



Your independent community newspaper

# WALTHAM FOREST ECHO

Free  
Dec 2022, No. 93

Email [WFEcho@socialspider.com](mailto:WFEcho@socialspider.com)  
Facebook [/WalthamForestEcho](https://www.facebook.com/WalthamForestEcho)  
Instagram [@walthamforestecho](https://www.instagram.com/walthamforestecho)  
Tweet [@WFEcho](https://twitter.com/WFEcho)  
Visit [walthamforestecho.co.uk](http://walthamforestecho.co.uk)

## News

Grounds 'in heart of borough' picked as preferred spot for new lido

► P. 3

## News

Whipps' discharge goal 'inevitably dehumanises' elderly, charity warns

► P. 5

## Crime

Rape and sexual assault reported at hotel housing refugees

► P. 7

## Housing

Study finds almost all local private rents unaffordable on benefits

► P. 13

## News

Struggling GP given final chance to improve or risk closure

► P. 15



Walthamstow's Swedish choir - started ten years ago by Scandanavian mums missing home - performing a "Luciatåg" procession (credit: Clare Dixon) – more on p12

# Food banks see 'major' rise in demand

by Victoria Munro

Local food banks are reporting a "major" increase in demand, particularly among working residents who have never relied on them before.

At the same time, more fortunate residents are finding themselves with less spare income to donate, forcing some charities to scale back services.

In July, Waltham Forest Council cabinet member Vicky Ashworth said more than 11,000 residents were regularly using local food banks, calling it an "absolute travesty".

However, multiple food banks told the *Echo* they have seen numbers grow in recent months and expect things to get even worse as winter continues.

Syed Shafi, from the Cann Hall Masjid food bank, said the number of families they support had "nearly doubled" in the last three months, adding: "We're definitely seeing people that weren't struggling before."

"I don't think it's going to get less soon, I think it will increase, and that's definitely not good, it's worrying."

"In the last two months, we also helped a couple of families with young kids who didn't have basic things like beds, freezers or tables. It's so sad seeing people in this country, our local people, suffering like this."

Tracy Rogers from Highams Park Food Aid said a decline in donations had left the charity "juggling balls in the air" and forced to make difficult decisions about how to best use their

limited funds.

While they have gone from supporting around 50 families at the start of this year to about 80 last month, she noted this was after taking 20 families off the register temporarily to ensure they could support them this month.

Tracy told the *Echo*: "It's very difficult to make a judgement on whether somebody needs it or not and how long they need it for. We're having to look at demand and try to get people coming every other week and see if they can cope without."

"We have been getting at least four walk-ins a day and we've had ten new referrals in the last two to three weeks."

"There's very little help and support in the north of the borough because of the perception that the area is well-off but that's just not

the case. We still have pockets where people are really struggling."

At Rukhsana Khan Foundation food bank, one of the borough's largest, the line on some Saturdays "reaches out to the end of the road", according to founder Jahangir Khan.

The foundation now supports up to 125 families in just two hours every Saturday, whereas at the start of this year it would have seen around 100 and, pre-pandemic, only 50.

Jahangir said: "What's happening now is that it's not just people on benefits but people in what you would class as good jobs, who are finding it hard to make ends meet."

"They have never needed to use a food bank and are now feeling that they need to so they can put that

money towards their energy bills."

Jahangir added that, while the support from the community and the council has been "fantastic", a lack of funding had still forced the charity to stop offering weekly hot meals earlier this year.

He said: "Our costs went up because of the price of food and, after Covid, our donations dropped by around 90% pretty rapidly."

"People are struggling now and the first thing they cut back on is donations, which is understandable because the first thing you have to look out for is yourself and your family."

"But the community has been really good in supporting local organisations and that support should not diminish, especially over the coming months. It's going to be a very difficult period."



NEWS



DEC 2022  
No. 93

Waltham Forest Echo is the borough's free community newspaper. We publish monthly and distribute 15,000 free copies of each issue

**Publisher**  
David Floyd  
**Editor**  
Victoria Munro  
**Designer**  
Jonathan Duncan  
**Head of Advertising**  
Klaudia Kiss  
**Local Democracy Reporter**  
Josh Mellor

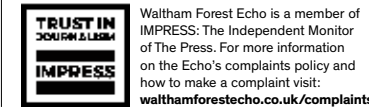
**Contributors**  
Jo Sealy, Charlotte Dunbar, Kirsty McNeil, Mark Hough, Penny Dampier, Thomas Barry, Clare Dixon

**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

**Advertising**  
Call 020 8521 7956  
Email [klaudia@socialspider.com](mailto:klaudia@socialspider.com)

WFE is published by Social Spider Community News:  
Visit [socialspidercommunitynews.co.uk](http://socialspidercommunitynews.co.uk)



# Shift to fortnightly rubbish collection proposed

by Josh Mellor,  
Local Democracy Reporter

Household rubbish collections could move from weekly to fortnightly in an effort to make residents recycle more.

The proposal is part of the council's draft recycling strategy, which aims to improve the borough's recycling rate from 32% to 50% by 2030.

At a climate scrutiny committee meeting on 16th November, deputy leader Clyde Loakes said halving collections would force residents to "make better use" of their recycling bins.

He told councillors: "This isn't a new thing in terms of local government – it's the norm now to have a residual waste collection



Brown and black bins  
Credit Penny Dampier

that is not weekly.

"We are learning from boroughs that have done this already, the ones that have done well and not as well.

"Bearing in mind we already have the capacity in our bins to deal with the levels we have, we

feel that we're in a good place to bring this forward."

According to the draft strategy, households with "six or more inhabitants" or specific medical needs would be eligible to receive a larger black bin.

The proposals would also not affect homes above shops or on estates, which have separate waste collection arrangements.

Last month, the *Echo* reported that almost 2,000 rubbish collections were missed in July due to staffing shortages at the council's waste collection contractor Urbaser.

Urbaser is currently in an ongoing dispute with workers, who are threatening to strike unless their demands for paid sick leave and better wages are met.

# Borough has second worst unemployment rate in London

Waltham Forest has the second highest unemployment rate in London – despite being able to boast the fourth lowest rate in the city only a few years ago.

Figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show the average unemployment rate between July 2019 and June this year was 8.1%.

This is a dramatic increase compared to the three previous years,

when the average unemployment rate was 3.9% and among the best in London.

The situation improved slightly in the year leading up to this June, with 6.4% of the working-age population out of work, although this still represents almost 10,000 unemployed residents.

Previous ONS data shows that, before the Covid pandemic, around 6,000 residents were

claiming unemployment benefits but that this rose to almost 18,000 by November that year.

Of the local businesses trading in 2019, one out of every 20 was forced to dissolve within two months after lockdown began.

Analysis of the ONS figures by charity Trust for London shows that in recent years Waltham Forest saw by far the largest spike in unemployment in the capital.

# Maternity unit has too few staff to 'ensure patient safety'

The maternity unit at Whipps Cross was deemed "good" by government inspectors, despite having too few staff to "ensure patient safety".

The Care Quality Commission inspected maternity services at Whipps Cross Hospital in Leytonstone and others run by Barts Health NHS Trust, publishing its findings last month.

Inspectors highlighted a number of areas where Whipps was performing well, including a commitment to "continually improving services", but raised a number of concerns, including

the shortage of staff.

In July, the *Echo* reported on an inquest into the death of a pregnant teacher at Whipps, which found a staff shortage in the maternity unit forced her to stay on an "inappropriate" ward.

A Barts Health spokesperson said the trust is "actively recruiting, including from overseas" and now has more than 70 new midwives joining across the trust in the next month.

They added: "Despite the national shortage of midwives, we are working to improve our services for pregnant women in line

with the CQC recommendations."

Nicola Wise, CQC head of hospital inspection, said: "Maternity services across England face significant challenges but there are steps Barts Health NHS Trust can and must take to ensure all risks to mothers and babies are well managed while they are in its care.

"The trust has our findings and it knows where it must improve. We continue to monitor it closely, including through future inspections, and we will not hesitate to take further action if people are at risk of harm."



# String of swan attacks at Wetlands

Police are investigating after a string of attacks on swans at Walthamstow Wetlands.

In a statement on 3rd November, local police said a swan had been found with "significant facial and neck injuries... likely caused by ball bearings fired from a weapon".

At least four other swans are thought to have been injured in a similar way in recent months, according to a spokesperson from London Wildlife Trust, which manages the nature reserve.

On 30th September, London Wildlife Trust received reports of two other swans seemingly injured with a slingshot and, three days later, found a third swan dead.

Speaking at the time, the spokesperson said it was the second such incident this year.

They added: "Such incidents are very distressing for our visitors, volunteers and staff. The incident has been reported to the Metropolitan Police Wildlife Crime Unit.

"We urge visitors at our reserves to continue to report such incidents, while taking care not to put themselves at risk."

Anyone with information is asked to call police on 101, quoting the crime reference number 2903 29/10/2022.

The injured birds are being cared for by charity The Swan Sanctuary.

NEWS

# Proposed site for new lido revealed

by Victoria Munro

A new lido, promised in Waltham Forest Labour's election manifesto earlier this year, is being planned "in the heart of the borough".

On 22nd November, Waltham Forest Council announced that, after a "comprehensive search to find the most suitable place", their preferred location is Low Hall Sports Ground in Walthamstow.

The lido is part of a "vision to create a health and wellbeing hub", building on the ground's existing sport facilities.

However, the ground is legally protected Metropolitan Open Land, meaning the council must demonstrate there are "special circumstances" to justify building on it.

Council leader Grace Williams said:



Low Hall Sports Ground Credit Waltham Forest Council

"Opening a new lido in Waltham Forest was one of our manifesto commitments and I'm happy to see we've now got a preferred site at Low Hall.

"Our ambition is to create a new health and leisure hub that will give a huge boost to the local economy as well as the potential new lido.

"If the project is approved, we will work with all sports clubs currently using Low Hall to ensure the current facilities are maintained and enhanced.

"We are determined to bring local people who use the current site with us if our vision for a new lido in the borough progresses.

"We hope to ensure everyone has the opportunity to enjoy outdoor swimming in the future."

The announcement came during a fundraising campaign by a group of volunteers, aiming to create East London's version of Hampstead Heath swimming ponds in Leyton.

The East London Waterworks Park (ELWP) team hope to raise £3million to buy land opposite the Lee Valley Ice Centre and transform it into a "brownfield rainforest".

Responding to a request for comment, ELWP chairman Abigail Woodman noted access to their proposed swimming ponds would be free, adding: "We are extremely proud of the widespread support the project has received so far, and that includes support from Waltham Forest Council. We will continue to raise money and develop the idea, and look forward to welcoming everyone to



Coppermill Swifts FC playing at Low Hall Credit Little Red Hen

the park in the future."

According to a council press release, Low Hall was chosen due to "its position at the centre of the borough, its excellent public transport and cycling links and its existing sports facilities".

The proposed lido would form part of a "nature trail for Lea Bridge", connecting the nature reserve on the grounds to Walthamstow Marshes and the wetlands.

The release adds that the surrounding neighbourhood "is a significant growth area in the borough", where it hopes to see new homes built, and that consultation with existing residents "showed a lack of leisure facilities was one of residents' main concerns".

Responding to the news, Conservative group leader Emma Best said her party were "disappointed but not surprised" that council leaders had discounted a possible location

in the north of the borough.

She said: "It is galling to see the Larkwood site, with its historic lido links, was [partly] discounted because there was insufficient public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure.

"Yet, simultaneously this council is arguing it is acceptable to overdevelop the same site with towering blocks without parking because there are 'good public transport links'.

"In terms of the Low Hall site selected, the proposal thus far poses more questions than it answers in terms of feasibility of delivery and impact. As a group we will be evaluating this further in order to provide helpful scrutiny as this proposal progresses."

A report seeking to "proceed with the vision and preferred location" for the lido will be put to council leaders for approval at a meeting on 1st December.

**NEW BREWHOUSE AND TAPROOM ON THE BLACKHORSE BEER MILE**  
**OPENING FRIDAY 9 DECEMBER!**

BEER CO LONDON

20 BEERS ON TAP

£4 PINTS ON OPENING WEEKEND

Pizza from IT'S NOT BIG DOUGH

PRETTY DECENT BEER CO

@PRETTYDECENTBC FOLLOW US

SIGN UP FOR UPDATES

UNIT 10 UPLANDS BUSINESS PARK, BLACKHORSE LANE, LONDON E17 5QJ

**Carers First**

Are you worried about how caring is affecting your finances?

Did you know?  
Nine out of ten carers are worried about the cost of living and are losing sleep because they are worrying about how to afford the basic essentials?

That's why we're here.  
Carers First wants to help carers Lighten the Load with our new campaign, which aims to provide information on financial support options for carers, such as discounts, grants and benefits.

Lighten the load

Visit [carersfirst.org.uk/LightenTheLoad](http://carersfirst.org.uk/LightenTheLoad)  
Call our Helpline 0300 303 1555



Advertisement

London's First Free College

**YOU HAVE IT IN YOU**

**FREE SHORT COURSES**

at our **Tottenham and Enfield centres**

Study a FREE course designed to help you get a job or move into a new career.

Online and face-to-face options, with support to help you achieve your ambitions.

- ESOL
- Childcare
- Counselling
- Beauty Therapy
- Computing and IT
- Business & Professional Services
- and many more other subject areas!

**BOOK NOW**

conel.ac.uk/freecourses | 020 8442 3055

All courses up to Level 2 and short courses up to Level 3 are **FREE**

The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London

part of Capital City College Group

**Discover** Children's Story Centre

**Rob Biddulph**

An immersive world of play and storytelling... with a mysterious mystery to solve.

Book now: [Discover.org.uk](https://discover.org.uk)

383-387 High Street, Stratford, London, E15 4QZ

Last chance to see - ends February 2023

**WELCOME TO THE 100 STORY HOTEL**

NEWS

# Whipps’ discharge goal ‘inevitably dehumanises’ elderly, charity warns

by Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

Aiming to discharge Whipps Cross patients within 24 hours “inevitably de-humanises” elderly patients and risks “corners being cut”, according to a local charity.

During the Covid pandemic, the hospital set up an “integrated discharge hub” to free up beds by discharging patients as soon as they were “medically optimised”.

Despite being introduced as a crisis management measure, the hub is now a “business-as-usual model” and discharged 8,721 patients in the first nine months of this year, mostly to their own homes.

In theory, patients being sent home are first cared for by a “bridging” team, tasked with providing care and ensuring equipment like grab rails or bathroom aids is installed.

However, at a Waltham Forest Council meeting last month, Terry Day from Waltham Forest Age UK highlighted three cases involving elderly people the charity supports where this did not happen.

Given Age UK supports only 160 elderly people in the borough, a “minute proportion” of those discharged by Whipps, she added: “We believe, therefore, that these are not simply outlier cases where normal practice has not been followed.

“We believe they must illustrate systemic problems – we have come across many



Credit Pixabay

such examples.”

Terry told councillors an 80-year-old woman with lung cancer was discharged to her home when it had no hot water. In the following days, carers reportedly told her to use incontinence pads instead of helping her to the toilet.

Terry also said an 88-year-old woman with dementia had to be helped to the

toilet by her neighbours because home carers did not arrive until late morning.

Community NHS trust NELFT, Whipps Cross and Waltham Forest Council prepared a report for the committee that accepted the quality of service is sometimes “not optimal”.

Zaynah Dinah, NELFT’s interim director of unplanned care, told the committee: “We’re definitely aware there is room to work on that and that work has already started.”

Anna Saunders, Waltham Forest’s assistant director of integrated commissioning, told the committee it is “really challenging” to find home care staff or residential care home places at the moment.

She added: “The key thing is that care providers don’t take on people they can’t provide for and it’s important that we don’t release them until they’re ready.”

NHS North East London hopes to reduce the demand for Whipps Cross Hospital beds, despite a growing local population, by improving community care.

It is so confident that this is achievable that plans for the new hospital originally suggested a reduction in beds, before public outrage forced an apparent U-turn.

The discharge hub team has now listed actions to improve its system, including a review of planning, welfare checks and taking a “patient voice” approach.

Councillors at the meeting recommended a next-day welfare call be made to all discharged patients and agreed to scrutinise “continence arrangements” during home care at a future meeting.

Following the meeting, Terry told the Local Democracy Reporting Service: “I was glad to see the powers that be are taking this issue seriously and I very much hope things will improve.”

# Local areas raided most by Home Office in lockdown

By Victoria Munro

More immigration raids were carried out in Walthamstow and Leyton postcodes during the pandemic than anywhere else in London, new data reveals.

Between March 2020 and June this year, there were 67 “enforcement visits” in E17 and 53 in E10, during a period when the average number of visits per London postcode was just twelve.

The Waltham Forest branch of the Anti-Raids Network told the *Echo* pre-pandemic figures show the borough’s Romanian and Bulgarian residents were most likely to be affected by deportation.

The data, obtained by the network via Freedom of Information request, does not even represent the full scale of Home Office enforcement as it does not include, for example, the “street operation” outside

Walthamstow Central Station that saw eight arrested last October.

The Home Office has repeatedly refused to respond to Transport for London’s insistence that this operation on its property was “unauthorised” or to confirm if any of the eight people were ever charged.

Speaking anonymously, a spokesperson from Waltham Forest Anti-Raids Network said raids may be more frequent locally due to a “culture of collaboration” between the Home Office and employers, landlords and other organisations.

They said: “Shops and takeaways are raided a lot and these businesses are asked to hand over lists of their staff, including addresses.

“Employers in general are not legally obliged to cooperate but they’re liable for a £20,000 fine per illegal worker found, which can be reduced for cooperating or even reporting workers.

“Landlords and councils are also given financial incentives to not just cooperate with the Home Office but actively report people to them.”

Leaked emails from November last year, seen by the *Echo*, show Waltham Forest Council workers arranging a joint visit to a chicken shop in Leyton with the Home Office.

The Anti-Raids Network spokesperson added: “Immigration law is increasingly murky territory and subject to delays, which means people might be legal one day and not the next.

“But the law is not impartial or necessarily just, it belongs to powerful people and we all only have certain rights because people fought for them.

“People already want to keep their communities intact – they don’t want their neighbours to get arrested or for children to live without their dad because he was taken away

– so we are just here to provide information and resources.”

The enforcement outside Walthamstow Central Station on 13th October last year attracted widespread condemnation from the community, with local MP Stella Creasy calling it “a waste of resources” and “deeply divisive”.

While it remains unclear whether any of the people arrested had broken the law, WF Anti-Raids was keen to emphasise that their “solidarity is not conditional”.

The spokesperson said: “We believe that people should be free to live where they want, no matter their financial status or where they were born.

“People do not uproot their whole lives just because they feel like it, often people coming here are fleeing conflict or climate change or are trying to find a better economic future for their families.”



FEATURES

# A week in the life of: an architectural designer

*The weekly diary of Nicole Fassihi from the Waltham Forest Business Network*



Co-founders Lemma Redda and Nicole Fassihi Credit Grafted

**G**rafted is a new architect-led design studio, inspired by Walthamstow’s tradition of makers and creators. My partner Lemma and I decided to start our own company after the birth of our daughter – it might not mean working less hours but it does mean we can

plan the hours we work around her.

The start of most weeks is currently spent in Norwich, working on a kitchen extension and ground floor renovation. Our typical Monday will be spent briefing tradespeople on tasks for the week ahead and running through fabric swatches or paint samples with our clients.

Tuesday is our regular day on-site together so it’s the best day to get big things done. Some of the details in our current design – such as the red-pigmented concrete footings – are totally bespoke so we are producing them in-house to achieve the shape, colour and finish we want. This means recently we’ve

spent a lot of time assembling moulds and pouring concrete; with over 70 individual elements, we have a lot to get through!

On Tuesday night, I head back to Walthamstow so I can take our daughter to nursery, meaning Wednesday and Thursday are my working from home days, where I get most of the finance and admin done. At Grafted, we act as both the architect and the contractor, meaning we don’t have to worry about the design being compromised based on what is easiest or cheapest, while still working within the budget agreed with the client. I manage the money carefully and spend a lot of time researching to find the best people, materials and products for the job.

As well as bigger architectural projects, we also design, fabricate and install fitted furniture. The first step for these smaller projects is always a consultation to find out what our client wants and how the furniture would fit into the rest of the home. Once we have the measurements, Lemma presents different designs and a shortlist of materials and finishes to choose from.

When it is time to make the furniture, we head to the workshop. Lemma programmes and operates the machine that cuts out our design and, depending on the desired finish, I sand and oil or paint the wood. Once it’s done, we’ll install it together.

**To find out more about Grafted:**  
**Visit** [wearegrafted.co.uk](http://wearegrafted.co.uk)

Advertisement

CRIME

# Alleged lake rapist denies crimes



The police cordon around the lake this August Credit Penny Dampier

**T**he man accused of raping and sexually assaulting two girls near Highams Park Lake will face trial next year after denying the crimes. On 7th August, two teenage girls contacted police at around 9.30pm, reporting they were

attacked in the park surrounding the lake at some point between 4.30pm and 8.45pm. Two days later, police arrested Nayden Nastov, a 38-year-old from Moss Hall Grove in Finchley, who was later charged with rape and assault by penetration.

Nastov first appeared at Thames Magistrates’ Court on 10th August and was refused bail at Snaresbrook Crown Court on 11th August.

After his original plea hearing was adjourned, Nastov finally appeared again at Snaresbrook Crown Court on 1st November and submitted a “not guilty” plea to both offences.

He is due to face trial next September, with the court battle expected to last four days.

The crime has caused significant concerns about women’s safety in the area, leading to a meeting with local police last month, chaired by Chingford MP Sir Iain Duncan Smith.

One resident – who asked not to be named – told police: “I’ve lived here all my life and expect muggings but I don’t expect to hear about rapes or attempted rapes.

“I’ve got teenage girls - I don’t want them to go out but I have to let them - so I want to know what level of service we can expect from police.”

Residents were promised that they “will see an increase in police presence” but that, despite a recent “influx” of new officers, numbers were still not where they “need to be”.

## Rape and sexual assault reported at refugee hotel

by Josh Mellor,  
Local Democracy Reporter

**T**wo sex crimes against a teenager and a young boy were reported at a Walthamstow hotel housing hundreds of refugees.

On 9th September, a boy younger than 13 was reportedly forcibly kissed at the hotel by a teenager.

At the same hotel almost a month later, on 5th October, a teenage boy was reportedly raped by a man in his 30s.

Following the revelation of the two unconnected reports, council leader Grace Williams wrote to the Home Office expressing concerns about a “lack of safeguarding” at the hotel.

She wrote: “These hotels are not safe places for young people. These are vulnerable children, often moved thousands of miles and placed in cramped hotels for months on end without adequate support in place.”

The alleged rapist, who is currently under investigation, was released on bail until early next year.

The young man accused of forcibly kissing a child appeared in court on 9th November but the hearing was adjourned to allow for an assessment of his age, necessary to decide whether he should be tried as an adult.

After receiving evidence from two social workers at Waltham Forest Council, District Judge Ross Johnson ruled on 23rd November that he should be treated as a “minimum of

17 years old” and therefore cannot be named in the press.

The accused denied the charge of sexual assault against him and is awaiting a trial in the youth court in January.

In response to media reports of both alleged attacks, a Home Office spokesperson told the BBC: “It would be inappropriate to comment on an ongoing police investigation.

“We work around the clock with the police and local authorities to ensure the children in our care are safe.”

In August, the council leader criticised the Home Office for placing 400 refugees, including 150 children, in a local hotel “without prior notice” to the council and with “inadequate food”.

## Man banned from owning pets for two years

**A** Walthamstow man was banned from keeping animals for two years after allowing his puppy to undergo an illegal procedure.

Ramadan Murtati, a 20-year-old from Folkestone Road, pleaded guilty at Leicester Magistrates’ Court to violating the Animal Welfare Act.

Murtati had allowed someone to crop the ears of his 15-week-old puppy Bully, despite having been previously warned by vets that this procedure is illegal in England.

Ear cropping, while legal in some countries, is a painful process where part or all of the ear is removed for cosmetic reasons and was outlawed in 2006.

Animal welfare charity RSPCA was con-

tacted by a vet asked to vaccinate Bully after noticing his ears had been recently cropped. They attended the vet with police, who seized the dog.

RSPCA inspector Herchy Boal said: “Bully was quite old to have had his ears cropped, which would have been more painful for him. He could have further health issues from this in years to come.

“I am happy to say that Bully was signed over to the care of the RSPCA and has since been rehomed to a lovely family who completely adore him.”

Murtati was disqualified from keeping all animals for two years, fined £120 and ordered to pay court costs of £150 and a £34 victim surcharge.



15-week-old puppy Bully Credit RSPCA

# ‘Sordid’ sex offender assaulted sleeping woman



Michael Piczak from Station Road Credit British Transport Police

**A** local man was sentenced to a year in jail after sexually assaulting a sleeping woman on the tube to Walthamstow Central Station.

The victim was travelling home in the early hours of 29th September in 2019 when she fell asleep on the Victoria Line.

When she woke up, she found Michal Piczak, a 31-year-old from Station Road in Walthamstow, stroking her unconscious body.

Following an investigation by the British Transport Police, Piczak was found guilty by a jury at Inner London Crown Court.

In a statement on 9th November, Detective Constable Ibrar Ahmed said: “Piczak is a sordid sex offender who targeted a lone woman as she slept and subjected her to a prolonged sexual assault.

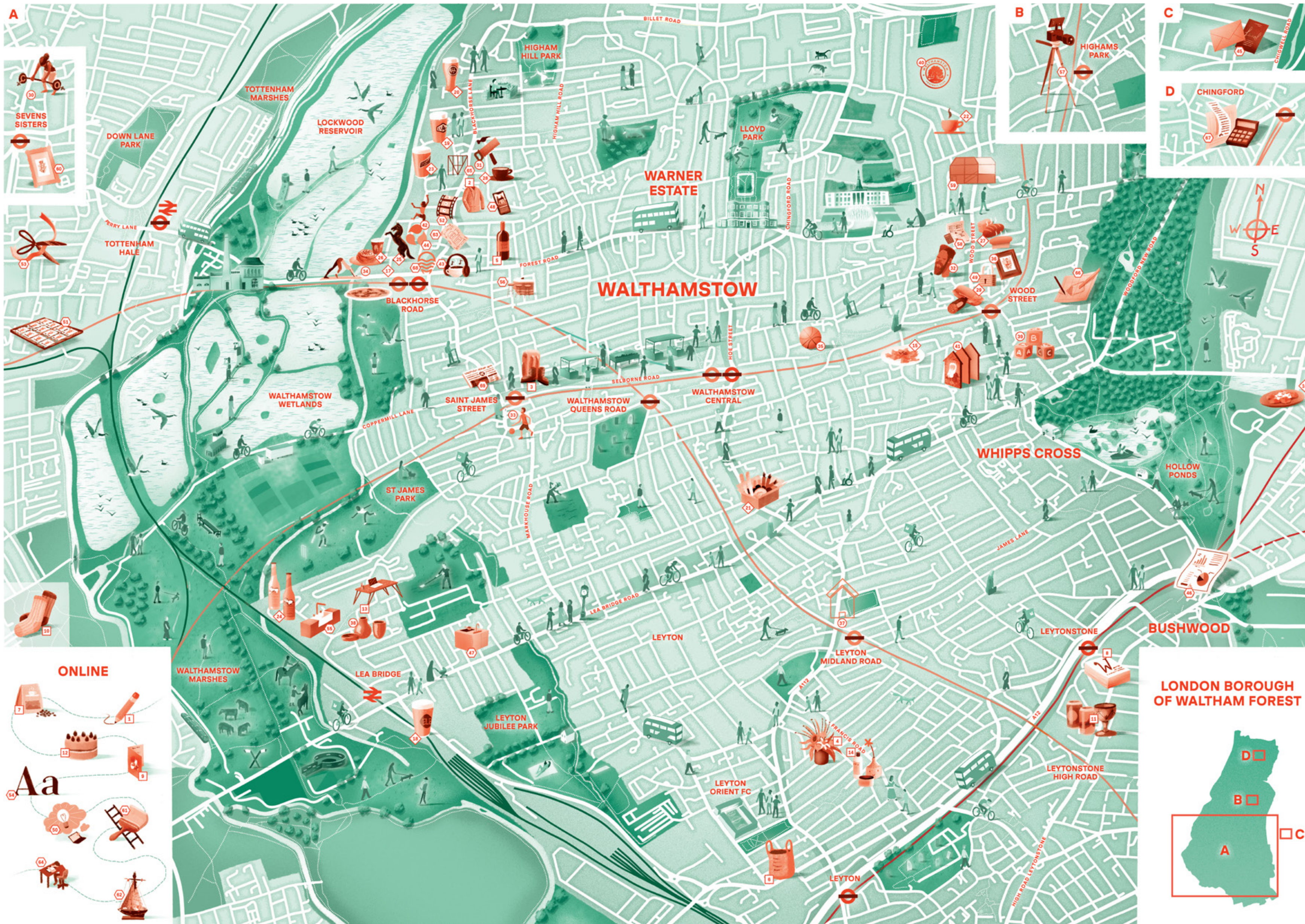
“His jail term sends out a clear message to anyone who exhibits this type of behaviour on the railway – we will catch you and bring you to justice without exception.

“If you are a victim of, or witness to, any form of sexual offending on the railway, please report it to us by texting 61016 or calling 0800 40 50 40. Always dial 999 if you’re in immediate danger.”

CCTV footage captured Piczak reaching over the train carriage aisle to touch the sleeping woman before moving next to her and stroking her legs.

He will spend a decade on the sex offenders register.





**A MAP OF SMALL BUSINESSES FOR THOSE WHO SEEK QUALITY, DISTINCTIVENESS AND CHARACTER.**



## SHOPS, MARKETS & ONLINE RETAILERS

1

### ADAM GRAFF ILLUSTRATOR

[adamgraff.com](http://adamgraff.com) (online)

Freelance illustrator with many years of professional experience, providing illustration with humour, fun and joie de vivre.

2

### BLACKHORSE LANE ATELIERS

114b Blackhorse Lane, E17 6AA  
[blackhorselane.com](http://blackhorselane.com)

Selvedge and raw denim jeans made with a focus on sustainability, community and unmatched quality.

3

### E17 EASTMAN CAMP

52 High Street, E17 7LD

e17eastmancamp, Walthamstow High Street's iconic army surplus store, outdoor clothing + camping and fishing equipment.

4

### EDIE ROSE

228 Francis Road, E10 6NQ

[edierose.co.uk](http://edierose.co.uk)

Florist based in East London creating wild and unusual flowers for any special occasion.

5

### FOREST WINES

149 Forest Road, E17 6HE

[forestwines.com](http://forestwines.com)

Independent natural and organic wine shop. Showcasing a curated selection of low intervention wines, natural, organic, biodynamic, and vegan. Alongside a wide selection of craft beers. Free UK wide delivery.

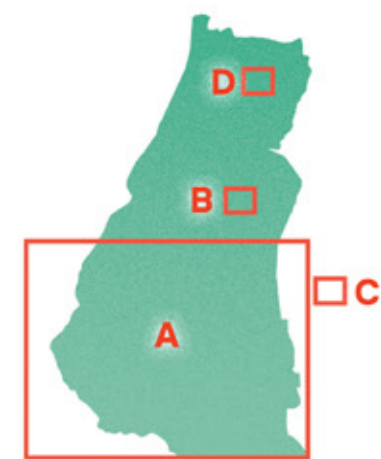
6

### GARDNERS' BAGS

78 Ruckholt Road, Leyton E10 5NP  
[gardnersbags.com](http://gardnersbags.com)

One of London's oldest traditional family business, specialising in a wide range of paper and polythene bags since 1870.

**LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST**





7

**GOOD FOLK COFFEE**  
*folk.coffee (online)*  
Female owned speciality coffee sustainably sourced from small farms around the world.

8

**HOOKSMITH PRESS**  
**54 Church Lane, E11 1HE**  
*hooksmith.com*  
They make it like they used to: letterpress printer and gallery, hand-printed quality art prints and greetings cards. Commission work undertaken.

9

**PRESSED & FOLDED**  
*pressedandfolded.com (online)*  
Range of greeting cards, wrapping paper and screen prints.

10

**SOCKO**  
**Florentia Clothing Village 108 Vale Road, N4 1TD**  
*socko.shop*  
Sustainable socks made in the UK.

11

**STONE MINIMARKET**  
**719 - 721 High Road Leytonstone**  
*@stoneminimarket*  
Ethical Store, Drinking Venue, Kitchen & Community Hub.

12

**THE KETO BAKERY**  
*theketobakery.com (online)*  
Freshly baked low carb - gluten free - grain free sweet and savoury products sold direct to consumer and wholesale. Available to order online for collection from Walthamstow.

13

**THINKFOUND**  
**Unit 2, 11 Argall Ave, E10 7QE**  
*thinkfound.co.uk*  
Reclaimed wood table & bench making company with a social edge.

14

**VENNER STORE LTD**  
**200 Francis Road, E10 6PR**  
*venner-store.co.uk*  
An independent shop selling responsibly sourced, beautifully designed gifts and homewares.

## EATING & DRINKING

15

**ARTE E PASTA**  
**93 Shernhall Street, E17 9HS**  
*arte-e-pasta.com*  
Italian sharing plates and pasta restaurant with art gallery curated by Wood Street Walls.

16

**BOMBETTA**  
**51-53 Station Approach, High Street, E11 1QE**

**bombettalondon.com**  
Italian grill and small plate restaurant, with adjacent deli that imports produce direct from Slow Food farmers throughout Italy.

17

**DODICI PIZZE**  
**1 Wickford Way, E17 6ZH**  
*@dodicildn*  
Delicious pizzas with a spectacular wine list to pair.

18

**EAST LONDON BREWING COMPANY**  
**Unit 45, Fairways Business Park, Lammas Road, E10 7QB**  
*eastlondonbrewing.com*  
Award-winning microbrewer of excellent quality, elegantly packaged, traditional British craft ales.

19

**EXALE BREWERY**  
**Unit 2C, Uplands Business Park, E17 5QJ**  
*exalebrewing.com*  
Brewery and taproom forging unique balanced and complex beers inspired by their everyday surroundings.

20

**HACKNEY BREWERY**  
**Unit 10, Lockwood Way, E17 5RB**  
*hackneybrewery.co.uk*  
Hackney Brewery is a progressive, independent and ethical brewery. 100% green energy in the brewhouse and London Living Wage accredited.

21

**ORGANICLEA**  
**Hornbeam Environment Centre, 458 Hoe Street, E17 9AH**  
*www.organiclea.org.uk*  
A workers' cooperative growing food on London's edge in the Lea Valley, providing veg boxes, training, volunteering and courses.

22

**RUTTLE & ROWE COFFEE CO.**  
**19 Victoria Road, E17 4JT**  
*ruttleandrowe.co.uk*  
Independent Specialty Coffee Shop and Small Batch Roaster.

23

**SIGNATURE BREW**  
**Unit 15 Uplands Business Estate, Blackhorse Lane, E17 5QJ**  
*signaturebrew.co.uk*  
Brewery and tap room with live music and comedy.

24

**SQUARE ROOT SODA LONDON**  
**Unit D11, Leyton Industrial Village, Argall Avenue, E10 7QP**  
*squarerootsoda.co.uk*  
Small batch sodas, handmade from real ingredients.

25

**THE BLACK HORSE**  
**1 Wickford Way, E17 6ZH**  
*@theblackhorsee17*  
E17's newest bar serving locally crafted beer, wine and soft drinks.

26

**THE WILLOW TREE**  
**Blackhorse Mills, 4 Wickford Way, E17 6ZH**  
*@thewillowtreee17*  
Café and event space in swanky new building serving local produce with lots from fellow guild members.

27

**WOOD STREET BAKERY**  
**21 Wood Street, E17 3JX**  
*woodstreetbakes.com*  
Independent, female owned bakery & cafe welcoming in customers with freshly baked pastries, breakfast and lunch options, speciality coffee & tea.

28

**WOOD STREET COFFEE**  
**Blackhorse Workshop, 1–2 Sutherland Road Path, E17 6BX**  
*woodstcoffee.co.uk*  
Independent local café serving speciality coffees from Dark Arts Coffee, along with guest roasters.

29

**WOOD STREET DELI**  
**135 Wood Street, E17 3LX**  
*woodstreetdeli.co.uk*  
Independent delicatessen and café.

## THINGS TO SEE & DO

30

**AWC WELLNESS STUDIOS**  
**266-268 HIGH ROAD N15 4AJ**  
*almawhitecoach.com*  
Women only holistic fitness studio with a mission to help as many women as possible fall in love with themselves and their bodies. Welcoming newbies and experienced lifters to come and get strong and be a part of a community that really cares.

31

**BLACKHORSE WORKSHOP CIC**  
**1-2 Sutherland Road Path, E17 6BX**  
*blackhorseworkshop.co.uk*  
A public space dedicated to making and mending, just half an hour from the centre of London. We offer open access to a fully equipped wood and metal workshop.

32

**COVE17**  
**106 Wood Street, E17 3HX**  
*cove17.com*  
Concept Barbershop with its roots in E17. Discover top quality barbering, The Cove17 Coffeehouse and unique event spaces.

33

**EVERBETTER SPORT**  
**Unit 14b, Crate Building 25 St James Street, E17 7FY**  
Community fitness and wellbeing, indoor and outdoor classes with basketball drills and much more.

34

**F45 BLACKHORSE LANE**  
**Blackhorse Mills, Forest Road, E17 6ZH**  
*45training.co.uk/blackhorselane*  
Boutique fitness studio providing fun group training sessions.

35

**FLAMES BASKETBALL**  
**Walthamstow School for Girls, Church Hill, E17 9RZ**  
*flamesbasketball.co.uk*  
Fun and fast paced basketball for all ages. Sessions are family-friendly, open to all, and offer opportunities to get involved in coaching, personal development and work experience beyond the court.

36

**IMAGES IN FRAMES**  
**51 & 59 Wood Street, London E17 3JX**  
*imagesinframes.com*  
Members of the Fine Art Trade Guild showcasing the best upcoming and established artists. From original artworks to limited edition prints, there is something for everyone.

37

**SASB EVENTS**  
**HOST, 658 High Road, E10 6JP**  
*sasbevents.com*  
Events at various venues across London including HOST Leyton to support, showcase and develop small, independent businesses.

38

**TURNING EARTH E10**  
**Top floor, 11 Argall Avenue, E10 7QE**  
*turningearth.uk*  
Open-access members' ceramics studio, accessible to anyone from total beginners to professional artists.

39

**THE VILLAGE PRE-SCHOOL**  
**48a Greenway Ave, E17 3QN**  
*villagepreschoole17.com*  
Waltham Forest based Pre-school, providing affordable childcare to children aged 2+. Established as a charity.

40

**WALTHAMSTOW FC**  
**Wadham Lodge Sports Ground, Kitchener Rd, E17 4JP**  
*www.walthamstowfc.com*  
Your grass roots football team in Waltham Forest playing in The Southern League Division One Central. Families are welcome. Tickets start at £5. ALWAYS BELIEVE.

41

**WOOD STREET WALLS**  
**Wood Street Studios, Barrett Road, E17 3FU**  
*woodstreetwalls.co.uk*  
Arts collective brightening neighbourhoods with artist- and community-led murals and street art.

42

**YONDER**  
**6 Hooker's Road, E17 6DP**  
*thisisyonder.com*  
Co-working space and workshop, climbing centre, yoga studio, bar and cafe.

## SERVICES & SUPPLIES

43

**ARMSTRONG AUDIO**  
**COFFEE & REPAIR SHOP**  
**32A Blackhorse Lane, E17 6HJ**  
*armstrong-audio.com*  
Leading specialist with over 35 years' experience in home, high-end and professional audio equipment repairs.

44

**AYAMA COACHING**  
**Yonder Workspace, 6 Hooker's Road, E17 6DP**  
*ayamacoaching.co.uk*  
Career and business coaching, helping individuals get clear on their career ambitions, change careers or climb the ladder. Also providing business coaching to start ups and micro-businesses who would like to grow their businesses or make them more sustainable.

45

**BADDELEY BROTHERS**  
**Tupos House, 208a Maybank Road, E18 1ET**  
*baddeleybrothers.com*  
Renowned specialist printing and bespoke envelope makers since 1859.

46

**BARNES ROFFE LLP**  
**Leytonstone House, 3 Hanbury Drive, E11 1GA**  
*barnesroffe.com*  
Top 45 firms of Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors specialising in business start-up advice, corporate and personal tax, payroll and VAT services, bookkeeping and accounts, year-end compliance in respect of statutory accounts and tax. Free initial consultation.

47

**CONSTRUCTIVE AND CO**  
**3 Flampton Road, E10 7NH**  
*constructiveandco.com*  
Bespoke kitchen and cabinet makers.

48

**COVERS**  
**Unit B3, Sutherland House, Sutherland Road, E17 6BU**  
*covers-studio.com*  
Covers specialises in design for remarkable places to stay, eat and

explore. From small projects to brand identities, working to craft considered and distinctive experiences.

49

**DENNIS SECURITY**  
**137-139 Wood Street, E17 3LX**  
*dennissecurity.co.uk*  
Family business started in 1959 now in its 3rd generation, trading from the same premises in Wood Street Walthamstow, offering locksmith and security services.

50

**ELBOW**  
*elbowstudio.co (online)*  
Creative communications agency combining a high-end experience with a friendly, open-minded approach, bringing big agency thinking and creativity within reach of smaller organisations.

51

**DOT STUDIO**  
**1.1 Gaunson House, Markfield Road, N15 4QQ**  
*dot-studio.org*  
Printing studio. Specialise in foil blocking, screen printing, edge gilding and print finishing.

52

**GLASS EYE**  
**Suite 7, 4-6a Hookers Road, E17 6DP**  
*glasseyeinc.com*  
UK-based creative marketing agency producing eye-catching video, artwork and animation.

53

**LONDON TRIMMINGS**  
**Head Office, Warehouse & Trade Counter, 41b Antill Road Tottenham Hale, N15 4AS**  
*londontrimmings.co.uk*  
Established in 1969, dedicated to delivering the widest variety of supplies to the garment industry.

54

**MATT CURTIS**  
*matt-curtis.co.uk (online)*  
Creative Director & Graphic Designer

55

**MAXWELL PINBOROUGH**  
**3 Excalibur Works, 13 Argall Ave, E10 7QE**  
*mpfurniture.com*  
Bespoke furniture and interiors from designer Stephen Maxwell and cabinet maker Andrew Pinborough.

56

**MUZO**  
**2 Ritchings Ave, London E17 6LB**  
*muzodesign.co.uk*  
Muzo is an award-winning interior design studio based in London, specialising in Hospitality – restaurants, bars, cinemas and hot.

57

**MVP MEDIA**  
**Unit 14, 500 Larkshall Road, E4 9HH**  
*mvpmedia.co.uk*

Innovative youth driven social enterprise that works to develop skills and create opportunities for young people in the creative industries. Young creatives produce professional standard music, podcasts, videos, games and other content.

58

**NRM ACCOUNTANTS**  
**70 Wood St, London E17 3HT**  
*www.nrmaccountants.co.uk*  
Walthamstow based firm of Chartered Certified Accountants since 1979, specialising in Accountancy and Taxation Services and Advice, as well as VAT, Payroll, CIS and Business Planning.

59

**OMNISCIENT HOMES**  
**Unit 26 Walthamstow Business Centre, Clifford Road, E17 4SX**  
*omni-homes.co.uk*  
Established since 2015 specialising in high quality loft conversions, refurbishments and extensions.

60

**PENDRAGON FRAMES**  
**Rangemoor Industrial Estate, Rangemoor Road, N15 4NG**  
*pendragonframes.com*  
Fine Art Picture Framing for galleries, museums and private clients.

61

**PENTON & SONS**  
*pentonandsons.co.uk (online)*  
Painters & Decorators.

62

**REMIYARIVERAMBLER**  
*@remiyariverambler (online)*  
Artist, Maker and Creative Practitioner.

63

**RESILIENT EDGE ARCHITECTURE**  
**Creative Works, 7 Blackhorse Lane, Walthamstow, London, E17 6DS**  
*resilientedge.co.uk*  
Chartered Architects specialising in residential projects.

64

**SAM BREWSTER**  
*www.sambrewster.com (online)*  
Freelance illustrator & animator.

65

**THINGS PLACES MESSAGES**  
**Blackhorse Workshop, 1 Sutherland Road Path, E17 6BX**  
*thingsplacesmessages.com*  
Agency for architecture product and graphics design all under one roof. Professional and skilled practitioners contributing to the same project.

66

**SYNDICATE WEST ARCHITECTS**  
**57 Upper Walthamstow Road, E17 3QG**  
*syndicatewest.co.uk*  
RIBA Chartered Practice purposefully positioned in the heart of East London specialising in people's homes, their context and interventions; working hard to make genuinely sustainable projects.

67

**TAX ASSIST**  
**77 - 79 Station Road, Chingford, E4 7BU**  
*taxassist.co.uk*  
Accountant and tax adviser.

68

**STRILLOBYTE**  
**Creative Works, 7 Blackhorse Lane, E17 6DS**  
*strillobyte.com*  
Small but ambitious software agency behind Klu, a mobile app that allows anyone to connect their digital content with the real world through QR codes.

69

**WALTHAM FOREST ECHO**  
**The Mill 7-11 Coppermill Lane, E17 7HA**  
*walthamforestech.co.uk*  
Independent newspaper for Waltham Forest promoting the work of the local community. Through journalism they help to hold authority to account.

From traditional shops to new online designers to craft breweries, this map is a celebration of the diversity of small independent businesses that continue to give East London its famous character.

All businesses within this guide are members of the East End Trades Guild: a diverse alliance of small independent businesses, working together in solidarity to wield influence on common interests, supporting neighbourhoods that are increasingly left out of the wealth of East London, enhancing economic resilience through bridging relationships, and cultivating community wealth.

Illustration: Sam Brewster  
Design: Matt Curtis

Sponsors & Partners:



WALTHAM  
FOREST ECHO

WOOD STREET WALLS

THE STOW BROTHERS



ARTS & CULTURE



# King Arthur returns to Walthamstow

Charlotte Dunbar from William Morris Gallery on their current exhibition

The only known oil painting ever completed by William Morris is one of many pieces on display at the gallery that shares his name. *The Legend of King Arthur: A Pre-Raphaelite Love Story* – open until 22nd January – explores the medieval king’s impact on the Victorian imagination and Pre-Raphaelite art.

The Arthurian legends were largely forgotten until new editions of *Le Morte d’Arthur*, the first attempt to tell the stories in a single work, were published in 1816 and 1817. For the Pre-Ra-

phaelite Brotherhood, a society of young artists founded in London in 1848, the tales of romance and chivalry resonated with their dream of creating a new British art founded in sincerity and truth to nature. William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones, for example, read the legends obsessively while at Oxford University.

On display is Morris’ painting *La Belle Iseult*, modelled on his eventual wife Jane Burden, alongside the dress he designed for the sitting. The exhibition is also a rare opportunity to see two large tapestries designed by Edward Burne-Jones and co-produced by Morris, featuring King Arthur’s knights on their search for the Holy Grail. Also shown are works by lesser-known female artists, such as two watercolours by Eleanor Fortescue-Brickdale.

To accompany the exhibition, the William Morris Gallery commissioned contemporary artist Joy Gregory to create an installation exploring international myths and legends. *Fierce And Fearless: Witty Wise Women and Wondrous Tales* is a response to King Arthur’s male-dominated round table. A printed and embroidered textile forms a tent illustrated with stories with women as fierce protagonists.

Designed to be seen together, the William Morris Gallery is encouraging visitors to consider how myths and legends shape and define our values.

Visit for free at William Morris Gallery from 10am–5pm, Tuesday to Sunday. A special curator-led tour of the exhibition will take place at 12pm on 10th December.

# Walthamstow Market ‘guardian’ revealed

Kirsty McNeil from Artillery on a new public sculpture coming to the High Street

An exciting new sculpture is being unveiled in the town centre this month to act as a “guardian” of the famous Walthamstow Market.

The *Walthamstow Griffin* was created by local sculptor Sandie Sutton with the help of us at arts organisation Artillery and funding from Mayor of London Sadiq Khan.

The wall-mounted sculpture will

“Many traders carried representations of them because they were seen to bring good fortune and to be protectors of gold and gold can be symbolic of all sorts of things.”

For Sandie, whose family were stall holders at Walthamstow Market, the *Griffin* “symbolises a guardian of things that we treasure and [the market] is definitely something we should treasure”.

be unveiled on the corner of Caris-brooke Road and the High Street on 3rd December, amid a special ‘Winter Feast’ to celebrate its arrival.

Sculptor Sandie approached Artillery after being inspired by the wall-mounted dragons that decorate Chinatown in central London.

She said: “I thought we really should have something like that in Walthamstow but we needed to find the right idea to fit this area.

“[I and Laura from Artillery] both like the griffins[...] at the St James Street end of the market and the more we researched the mythology of these incredible creatures, the more we realised how much they fitted with the High Street.



A keen environmentalist, Sandie’s work entails using plastic waste to create sculptures of animals, particularly endangered species.

She added: “Using things that already exist is important – most of the items I’m using to make the *Griffin* came from the local area.

“I find a lot of it on the street from fly tipping, a lot of stuff has been donated and some I collected from charity shops so it’s saved, rather than thrown away.”

The *Griffin* was funded with a grant from the Mayor of London’s “Untold Stories” initiative, which aims to create London landmarks honouring the less widely recognised contributions to the success of the city.

HOUSING

# Almost all private rents unaffordable on benefits

by Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

Almost all private rental properties advertised in Waltham Forest are unaffordable for people on benefits, an investigation has revealed.

This year, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism surveyed Rightmove adverts for thousands of two-bed properties across East London and found 97% would not be affordable for local people using their Local Housing Allowance (LHA) benefits.

Waltham Forest residents are eligible for £1,196 per month in LHA if they live in the south of the borough and £1,058 per month if they live in Chingford. According to recent Office for National Statistics estimates, the average monthly rent in Waltham Forest is £1,350.

Waltham Forest Council’s deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and



regeneration Ahsan Khan said the research demonstrates an issue the council has been raising “for years”: that the support they receive from the government is “not enough” to help families facing rising house prices and increasing demand.

He added: “It is also clear that Local Housing Allowances and benefits should be raised in line with housing costs and inflation. It is a national scandal that families are unable to afford to live in the areas in which their friends and

support networks are based.

“We urgently need more assistance, not just to build more homes for social rent but also to make sure we can provide a safety net for those in most need – especially as the cost of living crisis intensifies this winter.”

The Bureau’s analysis looked at 349 properties advertised in outer North East London – an area covering Chingford and much of Redbridge, Barking and Dagenham and Havering – and found only ten affordable using LHA alone.

Within the outer East London area – which includes Walthamstow, Leyton and Leytonstone – an analysis of 410 properties found 98.5% were unaffordable using only LHA.

Polly Neate, chief executive of Shelter, said: “Housing benefit should be the safety net that stops people becoming homeless but it’s frozen at 2020 levels, leaving renters desperately trying to make up the shortfall.

“Now, record-high private

rents and rocketing prices are leaving even more renters fighting to keep a roof over their heads. The housing emergency is at the core of the cost-of-living crisis but it is being ignored.”

When approached to comment, a government spokesperson said: “During the pandemic we increased Local Housing Allowance significantly and beyond inflation, benefiting over one million households by an average of over £600 over the year. We’re maintaining that boost, keeping support for private renters above pre-pandemic levels.

“We recognise people are facing pressures with the cost of living, which is why we have taken action through our £37billion support package to help households with rising costs, including £1,200 this year for the most vulnerable.”

They added that Waltham Forest Council will receive £5,493,727 this financial year in homelessness prevention grants.

The former Ritz Cinema in High Road, Leyton  
Credit: Google Streetview



# Leyton cinema flats approved

Plans to pack 83 flats onto a “compressed” former cinema site in Leyton won unanimous approval from councillors last month.

Waltham Forest Council’s planning committee approved plans for two blocks – five and six storeys high – at the former Ritz Cinema in High Road, Leyton, on 1st November.

The cinema was built in 1938 but closed in 1979. Its auditorium was used as office space for many years but, due to its “deteriorating condition”, has been empty since 2020.

Although not listed, its distinctive Art Deco-style façade is considered “something of a local landmark” and will be preserved, albeit with a five-storey block rising behind it.

This attracted criticism from the Council for British Archaeology, who argued the plan “totally fails to respect the architectural design”.

# One in 75 local homes lying empty

One in every 75 Waltham Forest homes is currently “empty”, according to the Action on Empty Homes campaign.

Last month, based on figures released by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the campaign group released their annual analysis of the UK’s empty homes.

In Waltham Forest, they found 1,007 homes have been lying empty “long-term” this year, a slight decrease from last year’s figure of 1,118.

The borough also saw a drop in the number of second homes in the borough, from 520 to 441, meaning there are a total of 1,448 local homes not in regular use.

The borough ranks 18th in London for the number of “long-term empty homes”, not including second homes.

Southwark is by far the borough with the most empty homes, with 2,431 recorded this year, while Wandsworth has the least, with only 191.

# Swedish choir celebrates ten years

Walthamstow’s Swedish choir celebrates its tenth anniversary this month by staging a centuries-old Christmas ceremony.

Norrsång – which translates to “songs of the north” – was created in 2012 by “a group of Scandinavian mothers missing home”, allowing them to share

their traditions with their new neighbours.

In the decade since, the choir has tripled in size and boasts members from many nationalities, who sing in cafes, churches, town halls and at private functions.

This month, they will stage three performances in a local church to celebrate Saint Lucia, an early

Christian martyr who brought food to worshippers fleeing persecution in the Roman catacombs, lighting her way with a candle-lit wreath on her head.

Choir leader Sara Jenkin said: “It’s such a pleasure to bring together this wonderful group of women to perform something truly magical.

“We promise an evening of songs absolutely guaranteed to get you in the mood for Christmas.”

Fellow member Karoline Toba, who joined the choir after watching a Christmas performance in 2018, added: “It was astonishing. I couldn’t believe how moved I was by the music. Two months later I joined the choir and hav-

en’t looked back.”

Norrsång will celebrate with a candlelit performance and a Luciatåg procession, a tradition which takes place across Sweden, in three performances at St. Michael and All Angels Church on 9th and 10th December.

Find out more and buy tickets here: [norrsangchoir.co.uk/news](http://norrsangchoir.co.uk/news)









# WE NEED YOUR HELP

## WE ARE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP SUPPORT US TO PRODUCE MORE HIGH-QUALITY LOCAL JOURNALISM IN WALTHAM FOREST

- We have NO shareholders
- We have NO wealthy backers
- We are run by a small but dedicated team as part of a not-for-profit community interest company
- We hold authority to account, expose scandals, highlight inequality, promote good causes, and provide a platform for local people
- Every penny of income from the Echo helps us deliver more journalism in Waltham Forest
- The paper costs nearly £6,000 per month to produce and distribute, but monthly income is under £5,000 currently
- We currently have 259 supporters who contribute around 23% of our income, but we need more!

Can you help us? Our membership scheme has many different options, starting from £3 per month, depending on your ability to contribute. Rewards include having a copy of the paper posted to you every month. Local businesses and charities can also sign up and, for as little as £10 per month, access discounts on advertising.

Find out more at: [walthamforestecho.co.uk/membership](http://walthamforestecho.co.uk/membership)

## OUR CURRENT MEMBERS

Chris Lemin, Darrel Hunneybell, David Gardiner, David Hamilton, Dexter Coles, Graham Millington, Jean Duggleby, 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, Community Counts UK, Esther Neslen, Saradadevii Hull-Jurkovic, Claire Weiss, George Clarke, Ben Marlow, Creative Works, 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, 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, Ruth Goldsmith, Kate Bohdanowicz, Kizzy Gardiner, Lydia Noon, Douglas Saltmarsh, Louis Wallinger, Peter Brennan, Paul Perkins, 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, 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, Tom Penn, Mette Isaksen, Tony Lawlor, Thomas Ableman, Matt Bennett, Wendy Wood, Gary Anderson, Jamie Smyth, Andrew Prescott, Bryony Forde, Matthew Rodriguez, Dara Maguire, John Hugill, 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, Gail Courtney, Ruth Kosminsky, Ryan de Ste Croix, Chris Radley, Scott Rodgers, Louisa Ackermann, Ollie Daw, Justin Tilley, Carl Antbring, Felicity Hall, Tristan Moyle, Mary Seabrook, Joyce Quarrie, Simon Cook, Leonora Peralta, Elaine Hoctor, Jennifer Crampton, James Mayne, Rob Plant, Ciaran O'Connor, Peter Baker, Tanja Nielsen, Darren Lawrence, Emily Emmott, Roger Huddle, Dan Browne, Sophy Harper, Adrian Stannard, Lily Nelson, Sonia Fletcher, Terence Button-Sands, Ellie Dawes, Derrick Hibbett, Justina Forristal, David Cato, Anne Strudwick, Mark Brown, Philip Wray, Nick Dovey, Christina Carè, Jon Parker-Dean, Sophie & John deGraft-Johnson, Rhod Morgan, Steve Bloomfield, Abigail Ross, Ruth Parmessur, Albert Carter-Phillips, Linda Green, Claire Hambleton, Clive Power, Amy Keegan, Lesley Finlayson, Lewis Robinson, Matthew Wyatt, David O'Driscoll, Andrew Cole, Paul Gasson, Tom Belger, Irena Chudzio, Angela Shek, John Leeming, Mike Bartlett, Fiona Johnson, Delroy Peters, Anoushka Huntington-Bowles, Natasha McFadzean, Louise Krzan, Daniel Bowman, Diana Wellings, Simon Thompson, Alistair Scott, Niklas Friedberg, Angie Tillyer, Helen Porter, Sybil Ritten, Rob Skipwith, James Baines, Graham Norman, Alex Maws, Richard Bagley, Sharon Matthews, Rosio Cafarelli, John Gilbert, Roy Sutton, Matt Button, Karen Ruddock, Fatemah Abidi, Alistair Scott, Jane Tilson, Liam Jones, Sarah Jones, Hilda Varley and Emily Parsonage.

