

**SPECIAL 100th EDITION OF Highbury COMMUNITY NEWS!**

# Highbury COMMUNITY NEWS

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## Sainsbury's suffers setback in plans for 2nd Blackstock Road store

By JOHN EGAN

Sainsbury's plans to open another store on Blackstock Road in the old police station suffered a significant setback this month when its application was withdrawn from an Islington Council committee meeting.

Council officers have recommended that the application is refused. This followed a vociferous local campaign, which included the HCA, to protect local businesses from the detrimental effect another Sainsbury's store would cause.

The HCA has followed this issue very closely and our objections were submitted to Islington's Planning Committee. An abridged version of our concerns is included here:

"When planning permission for part of the building to become a gym was granted a condition was that any change to another D2 use should be subject to a full planning application, so we cannot understand why this is being treated as a variation to the original permission. There is no evidence that the site owner has sought to implement the original permission by seeking a tenant for the gym space and this has raised suspicion that the application was merely a holding device following the public concern, expressed by a petition with thousands of signatures, opposing retail use.

"The retail impact assessment

constantly refers to the site as being within the Finsbury Park Town Centre. This may be technically correct but in reality it is on the very southern fringe and much more realistically a northern outlier of the Highbury Barn retail area. Sainsbury's own assessment accepts that the location is in a separate retail area from their other store, a few hundred yards away in Blackstock Road, which is realistically part of the Finsbury Park Town Centre. If the site is



considered to be part of the Finsbury Park Town Centre it does not diversify the retail offer as Sainsbury's would be competing with themselves.

"The Planning Statement says that additional plant will be accommodated within the light-well at the front of the building and refuse storage to the rear yet there is no



recognition that these may impact adversely on other users.

"The suggestion of a loading bay on Blackstock Road needs greater clarity. Car parking spaces, available to the public would be lost and there is no indication of how the bay would be kept clear when not in use. How would all deliveries be contained within the times set? What if delivery vehicles were early or late? What we do not want is empty containers parked on the pavement awaiting the lorry, nor any unloaded and left on the pavement. Provision of unrestricted pedestrian passage is a must. The proposed bay is alongside a street tree and we fear that it will be damaged if the current plans are implemented.

"The Old Police Station is a locally listed building and, if a gym is proved to be not viable, is ideal for some form of community use or full conversion to residential space. Part retail use is not acceptable."

It is expected that Sainsbury's will maintain their fight to open a second store on Blackstock Road so it is important that local residents continue to campaign and make their voices heard.

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# 2017 Wireless festival set to repeat the problems of last year

By WILL PARKES

Local consultation for the 2017 Wireless Festival due to take place in Finsbury Park in July has recently closed. Sadly this year's event looks likely to bring with it the frustrations that have angered locals in previous years. An abridged version of our response to the consultation is published here.

The HCA supports the use of Finsbury Park for the benefit of all local residents and would be happy to see events organised that are accessible to all and promote diversity and inclusion. We do not support the use of the Park for events that are disproportionate in scale, cause annoyance, are poorly organised, involve a loss of amenity to local residents or prevent their enjoyment of the Park. The HCA again opposes the London Borough of Haringey granting a licence for these proposed music concerts for a number of reasons, which we set out below.

## Consultation Process

The HCA is disappointed that the consultation process is once again not open to local people, who will be most impacted by the proposed music concerts. We also believe that the length of the consultation process -

just 10 days - was far too short. The application again contravenes Haringey's own guidelines by being consulted on well within the 9 month period specified in the policy.

## Length of Event

The HCA believes that the proposed length of disruption/closure of a large section of the Park for several weeks represents a significant loss of amenity over too long a time period.. The HCA also believes that this proposed closure of a large section of the Park in the height of summer is a disproportionate inconvenience to

local people.

## Noise

From previous experience local residents have to endure excessive noise not just during the concerts, but also in the preparation for the events. We would wish to see more stringent regulations in place to minimise the impact on local residents, including earlier finish times, fewer fireworks and ensuring adequate sound insulation directing noise away from residential areas is in place.

Continued on page 3...




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### Damage to the Park

In previous years there has been significant damage to the grass where the event has taken place. We recall that stakeholders visited the Park following 2015's Wireless Festival to survey the damage caused, which covered a large expanse of the Park. We believe LB Haringey should consider rotating the area used for the concerts each year to give respite to those residents who are currently inconvenienced every year.

### Anti-Social Behaviour

In previous years our residents have experienced anti-social behaviour due to the large number of

people at the station (some with tickets for the events, some without). The HCA believes the risk of anti-social behaviour that comes with such a large-scale event taking place for many hours over several days outweighs the 'public benefit' of putting on the concerts. It is also obvious from previous years' experience that the event is not aimed at 'families' and 'older people' as the consultation document again asserts.

### Local information

Previously the experience of HCA members has been that the provision of information has been poor with many local residents being unaware of the music concerts taking place - or knowing of a dedicated contact number that people can call.

The HCA believes the residents of Hackney and Islington will once again be disproportionately affected by these concerts which are intentionally placed as far away from Haringey residents as possible. We are also disappointed that there will be four days of concerts over two weekends, where there were three concerts over one weekend in 2016.

For all the reasons we have provided the HCA's considered and firm view is that the event application should be refused.

**Have your say over Finsbury Park's neighbourhood plan**

By CHARLIE ROBERSON

Residents of Finsbury Park are in the process of setting up a Neighbourhood Plan, a local body that will play a role in future policy making in the area. The borders for the plan are currently being decided upon and if you live near Finsbury Park you may be able to help.

A Boundary Survey can be found online at <https://finsburyparkplan.wordpress.com/boundary-survey>

A meeting will also take place on Saturday 25 February at 11:00am held at FinSpace, 225-229 Seven Sisters Road N4 2DA. Email Sally Billot at [billot.sally1@gmail.com](mailto:billot.sally1@gmail.com) for more information.



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# Highbury Community News at 100

By ROGER WRIGHT

Keen eyed readers will have noticed that this is the 100<sup>th</sup> edition of our Newsletter! HCA News was founded on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1997 and the Association will be 20 years old this summer.

The Newsletter has been an important part of the Association all that time. The Association was originally set up by residents who were concerned that Arsenal Football Club wanted to compulsorily purchase and knock down the houses surrounding Highbury Stadium on the East side of Highbury Hill from the Underground station to the corner of Aubert Park; and was trying to persuade Islington Council to "play along".

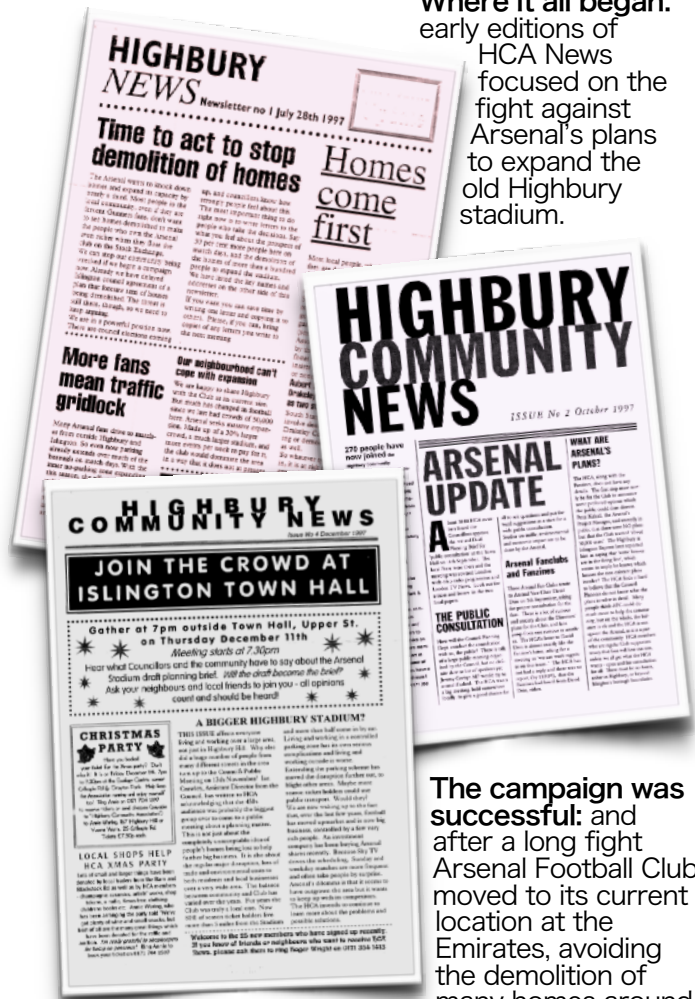
Since then, many things have changed in Highbury and many things have not. Arsenal Football Club moved to its new ground, but seems unable to quite regain the form it had at the old ground. Many new residents have moved into the area and many jobs have departed - a theme we have struggled with, not always helped by the Council.

As jobs move out, daytime business trade for our local businesses declines. Despite that, the shops at the Barn and all the way along Blackstock Road to Finsbury Park are staying in business and continuing to contribute to our community.

We have nearly 1,000 members all over Highbury now and the HCA has taken up many causes over the years. As well as newer issues such as the proposed Sainsbury's on Blackstock Road and Wireless festival, we still focus on ongoing problems. We worry that one day the Council and Housing Associations will sell off the stock of street properties they hold, making our diverse community much less so.

Continued on page 5...

Where it all began: early editions of HCA News focused on the fight against Arsenal's plans to expand the old Highbury stadium.



The campaign was successful: and after a long fight Arsenal Football Club moved to its current location at the Emirates, avoiding the demolition of many homes around the old stadium.

Supporting Highbury's green spaces: the HCA has consistently campaigned to preserve local trees, parks and green spaces so they are available for all to use.



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On the side of local businesses: the HCA has always fought to retain vibrant local shops and stop the big supermarkets from taking over our high streets.

...continued from page 4

Several of our founding committee members have left us over the years - we particularly remember the sterling service given to the Community by Robert Scott and Alison Carmichael. Others left the area - one to run a trout fishery in New Zealand. As older members departed, new members have joined the committee and the HCA is as healthy as ever.

Highbury is still a community with a rich mix of people and businesses, not just a place on a map, and it remains one of the best places to live in the country (in our opinion, at least). Long may it remain so!

The Highbury Community Association (HCA) represents local 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, visit our website, or email [hcanews@hotmail.com](mailto:hcanews@hotmail.com). The HCA can also be contacted on Facebook and Twitter.

The opinions expressed in Highbury Community News are not necessarily those of the HCA and/or its committee members.

Please let us know if you move, so we can keep our membership list up to date.

Do you have a local news story you would like to see in a future edition of Highbury Community News? Please contact us at [hcanews@hotmail.com](mailto:hcanews@hotmail.com)

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Some of the quirkier stories to make it into HCA News have included Highbury filming locations, the invasion of Japanese knotweed and the history of the 'Highbury highwayman'!

Did you know? All 100 editions of Highbury Community News are available on our website

# Exhibition at restored Estorick sheds light on forgotten WWI conflict

By SARAH POTTER

The new temporary exhibition *War in the Sunshine, the British in Italy 1917-1918* marks the reopening of the Estorick Collection Galleries in Canonbury Square after a period of closure for refurbishment. It also marks the centenary of the year in which British forces joined Italy's war against Austria-Hungary, the ally of Germany. This war, like Gallipoli and the war in the Balkans, was viewed at the time as a mere sideshow in comparison with the Western Front, and it remains underrepresented in discussion of the First World War to this day.

The exhibition at the Estorick introduces us to this unknown war through the works of Sydney Carline (1888-1929) fighter pilot and Official War Artist in Italy from 1918, Ernest Brooks (1878-1941), War Photographer 1917-1918, and William Joseph Brunell (b.1878), War Photographer 1917-1918. They served as part of the British Expeditionary Force sent to Italy in 1917, which arrived at the point when two years

of stalemate in the fighting between Italy and Austria-Hungary on the Isonzo front just north of Trieste on the Adriatic suddenly turned in to an Italian collapse and retreat in the autumn of 1917.



The German high command had decided to reinforce the Austrian army with six German divisions in an attempt to knock Italy out of the war, after the Russian collapse on the Eastern front. With Russia and Italy out of the war, a German victory on the Western front in 1918 was their plan. The Italians, however, were able to halt their retreat and stabilise their front within a very short distance of Venice, and were rapidly reinforced in this crisis by the British and French at the end of 1917.

The photographs of Ernest Brooks document the arrival of British troops, showing groups of Italian villagers crowding to watch them on the march and sharing meals with them. Mark Thompson's account of the war in Italy in the exhibition catalogue records how troops transferred to the Italian front from Passchendaele marvelled at the warmth, sunshine, blue sea, picturesque farming landscape and beautiful women they encountered in Italy.

The British High Command doubted the military capacity of the Italians, but Hart's recent history underlines that the Italian fighting on the Isonzo front had in fact been particularly intense and disciplined in difficult terrain and winter conditions.

German troops were, however, quickly withdrawn from Italy in 1917 in order to end the war on the Western Front before the Americans arrived. In October 1918, with the Germans now collapsing on the Western Front, the Allies in Italy secured the defeat of the Austrian army, its morale destroyed by this point, at the Battle of Vittoria Veneto. Again, this part of the war is graphically represented in the exhibition in William Burrell's photos of bomb-damaged churches, castles and a ruined palace gateway, and British troops advancing on horseback and packing a mountain road with carts and lorries. He captured sympathetically the stricken expression of an Austrian prisoner of war.

Local artist Derek Whitehead was particularly struck by the work of Sydney Carline in this exhibition. Because of the difficulty this skilled and fearless pilot had in working while flying his Sopwith Camel light aircraft, he decided that the best procedure was to make simple sketches while airborne, then more detailed sketches from memory when back on the ground. The works in the exhibition show these various stages and also the oil paintings he made later, many of them of flying in the breathtaking Alpine terrain.

The sketches are very impressive and have an immediacy that perhaps the more finished work lacks. A charcoal sketch of an injured British pilot being helped from his aircraft and a pen and ink drawing of three Alpini, the elite Italian mountain soldiers, taking a rest, show this aspect particularly. Brunell's photographs of the Italian women employed as workers in the British war effort also capture the period vividly.

The exhibition is well worth visiting to find out about this unknown war and as a mark of its centenary. The exhibition is on display at the Estorick until March 19<sup>th</sup> and the HCA encourages all Highbury residents to make a visit.

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# Something extraordinary is happening at the Palace

By RICHARD SMITH

No, not that Palace, but the remarkable Alexandra Palace overlooking London from Muswell Hill. Inside its walls an architecturally unique and important space is being brought back to life - a Victorian Theatre, once seating over 2500 people and home to extravagant pantomimes, melodramas and spectacles but closed to the public for the last 80 years.

Very few people have been able to visit it in that time. But all that is about to change as Alexandra Palace has been given a Heritage Lottery Grant to restore the Theatre, the East Court, where the ice rink is based, and the old Television studios, home to the very first television broadcasts in this

country.

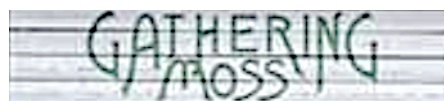
The Theatre opened in 1875, and rivalled the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane in size, although it was never possible for the Theatre to provide a continuous programme of entertainment. After 1900, it was converted to function also as a cinema. In 1936, it was taken over by the BBC, who were using the adjacent studios for the earliest television broadcasts and became a scenery store for 40 years. It then fell into disuse, occasionally used by filmmakers or photographers attracted by its faded grandeur.

Work has begun on the regeneration and transformation of the spaces and plans are being drawn up for an exciting opening season next year.

The Friends of Alexandra Palace Theatre have campaigned long and hard for this Victorian gem to be brought back to life and short videos on the Friends' YouTube page offers an insight into the history of the Theatre and with some stunning shots of the interior. You can view these here: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaJybyAEYU0hr\\_cRiLBvW9A](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaJybyAEYU0hr_cRiLBvW9A) (print readers can find the videos by searching YouTube for 'Friends of Alexandra Palace Theatre').

As our own community has been enriched through the Heritage Lottery Grant and its substantial contribution to the Christ Church spire refurbishment, we are pleased to see them awarding funds to one of North London's most beautiful monuments.

Any Highbury residents can make the short journey to Alexandra Palace on National Rail services from Drayton Park.



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# Michelle Lovell: a personal appreciation

By JULIE HORTEN

Michelle Lovell, who died on 29 January 2017, was born in Islington and lived in N5 for many years. She was a vibrant, much loved community figure, a successful retailer and a terrific charity fundraiser. For Michelle her adored family always came first and HCA sends them our deepest condolences.

Michelle owned two shops at the Barn. *Mrs Lovell's Greengrocer*, with its lovely green awnings, and *To Be Established*, a tiny shop with a huge array of cards and presents. Its unusual name came about in 1995 when Michelle was at a trade show before the shop had opened. She had to register the shop but hadn't decided what to call it. She wrote down 'To Be Established' and that was that. In 2014, Annie, the manager, won a RETA at the national greetings cards awards ceremony: a stunning achievement given that competitors included large stores such as Harrods and Paperchase.

Michelle was a key figure in the Barn Traders' Association. She loved Highbury and she fought for it too. She was not only involved in all the issues affecting the Barn itself but she campaigned against dangerous

pollution levels around our schools and was concerned about community safety in its widest form. When, in March 2014, Michelle received a well-deserved Mayor's Civic Award for her charity work, the after-celebrations inevitably took place in the Highbury Barn.



Any local school or charity holding a fundraising event knew they could ask Michelle for raffle or auction prizes; she helped organise the Barn's 2012 Jubilee Celebrations - a terrific all-day party which raised funds for Help the Heroes; and she is probably



best known for **Paint Highbury Pink** which she started following her recovery from breast cancer.

In 2007 one small stall selling cupcakes raised £250.00. Through the years, with Michelle as the inspiration and organiser, Paint Highbury Pink grew and grew and became a much anticipated, much loved fundraising and community event. In 2014 there was a fiesta feeling as the jazz band played and we gathered to eat, drink, chat, bop a little and support breast cancer charities. Over £10,000 was raised in that one year alone. Michelle was great fun, with a zest for life and a gift for friendship - her legendary 'Wednesday-Night-Girls' group had been meeting for over 20 years. She had the ability to glam up splendidly and her immaculate cropped hair made it no surprise to learn she had been Vidal Sassoon trained.

Michelle was unable to organise anything over the last couple of years. On Saturday October 7<sup>th</sup> her family and friends will be holding **Paint Highbury Pink 2017** in her honour. This will be a chance for Highbury to come together to remember a very special person.

Please contact Gianna Cinalli on 07843 018006 if you would like to help with this year's event, make a donation or donate raffle prizes.