

Highbury Community News

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Solidarity with Finsbury Park mosque after arson attack

Community gathers to show its support

By CHARLIE ROBERSON

On the evening of Friday December 4th, residents of Highbury and the surrounding areas gathered outside Finsbury Park mosque. The meeting was convened to show solidarity in the wake of an attempted arson attack on the site. Numerous prominent local figures made speeches, among them local MP, Jeremy Corbyn.

The incident occurred on the night of November 29th. An as-yet unidentified man attempted to light a jerry can of petrol before throwing it at the mosque and fleeing on a moped. Because of the rainy conditions of the night, the fuse on the bomb was extinguished and no serious damage was done. Police are continuing to search for the perpetrator, who was captured on CCTV.

The attack is just one of the huge number of Islamophobic hate crimes that have occurred in the wake of November's Paris terrorist attacks. In the two weeks since the atrocity, the rate of such attacks has tripled in the London area.

The mood at the gathering was one of unity, with hundreds of people from various backgrounds turning out. Many of them carried signs with slogans such as 'No to racism' and 'Don't let the racists divide us'.

A number of speakers of different faiths spoke at the event, as well as members of the Stand Up to Racism campaign.



Mohammed Kozbar, chairman of Finsbury Park mosque, and local MP Jeremy Corbyn address the crowd

Mohammed Kozbar, the chairman of Finsbury Park mosque and noted community activist, coordinated the night and delivered an impassioned speech on the importance of standing up to racism.

"We are very proud of our multi-cultural community here in Finsbury Park."

But the most high-profile speaker of the night was Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North and leader of the Labour Party. Despite a tumultuous week that included a controversial vote in Parliament over Syria and then a by-election in the Oldham West

and Royton constituency, he showed no signs of distraction from the task at hand.

He said, "This attack is designed to divide our community between one and another - one ethnic group and another - it has failed, it will fail, it will always fail because we are very proud of our multi-cultural community here in Finsbury Park."

Other speakers included Catherine West, MP for Hornsey and Wood Green, and Caroline Russell, Green Party Councillor for Highbury East. The common themes of community, solidarity and opposing racism echoed in every speech.

Members of the Highbury Community Association were proud to attend the peaceful and well-organised event.

Interview with Islington's Mayor, Richard Greening, on the back page...

HCA News is now 8 pages long!...

Sainsbury's press ahead with convenience store plans

By JOHN EGAN

When the former Highbury Vale Police Station building, at 211 Blackstock Road, became surplus to the Metropolitan Police's operational needs, its planning status was "*sui generis*", meaning of its own kind. This meant that any new use would require planning permission.

The site was sold in two parts: the rear part has permission for residential use and will not be discussed in this article.

In respect of the main building, fronting Blackstock Road, the new owners entered into what is called pre-application discussions in February 2014. They suggested that the building be divided up, with eight residential units and four commercial units, the largest of these having retail use.

The names of Sainsbury's and Co-op were mentioned, although neither retailer confirmed any interest at that time. This resulted in nearby retailers worrying about the impact on them and a petition was started opposing retail use, which attracted 2,000 signatures.

As a result, when a planning application was submitted in April 2014, the application for the largest unit was for D2 use, which can include a gym, which was suggested as the preferred option.

Now Sainsbury's has agreed to take the largest commercial unit and has said that it intends to apply for planning permission for retail use, as a convenience store.

It also intends to apply for a drinks license. Once again local shops are worried about its likely impact upon their businesses, as a survey we have carried out confirmed.

We have spoken to representatives of Sainsbury's who claimed that the proposed shop will attract fresh customers to this stretch of Blackstock Road and benefit existing businesses. They



Proposed site of new Sainsbury's

also say that they regard it as being in a separate catchment area from their existing store about half a mile to the north, and the supermarket is also rumoured to be planning another convenience store on St Paul's Road towards Highbury Corner.

Sainsbury's are openly seeking to increase their number of convenience stores. Their chief executive talks of doubling their existing 750, catering for time-poor commuters on their way home. They aim to, at least, cement their position as the country's second largest food retailer.

The transport statement

submitted with the original planning applications said that only light vehicles would be delivering to the site: no large articulated or rigid vehicles. Whether this will be compatible with the distribution system of Sainsbury's and their suppliers remains to be seen.

Do we want an homogenised "national names only" high street or do we want to retain our current lively mix of small, family-run shops?

What do our members think? Do let us know by emailing us at hcanews@hotmail.com

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Victory for athletics in Finsbury Park - running track works get green light

By DIANE BURRIDGE

The athletics track in the heart of Finsbury Park, popular with schools and clubs in the area, has been used since 1936 and was last updated with the modern scotch surface in 1996, following a fund raising effort by members of North London Athletics Club.

In 2012, Haringey Council, due to budget pressures, handed this facility over to the Finsbury Park Sports Partnership.

Now nearly £1million has been raised by the Partnership from various sources, including the London Marathon Charitable Trust, Haringey Council, Sport England and the Mayor of London to up upgrade the facilities once again.

Works will include installation of a new track, new floodlights, new athletics equipment and new carriageway lighting. Preparation work has begun with tree works along the boundary with the Bowls Club to prepare the facility for the main works which are likely to start in the winter. The project should be completed by the summer of 2016.

Once completed, the facility will be re-opened with certain times dedicated to community use. We will inform readers what this community use means for local people, once this is clarified and as refurbishment comes to completion.

Drayton Park to operate 7 days a week

By CHARLIE ROBERSON

From 13 December 2015, Great Northern will be operating a weeklong rail service at Drayton Park railway station. The move is expected to benefit local residents as well as commuters working irregular hours.

There will be a similar extension in operating hours at the Highbury & Islington, Essex Road and Old Street stations.

Since its opening in 1904, Drayton Park has served the Highbury area. It provides suburban rail travel on the Great Northern Route between Welwyn Garden City and Moorgate.

It is hoped that the weekend service will provide better connections for people wanting access to shops, recreation and nightlife.

The railway station is located on Drayton Park in the shadow of the Emirates stadium. However it lacks the capacity to handle the extraordinary number of



passengers that travel to the area for Arsenal's home football matches. It will therefore be closed for two hours before and after weekend matches.

The current policy of closing the station after weekday matches will remain unchanged.

Great Northern Passenger Service Director Keith Jipps said: "Our new seven-day-a-week service will connect communities to the heart of the City at night-time and at weekends which will be better for late-returning commuters, partygoers travelling to the night spots of Old Street and nearby Shoreditch and weekend shoppers at Westfield."

Highbury Community Association AGM 2016
 Saturday 16th April 2016 at 7pm

We are happy to announce the date for our 2016 Annual General Meeting which will take place at Christ Church. Details including the speaker and charity will be confirmed closer to the time. Put the date in your diary - we hope you'll be able to make it!

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Highbury Vale police station - a brief history

By SUSIE BARSON

This former Metropolitan Police Station closed down as an operating police station in 2004. Its future is uncertain; a plan to convert the building into a Sainsbury's supermarket is a possibility, (as detailed in our article on page 2).

Historical background

A watch house, cage and whipping post were erected on Islington Green from the late 17th century. The Local Act of 1772 enabled the trustees to use the rate for a 'watch' and to appoint two supervisors to oversee the watchmen or constables (who were volunteers), inspect the lamps and prevent civil nuisances.

A new watch house replaced the old one in 1797 and constables were now paid from the money raised from the Parish rates. Under Sir Robert Peel, the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829 established the world's first professional police

force and a designated area to be covered by their operation. Islington came within this area.

The police took over the old watch house in 1831 and leased premises nearby. In 1842 the Surveyor's Department of the Metropolitan Police was established; this department was responsible for buying land in London for police purposes and overseeing the design and erection of police buildings.

In Islington a freehold site was bought in Upper Street in 1857 and the station there - built to the designs of the police surveyor Frederick Caiger - was opened in 1864. This building, brick built in a simple Classical style survives but has been converted to flats.

A second police station for Islington was built at Highbury Vale in 1910, adjacent to an LCC fire station built in 1902. The new station was erected to the designs of John Dixon Butler (1861-1920) the chief architect to the Metropolitan Police at that time.

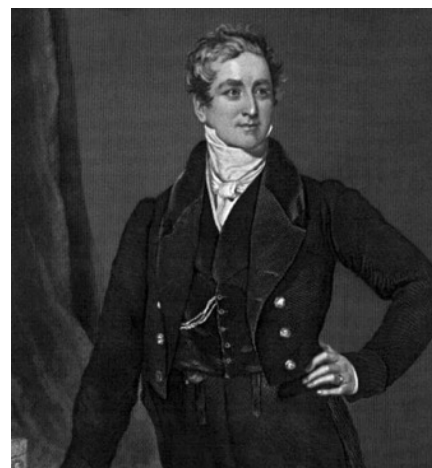


Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Sir Robert Peel

As stated above, it closed in 2004, when the Met first began close stations for which there seemed no pressing need.

The buildings

The site originally comprised the main administrative block fronting Blackstock Road, a cell block to the rear, a drill yard enclosed by the original brick wall and gate piers, and a second, later administrative block.

The cell block was demolished in 2014 and the drill yard redeveloped for houses (2015). The main station is built of high quality red brick with stone dressing and slate tiled roof. The window glazing is original, as are the distinctive cast-iron railings protecting the area basement.

The design is a example of the style employed by John Dixon Butler. Dixon Butler had worked with Richard Norman Shaw at the Metropolitan Police headquarters at New Scotland Yard, and at the Cannon Row police station adjacent, at the turn of the century.

(continues on the next page)

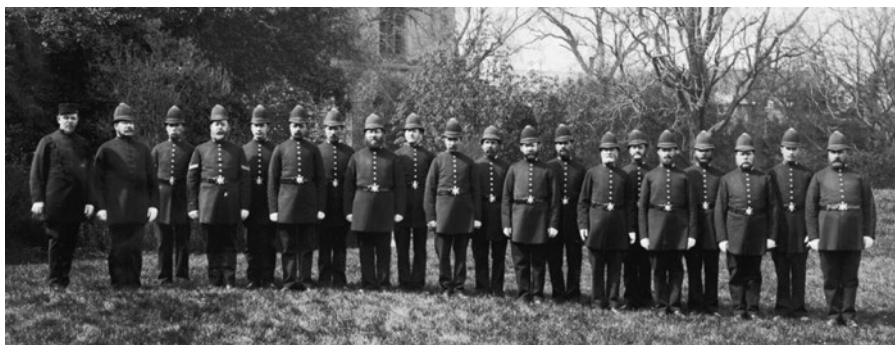


Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Police officers, circa 1900

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Drawing of Sainsbury's plans for the facade of 211 Blackstock Road

(continued from the previous page)

It was from Shaw that he picked up the 'Queen Anne Revival' style characterised by red brick and Portland stone dressings with white painted sash windows, thin leaded glazing bars, and stone window and door surrounds.

His porches were often the most distinctive feature on the main elevation, with swollen brackets flanking the door, such as at King's Cross, Tooley Street and Shoreditch magistrates' courts and stations; Highbury Vale is a more modest example, with its thin tapered piers. The stone porch comprises a triangular pediment with the word POLICE carved into the stone tympanum door.

The original, distinctive cast-iron railings, with the C. R. Mackintosh-inspired standards, survive on the front elevation surrounding the basement area, as does the original lamp standard (though the

blue lantern has been removed).

To the rear of the building can be seen a round-arched feature beneath the fire escape, which may have been a hayloft. Unfortunately the cell block at the rear has been demolished but this does not detract from the special interest of the main police station fronting Blackstock Road.

The building also forms a handsome civic feature in the main road. In combination with the LCC fire station and nearby flats of a slightly earlier date, it exudes a powerful townscape presence which reflects both Edwardian architectural merit and historic interest in the provision of London's public services.

I urge whoever now owns the building to take the greatest care to see that the special qualities of this building are not unnecessarily compromised by insensitive alteration.

Friends of Highbury Opera Theatre launch

By DIANE BURRIDGE


Members of the Highbury Youth Opera had the opportunity to perform in a new production 'Fables' by the Highbury Opera Theatre. Written by Tamsin Collison and Scott Stroman, with the music composed by the latter, the opera is based on Aesop's fables, and has received wide acclaim.

This production is the fifth for Highbury Opera Theatre, but the first to be held outside their base at Union Chapel, and the first to present the Highbury Youth Opera – whose young members acted and sang with great aplomb. Beaming with confidence, stars for the Royal Opera House and the Coliseum were in the making.

Although supported by the Arts Council, and other funders for the 2015/16 season, the Highbury Opera Theatre, which was set up in 2012, aims to run more workshops in local schools and provide free performances for hundreds of children at each new production.

To further these aims, the Highbury Opera Theatre has launched a Friends Scheme for £25 or £50, as they want to have more sustainable funding and local support.

To become a Friend of Highbury Opera Theatre, and for additional information, visit: www.highburyoperatheatre.com/friends-of-hot



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The Housing and Planning Bill 2015-16 explained

By DIANE BURRIDGE

Highbury’s population is set to change rapidly once this Bill is approved. Six main features of it are summarised below:

1. Temporary permitted development rights, introduced in 2013, are proposed to become permanent. These rights allow offices to be converted to new homes without having to apply for planning permission. The demolition of office buildings for residential use, and the change of use of light industrial buildings and launderettes to new homes, will now also be given such rights.



Highbury houses

Those areas that are currently exempt from this legislation have until May 2019 to make an Article 4 direction if they wish to continue to have this exemption. In Islington, only the south of the borough, within the London Central Activities Zone, is affected.

2. Starter Homes: Local authorities will have a legal duty to “guarantee” the provision of “starter homes” to first time buyers under the age of 40, at 80% of the market price on “reasonably

sized new development sites”. An initial price cap of £450,000 for these in Greater London will apply, and there is no restriction on the income of first-time buyers using the scheme.

“Tenants in social housing with incomes over £40,000 in London will have to pay the market rate.”

3. The right-to-buy of Housing Association properties at discounted levels:

The Government has accepted the National Housing Federation’s offer to implement the right to buy on a voluntary basis. In return for dropping their opposition to the proposals, individual associations can opt out.

However, those that sell their homes will be recompensed for the full value of the property sold and the shortfall is to overcome by making councils sell their properties in high-value areas, if they are vacant. (Clause 69)

4. High income social tenants to pay market rents: Tenants in social housing on incomes over £40,000 in London will be required to pay market rate, or near market rate, rents. (Clause 79)

5. ‘Permission in Principle’ for brownfield sites: Development orders from the Communities Secretary would be used to grant

unconditional Permission in Principle directly, or to provide for local authorities to grant it, for development proposals meeting a prescribed description. Planning permission would then be granted by councils through a ‘technical details consent’ only.

6. Private rented market: Local authorities will have additional powers to tackle rogue landlords in the private rented sector, including the ability to apply for banning orders against these. A database of rogue landlords and agents will assist authorities in carrying out their enforcement work. Landlords will benefit from a clear process to



‘Little houses on the Fields’

secure repossession of properties abandoned by tenants.

For further information, and to respond: The House of Commons Library has published a briefing on the Bill for MPs, and you can receive alerts via the website: They Work For You. There is the opportunity to submit evidence to the Commons Public Bill Committee, which the London Forum intends to do. HCA is a member of the London Forum and will be involved in this work.



Aerial view over Highbury

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The local public health response to particulate air pollution

By SARAH POTTER

The extent of air pollution caused by emissions from diesel engines has been of growing concern since this autumn's revelation of software in VW Group cars designed to minimise official test results for pollutants in the US. In the UK, information is already available on the local health effects of what are called ambient levels of fine particulate matter, or PM_{2.5}, to which emissions by diesel engines, among other fossil fuels, contribute significantly.

Public Health England published its estimates of mortality in local authority areas associated with long-term exposure to particulate air pollution in April 2014. These estimates were intended to be "a tool for communication about the importance of good air quality for public health" (Estimates of mortality in local authority areas associated with air pollution), and to encourage local action to reduce air pollution.

According to Public Health England, "current levels of particulate air pollution in the UK, and elsewhere in Europe, have a significant impact on the life expectancy of the population", because mortality in studies of adults exposed to air pollution over the long-term is most strongly linked to levels of fine particulate matter. Deaths associated with respiratory and cardiovascular disease, including lung cancer, are affected by air pollution.

The estimates of mortality in local authority areas use three metrics: first, the attributable fraction or proportion of local deaths attributable to long-term anthropogenic (human made) particulate air pollution; second, an estimate of deaths attributable to long-term exposure to air pollution (in reality air pollution may contribute somewhat to a larger number of deaths); and third, years of life lost to the population, which includes both attributable deaths



and age at death. The three metrics are listed in the table on this page and are for mortality for the local authority areas of Inner London, including Islington (highlighted) published by Public Health England.

The data shows that all the inner London boroughs have, in comparative terms, high levels of particulate air pollution linked to high percentage estimates of the fraction of attributable deaths. The highest are in Westminster, at 14.9 and 8.3% respectively, and lowest in Haringey, at 12.7 and 7.1%, with Islington at 14.1 and 7.9%. In contrast for example, the 2010 figures for Reading are 10.5 and 5.9%, and for Derbyshire Dales, 8.2 and 4.7%.

The Volkswagen scandal has already prompted a number of measures to curb particulate air pollution. A consultation paper was

issued by the UK government in November on restricting diesel cars in major cities, including London. Also, the Mayor of London had previously announced an 'ultra low emission zone' in the congestion charging area from 2020 for cars not meeting emissions standards.

Here in Islington, the Council has brought in a surcharge for diesel vehicles registering for residents' parking permits, the first to do so in London. The European Parliament has recently passed legislation enlarging the powers of local authorities to take action on air pollution

(www.eurolabour.org.uk/eu-measures-to-cut-deadly-air-pollutants-national-emissions-ceiling-directive).

However, it also emerged in November that diesel generation of electricity could shortly be subsidised by millions of pounds of taxation in order to avoid power shortages (*The Economist*, November 7-13, p.31). Above all, to improve air quality, it will be necessary to maintain the capacity in local areas to pursue effective public health policies, which recent cuts have called into question (www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-34912767). The most effective way to help the Council's finances in order to do this is to increase our recycling and bring in much needed local income.

	Pop. age 25+ x1000	Deaths age 25+	Mean PM _{2.5}	% attrib. deaths	Deaths age 25+	'Life years lost'
Camden	165.5	1126	13.8	7.7	87	1157
Hackney & City	151.9	1097	14.0	7.9	86	1397
Hamm. & Fulham	121.9	907	14.1	7.9	72	1070
Haringey	156	1142	12.7	7.1	81	1215
Islington	135.3	1069	14.1	7.9	84	1084
K & C	128	824	14.9	8.3	68	1164
Lambeth	200.8	1454	13.7	7.7	112	1520
Lewisham	181.5	1628	12.7	7.2	116	1331
Newham	147.2	1302	13.5	7.6	98	1322
Southwark	197	1426	14.1	7.9	113	1651
Tower Hamlets	151.8	1047	14.5	8.1	85	1121
Wandsworth	212.3	1587	13.1	7.3	116	1331
Westminster	182.5	1061	14.9	8.3	88	1403



HCA News | Issue 94 | December 2015

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Richard Greening: Mayor of Islington 2015-16

Since 2002 Richard Greening, has been one of three councillors representing Highbury West ward. Now he's also Islington's Mayor. Profile by NICOLA BAIRD, founder of Islington Faces, which specialises in local interviews.



Richard Greening with his wife, Patsy, at home in Highbury

Richard Greening may not play an instrument but music has had a profound impact on his life – from where he was born to his choice for the Mayor's charity. Although he was brought up in Litchfield, Staffordshire, his first years of life were in a tied-cottage in the grounds of Windsor Castle. "My father was an assistant organist in St George's Chapel," explains Richard who may be Islington's Mayor but seems like a modest person despite his grand babyhood.

"We moved when I was two, so I only have fragments of memories from then," admits Richard, 58, in the kitchen of the Riversdale Road house where he lives with his wife,

Patsy Bradbury – who moved here back in 1969. The pair are an unusual power couple as Mayoress Patsy was also Mayor of Islington (from 1972-73).

"I never learnt an instrument as my father thought that music was dodgy, and a high risk career!" says Richard who studied maths and then went into IT before moving to the Local Government Association. "That is partly why I want to help many more Islington children enjoy music-making and the benefits that it brings them, 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

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.

I have chosen Music First as my charity while I'm Mayor. I hope to raise £30,000 for the charity, so come to my fundraising dinner at Round Square Cafe at 132 Seven Sisters Road on 11 February 2016 for a delicious Chinese, £35 per person."

Visit www.musicfirst.org.uk and www.roundsquareuk.com for more details.

"Mayors have no power, but you do get to meet people who have power," says Richard. Welcoming Arsenal FA cup winning team at the town hall steps and hosting the Duchess of Cambridge when she came to visit Chance UK were highlights and he's enjoying the Christmas parties around the borough. However it's clear that Richard is still slightly bemused to find that wherever he goes in Islington "people want to take selfies with me when I'm wearing my Mayoral robes – it's the role of a minor celeb!"

Enjoy more interviews like this by following...
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