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HIGHBURY COMMUNITY NEWS

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Council criticised over poor state of Finsbury Park



By GILL SHEPHERD

A 'mystery shopper' visited Finsbury Park in October 2018 to provide an assessment of the park for the Green Flag Award Scheme. Its Green Flag status, a prestigious national scheme awarded to thousands of UK parks each year by Keep Britain Tidy, has been withdrawn as a result of the major areas of concern flagged up by the Assessor.

This has caused much concern for users of the park, not least because Haringey Council's justification for its major events policy is that the income generated from Wireless concerts and other events throughout the summer months is meant to be spent on improving the park. Given the clear evidence of poor maintenance and park management, it is difficult to see

whether that income has been spent on updating and improving park amenities at all.

The assessor highlighted several major concerns, some requiring urgent attention.

•The entrance from the Finsbury Park Station area was very off-putting, with litter and debris, graffiti on the walls, dog fouling, and rats.

•The play area needs urgent attention and some items should be put out of use until repairs are effected. The wooden climbing fort should be closed immediately and removed. Weekly inspections should have highlighted these issues as part of normal checks.

•The Hope picnic area is a disgrace. It needs a complete revamp and dangerous picnic benches need removing and replacing.

•Fly tipping and dumping is going

on in the park. The dump area is teeming with rats.

•Wooden shelters need cleaning and repair.

•A permanent water supply is needed for the event field to prevent the need for hoses snaking across the grass.

•Litter bins need repair and to have graffiti cleaned off.

•There were staff in the park but they appeared to be without direction, driving about without tackling any of the urgent and very obvious issues.

•Rats are a major problem in the park.

SAVE THE DATE!
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7PM

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Understanding plastics

Which are the easiest to recycle?
 Which can harm your health?
 How does Islington deal with plastics?

By GILL SHEPHERD

The plastics industry has to apply one of the recycling codes below to all plastic products. You will find them on containers and packaging, but it is left to the public to read and understand them, so a guide to them seems helpful.

#1 - PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate)

PET is one of the most commonly used plastics in consumer products, and is found in most water bottles, and some packaging. It is intended for single use: repeated use increases the risk of leaching and bacterial growth. PET plastic may leach carcinogens so should not be reused. The plastic is crushed and then shredded into small flakes which are reprocessed to make new PET bottles, or spun into polyester fibre for textiles.

RECYCLABLE? YES. AFFECTS HEALTH? YES. Switch to reusable beverage containers and replace disposable food packaging with reusable alternatives where possible.

#2 - HDPE (High-Density Polyethylene)

HDPE plastic is the hard plastic used to make milk containers, detergent bottles and toys. It is hard-wearing and does not break down under exposure to sunlight or extremes of heating or freezing. For this reason, it is also used to make picnic tables and chairs, waste bins and other products which require durability and weather-resistance.

RECYCLABLE? YES. AFFECTS HEALTH? NO. HDPE is the most commonly recycled plastic and is one of the safest forms of plastic too. Products made of HDPE are reusable and recyclable.

#3 - PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride)

PVC is the soft plastic used to make clear plastic food wrapping and blister packs for many consumer products. It is also used for plastic pipes for plumbing, and window frames. PVC is dubbed the "poison plastic" because it contains numerous toxins which leach out throughout its life cycle. Less than 1% of PVC material is recycled.

RECYCLABLE? NO. AFFECTS HEALTH? YES. To avoid PVC plastic, consider replacing cling-film wrap with reusable beeswax wraps or with silicone wraps (see below).

#4 - LDPE (Low-Density Polyethylene)

LDPE is often found in shrink wraps and dry cleaner garment bags. Plastic grocery bags used in most stores are made of LDPE plastic. LDPE is less toxic than other plastics, and relatively safe for use. It is not currently commonly recycled, although this is changing.

RECYCLABLE? NOT VERY. AFFECTS HEALTH? NO. Replace plastic grocery bags with fabric alternatives. You can replace plastic sandwich bags with silicone alternatives (see below).



PETE



HDPE



PVC



LDPE



PP



PS



OTHER

polyethylene terephthalate	high-density polyethylene	polyvinyl chloride	low-density polyethylene	polypropylene	polystyrene	other plastics, including acrylic, polycarbonate, polyactic fibers, nylon, fiberglass
soft drink bottles, mineral water, fruit juice container, cooking oil	milk jugs, cleaning agents, laundry detergents, bleaching agents, shampoo bottles, washing and shower soaps	trays for sweets, fruit, plastic packing (bubble foil) and food foils to wrap the foodstuff	crushed bottles, shopping bags, highly-resistant sacks and most of the wrappings	furniture, consumers, luggage, toys as well as bumpers, lining and external borders of the cars	toys, hard packing, refrigerator trays, cosmetic bags, costume jewellery, CD cases, vending cups	

#5 – PP (Polypropylene)

Polypropylene plastic is tough and lightweight, and has excellent heat-resistance qualities. It is commonly used for disposable nappies, margarine and yogurt containers, straws and some Tupperware. PP is safe for reuse and can be recycled, though it is slowly being accepted by recyclers.

RECYCLABLE? YES. AFFECTS HEALTH? NO. To cut down on how much PP you consume, opt for reusable straws and water bottles, and cloth diapers.

#6 – PS (Polystyrene)

Polystyrene is inexpensive, lightweight and easily-formed. It is most often used to make styrofoam drinking cups, take-out food containers, egg cartons and foam packaging. Polystyrene breaks up easily. Beaches all over the world have polystyrene fragments on them, and many marine species have ingested it. Most recycling services will not accept polystyrene, which is why this material may end up in landfill. Avoid where possible.

RECYCLABLE? NO. AFFECTS HEALTH? YES. Polystyrene may leach styrene, a possible human carcinogen, into food products. Chemicals present in polystyrene have been linked with human health and reproductive system dysfunction.

#7 – Other (BPA, Polycarbonate and LEXAN)

The #7 category was designed as a catch-all for polycarbonate (PC) and “other” plastics, so reuse and recycling protocols are not standardized. Of primary concern with #7 plastics is the potential for chemical leaching into food or drink products packaged in polycarbonate containers made using BPA (Bisphenol A). BPA is a xenoestrogen, a known endocrine disruptor. #7 plastics are used to make baby bottles, water cooler bottles and car parts.

RECYCLABLE? NO. AFFECTS HEALTH? YES. A new generation of compostable plastics, made from bio-based polymers like corn starch, is being developed to replace polycarbonates. When possible, it is best to avoid #7 plastics, above all for children’s food and drinks.

ACTION TO TAKE

1. **Sort out your plastic.** Put PVC, cling film, plastic bags, polystyrene and polycarbonates into the dustbin not into recycling.
2. **Choose alternatives to plastic** - cloth shopping bags, metal water bottles, reusable cups.
3. **Try to avoid contact between food and most plastic.** To avoid chemicals leaking into foods from packaging, avoid ready-meals, and store home-cooked food in polypropylene (#5), silicone-covered bowls or stainless steel. Food-grade silicone is mostly made from sand, and withstands heat and freezing without leaching or off-

gassing hazardous chemicals, unlike plastics. You can buy silicone stretch covers and lids to cover food, and sealable bags. Products last for many years unlike cling film and plastic bags.


HOW IS ISLINGTON DOING ON RECYCLING PLASTIC?

Islington is one of the seven boroughs served by the North London Waste Authority. The NLWA is proud of the fact that it keeps over 90% of all waste from these boroughs out of landfill.

Plastics are separated from other recyclables at facilities in London and sorted into the different types, including plastic bottles and mixed plastics, such as pots and trays. Plastic bottles are predominantly sent to facilities in the UK for remanufacturing. They are washed and chipped to create plastic pellets which can be remade into new plastic bottles. Some other mixed plastics are sent to outlets in the UK and overseas for manufacturing into new products. (But China has stopped taking HDPE and for the moment this plastic cannot be recycled in the UK, though it has a high value). All other residual waste, including all unrecycled plastic, is incinerated sustainably at the ‘London Energy’ facility in Edmonton, the output powering electricity for over 80,000 homes in North London.


This article was written with the help of the North London Waste Authority, and the website www.eartheasy.com.





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Help clean up your neighbourhood

CleanupUK's Beautiful Boroughs Project launched in Islington in 2017 and covers 11 other London Boroughs, as well as 3 Birmingham wards. The charity supports residents or existing community groups to come together and look after their local environment by holding cleanups. The hope is that these events become regular resident led organised meetings to bring about cleaner, safer and more connected communities.

The great thing about litter picking as a community activity is that it is easy to do and most people, young or old, can take part. Those involved in the project feel that not only are they making a difference to their neighbourhoods but also meeting their neighbours.

Every group is different, some also hold mini bake-offs, raffles and table top sales, while others garden or dance. For some, it is just about going for a walk in the park and doing their bit. However people want to do it, we want to help them to take action and take ownership of where they live.

For more information please contact Daniella, daniella.levene@cleanupuk.org.uk, 07458 018702.



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Health and the High Street

By SARAH POTTER

The Royal Society for Public Health has just updated its work on the link between the High Street and health in its report “Health on the High Street: Running Empty 2018.” It documents changes such as the increasing number of vacant shops on our high streets, and the clustering of unhealthy businesses such as fast food shops in deprived areas. This work is directed at both at local community groups acting on issues of health in the high street via the planning system, as well as at professional planners and developers. In its earlier 2015 report, the RSPH underlined that individuals’ ability to adopt healthy lifestyles is linked to the quality of retail environments.

The report is based on a “Richter scale of health” which rates high streets and their businesses according to the extent to which they encourage healthy lifestyles, promote social interaction, facilitate greater access to healthcare and promote mental wellbeing. Leisure centres thus score highest at 7, convenience stores score 0 and high cost credit businesses score lowest at - 4. In London the two top scoring high streets for health are Muswell Hill in Haringey and Hornchurch in Havering, and the two lowest scoring are West Green Road, Seven Sisters, Haringey, and Roman Road (West), Tower Hamlets. The difference in average life expectancy for the people of Muswell Hill compared to those in Tottenham Green, where West Green Road is located, is approximately four and a half years. The report comments “Our analysis demonstrates that despite their central role in the lives of Londoners there is great disparity in the impact that different London high streets have on health” (p. 39).

Some important trends in the array of high street businesses emerge in the report. The number of payday lenders has decreased by a third, and since betting shops are now in a planning class of their own, which prevents



conversion of premises for this use, their increase seems to have tailed off. The number of off-licenses is shrinking by 1% per annum, but they are used by young people for buying alcohol and tobacco. Convenience stores have increased by 17% in the last five years, and now account for one fifth of grocery market sales. They are often the main source of fruit and vegetables in low income areas, but respondents to the survey rated the range of these in convenience stores as poor. Almost three quarters of respondents saw the rapidly increasing number of cafes and coffee shops as effective in promoting social interaction, but less so in encouraging healthy food choices. The number of vape shops, which score high on the Richter scale of health has doubled from 1000 to 2000 in the past three years, and often provide what the report calls ‘third space’ social facilities in the same way as pubs and cafes. Fast food outlets have increased by 8% between 2014-2017, but many London boroughs now plan to prevent new ones opening within 400m of a school.

Empty shops in the high street were below 7% in 2007, rising to 11% in 2017 and are still rising. The report recommends ‘meanwhile’ use of empty premises as art spaces, community centres or short-lease shops. Over half of respondents felt that their mental wellbeing was negatively affected by empty shops.

The recommendations of the report aim to inject new life into high streets, as well as improving the health promoting capacity of their businesses. Concerned local community groups will be interested in suggestions that reduced business rates and rentals should be offered to businesses which try to improve public health, and that human health should be an important part of local authority assessments of town centres carried out under local plans, which now focus only on economic and retail health. This report strongly underlines for our readers the importance of the diversity of local retail, and stresses how much that diversity is an asset to cherish and preserve.

The report can be found at this link:

<https://www.rsph.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/health-on-the-high-street/health-on-the-high-street-running-on-empty-2018-report.html>





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New Islington Plan - have your say

By GILL SHEPHERD

Islington Council is preparing a new Local Plan, which sets out a range of planning policies that developers seeking planning permission will need to meet in the future. The new plan will take into account changes in the borough in addition to changes across London, new priorities and the latest evidence on key issues, such as affordable housing. The Planning period will run from 2020 to 2035.

From **20 November 2018 until 14 January 2019**, the council is seeking views on the following draft Local Plan documents:

Strategic and Development Management policies: the principal document in the Local Plan, which sets out strategic policies to identify where and how change will happen in Islington; and detailed policies to manage development.

Site allocations: this document sets out site specific policy for a number of sites across the borough which will contribute to meeting development needs.

Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan (AAP): a plan for the south of the borough where significant change is expected to occur. The plan sets out spatial policies covering different parts of the area with further policies to manage development.

The documents and supporting information are available at www.islington.gov.uk/consultations. Hard copies are available to view at Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm).

The HCA will be preparing a contribution to the local plan documents, but in the meanwhile we would encourage individual HCA members to take a look at the documentation, particularly the Site Allocations document, which contains at least 25 sites of potential local interest and local concern for comment.

You can **have your say** by email at: planningpolicy@islington.gov.uk or in writing to the Planning Policy Team, Freepost RTXU-ETKU-KECB, Planning Policy, Islington Council, Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD.

The council will consider all responses received. Where appropriate, please provide evidence to support any comments. The information submitted, other than personal contact information, will be made publicly available with a summary published as part of the Local Plan evidence base.

Comments must be submitted by the end of **Monday 14 January 2019**.

There will be a drop-in session at Islington Town Hall, Committee Room 6 on Wednesday 9 January 2019 (6-8pm).

Major events in Finsbury Park - Islington's conditions and the HCA's response

By DIANE BURRIDGE

Islington Council emailed HCA the conditions for Islington to support the continuation of major events on 15 October 2018 - the first day of Haringey's two-day hearing on the Licence Review for Live Nation to continue holding events, such as Wireless, in Finsbury Park. Live Nation had just agreed these and consequently, no Islington Councillors made representations at the Licence Review: in contrast, Hackney Councillors turned up and demanded that the Licence for major events be revoked!

Live Nation have now appealed against the conditions set for future events. The HCA is disappointed that Islington's conditions were not stronger, particularly relating to the number of major events and the sheer size of these. (We provided evidence in July 2018, giving details of the disturbances that the Wireless event had on our area.)

Cllr Kaya Comer-Schwartz, Islington's Executive Member for Community Development, and the Leader of the Council, Cllr Richard Watts, are now keen to meet with the HCA to discuss residents' concerns. If you would like to be involved, please contact us on: hcanews@hotmail.com

Listed below are some of Islington's conditions (with references) and our comments (in bold):

13.The Traffic Management Plan must be supported by a traffic management order (TMO) which will provide the lawful authority for all road closures and traffic diversions. This must have been approved by the three boroughs and the relevant traffic authority/ies. **(Will there be any consultation with local residents on this?)**

76.The Licensee shall encourage patrons not to congregate outside the premises after the event has finished. **(What about ensuring that people are not lingering in side streets, urinating and defecating in front gardens, shouting etc? What about people lingering**

outside the event during events?)

85.If the Egress plan requires the closure of Seven Sisters Road, agreement must be sought with TfL-Roads. **(What happens to traffic management in areas where traffic is displaced due to Seven Sisters Road being closed? There were traffic jams in the area around St Thomas's Road and much car tooting and shouting. As well, an ambulance was stuck in traffic in Gillespie Road during the 2018 Wireless event.)**

New Conditions as set by Islington include:

(b)The Licence Holder shall arrange a consultation meeting with Local Residents from LB Haringey, LB Islington and LB Hackney at least two months prior to the first event each year to receive feedback on the Event Management Plan. **(What is the point of this meeting- we have been soundly ignored for years? We need our local councillors and Council to fight on our behalf)**

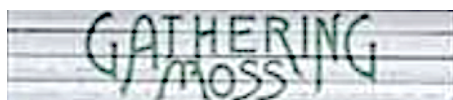
New undertakings by Islington include:

4. It is agreed that specific roads in LB Islington shall be included in an agreed Islington street cleaning plan. **(Local input here?)**

5. It is agreed that a noise monitoring location in Islington will be agreed between the acoustic representatives of LB Islington and the Licence Holder. **(Only one location? Noise can be heard at different levels depending upon the height of the dwelling, wind direction etc)**

6. The possibility of introducing event day parking controls in Islington has been discussed by the Licence Holder and LB Islington and the Licence Holder **is willing to explore** financing LB Islington's costs of the controls. **(What happens if the Licence Holder says no?)**

Continued on page 8...



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Gillespie Park volunteers



By DAVID BRAINE, Gillespie Park volunteer and HCA Committee Member

If you happen to be strolling in Gillespie Park on any Thursday between 10am and 3.30pm you may have noticed a group of Volunteers of all ages beavering away in the park - come rain or shine. They have been a regular presence for over 20 years.

The work they carry out is supervised by members of Islington Council's Nature Conservation Team, based at the Ecology Centre. Volunteers carry out a range of tasks, such as scything the meadows, making and repairing natural hedges, planting new trees and shrubs, removing weeds and brambles, maintaining paths and steps, and cleaning out ponds.

The Thursday group carries out virtually all the practical management of Gillespie Park, as well as the

Parkland Walk and Barnsbury Wood nature reserves. Without the Volunteers these parks would be less well maintained, attractive and welcoming.

Recently, Islington's Mayor and Executive Member for Environment and Transport came to the Ecology Centre to award long service certificates to four of the Volunteers - in recognition of their volunteering for 10 or more years. The photo includes the Mayor, Executive Member for Environment and Transport, Volunteers and Nature Conservation Team who attended the award ceremony.

Anyone interested in becoming a Volunteer is welcome to join the group for just a part of the day, or for the whole day, every Thursday from 10am to 12pm and then from 1pm to 3:30pm. Please contact the Ecology Centre before you come for the first time, on tel: 020 7527 4374 or email: ecologycentre@islington.gov.uk

Major events in Finsbury Park

Continued from page 7...

Final points by the HCA:

There is nothing in these conditions about the importance of Finsbury Park as a park for Islington residents. Local children and others need somewhere to go for exercise and peace. And there is nothing about the sheer number of events each year, and the huge size of some of these. No matter how many controls there are, the large events have a major impact on the area and throughout the Park.

The Friends of Finsbury Park are continuing with their struggle to protect this Park from too many large events. Because Live Nation are appealing, more funds are now needed. **To support this campaign, please click: <https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/wireless-festival-licence-review/>**

Thank you and festive greetings



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