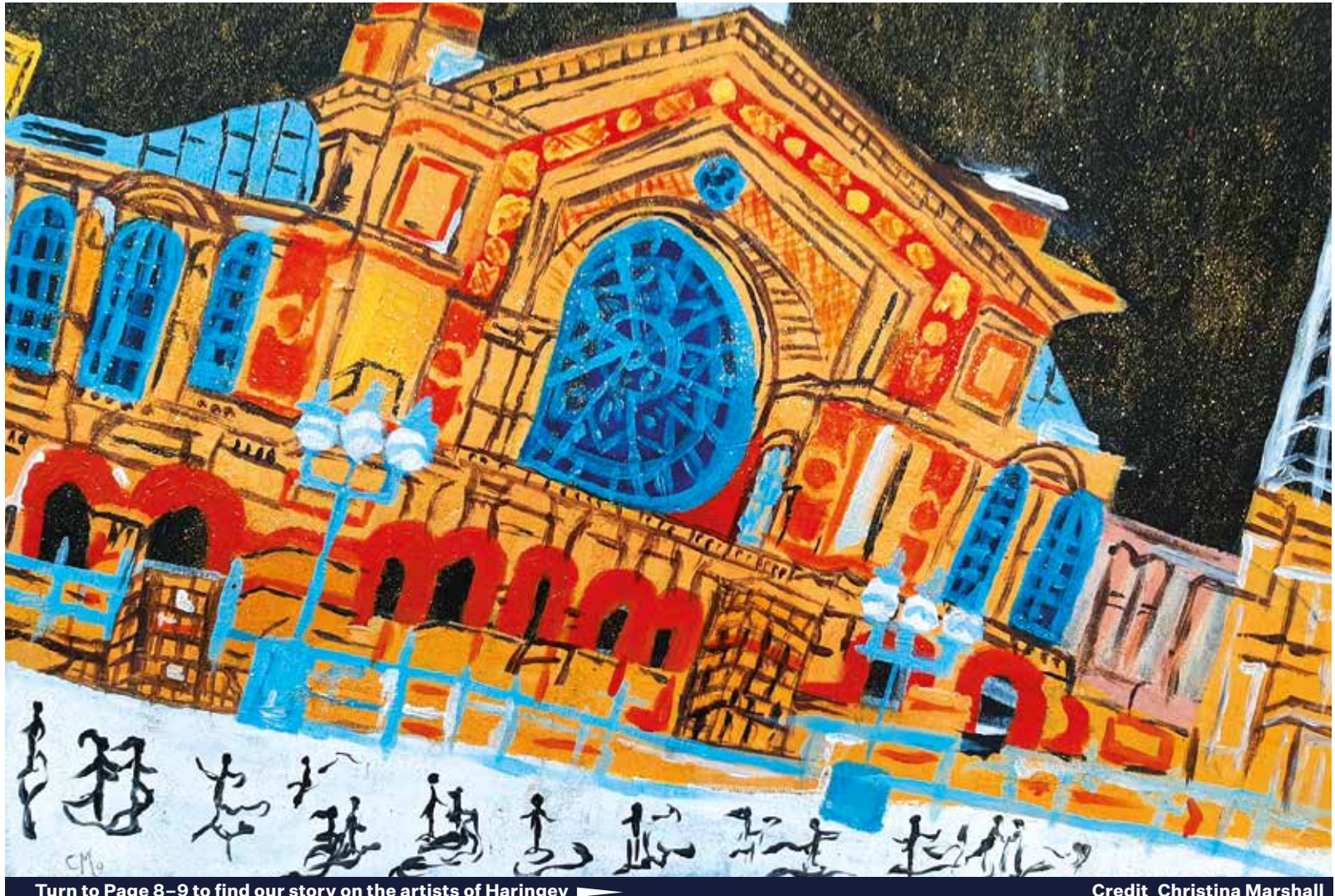


<b>NEWS</b> A father of a disabled teen criticises Haringey Council PAGE 3	<b>COMMUNITY</b> A sea shanty crew in Bounds Green welcome new singers PAGE 7	<b>ARTS</b> Meet the artists of Haringey on a tour round the borough PAGES 8-9	<b>HISTORY</b> HCP celebrates Black History Month in the borough PAGES 10-11
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Turn to Page 8-9 to find our story on the artists of Haringey Credit Christina Marshall

# Mother of disabled children ‘clueless’ after being stuck in unsuitable accommodation for years

*Despite a court order in June, Haringey Council still hasn’t found suitable accommodation and told the mother her ‘expectations are too high’*

BY MIRIAM BALANESCU

A mother of four – including two severely disabled children – has been trapped in unsuitable accommodation, even after a court order on Haringey Council to move her.

Haringey Council was ordered to move Mary (who wished to use a different name to protect her identity) under the Housing Act 1996 by 14th July, but, two months later,

suitable accommodation has still not been found.

Mary says she has been stuck in a series of unsuitable properties over the course of 15 years, including “roach-infested” houses, homes with “rats the size of kittens”, and flats that pose health hazards to her two autistic children, such as unsecured windows.

The current property she is living in was deemed unsuitable by the High Court of Justice at a hearing on 22nd June for the reason that her eldest son was assaulted in August 2022 – and the location she is living in continues to pose a risk to her four children.

Mary told HCP: “My son was attacked by a group of four boys. He ended up with a broken eye socket [...] He has a metal plate in his head. “My son has lost the feeling on

the right side of his face. He’s only 18 years old.

“The whole situation is causing a lot of strain on the family.”

Mary has been living in her current accommodation since 2021, when the council discharged her into the private sector and ended their homeless duties, meaning she was removed from the waitlist for social housing. She had been living in various temporary accommodations (TAs) under homeless duties since 2015.

She says when she was made the offer of accommodation and expressed her concerns around threats made towards her son, the council threatened her with social services.

Mary said: “Everyone was saying, if you don’t accept then you do the review [challenging the council decision] and fail then there’s a risk

of you being homeless.

“The same people who offered me the property are the ones who do the reviews. Haringey, from my experience, is somewhat corrupt. So once they say something, even when you think there is a system or a way to go around getting it rectified, it still gets nowhere.”

Mary says that when her banding review was completed (which could potentially help make her case on the housing register more urgent), they assessed her case as if she were still living at an old property, rather than her current – despite the council themselves being responsible for moving her to both.

“They obviously know I don’t live there,” Mary said. “They’re the ones who gave me this property. I didn’t just pop out of the blue.

Continued on Page-2



## Local news that matters to you

1<sup>st</sup> Oct



Waning  
Gibbous  
94%/0.53

31<sup>st</sup> Oct



Waning  
Gibbous  
91%/0.52

### ABOUT

At *Haringey Community Press* we believe that the borough deserves a newspaper that is written by and for local people, and which celebrates community in all its diversity. We believe that local news brings people together around the issues that matter most to them and ensures everyone can have a voice in local decision-making. Now more than ever we believe that the media should be responsive and accountable to the community it serves.

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HCP editor Miriam Balanescu (left) at Markfield Road Festival last month, with speakers Penny Woods (centre) and Jibril Rose (right). For your chance to have your pictures featured in our next issue, use the hashtag #haringey and tag us @haringeycp on social media **Credit** Stephen Furner

## EDITOR'S LETTER

Hello and welcome to issue 24 of *Haringey Community Press*. Next month will mark two years since *HCP* was first printed – an incredible achievement in an increasingly difficult landscape for local, independent media outlets – and we would love to hear from you about your experiences of the paper and the role it plays in the community for publication in our next issue – whether you once joined us at an event, remember reading a particular article, or have only started reading the paper recently. And keep your eyes peeled for some special birthday celebrations!

This month, we hear from a mother of four, including two autistic children who has been stuck in unsuitable accommodation for years – and remains so, despite a court order on Haringey Council to move her elsewhere. Also in this issue, a father has faced repeated delays to the council making housing adaptations needed to help him look after his disabled son, and a housing repairs backlog plagues the council. Housing is still very much under scrutiny in Haringey, following the Housing Ombudsman's report earlier this year which found failings in Haringey's handling of damp and mould complaints.

Also this month, we delve into Black history in Haringey, finding out about the first Caribbean-run credit union in Hornsey and one of the first Black British footballers for Tottenham Hotspur.

The only way we're able to continue writing and printing these stories is through the help of our supporters and advertisers. Your support is crucial to keeping *HCP* going. If you're able to, please consider making a donation through our website ([haringeycommunitypress.co.uk/support-us](https://haringeycommunitypress.co.uk/support-us)). Enjoy and see you next month!

**Miriam Balanescu**

#### ► Continued from Page-1

"They did not consider the risk of violence, nothing of the sort, not my circumstances at present, nothing like that.

"And even up till now, at present, I'm yet to get a response or an actual review."

In November 2022 following the attack on her son, the council finally reaccepted Mary's main housing duty – but has still failed to move her.

Before hiring a solicitor and taking her case to court, Mary says she had already written to the ward councillor to explain her situation and "pretty much everyone – and I got nowhere". Haringey Housing Action Group (HHAG) also wrote letters on her behalf, which they say were ignored.

Mary said that now "they are not making properties available for me, so I'm just stuck."

Further, the council has made two property offers, but one has been the accommodation in which she currently resides – just reclassified: "They offered me the private property back as a temporary accommodation.

"They were trying to argue the fact that there was no violent involvement."

The other property is in Bromley. Mary said: "I have kids with special needs that require an outdoor secure area. It's obviously an hour and a half journey to my son's school, my son goes to special needs and is getting help and support in the borough. He goes to school by specialist school transport."

In a phone call last month with a reviewing officer, Mary was told that her "expectations are too high".

"He was asking: 'Why did I

*"I've been saying it for years – I feel like I'm being profiled. I've done everything by the books"*

come to Haringey? [...] Why don't I go out of London?"

Mary added: "Why am I being treated like this?"

"I've been saying it for years – I feel like I'm being profiled. I've done everything by the books."

Mary says she has been left "clueless" after a decade of the council failing to move her to suitable accommodation.

Mary said: "Haringey put me in a roach-infested house,

they did not come and look at me until one year [and] four months. I said to them, there are roaches in the house and there's rat traps in the house."

At another property she resided in for five and a half years, Mary says the council asked to spread roach poison throughout the house: "I had special needs kids picking at things, eating everything.

"It's really, really draining.

"It's my home, I can't run away from it."

Sarah Williams, cabinet

member for housing

services, private renters

and planning, said:

"We fully understand

and appreciate the concerns

expressed by the resident

and regret the delay in the family

being rehoused. We received

more than 4,000 homelessness

requests last year,

one of the highest in London,

yet there is a chronic shortage of family-sized

accommodation available, in Haringey and across the capital.

The council has made an offer of a three-bedroom

flat in Bromley, which will remain available to the family.

The family has refused this accommodation and asked the council to review its suitability, which it is currently undertaking."



# Father of disabled Tottenham teen slams council over delay to home adaptations

Brian Leveson says lifting 18-year-old Zack in and out of the bath is “physically exhausting”

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

The father of a disabled young man says he has been left physically and emotionally exhausted by repeated delays in fitting housing adaptations to help him care for his son. Brian Leveson, who lives in Lawrence Road, Tottenham, has been waiting for hoists to help lift his son Zack in and out of the bath since 2015, but he says the family are still being frustrated by delays caused by Haringey Council. Zack, now aged 18, is quadriplegic and non-verbal, and has needed round-the-clock care since he was born. He has cerebral palsy and epilepsy. Despite a ruling by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman against the council telling it to pay £2,000 in compensation for delays in December 2021, Brian says works to fit the bathroom hoists and other adaptations are still being held up. He told the Local Democracy Reporting Service:

“It is physically exhausting. We are lifting an 18-year-old man, as he is now, in and out of the bath. “The constant follow-ups and chasing is not our responsibility. They [the council] should be maintaining records and having systems in place [...] it is emotionally exhausting and, physically, it is not a safe practice.”



not hear anything from the council”. When the family followed up with the council, Brian said it eventually replied on 24th August saying it wanted to discuss their concerns and “try to formulate a plan to progress your bathroom adaptations”. Having heard nothing from the council, the family ordered the mesh cot sides and fitted them in August. They have not heard whether the council will reimburse them for the adaptation. A spokesperson for the council said it had been “working hard with the family to arrange and co-ordinate the adaptations for the young adult for a number of years”. They added that the family “requested that the adaptations were put on hold during discussions with the housing association, and we have since written to them to request what their wishes are moving forward”. However, the family claims this statement relates to a communication from before the agreements were put in place in April. They say the recent delays are the fault of the council and the poor handover of the case from one occupational therapist to another. The council spokesperson added: “Unfortunately, changes in personnel in social care do happen, and we work tirelessly to ensure recruitment and retention is a priority. “A senior manager is in contact with the family, and we are working together to get this issue resolved.”

◀  
Brian taking Zack to the bathroom

# Council blames staff recruitment challenges for housing repairs backlog

Other boroughs said to be paying higher salaries for maintenance workers as Haringey struggles to fix leaky housing stock

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Efforts to boost housing repairs in Haringey are being set back by other boroughs “poaching” staff, according to council bosses. A “huge demand” for repairs following the Covid-19 pandemic plus less attractive pay schemes compared with other local authorities mean the borough is struggling to retain staff. In April this year, the council announced it would spend nearly £5million fixing “major and systematic failings” in its housing service. Its repairs performance was found to require “significant levels of improvement”. It came after the Regulator of Social Housing found the council had failed to complete thousands of overdue works and that nearly 5,000 homes did not meet minimum social housing standards. The council was also investigated by the Housing

Ombudsman over its handling of damp and mould complaints, which identified a series of failings in a report published in July. An update on the council’s housing improvement plan – which includes a £2.8m investment in the repairs service – was presented to a meeting of the housing, planning and development scrutiny panel last month. Jahedur Rahman, the council’s operational director of housing services and building safety, told the meeting that local authorities were finding the recruitment of trade operatives “more challenging”. He added: “We have got neighbouring boroughs offering a higher salary and poaching our staff, so we need to make sure, when we do fully complete the repairs recruitment plan, there is a pathway that makes it attractive for [our staff] to stay within Haringey.” Under questioning from the committee, Jahedur said the council needed to bring in apprentices as

more than half of the staff in the repairs service are over the age of 55. He added that landlords across the country were “competing for a small pool of skilled staff”. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Jahedur explained, landlords could not enter properties to carry out repairs, meaning there was a “sudden influx” of works that needed to be done after the lockdown was lifted. The increased focus on damp and mould complaints across the sector following the death of Awaab Ishak in 2020 had also contributed to the “huge demand” for repairs. Councils were going out to market for staff because they did not have the internal capacity, and salaries were being offered at “different levels”. Jahedur said that, according to his understanding, Haringey was “off the London weighting” – a pay supplement designed to cover the higher cost of living in the capital – while neighbouring boroughs had “different pay models and structures in place different to Haringey”. Panel chair Alexandra Worrell asked: “So we don’t offer the London weighting?” Jahedur replied: “On the red book scheme, yes.” The red book covers the pay and conditions of local authority craftworkers who are primarily involved in housing maintenance work, while the green book is a separate scheme covering the pay and conditions of local authority employees. Later on in the meeting, Sarah Williams, cabinet member for housing services, private renters and planning, offered some clarification. She said: “Different authorities employ staff differently, rather than them being on different pay scales. “In some authorities, librarians will be on red book and repairs operatives will be on green book. It is a historic situation that has developed differently in different authorities, but all of those pay grades and terms and conditions are negotiated nationally.”

# Haringey housing boss remains 'quite confident' of meeting 3,000 new homes target

**C**ouncil bosses insist their plan to build 3,000 homes remains on track despite a "significant number" of projects being stalled by spiralling costs.

The town hall's housing chief is "quite confident" of meeting the target even though higher construction and borrowing costs have rendered multiple schemes in the early stages of design financially unviable.

Haringey Council pledged to build 3,000 homes for council rent by 2031 after launching a major construction drive in 2018.

Inflation in the construction sector has since risen sharply, however, and recent interest rate hikes have pushed up the cost of borrowing needed to fund the schemes. Council reports say a "significant number" of projects in the housing delivery programme that are not already in contract have been paused or delayed because they are not financially viable.

Despite the financial squeeze, the council says that on the "current trajectory" it will meet its target, with work "already completed or begun on 2,027 homes as of August 2023". The reports add that 199 homes have already been finished and are occupied by new tenants and their families.

Speaking during a meeting of the council's housing, planning and development scrutiny panel last month,

The council pledged to build 3,000 homes for council rent by 2031 but has faced a number of challenges

BY SIMON ALLIN, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER



New homes under construction at Tottenham Hale

cabinet member for housebuilding Ruth Gordon said: "We feel quite confident that we can deliver the 3,000 homes. We have got more sites that are available than just for 3,000. It obviously does depend on the economic climate."

Last year, the council switched 870 homes in its housebuilding programme from lower-cost for-

mula rents to higher London Affordable Rent levels to ensure its plans remained affordable.

Council reports reveal that some of its construction contracts have been terminated after contractors went bankrupt, meaning new firms had to be appointed.

After panel members raised concerns over financial viability, Robbie Erbmman, the council's

assistant director for housing, said that even with the "fairly unusual" recent economic conditions "we are still pretty confident that the housing delivery is affordable".

He added: "We are not making any plans to mothball any of our schemes on site. The HRA [housing revenue account] business plan can support them."

Robbie said construction costs had recently started to come down, adding that conditions were "tough" but the housing programme was "just about viable".

According to the reports, construction of 2,027 council homes has so far begun across 41 sites. Panel chair Alexandra Worrell asked if the definition of starts on site could encourage "tokenistic" starts involving putting in foundations "to say that we have X-number of homes".

Robbie said some projects needed to begin by a certain date "to satisfy funding conditions". He denied any starts were tokenistic but acknowledged that some had "progressed more rapidly through the stages of construction than others".

Cllr Gordon said she was "very proud" of the housebuilding programme, claiming the council was "leading the way in London".

However, she acknowledged that there are 12,500 households on the borough's housing waiting list, so that by building 3,000 homes "we are still only nibbling away at that".

## Tottenham programme for young DJs to help them 'make a living off of their passion'

**A** new programme for young adults to learn fundamental DJing skills will launch in Tottenham this autumn.

From mid-October, Mission London, a streaming studio in Tottenham, will be providing DJ training as part of its 'discovery' programme open to young adults aged 18-30 who are not in further education or training and live in Haringey. The programme will provide free access sessions to 35 participants who will learn the fundamental skills for DJs including practising in the studio using industry-standard DJ equipment, software theory, access to online material, and mentoring.

Participants will also learn how to create promotional mixes and assets to prepare them for meetings with promoters and venues, while also being supported to perform in front of an online audience by recording and streaming from the Mission London platform. Past participants on a similar programme from last year have since been able to secure paid gigs and work.

A consultation by Mission London found that 87% of young creatives cannot access industry-standard equipment

BY OLIVIA OPARA

The programme aims to nurture local talent and encourage artists to give back to the community whilst being supported to achieve their goals, with a focus on supporting underrepresented artists. It also aims to establish a grassroots hub that will be a dedicated music space – identifying and offering

resources to artists.

According to parliamentary data, as of August 2023 there are 8,445 people in Tottenham claiming unemployment-related benefits, including 1,055 young people – a 76% increase from March 2020.

Consultation conducted by Mission London also found

*"We are aware of the limitations for young people in Haringey and North London [...] which is why we are offering this programme for free"*

that 87% of young creatives cannot access industry-standard equipment. As a result, its discovery programme aims to establish a grassroots hub that identifies and offers resources to talented individuals who will benefit from the provision of a dedicated music space that serves their artistic needs and ambitions.

A spokesperson from Mission London said: "To get young people into something they enjoy doing is amazing and DJ courses are costly, so this programme is to enable young people to be able to make a living off of their passion. We are also aware of the limitations for young people in Haringey and North London who are interested in DJing but have not been able to get started in the industry due to lack of access to training or equipment which is why we are offering this programme for free."

The deadline to apply for the programme is Thursday, 12th October.

**To find out more:**  
Visit [missionlondon.net/discovery-programme](https://missionlondon.net/discovery-programme)



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## Co-founder of Highgate arts centre to be recognised with pink plaque

Nicky Gavron helped found Jacksons Lane in 1975 and campaigned to save it from demolition

BY MIRIAM BALANESCU

A co-founder of a Highgate arts centre is set to be recognised with a 'pink plaque' which celebrates remarkable women from Highgate.

Nicky Gavron, the first deputy mayor of London, will have the plaque unveiled at the arts centre she helped found, Jacksons Lane, as part of the Highgate Pink Plaques Project.

People who have contributed to Nicky's career and Jacksons Lane will gather to celebrate the unveiling on Wednesday, 4th October.

Jacksons Lane opened in 1975 in the former Highgate Wesleyan Methodist Church (which opened in 1905). Community work and programmes were held at the church throughout the 1960s, but, by the 1970s, the church was closed.

Nicky was among a group of local residents who envisioned the space as a community and creative hub. Together with Melian Mansfield, a former chair of the board, and Jan Brooker, Nicky set up the arts centre, which survives today.

Soon after the opening of Jacksons Lane, however, plans were made to widen Archway Road – which would have resulted in the building's demolition. Nicky campaigned against this decision and the building has since been given a Grade 2 listing.

Nicky has also built a career in

urban policy and planning, and is the current 'new Londoner of the year' as part of the New London Architecture Forum 2022. She also established the Greater London Authority's (GLA) Children and Young People's Unit, the London Climate Change Agency, and the global network C40: Large Cities Climate Leadership Group.

Jacksons Lane executive director Hannah Cox said: "Nicky has been intrinsic to making Jacksons Lane what we are today, from developing the building into a community arts centre as one of our co-founders, to campaigning against the widening of the Archway Road which would have seen us demolished. We are so delighted that Nicky's vital work will be now honoured with a pink plaque at Jacksons Lane, where it all began!"

Highgate's Pink Plaques Project was started in 2019 as part of Highgate Festival, which invited residents to suggest names of remarkable Highgate women to be recognised with a pink plaque – attempting to redress a gendered imbalance of untold history. However, the scheme prompted some controversy for reinforcing gendered stereotypes around the colour pink, with critics including journalist Caroline Criado Perez and the Women's Equality Party.

Those already recognised by the scheme include the 17th Century philanthropist Lady Elizabeth Gould and chair of the Highgate Society Isla Merry.



Barbara Castle  
1910-2002  
Highgate Pink  
Plaque Project  
Credit  
Wikicommons

NEWS

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# Lord over

## Joan Curtis at Lordship Hub Co-operative looks back on ten years

Credit  
Lordship Hub



**H**oused in a wood-framed, straw bale, eco-building, Lordship Hub is run as a co-operative by local residents, paid workers, volunteers and co-op members. We always say we want it to be a “community building in every sense”.

The co-operative was set up by park users after the Friends of Lordship Rec decided to take on the running of the building, ensuring that it would be run by and for the benefit of the local community.

The friends group itself started in 2001 with the aim of returning the park to the popular green space it had been before government cuts had reduced it to a neglected and unused green space. This project has been a massive people-led success.

A Heritage Lottery Fund bid, obtained through a close partnership between Haringey Council, the friends and other local

community groups in 2011 and 2012, saw a complete refurbishment of the park which included, among many other natural and recreation features, Lordship Hub, providing the park with much-desired cafe and toilet facilities.

In the early days, Lordship Hub was run completely by volunteers and it was a while before we had the confidence and resources to take on paid staff to work with the volunteers. Throughout this time, a voluntary co-operative board of local residents have met to develop our community ethos and a strategy going forward. We do not receive direct funding from the council and depend on our trading income, grants, and donations.

The building has a friendly, community cafe and two bright rooms which house a wide variety of classes for adults and children, and offer space for private parties, community events, and meetings. Over the

last couple of years we have developed a special ‘solidarity day’ on Thursdays and run a food hub with a free hot food offer (in collaboration with OK Foundation), a free seniors’ coffee morning, and have recently welcomed a refugee support organisation.

We have a large number of volunteers in all areas of our organisation and offer opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to support the running of the building, learning new skills in our cafe, enjoying meeting and working with other local people or building their confidence and feeling part of something.

Over the years we have hosted many interesting and enjoyable events from topical film shows and discussions to gardening and food-growing talks, a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of local residents, Luke Howard (‘namer of clouds’), the 75th Anniversary of Windrush, art fairs, poetry and musical performances, children’s creative workshops, and an apple day to name but a few. We also offer free space to local artists to exhibit their work in our cafe. Recently, we added a weather station to monitor conditions and engage people in understanding weather and climate.

The possibilities are endless and our future success depends on community engagement in our Lordship Hub project, so we would love to welcome new members to our co-operative and look forward to the next ten years of enhancing the life of our community.

To find out more visit: [lordshiphub.org.uk](http://lordshiphub.org.uk)



## Notes on nature

*Bethany Anderson lifts the lid on an awe-inspiring eco-initiative in Finsbury Park*

**E**dible Landscapes is a community garden and education project that has been inside Finsbury Park for over ten years.

We specialise in forest gardening, a food growing system that mimics natural ecosystems, involving a variety of perennial plants and trees. We have drop-in volunteer sessions twice a week to help Londoners learn to grow their own food, and to propagate plants that we give away to local projects and sell to the local community.

We run a variety of community workshops on related subjects; host local schools for outdoor education; run after-school nature clubs and a parent and toddler drop in; help adults with special educational needs gain experience in gardening; and partner with Salter’s Institute on their wild city project teaching biodiversity and building new forest gardens in schools.

The seven-layer, pesticide-free system of fruit and nut trees, perennial crops, fruit bushes, climbers, medicinal and dye plants means small spaces can be designed for maximum yields.

In a time where we have high levels of declining biodiversity, obesity, deprivation, mental ill health and social isolation, a cost-of-living and climate crisis and limited protection and investment in our green spaces, community forest gardens have never been more important.

To find out more, visit: [ediblelandscapeslondon.org.uk](http://ediblelandscapeslondon.org.uk)



Volunteers working at Edible Landscapes

# Anchors away

## Ailsa Mainwaring at New River Shanty Crew sings her praises of this community group

**I**f you’re walking through Bowes Park on a Thursday afternoon, you might wonder whether you’re actually in a Cornish seaside town. But no, what you can hear is a shanty singing group making the rafters ring in Shaftesbury Hall.

The New River Shanty Crew is open to everyone who wants to boost their spirits with some community singing, and takes its name from the river running through Bowes Park. The group makes a hearty sound, but it’s not a choir – it’s a bunch of people getting together to sing some fantastic songs in a cheerful, relaxed atmosphere. People living with dementia and their companions are particularly welcome.

Sea shanties have recently become popular again, and the great thing is that they are designed for joining in. Their catchy



Ailsa (right) and a fellow shanty singer

choruses and rhythmic drive mean you can quickly become confident. Everyone is welcome to try out harmonies, sing a solo, or even teach a new song. The group also sings other folk and traditional songs.

Shaftesbury Hall sits just next to Bowes Park Station. The hall is bright and airy with accessible WCs and brilliant facilities.

Fittingly enough, just over the footbridge from Shaftesbury Hall, you’ll find Mum’s Bistro, home to Bowes Park Folk Club. The two groups have a strong link, and the shanty crew are looking forward to singing there soon!

If you want to come for a free trial session, there’s no need to book ahead, just turn up!

To find out more:  
Email [NewRiverShantyCrew@gmail.com](mailto:NewRiverShantyCrew@gmail.com)

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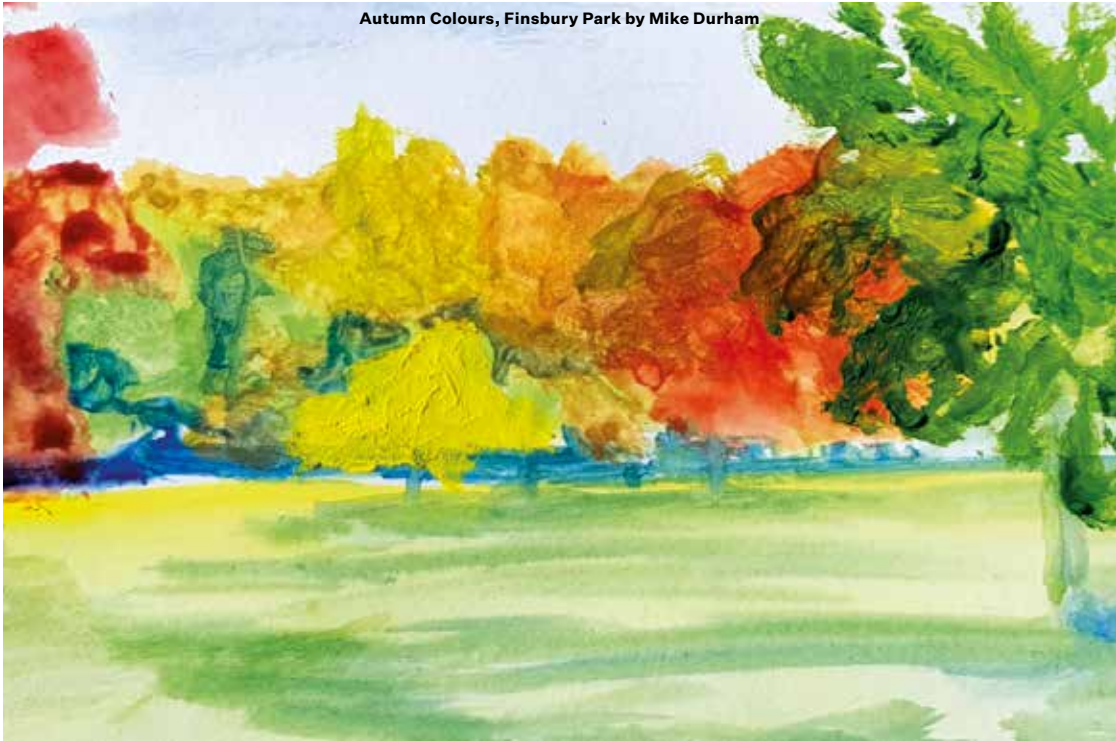


▲ Summer by Phoebe Swan

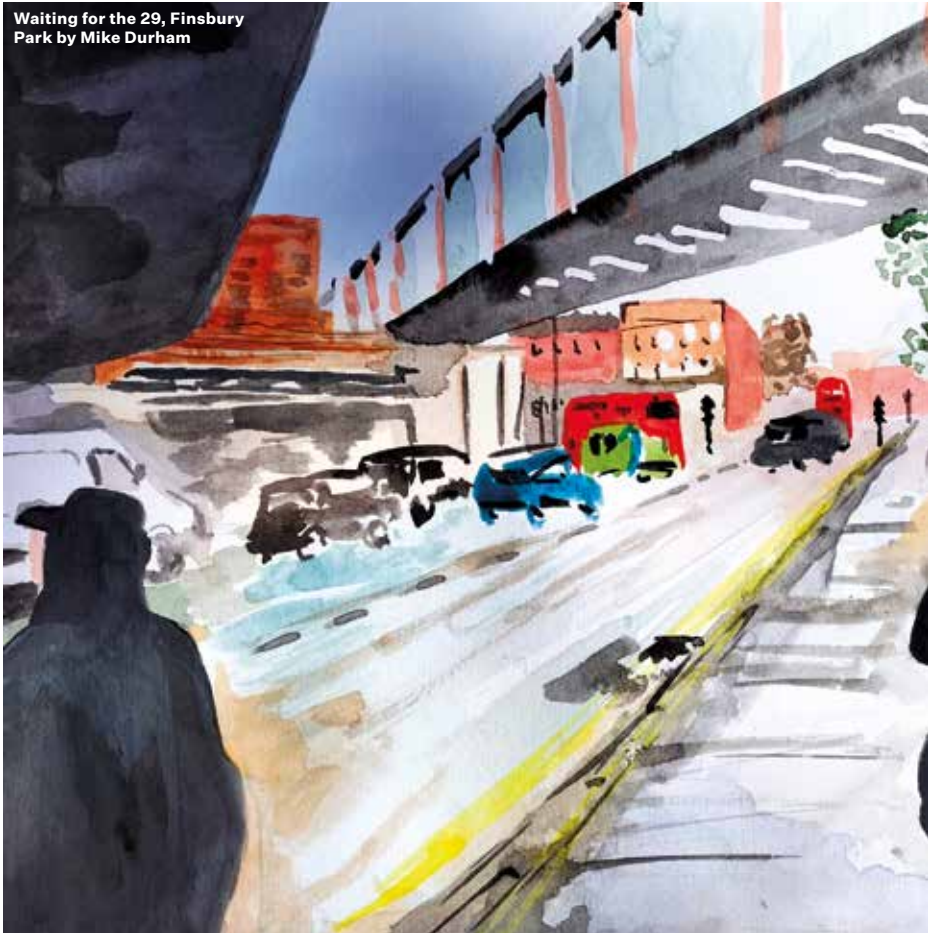


▲ Waiting for the 29, Finsbury Park by Mike Durham

# Artists of Haringe



Autumn Colours, Finsbury Park by Mike Durham



Waiting for the 29, Finsbury Park by Mike Durham

## Five artists take us on a whirlwind tour around the borough

### EMMIE JOANNA

**How did you first get into creating art?**  
I feel like I see things more clearly when I draw them, and I've loved to observe and draw since childhood. I studied printed textiles but after graduating took a long hiatus from creativity for financial and personal reasons. Then, during the lockdowns in 2020, I found the space and time to return to drawing.

Sharing my drawings on Instagram then helped me connect with others in the local area and led to opportunities to exhibit and take part in local events such as the North London Makers Market and Citizen's Art. The first connection I made was when I drew With Milk, a lovely coffee shop

on Philip Lane. The sisters who own the shop responded with such delight that I gave them the drawing, and they gave me the confidence to keep drawing and sharing my work.

### What do you want to express about these locations in your art?

Often, the beauty of the familiar is unrecognised until you leave and come back. I want to capture something of that feeling, of realising a place you know well is beautiful.

I want to show something of the truth and the beauty in the cracks and the imperfections that build up over time. The posters and stickers and drainpipes and dirt that are part of life. There are

many details to the spaces around us that go unnoticed, that I think are worth seeing.

I also want to capture these spaces in time, with love. High streets change so quickly and I've seen a huge amount of change in just the last ten years. Definitely some of the shops I have drawn have already closed down and changed, and more change will come.

### What are the art communities like there?

The Lordship Hub Cafe regularly exhibits local artists' work, as does our community-owned pub The Antwerp Arms. I was lucky enough to exhibit in both spaces last year which were fantastic opportunities.

### PHOEBE SWAN

**Why are local areas in Haringey a source of inspiration to you?**

When I was doing GCSE art at school I set a project called 'a sense of place'. For my location I chose to explore what's at the bottom of Alexandra Palace Park and the railway. In the last ten years, I've been inspired by the local area and has taken inspiration from around the area on Ferry Lane Estate, next to the railway. I was trying to work out what makes me to these kinds of places I love. I did a permaculture gardening course which has an 'effect' which suggests there is a sense of life in the region where





Winter by Phoebe Swan

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adjacent ecosystems overlap. At the edge of two overlapping ecosystems, you can find species from both, plus unique species that are specially adapted to the conditions of the transition zone between the two edges.

### What do you want to express about these locations in your art?

For me, the landscape of the Lea Valley within East London feels like the edge of the city (even though it isn't technically anywhere near the edge). The environment is made up of the intensely manmade and the completely wild. Some of the wilderness is there because of, not in spite of its industrial heritage, for example it's because of the electricity pylons that the land has never been built on. I'm fascinated by capturing the uniqueness of the things that are only present in that edge zone, for example the houseboats or the Victorian pump-houses. I want to capture the preciousness of this natural habitat within a densely urban environment, particularly in our time of climate crisis and eco-anxiety and explore how humans and nature can co-exist and thrive together.

“  
The trick is to see  
a familiar place  
with new eyes  
”

### How did you find the right materials with which to represent these places?

Shortly after I moved to Ferry Lane, I went back to art school to do a masters. Our first task was to pick a theme and draw as much as possible on it for three months. I chose people and nature and drew in the Walthamstow Wetlands, the East Hale Allotments and all up and down the River Lea and Tottenham Marshes. I then got stuck into the print room and converted a lot of these drawings to prints. Lino print seemed the best medium for my work. The texture achieved by printing from a lino or woodblock seemed suited to the textures found in the water, reeds, the patina of weathered barges and rusty metal. It's also possible to get sharp crisp lines suitable for representing pylons and tower blocks. I'm currently working on a lovely commission called 'Marshland Oasis' using these drawings and prints for the new NHS Community Diagnostic Centre in The Mall in Wood Green.

### HILARY MASETTI

#### Why are local areas in Haringey a source of inspiration to you?

I am absolutely spoilt for choice with buildings I'm surrounded by in all the pockets of Haringey. From red brick Edwardian houses to Art Deco cinemas – I don't think there'll be enough time in my lifetime to draw all the buildings I love around here!

### What do you want to express about these locations in your art?

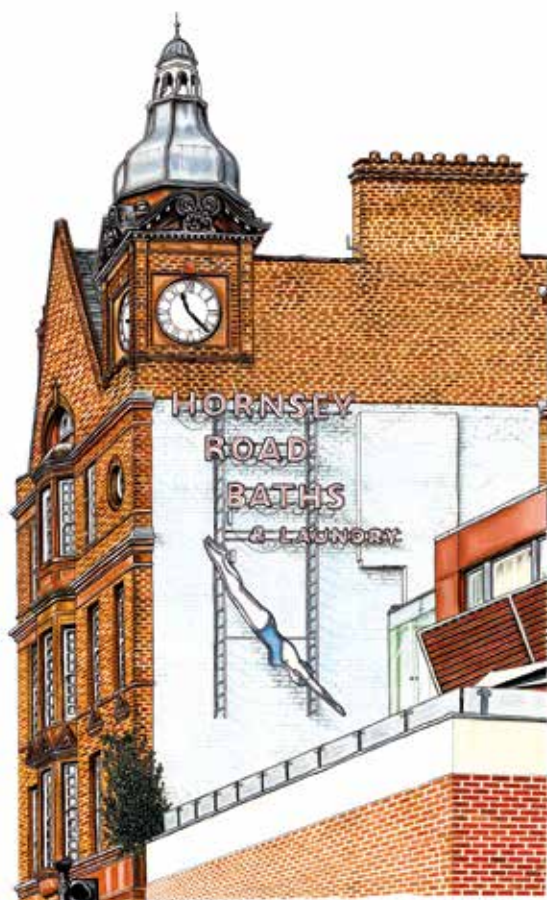
I like to incorporate all the small architectural features of each building I draw which can take some time but I love the end result. The small details in buildings are often overlooked when people are rushing by so it's nice to think they are captured in a drawing which can be enjoyed in people's homes.



▲ Crouch End Clock Tower by Christina Marshall



▲ Chick King by Emmie Joanna



▲ Hilary Sketches, Hornsey Road Baths and Laundry

### What are the art communities like there?

I find the art communities in Haringey incredibly supportive. I am part of a fabulous local collective called the Muswell Hill Creatives and they have been a huge support to me and really helped my business take off. I meet a lot of people through the fairs and markets I attend and I love being part of the wider art community.

### CHRISTINA MARSHALL

#### Why are local areas in Haringey a source of inspiration to you?

I love how each area of Haringey is different and interesting. I always enjoy discovering a new structure in Haringey and seeing how it has developed, for instance, the High Cross Pub and how that used to be a public toilet and now is an amazing pub.

### How did you find the right materials with which to represent these places?

I find my materials by looking at the way each of the buildings is structured, looking at the variations of colours within each of them. What I do after that is use both acrylic paints, glitter paint and a canvas board, because those are the main types of materials I like to use. Then I use the power of my art magic to create the new piece. I always have fun when creating a new idea.

### What are the art communities like there?

The art communities here in Haringey are amazing. Made By Tottenham is absolutely amazing. What I like about them is they always have interesting events going on, such as the North London Lates. I was part of the 150th Alexandra Palace Party back in May which I enjoyed because I had a stall there supported by the Made By Tottenham team and Collage Arts. They are also a great art community, because they are also very supportive of new creatives, providing workshops, and it's great for networking. As I have epilepsy, both were very supportive of my needs.

### MIKE DURHAM

#### How did you first get into creating art?

I was always good at art, but wasn't allowed to continue it at school after 14. I came back to painting when I retired 50 years later!

### Why are local areas in Haringey a source of inspiration to you?

I like the big variety of subjects – streets, buildings, parks and people – right on my doorstep. The trick is to see a familiar place with new eyes, it's very satisfying.

### What do you want to express about these locations in your art?

I paint what I see, and I like to express the colour and vitality that is always there even in the meanest back street.



Emmie Joanna



Phoebe Swan



Hilary Masetti



Christina Marshall



Mike Durham

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# Black History Month in Haringey

From the 16th Century to the modern day, Olivia Opara investigates Haringey's Black history

## MARTHA OSAMOR, BARONESS OSAMOR 1940–Present



Credit: Wikimedia

Martha Osamor is a community activist and civil rights campaigner who was the first Nigerian baroness of the House of Lords after she was given the title of Baroness Osamor of Tottenham in 2018. In the late 1970s, Martha co-founded the United Black Women's Action Group, which later became part of the Organisation of Women of Asian and African Descent (OWAAD), a national Black women's movement. She served as a Labour councillor representing the Bruce Grove ward from 1986 to 1990 and later became the deputy leader of Haringey Council and a founding member of the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign. Martha came to the UK in 1963 and lived with her husband in Tottenham.

4

## SKEPTA 1982–Present



Credit: NRK P3

Joseph Olaitan Adenuga Jr, more commonly known as Skepta, is a British-Nigerian rapper, grime MC and producer from Tottenham. Skepta began his career DJing as part of Tottenham grime collective Meridian Crew. He then joined grime crew Roll Deep in 2005, when his focus shifted to MCing, before founding his own grime collective and record label, Boy Better Know with his brother Jme that same year. He released his debut album *Greatest Hits* independently in 2007. His fourth album *Konnichiwa* won the Mercury Prize in 2016.

5



## WALTER TULL 1888–1918

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Credit: Google Street View

## THE HORNSEY COOPERATIVE CREDIT UNION 1964 – 2013

On 7th A... Caribbean... unions in th... to discrim... credit syst... higher inte... deposits, on... the Black c... ers were m... Park Bapt... joined the... year. The c... Drylands... merged w... Union in 2...

## Hale Time holiday programme at The Engine Room



The Engine Room invites all young people aged 12 to 18 years old to join us for **Hale Time**. This is our new school holiday programme starting in October half term with a Black History Month themed week packed with different activities. The programme will include street dance with **DefineMe**, art and craft with **Niart Fr3edom**, drama with **Legal Aliens** and games with **BKSports** and youth club sessions planned as part of the programme. To register call **0208 808 5490** or email Hale Time to [info@engineroom.org.uk](mailto:info@engineroom.org.uk)

**HOMECOOKED**

**engineroom**  
where community meets



April 1964, ten British- set up one of the first credit he country. It was a response ination within the banks' ems, which either charged erest rates, asked for larger r refused to help those from community. The ten found- members of the local Ferme ist Church and 200 people credit union within its first credit union was located on Road in Hornsey and later ith London Capital Credit 013.

1

## UNCLE JOHN'S BAKERY

1995–Present



Credit Uncle John's Bakery

The sweet homemade bread at Uncle John's Bakery is a staple within the Afro-Caribbean community – and has been since founder John Mensah and his wife Emelia Mensah opened their first bakery on West Green Road in 1995. John and Emelia relocated to the UK from Ghana in 1982 and first started baking bread as a side project after missing the loaves that his mother Nana Mary used to make from a family recipe passed down through the generations. The project then grew into a business: Emelia's mother Mary Fofia Arthur would help the two bake bread at night and also taught them how to bake cakes, pies, pastries, and donuts. In 2019, Morrisons started to sell four of the bakery's products: the original 'sweet bread', sponge cake, bofrot and savoury chin chin.

2

## DR NEVILLE ROY CLARE

1946–2015

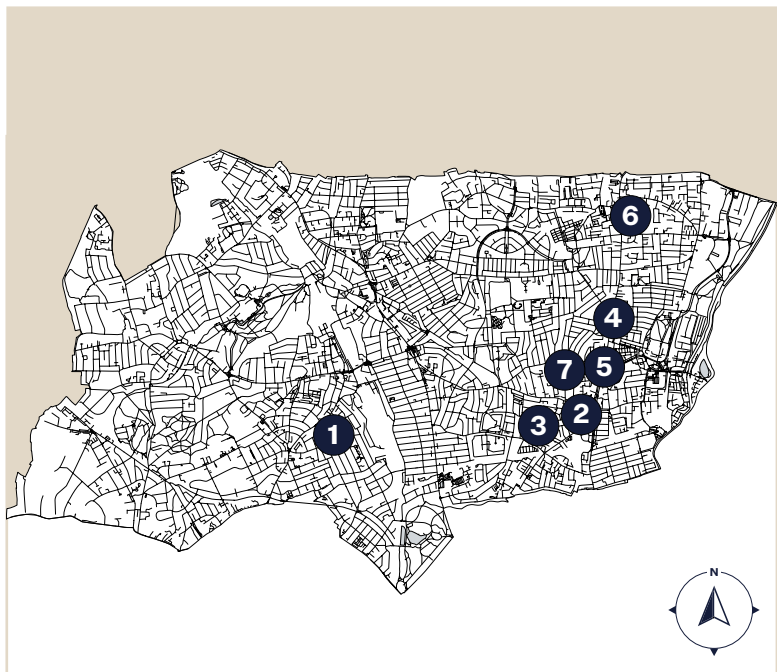


Dr Neville Roy Clare was a pioneering sickle cell advocate who was dedicated to raising awareness of the condition and its impact in the UK. In 1976, Clare, who had sickle cell anaemia himself, founded the Organisation for Sickle Cell Anaemia Research (OSCAR) in Wood Green – one of the first ever sickle cell organisations in the country. Clare later co-founded the George Marsh Centre, the country's first dedicated sickle cell centre, in St Ann's, Tottenham alongside haematologist consultant Dr George Marsh.

3

aniel John Tull was one of professional Black footballers d for England and Totten- spur. He joined the club ter signing for the Football A) First Division and playing ateur football club Clapton. ver 1914, Walter enlisted in n army during World War ng in the first football bat- the Middlesex Regiment. ne the first British-born er in the army and would ommissioned as a second in 1917. Walter was killed uring the second Battle of e in March 1918.

6



## ALTHEA MCNISH

1924–2020



Credit Bill Patterson/NIS Archive

Althea McNish was a Trinidadian textile designer who relocated to the UK in 1951 and settled on West Green Road, Tottenham in 1957. After achieving a postgraduate degree in textile design at The Royal College of Art, Althea went on to become an acclaimed and internationally recognised textile designer and artist. She designed for companies including Liberty's and Hull Traders, with her work also being represented in the V&A collections. 'Golden Harvest', a screen print on cotton satin, was one of Althea's first works to go into production in 1957 and she was closely associated with the Caribbean Artists' Movement.

7

Thank you for  
sponsoring our Black  
History Month Pages



**Exhibition: Syreeta King**  
Sunday, 1st October to Tuesday,  
3rd October, during library  
opening hours  
Coombes Croft Library and  
Marcus Garvey Library

Syreeta King is a local artist who has been exhibiting her art and visual narratives through various media, experimenting with documentary photography, paints, screenprints and a variety of other materials. Her art explores evocative topics and themes such as her 'Women on Top' collections, which portrayed women's strength and confidence in opposing male domination and oppression with- in power positions in relationships.

**To find out more contact**  
Coombes Croft Library on  
020 8489 2571

**Children's Storytime**  
Mondays, 10.30am–11am  
Alexandra Park Library

Throughout October, Alexandra Park Library will be hosting free Black History Month-themed children's storytime sessions – focusing on a new children's book each week. The first session takes place on Monday, 2nd October featuring Patrice Lawrence's 'Granny Came Here on the Empire Windrush', which follows Ava's grandmother's story of coming to England on the Empire Windrush. Patrice is an award-winning author and journalist who writes fiction for both adults and children.

**To find out more contact**  
libraries@haringey.gov.uk

**Caribbean Dance with  
Sheba Monserrat**  
Fridays, 12pm–1pm  
Jacksons Lane Arts Centre

Throughout October, Sheba Monserrat is hosting free Caribbean dance classes open to all ages. Sheba is a Caribbean dance specialist, performance poet, stand up comedian and Black British and Caribbean historian and will be sharing the historical contexts behind the various dances being taught.

**To find out more visit**  
jacksonslane.org.uk

**Film Screening: Me, My  
Music and Mental Health**  
Tuesday, 10th October,  
4.30pm–6.30pm  
Everyman Cinema, Muswell Hill

This documentary film follows the life of Kenneth Erhahon, a local rapper, mental health advocate and author who goes by the stage name Shocka. The film explores his journey as part of grime trio, Marvellous, growing up on Broadwater Farm Estate and his struggles with his mental health. The film was directed by SMILA, a local rapper, actor, and filmmaker, and produced in partnership with Black Thrive Haringey and Open Mind Alliance.

**To find out more visit**  
eventbrite.co.uk/e/  
me-my-music-and-  
mental-health-a-story-by-  
shocka-film-screening-tickets-  
713582994947?aff=oddttd  
creator

**Afro-Caribbean Cooking**  
Monday, 2nd October–  
Friday, 6th October  
Blooming Scent Café

In celebration of Black History Month, Blooming Scent Cafe is partnering with The Prince's Trust to host a week-long cooking programme for young people. Throughout the week, 16–25 year-olds will have the opportunity to learn how to cook Afro-Caribbean meals and develop their kitchen skills. The sessions will be facilitated by Gina, owner of Blooming Scent and a Prince's Trust alumni.

**To find out more contact**  
LondonGetStarted@princes-  
trust.org.uk

**Exhibition: Windrush 75 'The Grip'**  
Wednesday, 4th October, 6pm–8pm  
Bruce Castle Museum

This exhibition focuses on 'the grip' of a traveller's suitcase featuring photographs, written word, a short film and artwork – showcasing the experiences and contributions of Haringey's over 50's Windrush generation and friends. The exhibition was produced in collaboration with Code1, a community organisation that provides support for black communities across Tottenham and Enfield.

**To find out more visit**  
eventbrite.co.uk/e/windrush-  
75-the-grip-exhibition-opening-  
night-c-tickets-71710706537?af  
f=ebdsoporgprofile

**Black History Month Film Festival**  
Thursdays, 6.30pm–8.30pm  
Wood Green Library

Throughout October and November, Wood Green Library will be screening a range of Black history films such as 'Young Soul Rebels', which explores identity-politics, and 'Loving', which follows the story of a couple who are arrested for their interracial marriage in 1960s Virginia. The screenings are free to attend and the first one takes place on Thursday, 5th October.

**To find out more contact**  
libraries@haringey.gov.uk



Visit the Antwerp Arms  
Tottenham's friendly  
community-owned pub

Artist Gallery & Exhibitions  
Spins and Needles, Slam Poetry  
and Outsider Music Tuesdays  
DJ Fridays  
Live Music Saturdays  
Annual Shareholder's Meeting  
11 October  
www.antwerparms.co.uk  
168-170 Church Road N17 8AS



Mary Otumahana of The RecordShop – just one of The Mall Wood Green's Black-owned, independent businesses



# Championing Black-owned businesses at The Mall Wood Green

**T**he Mall Wood Green is a wonderful hub for local entrepreneurs, with more than 70 independent businesses offering specialist services and products for the community and beyond. In celebration of Black History Month, the shopping centre is shining the spotlight on its brilliant Black-owned businesses.

## Neon

First up is Neon, a specialist in afro hair styling. As well as cornrows, locs, twists and braids, the popular salon offers weaves, wigs and afro hair extensions. Alongside this, it also provides a range of beauty services, including pedicures, lashes, tinting and waxing.

## Wi Jammins

New to The Mall Wood Green for 2023, Wi Jammins specialises in authentic (and utterly delicious) Jamaican food. Inspired by the great Bob Marley, Wi Jammins creates and sells a range of traditional, takeaway dishes such as jerk chicken, mac and cheese, curry goat and escovitch fish. Using only natural ingredients, every dish is made from scratch and tastes amazing. Perfect for spicing up your weekday dinners.

## The RecordShop

Founded in 2015 by North London-

born powerhouse Mary Otumahana (aka WondRWomN) The RecordShop is a small charitable organisation on a big mission – to enable young people who face barriers access to a safe space to support them with their personal, professional and educational needs.

The RecordShop offers musical opportunities through workshops, events, recording and work experience for 11–25-year-olds. Having relocated to The Mall Wood Green in 2020, it's an award-winning, multi-purpose music space and wonderful cultural hub for creatives. Active in the local community, it also hosts regular events such as open mic nights, so if you're a budding musician, it's the place to be.

## Kenzie School Wear

Located in The Mall Wood Green's thriving market hall, Kenzie School Wear is known locally for its excellent school uniform service. It offers a vast range of school wear for both boys and girls. Staff there love to offer a personalised service and enjoy seeing their young customers grow from reception up to GCSE.

## Brush Europe

If you're looking for unique, fresh cosmetics, handmade in the UK, Brush Europe (BE) is the place to go. The company makes natural,

organic, vegetarian and vegan products, which are cruelty-free and do not contain any phthalates, parabens, sulphates or triclosan.

Based on the lower floor of the shopping centre, BE stocks a gorgeous range of indulgent soaps, creams, shampoo bars, hair conditioners, body oils, facial oils, scrubs, bath bombs and bath truffles to help promote naturally beautiful, glowing skin – all made with love.



Mrs Beaumont, owner of Success Hair & Beauty

## Success Hair & Beauty

Another market hall favourite, Success Hair & Beauty is a fashion, health and wellbeing retailer. As well as an extensive range of afro hair products, it sells gorgeous hats, herbal products and crystals.

## Identity School of Acting

Founded 20 years ago by Femi Oguns, Identity School of Acting (IDSA) is a double award-winning part-time drama school and The Mall Wood Green's latest addition. Based in both Wood Green and across the pond in Los Angeles, IDSA has birthed ground-breaking talent and huge stars, many of which have gone on to enjoy dynamic careers across stage and screen. An established hub of creative talent, well-known alumni include the likes of John Boyega, Letitia Wright, and *Bridgerton's* Regé-Jean Page.

If you fancy a trip to the shopping centre, come and see for yourself what our unique independent businesses have to offer. Or, if you're thinking of opening a premises or launching a new venture, The Mall is a great place to grow an independent business. Get in touch with *Catriona.baillie@themall.co.uk*. We'd love you to join the Wood Green family.

For further information contact The Mall Wood Green on 020 8826 1904 or email *Catriona.baillie@themall.co.uk*



NETZEROHARINGEY

2041



DO YOU HAVE IDEAS FOR PROJECTS TO REDUCE  
HARINGEY'S CARBON EMISSIONS?  
WANT TO MAKE YOUR COMMUNITY PROJECTS  
MORE SUSTAINABLE?



We welcome applications from any community group looking to carry out a local decarbonisation project.

**APPLY NOW**  
AND HELP US MAKE  
HARINGEY A GREENER,  
MORE SUSTAINABLE  
BOROUGH!

Haringey Council are helping our communities **tackle climate change** through the Community Carbon Fund. With a total of **£70,000** this year, community groups can apply for **grants of up to £50,000** to help reduce their emissions.



**The third round of funding is now open until 23:59, 7 January 2024**



Visit [www.haringey.gov.uk/community-carbon-fund](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/community-carbon-fund) or scan the QR code for more details and to apply. Applications close at midnight on **7 January 2024**.

**Haringey**  
LONDON



There have been many recent representations of Princess Diana, from the royal chronicling – which takes liberty with history – of *The Crown*, to an even more brazenly (maybe parodically) make-believe account of her life, named *Diana: The Untold and Untrue Story*.

Local playwright Jonathan Maitland, a regular writer for Finsbury Park's Park Theatre, has decided to take the subject of Diana seriously – something, he says, which has been missing from both stage and screen “despite her being a hugely significant figure in our recent history.”

“She was like a feather trying to battle against the wind: an individual trying to assert her own autonomy, caught in the competing cross currents of her own desires and duties and the expectations of others,” Jonathan says. “Plus of course it's easier to find an audience if you are writing about someone that famous.”

Jokingly, he adds: “That's not as cynical as it sounds: there are plenty of famous people I could have written about, but I was drawn to Diana because of her link with Martin Bashir. We were colleagues for many years when we were reporters together on ITV's *Tonight* programme.”

*The Interview* – which, as the name suggests, homes in on the infamous interview of 1995 – stars Tibu Fortes as journalist Martin Bashir and Yolanda Kettle as Diana.

“The accepted narrative is that Martin Bashir manipulated Diana,” says Jonathan. “Which he did, to a certain extent. But I wanted to go a bit deeper than that. Could it be that she manipulated him, too?”

Jonathan's play questions the fact



Tibu Fortes who plays Martin Bashir

## A royal subject

Park Theatre's returning playwright Jonathan Maitland explains why, for his latest, he has trained his gaze on the people's princess

BY MIRIAM BALANESCU

that this piece of history has been written off, delving into the questions of why and how the interview came into existence. It's not the first time he has taken a historic conversation as his subject, with Geoffrey Howe's famous 1990 speech for Margaret Thatcher forming the basis of his 2015 play *Dead Sheep*.

“If the speech or conversation is historic – a turning point, or something people talk about decades later – I'm always fascinated in how it came about,” says Jonathan.

Adapting from history comes with its challenges, however. “In terms of writing and characterisation, you don't want to canonise Diana or make her into a caricature,” Jonathan explains. “She wasn't Mother Teresa with great hair. It was more complex than that. As far as portraying her on stage, that's one for the terrific actor who's playing her. But it's safe to say it's a challenge. You don't want a *Dead Ringers* style impersonation. You want to see a real person that the audience believes in. Having said that, you do have to capture something about her – her voice, mannerisms or physicality – so that it strikes a chord of recognition in the audience. It's a delicate balance.”

On why the interview is relevant today, Jonathan says: “You barely fessed up to a migraine in those days, let alone postnatal depression. The stuff she talked about then is just as important and relevant now as it was then. Which makes Prince William and the BBC's decision to effectively ban the interview highly questionable – in some people's eyes.”

And why was the stage the right place for this story? “There is something about a living, breathing play in a theatre, which reaches the parts other art forms can't.”

**‘The Interview’ will run at Park Theatre from 27 October until 25 November**  
To find out more visit: [parktheatre.co.uk/whats-on/the-interview](http://parktheatre.co.uk/whats-on/the-interview)



The Interview

“She wasn't Mother Teresa with great hair. It was more complex”

### ARTS & CRAFTS

#### Muswell Hill Make and Mend Festival

Saturday, 14th October, 2pm–5pm  
St Andrew's, Alexandra Park Rd N10 2DD

Hosted by Muswell Hill Creatives, this fair will see a series of arts and crafts workshops including candle making, paper lampshade making, gel printing, and Japanese embroidery, as well as an array of local craft traders. The Muswell Hill Sustainability Group will be onsite to talk about the Green Open Homes Initiative and The People's Pantry refill truck will also parked outside for any of your refill needs.

**Free**  
**Visit** [muswellhillcreatives.com/make-and-mend](http://muswellhillcreatives.com/make-and-mend)

### TALK

#### A Spectrum of Life from the Middle Ages to the 19th Century

Wednesday, 20th September, 8pm  
Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield EN2 0AJ

Archaeologist Rosa Greco and Les Capon, AoC project manager, will dig into the history of Wood Green in this Edmonton Hundred Historical Society talk.

**Free | Visit** [edmontonhundred.org.uk](http://edmontonhundred.org.uk)

### FOOD & DRINK

#### Apple Day

Saturday, 14th October, 3pm–6pm  
Hornsey Vale Community Centre, 60 Mayfield Road N8 9LP

Over 60 varieties of English apple will be available to try at this community event. The day will also include storytelling, kids' activities, a cafe, local honey and plenty more.

**Entry £1 | Email** [info@hornseyvale.org](mailto:info@hornseyvale.org)

### ARTS & CRAFTS

#### The Knitting and Stitching Show

Thursday, 5th October–  
Saturday, 8th October  
Alexandra Palace, Alexandra Palace Way N22 7AY

Boasting being the UK's ‘biggest textile event’, this fair offers classes from crochet, punch needling and Christmas makes to goldwork, patchwork and knitted postbox toppers.

**Tickets from £17**  
**Visit** [theknittingandstitchingshow.com/london](http://theknittingandstitchingshow.com/london)

### THEATRE

#### What the Dickens? by The Telling

Sat 14th October, 7.30pm–9.30pm  
Hornsey Parish Church Hall, Cranley Gardens, Muswell Hill N10 3AH

This play is written by Clare Norburn and directed by BAFTA nominee Nicholas Renton.

**From £5 | Visit** [bit.ly/3Pw8sGa](http://bit.ly/3Pw8sGa)

### SUSTAINABILITY

#### Green Open Homes

Saturday, 7th October–Sunday, 8th October, Saturday, 14th October–  
Sunday, 15th October  
Various locations

Shedding light on how to make homes more eco-friendly without spending tonnes of cash, tours will be led by Muswell Hill Sustainability Group into local residents' homes who have done exactly that. The event has been running for ten years – and this year, with the cost-of-living crisis, organisers hope to help locals tackle their gas bills. Haringey residents will open their homes for either in-person or virtual visits, while talks offering practical advice will also be taking place.

**Free**  
**Visit** [mhsgroup.org](http://mhsgroup.org)

### ART

#### Life is Lemonade – ‘The Exhibition’

Saturday, 14th October, 6pm–11.30pm  
The Post Bar, 316 High Rd N15 4BP

An evening of live art, music, performance, to mark the launch of a project by artist iSEE. ‘Music visuals’ will also be on display, so the organisers recommend arriving early.

**Tickets from £5**  
**Visit** [thepostbar.co.uk/event-details/life-is-lemonade-the-exhibition](http://thepostbar.co.uk/event-details/life-is-lemonade-the-exhibition)

**Submit your listing**

Email [HCP@socialspider.com](mailto:HCP@socialspider.com) before Monday 16th October



## Lost diary

Dear HCP

Last month, I was riding a Lime bike through Tottenham when I had my bag snatched by a scooter thief on the corner of Green Lanes and Hermitage Road.

He got my laptop, headphones, and some clothes. So far, so annoying.

But deep at the bottom of my bag was a little black book (the moleskine style, but probably a cheaper Amazon version!) that I have been using as a diary this year.

In it I have written of my father's death, my feelings of grief and discombobulation – and the experiences, help and advice I received as I made my way back to a better frame of mind.

The thief could be sitting in a brand new Scotland rugby top with a mint pair of headphones on, leafing (regretfully) through page after page of my stream of consciousness.

Or, more likely, my diary is lying in a garden/hedge/gutter, dumped with the rest of the discarded rubbish from my green, roll-top bag.

I am writing in the vain hope that someone may have found my diary, and is wondering how to return it to its scrawly-handwriting owner.

Les Snowden  
Green Lanes

## Nobody home

Dear HCP

The number of vacant properties in Haringey is indeed astonishing. (In reference to your article published in the August issue, Catherine West MP declares 1,616 vacant Haringey Homes a 'scandal')

We at Make Harringay Home are desperately looking for a property to rent to house a family or individual fleeing conflict or persecution elsewhere in the world.

Make Harringay Home is a voluntary community sponsorship group working to support the resettlement of a refugee family.

Working with Haringey Council and the Home Office, we have created a local network of support and raised money to supplement income and benefits to help the family settle into this vibrant and welcoming corner of London.

However, the lack of suitable

homes in Haringey is preventing further progress and we have thus far been unable to achieve our goal of helping a refugee family settle into the area. Your article draws attention to another aspect of the housing crisis, on top of unaffordable rent, that seems rectifiable.

Surely there is at least one property owner on the list who would be interested in letting their property to a family in need?

Please help us!

Tom Luff and Julia Saperia  
Make Harringay Home

## Diet down

Dear HCP

New Scientist reported recently that "the first week of July was the hottest recorded on Earth since instrumental measurements began". No doubt everyone has seen the terrifying reports of unbearably hot weather in Greece and Italy, where temperatures have hit 47 degrees and wildfires are out of control.

But what can we do to reduce our production of CO2 and other greenhouse gases immediately?

A report last week from Oxford University showed that adapting our diet is one of the most effective things we can all do. A fully plant-based diet results in 75% less climate-heating emissions, water pollution, and land use than a diet including 100g of meat daily. Even a reduction in meat consumption can significantly lower impact.

Haringey made a commitment to stop serving meat at council events as part of its climate action plan in March 2021. It would be great to see Mike Hakata, Haringey's cabinet member for the environment, push this forward to make Haringey a plant-based council that doesn't waste tax money on earth-killing meat or dairy products.

Jim Edwards  
Wood Green

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# Labour seems determined to make costly and poorly thought through decisions

*Nick da Costa, who represents the Highgate ward, on the financial strain Haringey Council is under*



Council finances have hit the headlines in the past couple of weeks with the news that Birmingham City Council has declared itself essentially bankrupt (local authorities can't declare insolvency like a business, but issue a Section 114 notice, which restricts all new spending beyond the barest essentials). As the nation's second city, this hit national news, but Birmingham is far from the first local authority to go under. Northamptonshire went bust back in 2018, and in the past couple of years we have also seen declarations of effective bankruptcy from Slough, Thurrock, Croydon, Northumberland and Woking.

Much has been made of the cuts made by central government to areas like health and education, but in real terms councils have suffered far more. The Conservatives think they can get away with this as cuts to councils have far less emotional sway than those to schools or the NHS, but the reality is that these cuts have caused huge problems.

Most people think of the council as collecting the bins and repairing potholes, but the vital services run by local authorities stretch far beyond this. The vast majority of the budget is spent on social

care, an area where demand has exploded in recent years. National politicians often pay lip service to the importance of social care, but their actions do not back this up. Even as demand has risen, budgets have had to be cut, leaving councils struggling to meet their obligations.

These factors have led many, many councils to teeter on the edge of bankruptcy, with those who have either made a costly and poorly thought through decision or those hit by another outside factor the ones who have fallen off the cliff edge.

Haringey is not yet in immediate danger of bankruptcy, but the Labour administration seems determined to make one of those costly and poorly thought through decisions. After failing to invest in schools, roads, and housing for decades, the council leadership has decided that now, just after the spike in interest rates, is the time to borrow millions of pounds to spend on upgrades. Many of these projects are worthy (though Labour's insistence on a multi-million pound renovation of the council's own offices is not), but add them all up and Haringey is left in an extremely dangerous position. The interest we

paid on our borrowing rose from £3million in 2018/19 to £13m this year, and is forecast to continue to rise to £38m by 2027/28. To put these figures in some sort of context, a 1% increase in council tax increases the council's budget by just over £1m.

And, if we are forced to issue a Section 114 notice, the consequences for residents will not be trivial. In Croydon, the government authorised an enormous 15% rise in council tax, whilst residents in Thurrock will see costs for burials and interring ashes rise by 9%, and residents wanting a third visitor permit will see it quintuple in cost.

Meanwhile, the council will be banned from spending money on any service not arbitrarily deemed 'essential' by central government. This would not, for example, include replacing Raac concrete in schools and other public buildings. We cannot allow our borough to get into that sort of position, where we are putting children's lives on the line.

It is clear that the council is hoping that the Conservative government is swept out of power and that whoever replaces them will give councils a fairer funding settlement. I share that hope, but we cannot risk taxpayers' money on a wing and a prayer.

Haringey needs to create a robust plan to deal with its spiralling interest payments, and, if it is unable, we will need to review which projects are most important and which are not possible to undertake at this time.

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*Budgets have had to be cut, leaving councils struggling to meet their obligations*  
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Send us your letters

Email HCP@socialspider.com before Monday 16th October



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