



# HIGHBURY COMMUNITY NEWS

FROM THE HIGHBURY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

## High Court quashes Arsenal Student Tower approval

On 24th July, the High Court heard the Judicial Review requested by the London Borough of Islington (LBI) into the decision by the Planning Inspectorate to approve Arsenal Football Club's (AFC) application to build a 25 storey student accommodation tower block. The judge quashed the approval and re-instated the Council's refusal to allow this building to be built. Ashburton Trading (one of AFC's trading names) originally sought approval for this building in November 2009 but withdrew that application before a decision was made. They then made another submission in April 2011 which was rejected by the LBI officers in August 2011 on the grounds of its excessive height. Ashburton Trading appealed to the Secretary Of State for Communities and Local Government to overrule the decision and Mr. John Braithwaite, a Planning Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate, was appointed to hear the appeal. HCA represented the Community at the Appeal Hearing when it was held in September 2012 and were shocked when the Inspector's decision was



published, allowing the appeal and overturning the Council's refusal. Islington Council was also dismayed by the decision as it completely undermined their policy on Tall Buildings and would open up most of Islington to the development of such tall buildings. As a result, the Council officers and our Elected Councillors resolved to get this overturned if at all possible and the Council requested the High Court to undertake a Judicial Review of the Planning Inspector's decision. We went along as observers to the High Court hearing on 24th July. The case was heard by His Honour Judge Mackie QC, sitting as a Judge of the High Court. LBI was represented by an excellent QC - Nathalie Lieven, of Landmark Chambers, who was nominated for the Barrister of the Year awards. In support of their barrister, LBI had a Planning Law Specialist Linda Saunders and Victor Grayson, the Planning Officer, along with some admin support. The case was brought by LBI against the Secretary of State For Communities and Local Government in his role as the head of the Planning Inspectorate, seeking a review of the decision of the Inspector, Mr. Braithwaite, to grant the appeal and allow the Student Tower to be built.

In a very surprising move, the Secretary of State indicated to the Court that the Planning Inspectorate did not wish to defend itself against LBI's case and they withdrew from the proceedings in advance. This left AFC on its own to defend the Planning Inspector's decision. No one from the Planning Inspectorate attended, even as an observer Arsenal were represented, as usual, by David Cooper their lawyer, Jonathan Murch from Savilles, Arsenal's Planning Consultants, Ken Friar and miscellaneous admin. people. Ashburton Trading were represented by David Elvin, QC, also from Landmark Chambers, the same as Ms. Lieven. Although LBI won the case and the Appeal verdict was quashed, Arsenal could request the Appeal to be heard again, but so far they have not. It would be very unlikely for another Planning Appeal to approve the building as it was clearly ruled by the High Court that LBI's tall buildings policy is valid and that this building violates it. We can only suppose that Arsenal will have to rethink what they want to do with this site they own in Hornsey Road, and that they will submit an application for something else to be built there in due course.  
ROGER WRIGHT



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](mailto:hcanews@hotmail.com)

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

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**Council rejects additional concerts at Emirates**

On 24th July, Islington Council Officers rejected the application by Arsenal Football Club (AFC) to increase the numbers of non-football events from 6 to 9 of which the music concerts would increase from 3 to 6. HCA submitted a strong objection to this application, based on the experiences of these events so far by our community and our own Noise Measurements taken during this years concerts. Noise consultants employed by Arsenal say there were no violations of the agreed noise limits during this year's concerts, whilst HCA's own measurements showed that the limits were breached during all three of this years concerts. The Council has no independent measurements of its own to "referee" this situation. Council officers rejected the application on the grounds that it "would cause unacceptable harm to the amenity and functioning of the local area to the detriment of Islington's residents." AFC has appealed to the Secretary Of State for Communities and Local Government to overrule the decision. A Planning Appeal hearing has been scheduled for Tuesday, 10th December 2013, with a closing date for comments and submissions of 10th October. HCA will be making a submission and will participate in the Appeal as an "Interested Third Party".

Residents wanting to express their views on the issue should write to the Planning Inspector, Helen Skinner via email ([Helen.Skinner@pins.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.Skinner@pins.gsi.gov.uk)), or in writing to: 3/02 Kite Wing, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN. ROGER WRIGHT



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**Lorries increase as Drayton Park road restrictions removed**

Residents may have noticed in June the sudden removal, for the second time, of the road width restrictions in front of Drayton Park Station. There are now no plans to have any lorry ban scheme (over 7.5 tonnes), despite the restrictions having reduced HGV lorries cutting through between Blackstock Road and Holloway Road by over 90% - from 2000 to 100 per week. Several car collisions, widely reported in the local press, resulted in Councillor Catherine West, Leader of the Council, ordering the removal of the restrictions, without local consultation. The width restrictions were by no means perfect but they did dramatically reduce the number of large lorries cutting through a residential area which also contains several schools. The charity Sustrans, through the national Connect 2 Programme, supported the principle of this scheme as part of a wider project to develop an improved and calmed street environment from Finsbury Park to Holloway Road. Since the removal of the restrictions outside Drayton Park Station the speed of traffic has increased noticeably, as has the volume of lorries. The dangerous and illegal parking of vehicles at the bend of Drayton Park also continues.



Residents wanting measures to restrict lorry movements should write to the Leader of the Council asking what is now being proposed to achieve the original aims of the Connect 2 Project. CHRIS ASHBY/DIANE BURRIDGE

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# Urgent call to improve air quality in Finsbury Park

Environmentalists are urging people living in and around Finsbury Park to address the worsening problem of air quality in the locality. These environmentalists include the independent researcher, Keith



Cotton, and Sukky Choongh and Paul Cliff at Islington Council. The official bodies already working on the issue

include Islington Council, the GLA and Transport for London, and Islington Council is keen to encourage any residents, including non-specialists, to come forward with their ideas and proposals. Over the years I have been involved air pollution in Finsbury Park has increased. The Air Quality Objective Limits set by the European Union are being radically breached, as the Green Party's recent pollution testing in nearby locations corroborates. The main pollutants are diesel fumes (now classified as carcinogenic) from large vehicles including buses; nitrogen oxides (from general traffic); and gas from domestic and industrial boilers. In some parts of the area annual nitrogen dioxide averages are very high—up to 80 micrograms per cubic metre, compared with much safer levels—34.5 mcg/m<sup>3</sup>, found in others. I recall that several years

ago, when I conducted tests as a member of the Finsbury Park Action Group, NO<sub>2</sub> levels were also very



high. The effects of poor air quality can be worse than passive

smoking. Of the many implications for health, respiratory diseases and complaints are particularly obvious, with evidence suggesting higher incidence rates and increased severity of symptoms. The lung capacity of children growing up in locations with poor air quality can be reduced by five to twenty per cent. So what can be done to improve the air quality around Finsbury Park? With the intention of reducing the volume of traffic and improve flow the following measures have been suggested: promoting

public transport and local walking routes; on Severn Sisters Road, relocating the bus stop on the station side under the bridge to the bus station; creating green areas on top of the walls along Seven Sisters Road; and placing speed cameras on Isledon Road to monitor average speeds of vehicles. But more proposals are needed, and ideas and cooperation are being sought from our community and businesses. If you have a suggestion, idea or proposal you would like to share regarding ways to address this pressing problem, Islington Council are keen to hear from you. Please write to Paul Cliff ([paul.cliff@islington.gov.uk](mailto:paul.cliff@islington.gov.uk)). The HCA would be very pleased if you might indicate that you are doing so in response to this article in the newsletter.

TOM RUBENS

## Note about newsletter editors

We would like in this edition of the newsletter to offer our grateful thanks to its previous editor, Hannah Bristow, who left us in July. The newsletter evolved most satisfactorily under her stewardship and we are very grateful for the legacy she left. Hannah moved to Pinner with her fiancé when he took a post as a chemistry teacher there, and she will be getting married next year. In her stead we welcome Lucy Bradley, a Highbury resident born and bred, whose day job is for an educational charity which makes podcasts about current academic research. She commissions and produces, so we are lucky that she feels like doing something similar in her spare time for HCA as well. Please get in touch with her if you have bright ideas for newsletter articles ([hcanews@hotmail.com](mailto:hcanews@hotmail.com)).

GILL SHEPHERD

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# Turning a Dream into Reality



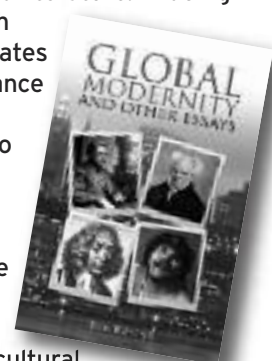
I am delighted to be able to report to you some good news about The Highbury Roundhouse. In previous issues of HCA News and at the AGM, I had to tell you that the community centre was in real trouble. Our main 'bottleworks' building had been declared unsafe and a closure order issued. Despite all our efforts, and contrary the best professional advice, the council could not be persuaded to repair it, but opted for demolition. After a 'lively' series of public meetings we secured an agreement with the council that, if we could build a brand new centre on the same site, they would give us a 99 year lease at a peppercorn rent - virtually a freehold. Sarah Wigglesworth Architects, who we appointed to design the new Roundhouse, have skillfully responded to our brief and to the concerns of the local residents who are our neighbours. Our Application was considered by Islington Planning Committee at the end of July. I am delighted to tell you it was approved. At the planning meeting there were no voices raised in opposition and the Members were unanimous in their praise of the design and of the services that the Roundhouse offers to the local community. This was a major milestone for us. Without planning consent we could not apply to the institutional funders from whom we are seeking the bulk of the construction costs. Now we can start to turn that dream into a reality. As you read this, our applications are on the desks of potential funders. We are not seeking a single benefactor (though it would be nice if one came forward). That might be a bit ambitious these days. Rather we are casting the net wider and making applications to a variety of charitable institutions with different remits or special interests. But we still need the tangible support of our community. We have been greatly encouraged by the support that the HCA has given us throughout this difficult time. Large numbers of you have registered affectionate comments on our campaign website ([www.savehighburyroundhouse.co.uk](http://www.savehighburyroundhouse.co.uk)) and a great many have backed up those kind words with donations to our initial fundraising - buying "Another Brick in the Wall". In the coming months we will be holding more local fundraising events - and at any time we will be delighted to sell anyone "Another Brick". Through our successors, we intend to be around for the next 100 years, keeping the Roundhouse at the heart of the community. It's an odd thought that four or five generations down the line, our descendents will (hopefully) be praising the far-sighted generosity of today's HCA members.

TONY MILLER, Secretary to the Highbury Roundhouse

## BOOK REVIEW: Global Modernity and other essays, Tom Rubens

In his latest series of essays local author and long-time Highbury resident, Tom Rubens, skilfully navigates an array of contemporarily relevant subjects from suffering in a secular world, to the purpose of policing in England, and democracy in relation to culture and society. His exploration of subject matter draws in inspiration from across a rich philosophical tradition including Democritus, Spinoza, Schopenhauer and Sartre and is illustrated with pertinent examples from both real world events and literature. In doing so he both demonstrates the relevance of his analysis to our everyday lives and invites the reader to challenge received cultural and societal ideas and assumptions. His essays, which should appeal to a wide audience, are presented clearly and succinctly, and provide much food for thought and reflection. Global Modernity was published 1st July 2013, by Imprint Academic. It is widely available online and in bookshops, RRP £9.95.

HANNAH BRISTOW



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## Highbury gets a new plaque

On the sunny afternoon of 31st August, over 100 people joined local Lib Dem Councillors for the unveiling of a new plaque to Sir



Francis Ronalds (1788-1873) the meteorologist, inventor and pioneer of electric telegraphy. HCA attended the lively ceremony which was replete with live music, singing and speeches, taking place outside his former home, No. 1 Highbury Terrace. He lived here from 1796 to 1813, on corner of Ronalds Road which bears his name. Festivities continued with a garden party in the grounds of 1 Highbury Terrace, now home to

Highbury View, a sheltered housing scheme, which celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. It was here that his flair for chemistry developed, later recalling that his "most memorable performance, in this science then, was the blowing up of a large hydrogen gasometer in the breakfast room of No. 1 Highbury Terrace."

Other plaques to explore in N5: **Charles Bowerman** (1851-1947) Veteran of the printing trade union movement, 4 Battledean Road; **Joseph Chamberlain** (1836-1914) Politician, statesman and businessman, 25 Highbury Place; **Wallace Bligh Cheesman** (1865-1947) Founder of the Fawcett Association, 8 Highbury Grange; **Charles Cruft** (1852-1938) Dog show promoter, Ashurst Lodge, Highbury Grove; **Highbury Corner V1 attack** (27 Jun 1944) Memorial to the dead, injured and bereaved, Highbury Corner; **Sir Arthur Keith** (1866-1955) Physiologist and anthropologist, 17 Aubert Park; **The Peasants' Revolt** (1381) Commemorating the burning and destruction of Highbury Manor, Highbury Barn Tavern; **Walter Richard Sickert** (1860-1942) Artist, 1 Highbury Place; **James Hudson Taylor** (1832-1905) Premises for the work of the China Inland Mission, founded 1865, 6 Pyrland Road.

## Islington U3A launches 10th October

This month Islington launches its own University of the Third Age (iU3A). This university has no exams, gives no degrees and is open to all in and around Islington who are no longer in full time work. Across the UK there are nearly 900 U3As and a total of over 300,000 members. U3As are learning cooperatives that draw on the knowledge, experience and skills of their own members to set up interest groups that will reflect the range of skills and interests of local people, and meet on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis. Over 25 groups will be up and running for the iU3A launch on 10th

October. These include art appreciation, foreign language conversation, current affairs, music, poetry, crafts workshop, gardening, architecture, Scrabble, cinema and walking. The number and variety of groups will depend on what members want to do and people coming forward to act as co-ordinators, hosts or leaders. There will also be monthly meetings with a speaker and time to socialise. The first one is with opinionated and witty Times columnist David Aaronovitch. The annual subscription for Islington U3A will be £30, then all regular activities are free.

So please come along to the launch, 10am on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October at The Resource Centre, Holloway Road N7 6PA (next to Waitrose). This will be the first opportunity for people to join iU3A and to find out more about the range of activities. Do take a look at our website, [www.islingtonu3a.org](http://www.islingtonu3a.org) VIVIEN GOLDSMITH

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# HCA News • No 83 • Sept 2013

## Islington People's Plaques

People's Plaques  
commemorate  
significant people,



places and  
events  
within  
Islington  
borough.

When you  
see a green  
circle on the facade of a  
building have a read;  
the inscription will  
reveal an interesting  
story that happened  
behind those four walls.  
The number of plaques  
grows annually. Since  
2010, Islington  
residents have been  
able to vote from a  
shortlist of nominated  
candidates. The three  
names receiving the  
highest number of  
votes are added to the  
impressive 76 plaques  
that already decorate  
islington buildings, with  
Highbury host to ten  
(nine of which are listed  
on p.5). The number of  
residents actively  
participating in this  
process is also  
increasing. This year  
over 4,700 votes were

registered, up from  
3,695 last year. While  
Islington's history  
includes many notable  
names, such as Joseph  
Chamberlain and  
George Orwell, there  
are plenty of other  
plaques  
commemorating locally  
recognised people who  
have done remarkable  
things. As with existing  
plaques, this year's  
nominees, reflect the  
diverse range of people  
and passions  
represented in the  
borough. The winners  
this year were Betty  
Knight, Dr Gordon  
Signy and Len Harvey.  
As a social campaigner,  
Betty Knight (1936-



2010) fought  
for better  
living

conditions in  
council homes and was  
the driving force behind  
Spa Green Tenants'  
Management  
Organisation,  
established in 1995. Dr  
Gordon Signy (1905-  
1972) was a pioneering  
pathologist, who was

instrumental in  
developing treatments  
for blood diseases. He  
helped establish the  
study of Haematology  
and in 1940 founded  
the Journal of Clinical  
Pathology. He also  
captained the British  
fencing team at both  
the 1964 and 1968  
Olympics. Receiving  
over a third of the  
votes, champion boxer  
Len Harvey (1907-1976)  
was widely considered  
one of Britain's finest  
20th century boxers.

Among his titles he was  
British Empire  
champion at light-  
heavy and heavy weight  
and by the end of his  
career had won 111 of  
his 133 recorded fights,  
sustaining just 9 draws  
and thirteen defeats.  
After retiring Len  
became licensee of the  
Star and Garter pub on  
Upper Street, which  
was renamed The  
Champion in his honour  
in 1973. It is now called  
the Steam Passage  
Tavern. Among the  
runners up was Robert

Paul (1869-1943), the  
Highbury-born,  
pioneering  
cinematographer and  
'Father of British  
Cinema'. Paul was an  
early developer of film  
recording technology. In  
1895, with



photographer Birt  
Acres, he developed a  
camera and shot some  
experimental footage.  
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shoot, a 40 second  
sequence of the Oxford  
and Cambridge boat  
race, was shown  
throughout the summer  
at the Empire of India  
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