnny's favourite comedians are Mike Epps, Hannibal Buress and Eric Andre, although he notes that his role models in life have always been footballers.

An Arsenal fan, he spent a year playing for local team Walthamstow FC when he was 17 but said he "fell out of love" with playing the game and struggled to balance it with his various jobs.

After deciding to break into comedy, Johnny spent a year and a half going to open mics "just to observe everything", from how performers got on and off stage to their voice control.

He said: "I felt ready to perform and won the Comedy Virgins competition in Stockwell against 20 other comedians but, a week later, it was lockdown and comedy venues shut.

"When things were back up and running, I hit the open mic scene and ended up building my name very quickly. I've headlined some shows and done a few gigs with professionals like Patrick Monahan. My biggest crowd so far was 150 people at the Amersham Arms in New Cross."

Johnny hopes he can pull the same number of people for his debut show at Project Zero on August 5th. Tickets available here: [bit.ly/3RZN5xb](https://bit.ly/3RZN5xb)



Johnny CT



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## NEWS

# Parents plead to save 'godsend' children's centre

by Victoria Munro

**P**arents devastated by the closure of a uniquely disability-friendly children's centre are urging the building's owner not to sell it.

In April, The Limes centre, based in Walthamstow's William Morris Hall, announced it was closing permanently after 19 years due to financial difficulties.

The centre was forced to shut temporarily last year while Ofsted investigated safeguarding concerns and, though the regulator eventually concluded it was satisfied, the period of missed income dealt a fatal blow.

Parents told the *Echo* The Limes was a "godsend" and uniquely equipped for disabled children. Now, they are terrified Barnado's, the building's owner, might sell it to a developer.

Claire Bithnell, who has a son with autism and mobility issues, told the *Echo*: "Its closure has left a massive hole for all kids, but particularly for kids with special needs. If we lose this space to development, we won't get anything like it again."

"The beauty of The Limes was that it had a really big, lovely central space; a



Concerned parents outside the shuttered Limes centre Credit Penny Dampier

sensory room, which was magical; a soft play area; and a very inclusive outdoor space, designed so kids in wheelchairs could get on the play equipment as well.

"Even before I realised one of my children has educational needs, it was the only play group I felt comfortable with. I always knew the children were safe and, because it's so big, one can be in a quiet area and the other can be in the fray of everything."

"What I'm really sad about is when my son gets older. I know from other parents that the teenage years are hard and The

Limes was running great youth groups. The friends kids make at The Limes are sometimes the only friends they have."

Ursula Coskin, whose two adult sons attended well into their teens, added: "It was a big part of our life and, from my point of view, an absolute godsend. It wasn't expensive and it lasted from 10am to 3.30pm, which gave me a chance to do the shopping in peace."

However, parents are not the only ones determined to see the building preserved. Local historian, Roger Huddle, insists it

is "unique in the history of architecture".

He told the *Echo*: "It was built [in 1909] by local trade unionists and socialists on Sunday mornings for a tuppence a brick – it was named after William Morris not because of his wallpaper but because of his revolutionary socialism."

"All kinds of people spoke there, including Sylvia Pankhurst... but it fell into disrepair in the late 60s and the Labour Party sold it on."

"I thought that was a criminal act because it's got such a romantic history. I think the Labour Party or the council should buy it back."

The building has been owned by Barnado's since 1986 and parents said they'd been told the charity "could not make any guarantees" it will remain a centre for disabled children.

A Barnado's spokesperson said: "As a charity, we seek to ensure that our properties are best utilised to support the children and families we work with."

"To meet this end, we are currently looking into possible options and will consider all opportunities to ensure the best outcome for the families and communities who have an interest in the future of this site."

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## CRIME

## Jury rejects teen murderer's 'self-defence' claim

**T**he teenager who stabbed a Chingford dad to death last summer is officially a murderer, after a jury rejected his argument he acted in self-defence.

On 9th August last year, James Markham, 45, was stabbed by the then-14-year-old boy outside his home in Churchill Terrace at around 6.20pm.

James had argued with a group of teenagers loitering near his home, reportedly frustrated by recurring antisocial behaviour, and approached them with a drill bit in an apparent attempt to scare them off.

His killer pulled out a knife and the pair swung at each other. James was struck three times – in the back, armpit and chest – and the last blow pierced his lung. Despite the best efforts of members of the public and paramedics, he died shortly after.

Following the verdict, Detective Inspector John Marriot from the Specialist Crime unit said: "James



James Markham, a father of three **Credit Met** was a loving family man who leaves behind a partner and three children.

"That day, they were met with a horrific scenario that no family should have to endure. I hope this conviction will provide them with some small measure of comfort as they continue to grieve James.

"The teenager in this incident was subject to a Criminal Behaviour Order and should never have been in the area. He had flouted it on a number of occasions. The knife he used

was also never recovered, indicating he went to some lengths to try to distance himself from this horrific crime.

"But my team worked to collate a wealth of witnesses, CCTV and forensic evidence proving his guilt. He will now spend a substantial amount of time behind bars.

"I'd like to thank the skill and determination of my team in working to deliver justice to James' family. Our thoughts remain with them."

James' killer, who cannot be named due to his age, was caught after dropping his mobile phone as he ran away from the crime scene. He was quickly identified and arrested two days later.

During his trial at the Old Bailey, his lawyer tried to convince jurors he acted in self-defence, fearing for his safety after James approached with the drill bit.

Despite this, he was found guilty of murder, as well as possession of an offensive weapon, on Friday, 8th July. He is due to be sentenced at the same court on 26th August.

## Cop sacked for punching handcuffed teenager

**A** cop was sacked last month for punching a handcuffed and unresisting teenager in Waltham Forest.

Steven Martin was among officers responding to reports of an attempted robbery in E10 on 28th February last year, who arrested three teenage boys.

While one of the boys, aged just 15, was on the floor and handcuffed, former PC Martin punched him and used abusive language, despite the fact he "was not resisting".

After the boy's mother complained, Martin attempted to claim that he had struck the boy by accident.

Earlier this year, he pleaded guilty to assault at Westminster Magistrates' Court and was sentenced

to a 14-week curfew order.

Following his disciplinary hearing on 14th July, Sal Naseem from the Independent Office for Police Conduct said he "paid a high price for his actions by losing his job".

Sal added: "Police officers may only use force when it is necessary, proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances.

"Following our independent investigation, we found... the force used appeared to exceed what was required in the circumstances as the boy had given himself up and was not resisting."

The former officer has now been added to a barred list, which will prevent him from ever working within the police service again.

The three teenage boys were never convicted.

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# HOUSING



## ‘Masterplan’ to gentrify Blackhorse Lane agreed

by Victoria Munro

**B**lackhorse Lane is set to become the borough’s version of Hackney Wick, according to Waltham Forest Council’s “masterplan” for the area.

The council feels the growing popularity of the area bordering Walthamstow Wetlands proves its “potential to deliver more” and offer “an urban buzz” to attract new residents.

Their “masterplan”, approved last month by the Greater London Authority, divides the area into approximate thirds, with industry concentrated in one third and up to 3,700 new homes elsewhere.

Existing industrial floorspace will be condensed by “stacking” businesses on top of each other to “free up land” for housing, with some new flat blocks built 18 storeys high or more.

The plan reads: “In the last 30 years... the Lee Valley has evolved from its industrial roots to become home to creative mixed-use neighbourhoods, with notable developments in Hackney Wick, Sugarhouse Island and Tottenham Hale.

“Large manufacturing has left [Blackhorse Lane], with the exit of Warren Evans in 2018. In recent years, it has seen the arrival of coworking spaces... and a rise in artisan manufacturing.”

While a dozen different landowners own small parts of the area, the biggest landowner by

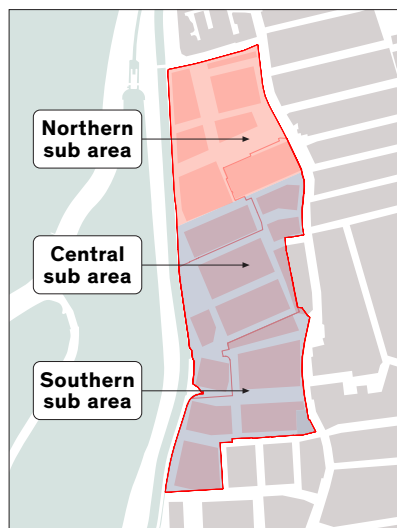
far is American company BlackRock, the world’s largest asset manager, who bought 11 acres for £51million in 2017.

Their land comprises the majority of the central third of the area in the council’s masterplan, which it states has room for 1,500–2,500 new homes overall.

Consultation earlier this year shows BlackRock want to build up to 1,800 new homes on their site in eight towers of 27 to 38 storeys tall.

The northernmost third of Blackhorse Lane will see “intensified” industrial space, “doubling” the existing capacity of Lockwood Way and Delta Group estates and building even more densely on land owned by BlackRock.

The masterplan adds: “This is regarded as a reasonable and practical increase, which can properly address the... impacts on adjoining neighbours.”



This third is also home to Eden Girls’ School, which the plan notes is “unlikely to be significantly altered or to relocate” in the foreseeable future, although it is keeping open “options for redevelopment in the future”.

The southernmost third of Blackhorse Lane is home to the Forest Trading Estate and Hookers Way, which the plan notes already make “efficient use of space”.

However, the council nonetheless feels the area has room for 700–1,200 new homes, which it suggests could be achieved “by adding additional storeys to existing buildings”.

While the council hopes to ensure the area as a whole can still accommodate most of its current 76,638sqm of industrial floorspace, despite thousands of new homes, it adds that “this should be supplemented by new [industrial land] on more suitable sites in the borough”.

The two lower thirds of the area have been deemed appropriate for new tall buildings of 18 or more storeys, although these will be concentrated in the middle of the site, away from Blackhorse Lane itself and the border to Walthamstow Wetlands.

The plan states: “The Wetlands edge is an important and sensitive wildlife habitat that needs to be respected and protected.”

The area’s regeneration is a key part of the council’s overall plan to see 27,000 new homes in the borough by 2035, which government inspectors recently suggested was not “justified” or “deliverable”.

## Mammoth investment fund takes over Mall towers project

by Victoria Munro

**A** mammoth investment company that owns hundreds of thousands of UK properties has taken over the construction of almost 500 homes on The Mall site in Walthamstow.

Long Harbour, Britain’s second biggest residential freeholder, spent more than £21million buying the project to build two 34 and 26-storey flat blocks from original developer Capital & Regional.

Capital & Regional (C&R), which owns the neighbouring shopping centre now known as 17&Central, was granted planning permission last January but was unable to get construction work started.

Long Harbour told the *Echo* today that work will begin imminently now they have taken over, with the final hoardings due to go up at the start of this month.

The planned scheme will contain 495 one and two-bedroom flats for rent, of which only 99 will be

rented at “affordable” levels, although the company will build additional affordable homes off-site.

Long Harbour chief operating officer James Aumonier said the flats “offer a totally unique experience for residents in a highly popular location” and “contribute to the transformation of the town centre”.

Speaking on 11th July when the sale was finalised, council leader Grace Williams said she was “delighted” that companies like Long Harbour “want to invest in our town centres and our people”.

She said: “When work is complete visitors will be welcomed to Walthamstow town centre with a redesigned town square, incorporating a new children’s play space and community areas, with the potential for a new entrance to Walthamstow Central underground station.”

The new station entrance was agreed as part of the original planning application but the likelihood of it going ahead has been called into question by TfL’s ongoing financial issues.

## Borough saw London’s biggest house price spike

**W**altham Forest saw the biggest jump in house prices over the last decade of any London borough.

Data from the Office of National Statistics shows the average local house price was £220,000 in 2010, compared to £505,000 at the start of this year.

While estate agents Douglas & Gordon found every London borough saw “a notable boost in property prices” over this period, of at least 66%, Waltham Forest prices had jumped by 130%.

Other boroughs with big price hikes were Barking & Dagenham, Lewisham, Newham and neighbouring

Redbridge, all of which saw the price of local homes more than double.

However, all five remain some of the least expensive places to buy a house in London, with Waltham Forest the most expensive of the group.

Waltham Forest is the 20th most expensive London borough to buy a house. The average house price in the most expensive – Kensington & Chelsea – at the start of this year was more than £1.3million.

The cheapest London borough to buy a house is Barking & Dagenham, where the average price at the start of this year was £338,500.



## HEALTH

# Heavily pregnant teacher died at Whipps after days on 'inappropriate ward'

**W**hipps Cross could “likely” have saved an eight months pregnant teacher from Leyton who died during last August’s Covid spike, an inquest found.

Sumera Haq, a 37-year-old teacher at South Grove Primary School in Walthamstow, died on 14th August last year from multiple organ failure, Covid-19 and an aggressive internal bleed.

Her husband Kasim told an inquest last month she first reported stomach pain to the hospital on 31st July, which continued until her death, but was told it was muscle pain from her Covid cough.

Sumera was admitted to the maternity ward on 7th August but moved to an acute ward two days later because maternity nurses were not confident they could treat her Covid symptoms.

This was an “inappropriate” place for her, according to east London coroner Nadia Persaud, but a lack of beds in critical care and a staff shortage in the maternity unit meant she stayed there until going into cardiac arrest on the 12th.

In his evidence to the inquest, Kasim said: “They said our baby had died and they had rushed her to theatre because she had a bleed in her stomach. I was left in shock and lost all my senses.

“They asked me if I wanted to see my daughter, which I did. Arya was beautiful and I just held her and cried my eyes out in that room for at least an hour.”

Despite being moved to the intensive



care unit, Sumera died two days later. Kasim added: “It was the hardest moment of my life watching her slip away.

“I could not stop thinking about our two children, who are seven and four, and how I would tell them that mummy is not coming home.

“She was an amazing wife, very loving, very caring and always giving. She was passionate about teaching and had been a primary school teacher for at least ten years.”

He added that an external consultant,

Dr Mamoun Abu-Habsa, told him at the time that he felt “something had gone terribly wrong” with her care.

While the maternity ward, where Sumera was first admitted, had a nurse for every two patients, the nurses on the acute ward were responsible for six patients each.

In the two days before her sudden collapse, doctors on the acute ward also failed to check her blood results, which showed “concerningly low” haemoglobin.

In her concluding statements, Ms Persaud said Sumera’s death “is likely to have been avoided” if she had been “cared for in an appropriate setting”, if her concerning blood results had been investigated or if she had received “early medical attention” after she began deteriorating on the 12th.

She concluded: “Her death was contributed to by lack of clinical leadership and lack of close monitoring.”

During the inquest, she asked Dr Jason Gittens, Whipps’ clinical lead for critical care, why Sumera was not either admitted to critical care or moved to another hospital.

Dr Gitten said: “It’s very easy to say this in retrospect but a lot was happening at the time. We had to take into consideration the safety of other patients, including those also outside critical care who were at 40 and 60% oxygen.

“On that day, bed occupancy was 100%. [Admitting her] would mean either having to transfer another patient out or transferring her to another hospital.

“Transferring patients does carry a risk and you also have to be sure that the [other] hospital has the capacity, you do not want to transfer someone to the same situation.”

Ms Persaud responded: “I completely understand that this was not an easy time for the hospital... but it was reasonably foreseeable that she could have a rapid deterioration. What she needed was close monitoring and that was not provided to her on the acute ward.”

## The old chestnut of Whipps’ beds

### Whipps commentator Mary Burnett on the return of an old problem

**I**d been thinking of giving myself, and readers, a break from my comment piece now work on the hospital has stalled. However, issues simply keep cropping up. This month, it’s the familiar problem of how many beds there will be in the new Whipps Cross Hospital.

Last year, we were told there would be 51 fewer beds in the new Whipps, prompting a huge public outcry. While Barts Health NHS Trust tried to reassure us there would be “flexibility” to add more beds as and when they were needed, a council meeting in January saw an independent expert warn the trust it was underestimating future demand. Eventually, Barts seemed to

promise not to cut beds.

However, in April, Waltham Forest Council’s health scrutiny committee considered plans to improve the borough’s community health services with an injection of £28million over the next five years. Buried in this report was the promise that doing so would mean enough residents prevented from needing hospital care to allow for 59 fewer beds in our new hospital.

So we’re back to bed cuts, with a new, higher figure of 59! While extra funding is nothing to sniff at, it’ll hardly transform the care we get, especially as the current level of funding our community services receive is 26% lower than most neighbouring

boroughs. This optimistic report also seemingly failed to take into account how our society is changing.

Research published last month by independent charity The Health Foundation paints a concerning picture of our future health needs. They’ve modelled all sorts of scenarios and calculated that, by the end of this decade, England will need between 23,000 and 39,000 extra hospital beds for our growing and ageing population, a trend north east London is not exempt from.

This dramatic increase is needed because for decades hospital beds have been steadily cut, leaving us with a really low ratio of beds to people compared with similar countries. We also spend

on average far shorter periods of time in hospital than people in similar countries, which means it’ll be difficult to reduce this further, as Barts insist they can.

We’re already way short of having enough beds for our rising elderly population but, if Whipps is to specialise in the care of older people as promised, cutting 59 beds seems incredibly risky. According to the research, patients in their 80s spend three days longer in hospital than those in their 50s. It’s not exactly rocket science.

Join the Action4Whipps campaign by emailing [whipps.cross.campaign@gmail.com](mailto:whipps.cross.campaign@gmail.com)



## COMMENT

# The Hive by Scarlett Brade

*Sarah Fairbairn reviews the debut novel of a young Walthamstow author*

Summer is the time for guilt-free enjoyment of the things that really make you tick, whether that's dancing until the small hours, spending time with friends and family or reading thrillers in which young women spiral out of control and wade remorselessly through the blood of their victims.

Scarlett Brade's debut *The Hive* is every bit the classic revenge tragedy. Passionate love affairs, all-consuming jealousy, unforgivable betrayal, and deep, sustaining friendship combine to form a plot dripping with delight in its exploration of the murkiest of human instincts. What sets it apart, however, is the use of social media as an unsettling and merciless Greek chorus, chiming in with comments all-too-familiar to anyone who's ever logged on to Twitter after an episode of Love Island. Far from just observing the tragedy from afar, the digital voices in this book are invited in to make the most harrowing of decisions. If strangers behind screens can share in the story, Brade seems to be asking, why shouldn't they also share in the responsibility?

Protagonist Charlotte Goodwin falls easily into a relationship with the tall, handsome



The Hive Credit Zaffre

and famous Lincoln Jackson. He appears like a modern-day Prince Charming, offering Charlotte his adoration and a life of luxury that lifts her up from the day-to-day mundanity of her job in administration at

a cosmetic clinic. She's fiercely loyal to her friends, all of whom struggle with the impact of traumas past and present, and dreams of being a mother. After escaping her own painful background, she is looking forward to the life she deserves when her plans are pulled apart by an increasingly sticky web of lies, unfaithfulness and, ultimately, violence.

Core to the story is an examination of the techniques of a gaslighter, someone who convinces you to ignore the evidence of your own eyes and ears and believe only, desperately in them. The bloody aftermath that unfolds is hardly surprising and is depicted with a satisfaction almost bordering on glee.

*The Hive* is populated by a diversely-drawn cast who push and pull the narrative along to its twisty conclusion. The ultimate question the book poses is how the band of women surrounding Charlotte will choose to respond – will they support her and maintain the bonds of sisterhood, even when she's been pushed to such brutal extremes? This bold debut clearly sets out to test the boundaries of loyalty and ask you where your own limits lie.

**'The Hive' was published by Zaffre on 21st July and is available in major bookstores**

## LETTERS

Dear WFE

DRIVERS SHOULD WATCH OUT AT the junctions between Wood Street and Havant Road or Wyatts Lane. The signs saying no cars or bikes are sufficiently far apart that you may pass through without noticing and receive a fine, as I did while using my SatNav. (I paid my fine ASAP.)

Really there should be a bollard in the middle of the road to ensure access is unavailable to cars, vans and motor-bikes. Even if emergency services needed access, presumably they could have keys to quickly remove them?

Laurance O'Neill,  
Chingford resident

Dear WFE

A GREAT IDEA, THAT "MASTERPLAN" to gentrify Blackhorse Lane but it's not entirely original. The Scottish aristocracy invented it in the 18th century: it was called "The Highland Clearances". When we've driven out all the poor people and all the traditional communities throughout the borough (and why stop there?), we can establish "freedom for capital" and have a proper "city of the rich", with a heliport for every tower block and a Shires second home for every resident.

David Gardiner,  
Walthamstow resident

Dear WFE

AS A RESIDENT OF BLACKHORSE Lane, I read with alarm that American company BlackRock wants to build towers of up to 38 storeys on Uplands Business Park [issue #85, p11]. This would darken and overshadow the neighbouring properties and have a detrimental effect on the area's general ethereal atmosphere.

Blackhorse Lane is relatively quiet for a main road and the road itself has been narrowed by the expansion of the cycle lanes so it's not suitable for such mammoth blocks and a huge influx of people. I would also like to challenge the claim that they have presented these plans to residents. Which residents and when? I haven't met anyone here that has seen anything.

Secondly, the skyline study claims that "well-considered heights & spaces between buildings will reduce the ecological impact and improve the visual impact from across the Wetlands" but this doesn't make any sense. Even a 30-storey tower would not "improve visual impact".

While East London, like the rest of the city, has to build more homes, Waltham Forest Council should only approve developments suitable to their areas. This is a bit much for Blackhorse Lane.

Bea Aladine,  
Walthamstow resident

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## LICENSING ACT 2003 Application for the Grant of a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that **Crate Places UK** has applied to the London Borough of Waltham Forest for the grant of a Premises Licence at **Unit 28, 35 St James Street E17 7FY** nature of the application is as follows:

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Friday & Saturday; 12.00–22.00  
Sunday, 08.00–20.00  
Recorded Music: Daily, 08.00–22.00

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.

Representations must be received no later than **17th August 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.

## Hello local businesses!

If you need to advertise your licence application, your local paper will help you with that:

Email [maia@socialspider.com](mailto:maia@socialspider.com)



PHOTOGRAPHY



**Top, from left to right:**  
*Togetherness* by Denys Vuika  
*The Wedding* by Tim Parker  
*Marshes* by Angelo Zappone

**Middle, from left to right:**  
*Embrace* by Anna Alcock  
*On the High Street* by Angelo Zappone

**Bottom, from left to right:**  
*Before the omelette* by Andy Charles  
*Togetherness* by Helen Jackson

This month, we feature photography and artwork on the theme of 'Togetherness'. Thank you to all those who sent in their submissions!

We want your photos and illustrations! Please send in your images of people and places in Waltham Forest to [penny@socialspider.com](mailto:penny@socialspider.com)





# AROUND THE BOROUGH

## WALTHAMSTOW

### House fire 'started by e-bike' puts five in hospital



The destroyed ground floor Credit LFB

**F**ive people were taken to hospital after a house fire thought to have started because of an e-bike.

Half of the ground floor of the home in Roland Road was damaged in the blaze on 3rd July and two women, a man and two children were taken to hospital after

inhaling smoke.

Investigators for the London Fire Brigade believe the fire started accidentally after the batteries of the converted e-bike malfunctioned.

The LFB was called to the scene shortly before 5pm and had the fire under control just

before 7pm.

A London Fire Brigade spokesperson said: "When these batteries and chargers fail, they do so with ferocity and, because the fires develop so rapidly, the situation can quickly become incredibly serious.

"We are predominantly seeing fires in e-bikes or e-scooters which have been purchased from online market places and batteries which have been sourced on the internet, which may not meet the correct safety standards.

"Our advice is to try and store and charge these items in a safe location if possible, such as in a shed or garage. If you are charging them indoors... make sure they are charged in a room where there is smoke detection and on a hard, flat surface.

"We would also suggest people try not to charge them when they are asleep, so that if there is an issue they can react quickly."

## CHINGFORD

### Former opponent squares up to IDS for MP spot

**F**aiza Shaheen is officially Labour's pick to challenge Sir Iain Duncan Smith in the next general election.

Faiza last took on the Chingford and Woodford Green MP for his spot in parliament in 2019, when she came second by a margin of around 1,200 votes.

Sir IDS, who has represented the area since 1992, received 23,481 votes, while Faiza received 22,219 votes – the smallest margin and the highest turnout the race has seen in two decades.

Faiza's success in winning the Labour candidacy has upset supporters of Bilal Mahmood, who ran against IDS in 2015 and 2017 and is seen as more moderate within the party.

Faiza Shaheen told the *Echo*: "It's an honour to have been selected... Chingford and Woodford Green means so much to me

Faiza Shaheen



because I grew up here, this community made me who I am.

"I want to thank local members for their support. I'll be standing up for everyone in Chingford and Woodford Green – my key priorities will be listening to local people and their concerns and addressing their worries about affordable

housing and air pollution.

"We need to win here to get a Labour government and only Labour can deliver a fresh start for Britain. I'm excited to take on this challenge and will be fighting for every vote."

Faiza became a Labour member in 2015 when Jeremy Corbyn became leader.

## LEYTON



Mice were nesting in the motor compartment of a fridge Credit WF Council

### Chicken shop shut after 'nest' found in kitchen

**A** chicken shop in Leyton was shut down after hygiene inspectors found a "mouse nest" in the motor compartment of a fridge.

Pranzos Piri Piri in High Road, Leyton, was ordered to close immediately after the inspection on 28th June, which the owner requested himself.

The business – operated by Tecnodeals Limited, which is registered to Muhammad Raheem of Ilford – was hoping to improve on a food hygiene rating of 1 it received in February.

However, along with the mouse nest, hygiene inspectors from Waltham Forest Council found "extensive" dirt and grease on the kitchen

floor and walls.

On 5th July, Thames Magistrates' Court ordered the owner to pay a total of £1,589 in fines and court costs.

Cllr Khevyn Limbajee, cabinet member for community safety, said: "While we are always vigilant in monitoring hotspots, given the extent of the health and safety breaches at Pranzos, it's shocking that Mr. Raheem was confident enough to actively request an inspection.

"I am pleased to see that Environmental Health Officers made such a swift intervention in shutting it down, and that Thames Magistrates Court agreed for it to remain closed until the risk to public health and safety is removed."

## LEYTONSTONE

### Suspected 'key member' of crime group arrested

**A** suspected "key member" of a "people smuggling crime group" was arrested in Leytonstone last month.

The 42-year-old man was one of four people arrested by the National Crime Agency (NCA) on 12th July on suspicion of facilitating "prolific smuggling" of people into the UK by lorry.

Investigators believe members of the crime group were involved in arranging for lorries to be broken into and people loaded onto them, without the knowledge of drivers.

NCA branch commander Andy Noyes said: "Smugglers pay no regard to the lives of the people they attempt to transport, whether that be by boat or in vehicles.

"While putting people in lorries might make the issue less visible to the public, it is no less dangerous to those being smuggled and unfortunately we have seen the tragic consequences this can have."

The NCA also arrested a 39-year-old from Dagenham – alleged to be a "senior member" – a 37-year-old in Ilford and a 36-year-old in Streatham.





# Support independent local journalism

## What we do

Here at *Waltham Forest Echo* we do things differently. We combine professional journalism with voluntary contributions from people who live and work in the borough and create content which is responsive to and reflective of the community.

These are challenging times for print media with many newspapers closing and advertising revenue in decline, but our not-for-profit model offers a new approach to creating local journalism which is inclusive and accountable.

## How you can help

As a not-for-profit publication we rely on the generous support of our community. We look to our readers, who recognise the value of independent journalism, to help support us.

You can do this by becoming a member either as an individual or as an organisation. See the rewards opposite and once you've decided what package you would like, visit our website: [walthamforestecho.co.uk/membership](http://walthamforestecho.co.uk/membership)

## Individual rewards

- £3 per month upwards:**  
Name in print and online, pin badge
- £5 per month upwards:**  
Name in print and online, pin badge, tote bag, paper posted to you every month

## Organisational rewards

- £10 per month:**  
Name in print and online, 10% discount on advertising
- £20 per month:**  
Name and logo in print and online, 20% discount on advertising
- £50 per month:**  
Name and logo in print and online, 40% discount, six free small adverts per year

## Members

Chris Lemin, Darrel Hunneybell, David Gardiner, David Hamilton, Dexter Coles, Graham Millington, Jean Duggleby, Melanie Strickland, Michael Grimshaw, Roland Karthaus, Renetta Neal, Graham Larkbey, Paul Schneider, Megan Lucero, Deri Jones, Scott Davies, Abigail Woodman, Pat Stannard, Lee Mitchell, Ian Cadogan, Madeleine Munday, Irena Souroup, Paul Scaife, Jon Dalladay, David McDade, Community Counts UK, Esther Neslen, Saradadevii Hull-Jurkovic, Claire Weiss, George Clarke, Ben Marlow, Creative Works, Julie Gibson, Carmen Trachenko, Transition Leytonstone, Clem Cowton, Linda Ridgers-Waite, Cranston Watts, Rachael Castell, Hewing Wittare, Stephanie Waterman, Martin Riches, Hugh Grant Peterkin, Alke Schmidt, Keith Segal, Daniel Stanley, Ray Love, Sarah Fairbairn, Sarah Jones, Bob Sullivan, Daniel Garay, Jo Pinney, Andrew Diamond, Julian Richards, James Wragg, Roland Zell, Jawed Akhtar, Miranda Grell, Meera Chadha, Chris Yates, Katherine Green, Shona Mackintosh, Jean Anderson, Laonikos Psimikakis, Joanna Moncrieff, Steve Cushion, Namir Shabibi, David Boote, Lawrence Walker, Mary Burnett, Manuel Arroyo-Kalin, Deborah Nash, Andrew Boyd, Florent Lassalle, The Digital Story Company, Lora Parkes, Tiffany-Louise Bird, Sarah McCulloch, Amy Rixon, Steve Lambert, Helen Weighell, Ines Nastali, Holly Wilkins, Steve Roffey, Caitlin McKiernan, Ruth Goldsmith, Kate Bohdanowicz, Kizzy Gardiner, Lydia Noon, Douglas Saltmarsh, Louis Wallinger, Peter Brennan, Paul Perkins, Tommy Lumby, Arlene Dunkley-Wood, Mark and Laura McCormack, Anne McKenna, Clare Thomas, Tom Thompson, Barbara Korner, Roland Rance & Inbar Tamari, Tamsin Green, Lucy Birchenough, Sam Brewster, Carolyn Difalco, Jonathan Weymer, Miriam Ceribelli, Maura Wilding, Roy Crawford, Clive Protheroe, Paul Dart, Allyiah Walcott, Philip Hall, Debra Antwi, Amer Saad, Flora Fyfe-Graham, Steven Scorer, Eduardo Regalado, Andrew Johns, Alis Templeton, Mary Logan, Claire Lee Shepherd, John Field, Thomas Greenhill, Robert Bell, Claudia Hillaire, Sylvia Sullivan, Marisa Takom, Mike Lanchin, Ben Holt, Annie Constable, Doreen Harding, Martin Goodsell, Jo Fletcher, Darren Kneller, Salaheddin AbuEin, George T Goodchild, William Slater, Adam Shone, Jill Hasler, Paul Clements, Alexandra Martinelli, Mayisha Begum, Tom Penn, Nick McGrath, Mette Isaksen, Tony Lawlor, Thomas Ableman, Matt Bennett, Wendy Wood, Gary Anderson, Jamie Smyth, Abigail Baker, Andrew Prescott, Bryony Forde, Matthew Rodriguez, Dara Maguire, John Huggill, Joseph Clift, Akhtarul Haque, Victoria Crabb, Richard Hughes, Michael Campbell, Carole Sturdy, Jane McCormick, Jon Seymour Jr, Alex Wilson, Richard Campbell, Ben Plant, Rossalyn Warren, Saskia Rombach and Gail Courtney.

## Member organisations

