

HIGHBURY COMMUNITY NEWS

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IMPORTANT JUNCTION CHANGES ON THE HOLLOWAY ROAD

By GILL SHEPHERD AND HIGHBURY RESIDENTS

Major changes to the junctions on the Holloway Road closest to Highbury are currently taking place, and it is not yet clear what their impacts will be in the future. Congestion on this road has increased since the changes made to Highbury Corner, and is likely to be further increased by the new Barnsbury and Laycock LTN.



1. At the Palmer Place/Holloway Road junction,

vehicles will no longer be able to turn left into Palmer Place from the Holloway Road. Nor will vehicles waiting at the lights in Palmer Place be able to turn left into the Holloway Road, though right turns will be allowed.

2. At the Liverpool Road Junction with Holloway Road,

where new traffic lights will be installed, vehicles will ONLY be able to turn left onto the Holloway Road. However traffic will still be able to turn into Liverpool Road from either side of the Holloway Road.

3. At the Holloway Rd, Drayton Park junction.

There are currently three main problems at this junction :

- Drayton Park is the sole exit from the dark blue cell of the Highbury LTN. The main concern is that because of the new traffic lights at the Holloway Road/Liverpool Road junction, traffic held there at red can back up and make it very difficult, at certain times of day, for residents wanting to get out of Drayton Park to do so, especially if they plan to turn right. As a result, traffic backs up on Drayton Park.
- Vehicles heading northbound up Holloway Road and turning right into Drayton Park need to wait in the centre of the junction for a gap in southbound Holloway Road traffic to be able to proceed into Drayton Park. Traffic light phasing has made this more difficult than it used to be.

- There is a new pedestrian crossing on Drayton Park, but it is impossible to see the green man sign on the crossing from where the car is waiting to turn. It is also the case that cyclists waiting to come out of Drayton Park quite often jump the lights. So there are now additional so far unresolved hazards at this junction.

4. At the Ronalds Road exit

Back in 2019, changes to the A1, Holloway Road, proposed by TfL were consulted on with local people, long before there were any LTNs in the area. The TfL design retained a two-lane exit at the junction of Ronald's Road and the Holloway Road. However, after the public consultation was over, Islington

Important Junction changes on the Holloway Road

Continued from page 1...

Council requested that Ronald's Road be reduced to one lane at this junction to discourage traffic from cutting through from Highbury Grove to the Holloway Road via Highbury Fields, as a way of avoiding Highbury Corner.

In 2021 LBI started trialling the Highbury LTN. This stopped the previous Highbury Fields cut-through and made the Ronald's Road/Holloway Road junction not only the sole exit for everyone living in the light-blue-coded part of the LTN, but also the sole exit for large Waitrose delivery lorries and for coaches taking musicians and their equipment to The Garage music venue, both of whose delivery entrances are on Highbury Crescent.

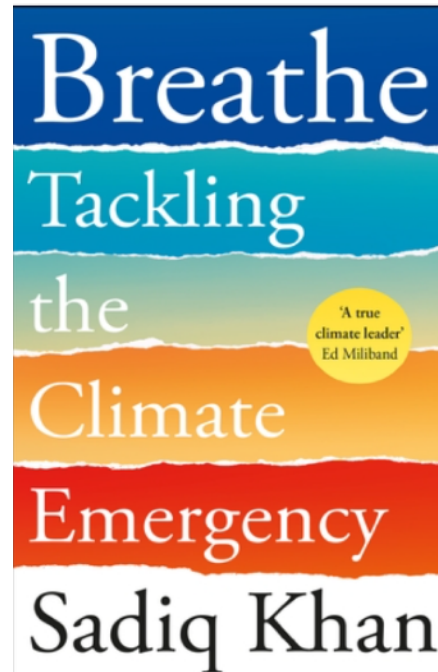
It is difficult to get out of the Ronalds Road exit onto the Holloway Road at the best of times as the A1 is frequently congested, and the junction is located between two sets of traffic lights which can generate tailback queues. Residents and delivery drivers rely on the goodwill of other drivers on the A1 to get out as they turn right or left, north or south, and having a two-lane exit has been very useful.

Unfortunately, despite a recent residents' walkabout with engineers Taylor Woodrow to discuss potential problems at the Holloway Road worksites, and despite strenuous pleas to local Highbury councillors, the Ronald's Road exit reduction to a single lane has gone ahead by default, even though the original need for it is now history.

Residents have been told to record problems and report back.

The Mayor of London's Action Plan for Clean Air in our City

By SARAH POTTER



In his recently published book *'Breathe: Tackling the Climate Emergency'* Sadiq Khan sets out both his own journey as a campaigner against air pollution, and an account of the seven main obstacles he has had to overcome in implementing climate policies in London: fatalism, apathy, cynicism, hostility, cost and gridlock.

Taking up running to compete in the 2014 Marathon, he was shocked to find himself diagnosed with adult-onset asthma which is contracted mainly because of poor air quality. This and the case of Ella Adoo-Klissi Debra, a little girl who died of asthma in 2013 and at an inquest in 2020 was ruled to have suffered the fatal consequence of air pollution, completely changed Sadiq Khan's understanding of the climate emergency and its links to breathable air. He also sees climate change as an issue which broadens our understanding of inequality and social justice, since the least well off are the

least likely to drive polluting vehicles but live in areas 13% higher in nitrogen dioxide pollution than the least deprived.

At the end of August, London's Ultra Low Emission Zone expanded eighteen times over to include Outer London. In May a group of doctors set off to bike round the new boundary to speak out on the toxic effect of polluted air. Thirty-six scientists also signed a letter to the Prime Minister calling for a halt to the government's discrediting of the science on toxic air, as reported by the BBC.

The issue has recently become highly politicised, as the government seeks issues on which it can be seen to hold views distinct from those of the Labour Party, which might appeal to voters. It hopes to win or retain some outer London seats in this way. However, since the population of Outer London is older and more vulnerable to the health problems arising from air pollution, there will be a benefit to them from the Mayor's policy.

The book is thus very timely, encapsulating a set of issues which will be made much use of in the run-up to the next election.

Help us keep our membership list up to date. Let us know if you have moved, or have updated your email address.

If you think your neighbours would like to receive the newsletter, simply ask them to email us and we'll do the rest...

Please contact us at hcanews@hotmail.com

The Website for Arsenal's neighbours

<https://www.arsenal.com/the-club/local-residents-news>

Don't forget that Arsenal football club has created a website specially for us, its local neighbours.

Because those of us living near the stadium have to pay for RingGo electronic parking permits for our visitors on match days, it is essential that we know when all relevant matches are going to be.

These days this does not just include the men's matches but the increasingly frequent women's matches and all other fixtures. Parking limitations and the need for parking permits comes into play as soon as an event is expected to have an audience of 10,000 or more.

We are lucky enough to have an Arsenal employee with the explicit task of keeping this website up-to-date for us, so please do use it!

The road across the middle of Highbury Fields

By GILL SHEPHERD



An informal group met recently to further discussions on what should happen to the road across the middle of Highbury Fields. This involved Highbury councillors, Islington Council Green Space employees, representatives from Highbury Community Association and Highbury Fields Association Highbury Community Association and Highbury Fields Association and members of the general public.

There has been some discussion of it being turned into a children's play area though several stakeholders felt that children were already very well provided for on Highbury Fields. HCA and HFA would like to see open-air gym equipment in this area of the sort to be found in Paradise Park in McKenzie Road.

This would not only cater to teenagers and adults but, they feel, would also protect trees and benches

on Highbury Fields from being used as supplementary gym equipment by personal trainers and their clients.

Cyclists currently cut across this road and would like there to continue to be a cycle track as part of the planned area. Some local people would also like to see planters in this area. There was a general consensus that seating in the area would also be attractive.

The GreenSpace official leading on this consultation says that in the shortrun, at least, gym equipment is unaffordable. However in his view the space can be planned in such a way that if it became possible to raise funds to obtain such equipment, it could be added at a later stage.

Further opportunities for consultation will be publicised as plans progress.



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Highbury Chamber choir



Highbury chamber choir is always keen to hear from individuals who would be interested in possibly becoming part of this well-known a cappella choir.

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Rehearsals are based on 8 week terms, rehearsing on Tues evenings 8-10pm at St Thomas's Church, Monsell Road, Finsbury Park. We also have one Saturday afternoon rehearsal mid-way through each term where we can take time to get to know the music in depth and even more importantly, enjoy our pot luck lunches!

We believe we've achieved the perfect balance of time spent rehearsing for concerts and time off. We focus mostly on Renaissance to baroque composers, downplaying the religious aspects in favour of enjoying the sublime harmonies of polyphony.

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Stoke Newington Early Music Festival

BY CHARLES PALLISER



This is music that constantly surprises and seems to break its own rules and reinvent itself in different pieces in a manner that contrasts fascinatingly with the more constrained style of composers like Haydn and Mozart.

The relation between the two instruments was fascinating: the dark, honeyed tone of the baroque violin conveying the often profound emotion in the music and the harp-like theorbo supporting or counterpointing its melody – frequently in a playfully ironic contrast.

At the end the audience demanded an encore and were rewarded with a charming piece based on a Scottish folk-tune”.



Back in the summer the Stoke Newington Early Music Festival created its customary magic. This is a review of just one of the concerts, which we were unable to publish earlier. But it gives such a fine flavour of what we can expect from this annual event that we felt it worth publishing it here, even some while after the event. We look forward to next year’s offering, and will make sure that the festival is advertised well in advance in the newsletter.

“In a rapturously received concert on Friday, 23rd June, Julia Bishop and Paula Chateaufneuf gave a magnificent performance of virtuosic seventeenth-century music for baroque violin and theorbo in the Old Church of Stoke Newington. Its excellent acoustic gave full effect to the tone of the period instruments which, while their temperamentality makes them trickier to play, have a

richer and grainier texture than their modern equivalents. With its syncopation, reliance on improvisation, and pre-classical scales, the music of that period sounds at times like jazz or the blues and often seems strikingly modern. It reminds us that it was closer to folk-music and popular dance than was the case later with the classical music of the late eighteenth-century and after.

The players gave brief but very useful introductions that provided the audience with a context in which to enjoy the music. The best-known composers were Biber (wild, passionate and always surprising) and Corelli (elegant, charming and inventive) and it was easy to see why they are so often performed. But the less familiar names - Castello, Marini, Piccinini and Kapsberger – demonstrated the depth and variety of the musical culture of the period.



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Ever-increasing problems with RingGo

By GILL SHEPHERD

Arsenal's neighbours were originally told by the council that there would only be parking restrictions in place for 15 matches every year. But this number has been creeping up. Firstly the Champions League means more matches and secondly women's matches are growing greatly in popularity and are increasingly likely to reach the 10,000 attendees threshold at which parking restrictions kick in.

So local residents are finding that more and more frequent conflicts occur between their wish to have

visitors at the weekend and the existence of an Arsenal match. And how are you supposed to know, in advance, whether or not a particular match – say a women's match – will reach the 10,000 threshold?

The Arsenal neighbours' website - <https://www.arsenal.com/the-club/local-residents-news> helps with this but is still not yet well known across Highbury.

But beyond this overall increase in the number of matches, RingGo itself can be challenging to use. It is impossible to use if you do not have a smart phone or a computer, and many older people around Highbury do not.

Even if you are computer literate, RingGo is not always easy-to-use and has been caught out being unaware of upcoming women's matches.

Those of us who are Arsenal neighbours still feel very strongly that we are being unfairly penalised by being made to use RingGo on match days.

The costs are much higher than paper tickets and the matches are becoming more and more frequent. If the council feels that too many paper tickets were being sold on illegally, then it should be

challenging purchasers bulk buying paper tickets rather than penalising Arsenal's loyal and mostly uncomplaining neighbours. We continue to request that Islington Council rethinks this ill-considered and entirely negative change.



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Recycling small electrical items

By GILL SHEPHERD



is also true of the small items. These items either get thrown away or left around the house cluttering up cupboards and drawers. It is thought that something like 880 million electrical items of all kinds are lying around unused in UK homes.


The reality is that anything with a plug, battery, or cable can be recycled - and there is somewhere near you where you can take it. In our immediate area there are recycling banks for small electrical items where such items can be posted through the chute into the bank.

Almost half a billion small cheap electrical everyday items end up in landfill in the UK completely unnecessarily every year: 260 million disposable vapes 29 million LED and other lights, 26 million cables and 9.8 million USB sticks. All in all more than a hundred thousand tonnes of waste electricals are thrown away every year.

Because many of these items are cheap and small, consumers may not realise that they contain valuable materials that could be salvaged if recycled. Small electricals can contain copper, lithium, and stainless steel.

While people are generally aware that larger electrical items can be recycled they may not realise that this

Anything up to the size of a hairdryer or small toaster will fit into the chute. In addition to the Reuse and Recycling Centre at 40 at Hornsey Street there are banks for small electrical items at the junction of the Caledonian Road and Cottage Road N7, and at the junction of Albion Road and Hawkesley Road N16 .




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The disgrace that is Highbury Fields

LOCAL AUTHOR SUE GEE IS DISMAYED BY NEGLECT AND DECAY



I first came to live on Highbury Fields in 1972, a time when the open-air swimming pool was shared with passing ducks. I was young, and more interested in people than grass, but my memory is that the Fields were well kept. They are not well kept now. The largest and loveliest green space in Islington, designated a Site of National Importance for Nature Conservation, has for far too long been in a shocking state.

What am I talking about? I'm talking about the planters, the verges, the paths and corners: the whole perimeter of this precious place. About yards of corner ground without a blade of grass in sight: a sea of mud and undrained water in winter, and in summer bald baked earth.

Horrible rusting litter bins stand upon them. I'm talking about a sapling on the verge adjoining Church Path choked by thistles four feet high. Along all the other verges, more bare earth, with what little grass remains

struggling for light, unmown and untended. As for the planters in Highbury Crescent, installed without consultation during lockdown, 'to be maintained by volunteers' - who was to pay for the planting? Look at them now - a few half-dead leggy plants in dried-up earth.

This was the state of things until the first week of September, with my email invitation to Andrew Bedford, Head of Greenspace, to come and see all this for himself left unanswered.

Then suddenly: Behold Burberry! On 18th September, for two hours during Fashion Week, they were to stage a show. To prepare for this the Council blocked off the whole of the two upper Fields for two weeks. Down came railings, up went screens. Flooring overlaid the grass.

Overnight, the planters vanished. In came pantechnicons. Up went marquees. And all at once, a transformation. Thistles cut

down, verges mown, the dreadful corners covered with mulch. Let Burberry not see in an afternoon what we have had to live with for years.

What this sudden spruce-up has exposed, of course, is just how neglected these spaces have essentially become. There is nothing to hide yet more bare earth, more places where grass has been overtaken by plants briefly beautiful then dying or going to seed.

Rewilding in a residential setting has to be *managed*. (See Clissold Park.) No-Mow May gives us glorious clouds of cow parsley, brilliant blue borage. But when plants die they have to be cut down for fresh young grass to grow. And if a portion of the money made by the Council for this one event is not put towards restoring the Fields to the state they deserve it will only confirm what seems apparent: they don't understand how to manage them, and do not care.