

# HIGHBURY COMMUNITY NEWS

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## Parking plan u-turn

### Islington Council abandons controversial proposals for parking zones in Highbury

By GILL SHEPHERD

#### Consultation process

Around 117,000 people were consulted in the course of the Islington Council Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) Consultation and over 11,000 registered their views. This response rate – close to ten percent of all those consulted – is the highest that Islington Council has ever received on any issue. In most areas – Archway, Angel and the Stadium Control area where we live – opinions about the proposals were almost entirely negative. Only around Whittington hospital – where staff and visitors impinge heavily on adjacent streets – and in the Finsbury area near Old Street, were residents keen for stronger parking controls.

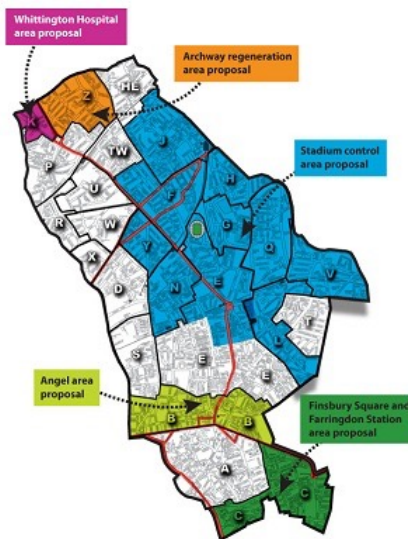
#### Final decision

A meeting was held at the Town Hall on 1<sup>st</sup> October with the Leader of the Council, Richard Watts, Claudia Webbe, the Councillor who has led the consultation, Hak Huseyin head of the Chamber of Commerce (for businesses) and Gill Shepherd (for residents).

Richard Watts explained that the news leaked to the Islington Tribune and the Islington Gazette was correct, and that the Council would make **no** changes to parking arrangements in Archway, Angel and the Stadium Control area.

Though this decision had to proceed through the correct decision-making channels inside the Council, and would not finally be ratified by the Executive until January 2016, Richard Watts assured us that the decision was final. I asked him whether minor changes might be made to

controlled parking hours (especially on match days) in areas which would not otherwise have their parking hours changed. He said no, that would require a whole new consultation exercise. There would be further consultation about details only in the Whittington and Finsbury areas. He said the parking issue would then be left by the Council for a further considerable period – eight years or more – before any further consultation was undertaken.



#### Other issues

Meanwhile, the Council will focus on other transport issues such as dealing with diesel vehicles and improving cycling routes. Only 31% of households in Islington still have a car, and both he and Claudia Webbe expect this percentage to go on dropping. However, the borough's position close to the centre of London means that there is a very



concentrated volume of through traffic as well as local traffic.

The detailed response on the original proposals made by HCA to Islington Council are available on the HCA website.

## Sainsbury's revives plans for second store on Blackstock Road

By CHARLIE ROBERSON

An upcoming renovation of the former Highbury Vale police station on Blackstock Road was intended to provide flats, commercial units and a gym. But now it appears that the gym has been scrapped in favour of a Sainsbury's Local.

A previous attempt by the company to establish a store in this location was prevented through the collaborative effort of local shop owners and citizens, which saw more than 2,500 signatures collected in a petition to block the development. This effort was successful and it seemed that Sainsbury's had abandoned their plans for this site.

*(Continued on page 3)*

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## Finsbury Park station improvements update

By DIANE BURRIDGE

As readers will be aware, Transport for London (TfL) had planned to work with Network Rail to provide step-free access, and to improve the station entrances with support from private developer, City North.

However, shortly before the planned closure of the Wells Terrace entrance for these improvements, the developer informed TfL that they were not in a position to proceed with their work from 20 April 2015.

The new Finsbury Park Station Users' Group has recently been informed that TfL are moving forward with delivering the station improvements

previously committed to, with the exception of the new western station entrance, including step-free access by 2018. They are also safeguarding the option to open a new western station entrance should the adjacent development move forward in future.

TfL are also liaising with Network Rail to ensure that step-free access works (including the installation of lifts) for the underground and overground rail system are timed to minimise short-term disruption.

If you are interested in attending meetings of the Finsbury Park Station Users' Group, please contact Diane Burridge at [dianeurridge@btinternet.com](mailto:dianeurridge@btinternet.com)

## Gillespie Park 'Apple Day'

The Friends of Gillespie Park and Islington Council's Ecology Centre staff are organising an 'Apple Day' on Sunday, 18 October 2015, 12-4pm at the Ecology Centre, to celebrate British apples.

There will be lots of apple-related activities, stalls, music and tours of the park, as well as an apple juicer and a display of heritage apples. If you have any spare apples please bring them along for juicing. Kids' activities include apple dipping, the longest peel and all the usual fun. Food will be available throughout the



Photo: Friends of Gillespie Park

day from the centre's Sunday Cafe. Please tell your friends and join the fun at the Ecology Centre, Gillespie Park Local Nature Reserve, 191 Drayton Park, London N5 1PH (just behind Arsenal Station and next to Arsenal Stadium).

## Gold award for local park

Gillespie Park has won a Gold award in this year's London in Bloom competition and was also awarded 'Conservation Area of the Year'.



Photo: Simon Carroll



# Sainsbury's revives plans for second store on Blackstock Road

(Continued from page 1)

However it has recently emerged that the commercial giant has made another bid to establish itself there. This news has been met with dismay from local retailers.

There are already a large number of convenience and specialist food shops located in Blackstock Road. These range from a traditional butchers to corner shops established by entrepreneurial Turkish and Kurdish immigrants.

A survey of these retailers carried out by the Highbury Community Association reveals a prevailing mood of fear and anger.

One proprietor said that it would affect his business "very badly". Another called the proposed store "another step towards a homogenous high street".

Everyone who was consulted recognised that a Sainsbury's Local threatened to deprive them of customers, putting their livelihoods at risk. Many claimed that they would likely be forced to close down if the supermarket was to open.

An existing Sainsbury's Local can be found further down Blackstock Road, less than half a mile away from the proposed development.



Former police station site

This has prompted vocal anger from critics, who see it as further proof of the new store's pointlessness. Tesco and Londis also have shops a short distance away from the former police station.

Sainsbury's claim that the store will benefit the community by creating new job opportunities and bringing increased footfall to local stores. One retailer expressed hope that this would be the case, although the majority remained sceptical. Despite this outcry and the thousands of signatures that were previously collected, Sainsbury's are currently moving ahead with little sign of hesitation.

Members of the HCA will be meeting with Sainsbury's in early October [as this newsletter goes to print] to discuss the situation. We will publish an update on our website when we know more.



## An invitation to tea

Piacha is Islington's newest tea bar and is inviting HCA members to a fun and informative complimentary tea tasting at Piacha on 28 October, 6-7.30pm.

Piacha's owner Pia Ikkala says, "Our tasting will take you on a journey through our finest tea blends, starting with elegant white and Oolong teas, followed up by balanced greens, vibrant herbals and sweet, surprising Rooibos infusions. Then you move on to full-bodied black teas and finish your tasting with the much-hyped caffeinated and antioxidant Matcha."



Photo: Piacha

You'll be tasting 11 teas in total, including Ginger Chilli, Rooibos Rhubarb Fudge and Earl Grey Vanilla.

If you can't make the tasting, you will be able to find Pia brewing tea (and also coffee) from 9am-9pm weekdays and 10am-9pm on weekends, at 280 Upper Street, London N1 2TZ.

Places are limited on a first-come-first served basis, to book email [pia@piacha.co.uk](mailto:pia@piacha.co.uk) by 22 October.

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# Finsbury Park - a 150 year battle to protect the park

By DIANE BURRIDGE

What with the Wireless, Ceremony and United festivals and three funfairs held over the summer months, it feels that we have lost our park. It is estimated that there have been events in the park for a total of three months in the past year.

Having written a book on the history of the park, Hugh Hayes, previous chair of the Friends of Finsbury Park (FoFP), spoke at a recent meeting, about the campaigns involving thousands of local residents to get the park in the first place. This was in response to a Select Committee decree in 1833 on the need for parks in London, due to all the building works taking place, and London's population explosion. How enlightened they were!

It was agreed, initially, that the park would be 230 acres in size, but after costs were considered, and land was given for Endymion Road (for farmers to have rights of way to move their cattle), the size was reduced to 130 acres. It would have only been 110 acres but for 14,000 people petitioning not to lose 20 acres.

Designated as common land, demonstrations were allowed and, during World War One, there were many disturbances between pacifists (at times, attended by Sylvia Pankhurst) and troops, spilling out into the surrounding streets. Next were the Brownshirts



'Walking in Finsbury Park'

Photo: Huk at en.wikipedia

and anti-fascists clashing during the 1930s. For a long time after this (not counting World War Two, when artillery guns were positioned near where the cafe is now), the park was peaceful. The big festivals started with the Fleadh, which attracted 30,000 people, the first one being in 1989. But only several events were held each year.

***"Finsbury Park will soon be 150 years old but now seems to be used as a 'cash cow' for Haringey Council"***

Haringey has a budget of £1.9million for all their parks, and makes £850,000 income from Finsbury Park – money which is 'ringfenced' to support the parks service. Haringey Council agreed that five large events (over five days each) would be allowed from 2014/15.

However, this total of 25 days does not include the funfairs and the setting up and closing down activities of the Festivals. The Wireless Festival (Live Nation), which attracted 50,000 commenced occupation on 19th June 2015 and concluded occupation on the 10th July 2015 – a total of 21 days. And some of the

funfairs have run for weeks, for example: one from 28 March to 12 April 2015, not including days used for setting up and closing down. The Fairs contribute £60,000 towards the £850,000 income. When the FoFP asked, through a Freedom of Information request, for a breakdown of income and expenditure relating to the commercial use of the Park, Haringey refused, stating that this would take up too much officer time.

Questions needing answers include: what cost: benefit analysis has been undertaken for using the park for large events; how much is given to Hackney and Islington Councils towards street cleaning costs during events; how much do all the repair works costs after events; why will it cost £1million to improve the play area near the cafe as advised by the Council, and why did the contact numbers which advertised for feedback from the public during the Wireless event not work?

The FoFP were invited to an evidence-gathering meeting with Haringey Council's Scrutiny Committee on 24 August 2015. At this meeting, the Friends emphasised that they are not opposed to all events but rather those, such as Wireless, which are too large, unmanageable and noisy, and which cause considerable disruption to park users and the local community. The Committee's findings will be discussed at a public meeting to be held on **Monday 19 October 2015**.

If you would like to join the FoFP, membership is free and committee members are volunteers, with a passion to protect our Finsbury Park yet again.

For information visit [facebook.com/finsburyparkfriends](https://www.facebook.com/finsburyparkfriends)



'Finsbury Park Tree Avenue'

Photo: Huk at en.wikipedia

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# Highbury Community News readers visit the Arsenal Hub



Highbury Community News readers with the HCA's Sarah Potter

By SARAH POTTER

A group of HCA News readers toured the recently opened Arsenal Hub this summer, courtesy of Arsenal in the Community. We were greatly impressed by the indoor Astroturf pitch for football and hockey, in use that morning for a free girls' football session. We also saw the specially equipped classroom for literacy, numeracy and IT classes, as well as additional classrooms, meeting rooms and a café space. The aim is for the Hub to be open to 1,500 participants per week for sport and educational and social activities, recreating the feeling of belonging that existed at Arsenal in the Community's JVC

Centre at the Clock End of the old ground. A visit to the stadium was included in our tour, and as one of our group commented, "We had a great time. It was such a good insight and we do love the area." Our thanks are due to Samir Singh of Arsenal in the Community, and Justin Pryce, Duty Manager, AFC.

You can contact [afccommunitybookings@arsenal.co.uk](mailto:afccommunitybookings@arsenal.co.uk) or call 020 7704 4660 if you are interested in using the facilities of the Hub, which is at 56 Benwell Road, N7 7BA. To see the indoor pitch, go to:

[arsenal.com/news/news-archive/20150204/arsenal-in-the-community-centre-pics](http://arsenal.com/news/news-archive/20150204/arsenal-in-the-community-centre-pics)

# The Haydn Chamber Orchestra at Christ Church, Highbury Grove

By DIANE BURRIDGE

We are so fortunate to have The Haydn Chamber Orchestra, formed in 1983, playing between three and five times a year at Christ Church. I try to attend whenever they perform, as the standard of musicianship is outstanding.

Composed of volunteers, this 30-40 piece orchestra attracts high profile soloists and conductors usually for free due to the quality of their work. Over the years, Sir Colin Davis, Sir Simon Rattle, Nigel Kennedy and Imogen Cooper have worked with the orchestra. Young artists, including Jack Liebeck, Guy and Magnus Johnston and Nicholas Collon have welcomed the opportunity to perform works they would later give as broadcasts or commercial recordings.

There is a strong local connection as some of the members of the orchestra come from Highbury and the orchestra practises at Christ Church.

Entrance fees are £14 (£12 for concessions) and these go towards costs and to raise funds for the North London Hospice, The Harrington Scheme and Noah's Ark Children's Hospice.

Next planned concerts are: 28 November 2015 and 19 March 2016 (at Christ Church) starting at 8pm. Other venues on 17 April 2016, 7 May 2016 and 2 July 2016. Visit: [www.hco.org.uk](http://www.hco.org.uk) for details.

## Timebank Cafe in Gillespie Park

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# Local nature reserve to open in Stoke Newington



Photo: London Wildlife Trust

Woodberry Wetlands

By SARAH POTTER

Stoke Newington’s East Reservoir will be open free to the public for the first time this November as the London Wildlife Trust’s Woodberry Wetlands nature reserve. The New River Company built the East and West Reservoirs between 1830 and 1833 to meet the growing demand for water as London expanded, using the bricks from the old London Bridge to line them. Now a wooden bridge has been built over the New River to provide public access to the East Reservoir, and extensive new reed beds, ponds, islands and a wildflower meadow have been developed. A nineteenth century coalhouse is undergoing restoration as a visitor centre, with a public viewing terrace and a café.

It used to contain the kitchen which served lunches for the directors of the New River Company. Kingfishers, grebes, dragonflies, song thrushes and speckled wood butterflies are among the residents of this large new reserve. You will be able to reach the East Reservoir by turning left along the New River path just inside The Castle Indoor Rock Climbing Centre on Green Lanes, then crossing Lordship Lane to the bridge into the reserve.

A scheme to link the Woodberry Wetlands with the Walthamstow Wetlands, the London Wildlife Trust’s second major current development, has been granted funding. A green way of 3 km through local parks and quiet roads will enable pedestrians and cyclists from the Woodberry

The Highbury Community Association (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, 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.

## Reusing and recycling your old electricals

Due to a change in the contract, the Ecology Centre will no longer be a drop off point for small electrical items. You can now either arrange to have these items to be collected from you free of charge, or take it to the Bright Sparks shop (176 Seven Sisters Rd, O20 7561 5515), or Islington Council’s Re-Use and Recycle Centre (1 Cottage Road, N7).

To book a collection, call: 020 3457 5681 or visit [123recycleforfree.co.uk](http://123recycleforfree.co.uk) for more details

Wetlands to reach the Walthamstow reserve and also the Lea Valley for a whole day enjoying nature, avoiding the traffic along the Seven Sisters Road. The Walthamstow Wetlands will be the most extensive in London, and will be partly open in 2016 and fully open in 2017. Information at [www.woodberrywetlands.org.uk](http://www.woodberrywetlands.org.uk).