



HIGHBURY COMMUNITY NEWS

FROM THE HIGHBURY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Highbury Fields New Projects Cut, BBQ Ban Upheld



As expected, the May elections were the starting gun for cuts and changes in direction. The obvious difficulties in public finances have meant withdrawal of funding for new projects on Highbury Fields; there is no longer the money for the planned wholesale repair of the paths, the refurbishment of litter bins, the installation of stone aprons for benches, or repairs to the café or bandstand buildings or, indeed, to pursue plans for changing the landscaping around the swimming pool and War Memorial.

Good news is that projects already started are being completed: the painting of railings; the removal of the eyesore, former

toilet building at the top of the main field at Highbury Crescent and covering the area with grass - for me, this opening up of a large, sweeping view across and between the top and bottom fields is the best thing that's happened to Highbury Fields in the thirty-odd years I have known the park - with further landscaping there, in the autumn, together with the corner beside Framfield Road where redundant depot buildings and changing rooms have been demolished as well. There may be sufficient money to set up three new notice-boards to advertise events the council organises on the Fields and to give a space for community-based groups such as HCA and local

schools and churches to advertise their activities. The council's Greenspace department will pay for one notice-board, at the children's playground at the lower end of Highbury Crescent, and Councillor Stacy will seek money for the other two. Probably a good way to deal with this is not to create new sites for notice-boards but to redesign three of the eleven recently installed 'Highbury Fields' signs to combine their information with each notice-board so that the park does not become cluttered with unnecessary structures taking too much attention from the grass and trees that bring us into contact with nature.

In mid-July, new notices made us aware that barbecues are not permitted in council parks for reasons of safety and protecting the grass, which is killed in many instances and costly to replace successfully. But also, the comfort of those not using the Fields for cooking has become an issue in recent times; on any sunny weekend clouds of smoke have been drifting over everyone present. The restriction may have come as a surprise but, equally, other kinds of picnic can be prepared and enjoyed on the Fields.



The HCA represents over 900 residents and businesses on all aspects of living and working in Highbury, Lower Holloway and Finsbury Park.

Membership is free. Members receive bi-monthly newsletters like this one. New members will receive the newsletter by email (unless you don't have email). To join or talk to us about anything Highbury-related, please email hcanews@hotmail.com or write to PO Box 43396, N5 9AD.

The opinions expressed in HCN are not necessarily those of the Highbury Community Association and its committee members.

Pilates Classes

Mondays 9.15 am
St Johns School Hall
Conewood St N5

Chloe's classes focus on improving posture by releasing tight muscles and breathing correctly. A great way to strengthen core muscles and release stress too.

www.chloepaterson.com
Member of the Body Control Pilates Association
07771 848 553

HCA at the Gillespie Festival

HCA is having a stall at the Gillespie Festival on 12th September in the afternoon. We will be selling books and a few choice items, as well as signing up new email members. Do come along and support us and other stallholders if you can.

Further information about the Festival:
<http://events.islington.gov.uk/Booking/Programme/Session/Default.aspx?BookingProgrammeUid=7d58e9c2-295c-4226-9b7a-13496cd8bc7c&BookingSessionUid=b5d124fd-a285-493d-b628-Of23ba0768d6>



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Save our centre

The Council are thinking of making cuts by closing our local day centre for senior citizens, Sotheby Mews Centre, which is currently managed by Age Concern Islington (*see last issue of HCAN, ed.*). This will have a devastating effect on older Highbury residents who go to Sotheby Mews, not to mention those who will want to come in the future. Those who come to Sotheby's rely heavily on the daily hot lunches, the warmth and companionship and activities that keep them fit longer, in mind and body.

For about 28 years the Centre has been open 5 days a week, catering for the needs of senior citizens in the Highbury area, in some cases through two generations. On average 65 people now attend during the course of each day.

If the Centre was forced to close through lack of funding many members would be housebound. Many others would fall into ill health through sickness and depression which occurs when there is a lack of companionship and activities which keep people healthy and happy.

How can you help?

- * Sign our petition
- * Come into Sotheby Mews and see what's going on
- * Lobby your local councillor and MP

HENRY BOURNER, Chair, Sotheby Mews Centre Members' Committee



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NEW:

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Contact Denise Byrne on 020 7 226 6753.

E-mail: denisebyrne@english11and13plus.net

Skills Sharing: Time Bank launches in Highbury

"I'd like to learn a new skill, but I can't afford to pay for lessons."

"I'd like to know my neighbours better."

"We need to share resources to look after the environment"

"When I need help around the house I don't know who to ask."

Does this sound like you? In which case you might want to consider joining a new initiative that has just started up in Highbury: Highbury Time Bank.

A Time Bank is an exciting - and free - way for people to come together to help others, help themselves and help the environment at the same time. Participants 'deposit' their time in the bank by giving practical help and support to others and are able to 'withdraw' their time when they need something done themselves.

In a Time Bank people exchange time on an equal basis: 1 hour of my time = 1 hour of yours, whatever the skills involved. So for example you could spend an hour putting up a shelf for a neighbour and they could help you with your garden, get you started with setting up a website or put together a newsletter. Everyone who has some time can get involved; even people who don't think they have many 'skills' can help by volunteering to wait in for a delivery for a busy person or return someone's books to the library, for example.

There are many benefits to a Time Bank: saving money, reducing isolation, and creating a friendlier, safer and more sustainable neighbourhood.

Highbury Time Bank has been set up by Mary Stevens and Priti Pedersen, who met through Transition Highbury. Time Banks support the exchange of all skills, but they hope that in the future Highbury Time Bank will have an important role to play in supporting the spread of skills that are particularly important in a low-carbon society (such as repairs and maintenance and food-growing).

If you would like to join the Time Bank please email Priti at highburytime@live.co.uk or call on . You can also visit the website at <http://www.projectdirt.com/group/highburytimebank>. Once you're a member you will receive a regular newsletter with information about the skills on offer and if you're looking for help with something that's not listed then all you need to do is call or email and the Time Bank team will try to find someone to help.

Mary and Priti are also very keen to hear from anyone who would like to get more involved, so if you are one of those people who likes to chat and knows all their neighbours they would love to hear from you! There are lots of other ways to get involved too, for example with fundraising or publicity or developing the website. And any time you spend can be banked as 'time credits' to be spent on all the wonderful services other members have to offer. Time to get involved!

PRITI
highburytime@live.co.uk
020 7226 3323
www.istime.org
www.timebanking.org



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references on request.

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Businesses we love: Alternative Time Out guide to Highbury

Below is the third instalment of NICOLETTE JONES' compilation of neighbours' recommended local shops/cafes/restaurants... *Note: these are the personal opinions of the individuals named.*

Part 3:

CAFES

Good for Food, Café/deli 16 Blackstock Rd (between Rock St and the Library)
-- Organic soups and lunches, friendly service (especially from Helena, the proprietor); note on Thursdays and Fridays their special Portuguese custard tarts (so delicious it would be too much to have them every day). Has an outdoor space, and wifi has just arrived, so a place to work with a coffee, J K Rowling-style. I have all my business meetings here. (Nicolette)

(Also a favourite of Christine's and Nicola's)

La Princesse 'Salon de Tea' 86 Blackstock Rd (near the corner with Ambler Rd)
-- Excellent croissants (Nick)

Heathville Scott, café and estate agents 129 Blackstock Rd 7226 1100
-- How amazing is it to find a café in an estate agents' office? Surprise your friends. Very good baked sweet potatoes. Have never bought a house from them, though. (Nicolette)

(Also a favourite of Sue's)

Golden Loaf (formerly Pain d'Or) café and bakery, 136 Blackstock Rd (between Monsell and Chatterton Rds)
-- Freshly baked bread; we waited long enough for a baker's in this area; use it or lose it! (Ian)

Cinnamon Village café/deli 108 Highbury Park
-- Lovely coffee/atmosphere/so many lovely fresh cakes to choose from (Jacqueline)
-- Pastries as good as they are in France (Becca)
-- Simple, great food, at a good price. Soup at lunch times is a treat, though closed at lunch Mon to Wednesday. Delivery service ideal for when you want to be lazy and healthy. (Adam)
-- Takeaways are heavenly (Becca)

The Clock Café 73 Highbury Park
-- Lovely coffee, comfy seats and friendly staff (the name apparently relates to the Clock end of the old Arsenal stadium). (Lindy)

HARDWARE, ELECTRICAL & PRINT

Mix Hardware, Ironmongers, 51 Blackstock Rd 7226 6415 (across and a bit down from Library)
-- Because the proprietor, Maria, in

the Dickensian interior can find anything you can draw, even if you don't know what it's called. (Nicolette)
-- Absolutely not a place where you buy shrinkwrap goods; totally bespoke; the epitome of a proper shop (Ian)
-- I like the people, the stock is amazing and the way the shop is laid out is a piece of art (Natalie)
-- Any strange nut or bolt - any DIY query, an amazing selection of useful bits and pieces - will help solve any DIY problem (Caroline)

Rae Electrical Services 116A Blackstock Rd 72262962
-- Incredibly helpful - will give advice and help fix - however in danger of being taken over by his stock! (Caroline)

ABSL Print shop 127 Blackstock Rd, 7704 1949 (near junction with Brownswood Rd)
-- Invaluable to have a local place where they will print photos from cameras/disks/phones/memory sticks. (Nicolette)

First Choice Hardware 156 Blackstock Rd (near corner with Gillespie Rd)
-- They always know what I want -- and have it (Jacqueline)

(Also a favourite of Henry's)

Woodland Hardware 20 Highbury Park 7354 5029
-- Kind, friendly and usually have what you want where others fail! (Liz)
-- Because the owner and his assistant are not just helpful but so charming and handsome as well (are we allowed to say that?) (Lindy)
-- Favourite of Angela's

CLEANERS

Quality Dry Cleaners 23 Blackstock Rd, 7359 2895 (near the bus stop)
-- Steve is friendly and thorough. He also cuts keys and has a sewing service for repairs and alterations. Open daily 8am-6.30pm EXCEPT Thursday pm after 1, shuts 6pm Saturdays and closed Sundays. The frontage could do with a lick of paint, though! (Nicolette)

C & A Dry Cleaners, 115 Highbury Park. Eco dry cleaning
-- Knows his stuff, friendly and fair (Jacqueline)

(Also a favourite of Sue's and Becca's)

MISCELLANEOUS

Seven Heavens Clinic, Top Flat, 20 Blackstock Rd, 7704 2777 (between Rock St and Library)
-- massage, cupping, acupuncture. Faisal and Awais are very caring (Nicolette)

Second Chance Bookshop 161 Blackstock Rd

-- On Nicola's Couldn't-Do-Without list

C & H Chemist 179 Blackstock Rd 7226 2500 (opposite the end of Gillespie Rd)
-- They greet you with friendly personal service and advice, rather than with a barcode reader (Ian)
-- Knowledgeable and polite (Nicolette)

Raymond's Newsagents 9 Highbury Park 72261361.
-- They are fantastically obliging with unusual requests. (Maya)

The Barn Post Office 10-12 Highbury Park
-- Favourite of Angela's

RESTAURANTS AND PUBS

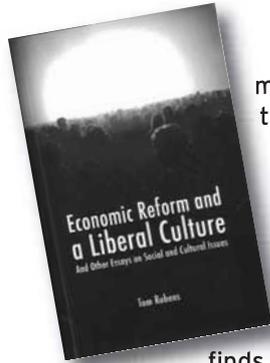
Dotori, Korean/Japanese restaurant 3 Stroud Green Rd 7263 3562 (also at beginning of Stroud Green Rd, just across Seven Sisters on that island triangle).
-- Set Japanese meal is pretty good value (about £25 for 2 from memory). (Christine)
-- Superb. We took a Korean friend who said it was the best Korean food she'd had in London. Booking is essential, because it's small. (Henry)

The Kings Head pub 26 Blackstock Rd (corner of Monsell Rd)
-- Safe drinking environment in prime spot (Ian)

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BOOK REVIEW

What price a liberal culture?



Economic Reform and a Liberal Culture is a new collection of short essays from long-term Highbury resident Tom Rubens written from a secular humanist viewpoint. The whole book is only 150 pages long and yet the topics covered are vast: ranging from multi-culturalism in English society to eugenics.

The book is divided into three sections so you can easily dip in and out of the parts that most appeal to you – whether it be social, economic and cultural issues; or pure philosophy; or literary themes. Tom's aim is to raise subjects in brief to stimulate debate. He amply succeeded in this at the launch event organised by the South Place Ethical Society at Conway Hall in Holborn in July, sparking a lively discussion among his fellow humanists.

What appeals to me most about the book is not only its broad scope connecting philosophical thought with wider trends in society, culture and science, but specifically the many tie-ins with English literature. This is to be expected since Tom, now 65, has for many years taught English literature both here and abroad.

For example, there is a chapter in his book on 'The Princess Casamassima Problem', Princess Casamassima being the title of a novel by Henry James. In this chapter Tom explores how the main characters in the novel are on opposite sides of a philosophical debate about whether material inequality in society is necessary for great wonders of art to exist – works of art that nourish the human spirit. He gives the examples of Versailles, the Vatican and the Palace of Westminster. He asks would such beautiful buildings have been created in a society where no one individual or group possessed

much larger economic assets than the other?

For those who are interested in hard-core philosophy Tom compares and contrasts the thinking of major philosophers since Darwin. For example, he surprisingly finds common ground between John Stuart Mill and Nietzsche.

This book is indeed food for thought. I am now inspired to read or reread some of the works of literature cited by Tom as having

reflected and powered the changing philosophical debate of the last 150 years.

How to obtain a copy

Economic Reform and a Liberal Culture And Other Essays on Social and Cultural Issues

RRP = £8.95 But available from www.imprint-academic.com at £7.16 ; www.amazon.co.uk or from Tom himself - call 020 7690 9896 or email tr015o2880@blueyonder.co.uk

REVIEW BY CEINWEN JONES

Businesses we love: Alternative Time Out guide to Highbury

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Pizzadelique, 1-3
Chatterton Rd
72263838
-- All my housemates love it (Jacqueline)
-- Friendly atmosphere, and the nicest banoffee pie in the world (Becca)

Organica Pizza, 4B
Gillespie Rd 7226
6007 (for takeaways)
-- Excellent pizzas (Henry)

(Also a favourite of Nicola's)

Dilara Restaurant 27
Blackstock Rd, 7226
2446 (by the bus stop)
-- As good as any Turkish Restaurant in Green Lanes (Jacqueline)

Organica Pizza, 4B
Gillespie Rd 7226
6007 (for takeaways)
-- Excellent pizzas (Henry)

(Also a favourite of Nicola's)

Yildiz, 163 Blackstock Rd
-- Good takeaway and eat-in ocakbasi restaurant. (Adam)

Little Sardegna 170
Blackstock Rd 7354
4500
-- A fantastic place to eat, whether it's a quiet meal for two, or a large group of friends - delicious food, great atmosphere (Seb)

Small & Beautiful
restaurant, 171
Blackstock Rd, 7359
9068

-- Reasonably priced food in relaxed setting, service is rarely delayed, not too crowded or cramped (Ian)

Il Bacio pizzeria 178
Blackstock Rd 7226
3339 (on corner with Hurlock St)
-- Thoroughly reliable restaurant that welcomes families and children (Henry)

Song Sushi 204a
Blackstock Rd 7226
4225
-- Good takeaway Sushi (Henry)

The Woodbine pub
215 Blackstock Rd
-- Great Thai food, good real ales, beaten up leather sofas (Jacqueline)

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TACKLING CRIME: The Brownswood Safer Neighbourhood Team

HCA member **Tom Rubens** recently interviewed **Sgt. Keith McMaster**, head of the Safe Neighbourhood Team (SNT) for Brownswood Ward.

Tom Rubens (TR): What were the main problems that led to the formation of the Brownswood SNT?

SM: Previously, local police teams had only responded to phone calls about problems from the members of the public, and it was felt that a more extensive response was needed. The last Police Commissioner therefore decided to set up personal teams for every ward in every London borough, each to be long-term and consistent, and each to spend more time on individual calls and complaints, and offer additional services as well. These units are known as Safer Neighbourhoods Teams. They deal with crimes of concern to local residents, and work with partners such as the local council and housing associations to deal with anti-social behaviour and issues which may need a long-term approach.

TR: What is the position now in relation to these problems?

SM: Police services have greatly improved for local residents. The SNT has conversations with the community. We run three surgeries per month, and hold Community Action Panel meetings every three months. Also, we visit every victim

of crime living in the ward. We introduce our team to the public and relay messages to other police units investigating crimes.

On specific issues: in the summertime, we are tackling an increase in burglary, and motor-vehicle theft by residents of local hostels and bed-and-breakfast establishments. Prostitution is also an issue we are addressing through regular vice operations.

TR: What are your chief priorities at present and in the immediate future?

SM: These priorities were set at the last C.A.P. meeting on July 8th. Our first priority is theft from motor vehicles. We plan to do a leaflet drop, and employ a decoy police vehicle, as well as visit various hostels and bed-and-breakfast establishments. Secondly, anti-social behaviour, in King's Crescent, Woodberry Down and Manor House: we are organising high-visibility patrols, estate-sweeps, and introducing our summer bus, which carries 12 officers.

Our third priority is youth diversion. We work in partnership with outreach workers to identify troublesome youths and get them involved with various programmes and schemes, under police

supervision. This approach has been working well; for example, youths who were creating problems at Amwell Court have been included in our programme, and the problems have decreased. Also, we are keen to have youth representatives at the C.A.P. meetings. We attend focus group meetings and give talks to youths.

Our fourth priority is prostitution. We recently conducted a four-night vice operation against kerb crawlers. This resulted in 27 arrests, 22 cautionings for prostitutes, 21 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts signed, and the seizure of 2 vehicles without insurance. The cautionings of the prostitutes will be followed up, and may lead to arrests. Furthermore, we have a partnership with 'Open Doors', an NHS agency which helps vulnerable females who are addicted to Class A drugs and we are arranging for the Council to board up premises used by prostitutes and their clients. Our final priority is youth gangs. Because of an increase in gang tensions during school holidays, a monitoring initiative for the Woodberry Down / Manor House area has begun, in conjunction with New River SNT. In addition to attending focus group meetings, we are currently discussing setting up a dispersal zone area. A mobile police station has been arranged for the summer months, and there is cross-border (Hackney/Haringey) work with the Safer Transport Police and the British Transport Police.