



Your independent community newspaper

WALTHAM FOREST ECHO

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Feb 2023, No. 95

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Two artists raised funds to install solar panels on 35 homes in their Walthamstow road by sleeping on their roof for 23 nights – turn to p13 for more Credit Peter Searle

Thousands wait more than 12 hours at Whipps A&E

by Josh Mellor,
Local Democracy Reporter

At least 1,100 patients a month waited longer than 12 hours to be treated at Whipps Cross A&E in the last three months of last year.

In October, November and December, the Leytonstone hospital struggled with bed occupancy rates of higher than 98%.

The hospital's "extremely busy" A&E means ambulances were often unable to drop off patients, with almost one in six waiting over

an hour outside the building.

Whipps Cross is run by Barts Health NHS Trust, which runs five East London hospitals with three A&E departments and is currently struggling with the sixth longest waiting list in the country.

The trust's chair Jacqui Smith says this winter has been "tougher than anyone has ever experienced", adding: "The whole system is effectively under sustained pressure."

"Too often, the demand for services is outstripping the

capacity of the people working here. However, we are working hard to deliver."

"We had 10,000 attendances in our emergency departments in the week running up to Christmas, that's an enormous amount of demand and pressure on the system."

Interim chief operating officer for Barts Health, Chris Pocklington, says the A&E waits are "unacceptable" but that it would be "unrealistic" to expect the demand to decrease before spring.

However, he said there is "no

indicator" so far that delays have led to an increase in patient deaths.

While grappling with the pressures on its A&E departments, the trust – one of the largest in the country – is also trying to stay on top of waiting lists for elective surgery, cancer and diagnostic tests.

Urgent cancer referrals remain a concern for the trust as a whole, which has a "backlog" of 536 patients who have waited longer than two weeks since their referral to be seen by a hospital.

A fifth of patients at Barts' five hospitals has waited more than

six weeks for diagnostic tests – the third worst performance out of London's 18 hospital trusts.

In the national drive to cut NHS waiting lists, the trust has reduced the number of people waiting more than two years for treatment from 232 in April 2022 to 18 now.

The number of patients waiting for more than 18 months has almost halved to 766.

Chris added: "The challenge in the first instance is to get activity back to previous levels and then ahead of where we were."

NEWS



FELLOWSHIP IS LIFE

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Local schools offered loans for greener buildings

Local state schools will soon be able to borrow money from Waltham Forest Council to make their buildings more environmentally friendly.

At a meeting last month, council leaders agreed to set up a £500,000 fund for schools to invest in new insulation, lights, heating and solar panels to reduce their energy and carbon consumption.

Schools would pay the loans back over a period of years, using money they save on their energy bills.

The first loans will be issued in the spring term and the council expects to be able to issue two or three loans in the first round of funding.

A report prepared for council leaders adds: "Schools will be expected to demonstrate their ability to pay back the savings made to ensure there is continued recycling of the funding allocation."

"The council could decide not to implement an energy loan

Solar panel installation Credit Pixabay



scheme [but] this would mean that we would not be able to implement energy efficiency measures in some of our schools.

"[It would] therefore take longer for schools to reduce energy use and become more financially sustainable."

In May 2021, the council

announced it was spending millions of government grant money to make some of the borough's public buildings more energy efficient.

A total of £2.28million was invested in twelve sites around the borough, with the goal of cutting the council's annual energy bill by an estimated £57,000.

No charges after man killed in council-owned reserve

by Josh Mellor,

Local Democracy Reporter

Waltham Forest Council will not face criminal charges after a man was killed by a falling tree in a council-owned nature reserve eight years ago.

In June 2015, 30-year-old Lukasz Costazza died at Low Hall Nature Reserve, sparking a years-long joint investigation by the Metropolitan Police and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

While police involvement ended in 2019, the HSE took a further three years to decide it would not bring any charges against the



Low Hall Nature Reserve
Credit Google Streetview

council regarding its legal responsibility to manage the trees.

This has caused unusually long delays to Lukasz's inquest, which by law must now be held within six months or "as soon as reason-

ably practicable".

Last July, HSE investigator Charles Linfoot told a coroner's court the pandemic and personal health issues had "delayed matters".

At a pre-inquest hearing on 17th January, assistant coroner Dr Shirley Radcliffe said a jury inquest is likely to be held this May.

She added: "This inquest is such an old one, the death was in 2015, I really want to try and get it heard."

The inquest will hear evidence from Waltham Forest Council, which owns the nature reserve, and tree contractor Gristwood and Toms.

Leyton Station to become step-free

Leyton Station is set to become step-free thanks to £14million from the government's Levelling Up Fund.

The Greater London Authority was awarded the funding by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in order to improve a "pocket of socio-economic deprivation in the capital".

In addition to step-free access,

the money will reportedly pay for a new ticket hall and concourse.

Waltham Forest Council has insisted for some time that an upgrade to the station is "desperately needed" to expand capacity before thousands of new homes are built nearby.

Speaking last year, deputy leader Clyde Loakes said: "Anyone who has used Leyton Station at hometime will know... it is

not fit for purpose for the 20th Century, nevermind the 21st. We desperately need to see this tube station modernised as soon as possible."

The original plans drawn up by Transport for London (TfL) in 2021, which included a new footbridge, were expected to cost an estimated £30m but could not move ahead due to TfL's uncertain financial future.

Council rents to increase by 7%

by Josh Mellor,

Local Democracy Reporter

The rent charged for local council homes is set to increase by 7% from April.

The increase will mean the council's approximately 10,000 tenants will pay an average of £30 more per month.

From April, a two-bed council home is likely to cost £468 per month, while two-bed homes on the private market are rented for an average of £1,800 per month.

The additional cost is also likely to hit the 15,000 social rent homes managed by housing associations in the borough.

Since 2019, social housing landlords such as Waltham Forest Council have been allowed to increase rents in line with the rate of inflation, plus one percent.

Last year, this rule led to an increase of 4.1%, more than double the 1.5% increase in 2020/21.

However, the high rate of inflation this year meant that, until the government capped social rents in its autumn statement, council tenants could have faced a maximum increase of 11.1%.

According to a council report due to be approved by cabinet in February, increasing rents at a lower rate than inflation creates an "extremely challenging" outlook for the council's housing account.

The report, prepared by strategic financial advisor for housing Julie Curtis, says her department will focus on maintaining existing housing stock and "compliance with health and safety regulations".

Capping the cost of council housing rents could cut its ability to borrow by £4.6m in 2023/24, meaning Waltham Forest may have to "scale back" its council housing improvement and house-building plans.

Electricity and heating cost increases are also likely to be passed on to tenants and leaseholders, although not initially at market rates.

These two service charges are likely to see a "phased increase" starting next year and continuing in following years, with a 7% rise in heating charges and £6 more per month for electricity.

INTERVIEW

The Walthamstow cafe-owner helping refugees find work

by Victoria Munro

A Walthamstow cafe-owner who spent 50 days in an immigration detention centre is now helping other refugees find their feet.

Usman Khalid, owner of Haven Coffee in St Mary's Road, offers free barista training to refugees and asylum seekers, teaching them how to make the perfect cup of coffee in six weeks.

Usman was raised Muslim in Pakistan and travelled to the UK after he began to question the faith, which he said was "not possible" there, and has lived in Walthamstow since 2012.

He did not seek asylum after his visa ran out because he feared being deported and was caught during a raid of his Walthamstow home in 2015.

Remembering the years before he was seized, Usman told the *Echo*: "I didn't apply for asylum straight away because I was not sure what the next step I should take was and, by the time I realised there was a process, it was too late for me.

"Life is very tough if you don't have a proper status, really there is no life. For a long time, I had just one meal a day – one piece of chicken and chips with a can of coke – because I didn't have money.

"I was always living under fear, even if I heard an ambulance siren, I was scared to hear any kind of siren. It was very tough and upsetting."

Usman was seized, alongside "one or two" of his housemates, during a raid of his home and says he has no idea how the Home Office discovered them.

In the December edition of the *Echo* [#93, p5], a spokesperson from Waltham Forest Anti Raids Network described a "culture of collaboration" between the Home Office and employers, landlords and other organisations, who are given financial incentives to report people.

Usman was taken to Harmondsworth Detention Centre in Hillingdon, where last November around 100 detainees protested during a power cut at the conditions inside, as reported by *The Guardian*.

Describing the centre, Usman said: "If you look at it from the front, it looks like some kind of nice office building but, from the back, there is barbed wire on the walls and security cameras.

"Inside, there are a million doors between you and the outside world, you can't see the outside world at all."

Despite keeping to himself as much as possible, Usman said he faced "hostility" and "dehumanising behaviour" from staff.

Usman recalled one incident in which



Usman at Haven Coffee



Haven Coffee in St Mary's Road

he was standing next to a staff member and coughed. The staff member allegedly asked if he had tuberculosis and told him: "Do not die on this floor and make it dirty, you can die in your room so I won't

have to clean the mess."

Reflecting on his experience eight years ago, he said: "Power without any check or balance makes you corrupt and you can't take cameras into the detention centres.

The little information coming out now is because of the efforts of charities.

"Just like they say 'what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas', what happens in detention, stays in detention. When you go inside, you don't feel like you are inside a civilised country or society.

"I'm the kind of person who avoids confrontation as much as possible but even then a couple of things happened to me.

"The staff do not show any empathy in a place where there should be more empathy shown to the people, because they are vulnerable."

Usman's case was heard and decided, granting him refugee status, in just 50 days, which he said was "very unique" judging by those he met inside the centre.

He said: "The UK is the only country with indefinite detention. I have seen people inside detention centres for a year and a half or two years.

"The people inside are not [serious] criminals. I don't think coming to this country and seeking asylum or overstaying your visa is a kind of law-breaking where you can see them as any other criminal.

"When I was out I was of course very happy but, in the back of my mind, I also thought 'why am I outside and other people still inside, I am no better than them'."

Usman's experiences made him determined to help other refugees into employment and, so far, he has trained eleven people in barista skills.

This includes one woman he hoped to hire to work with him at Haven Coffee but sadly she was relocated near Gatwick by the Home Office before she could start work.

Usman is continuously fundraising to help him take on more trainees, as the courses take time away from his growing business.

He added that, while living in Pakistan, he had no interest in coffee but "developed a love for it" in London, alongside "Chelsea FC, fish and chips and pub culture".

Usman said: "I also love that this city has a mix of old and new and so much multiculturalism. It makes me sad that now some politicians are trying to destroy that."

When contacted for comment, a Home Office spokesperson said: "We are committed to a fair and humane immigration policy, which welcomes those who use legal routes, but tackles abuse of the immigration system and makes our streets safer.

"We have not been provided with the evidence required to look into these allegations from 2015."

Find out more about Haven Coffee, including how to donate to the fundraiser, here: linktr.ee/havencoffee

NEWS

Security worker unfairly sacked over town hall death



Waltham Forest Town Hall

by Victoria Munro

A CCTV worker sacked after a tragic death outside Waltham Forest Town Hall has won a legal battle against his former employer.

Narayan Acharya worked for council-owned maintenance company Waltham Forest Services Ltd for 13 years and had “an exemplary

work record” until his dismissal in 2021.

The company claimed it sacked Narayan for neglecting his duties in the early hours of 21st March that year after a man was found unresponsive outside the town hall shortly before 6am.

Narayan, who was monitoring the town hall CCTV that night, had spotted the man drinking from a bottle at around 2am but

failed to inform the security guard on shift after deciding “he did not appear unwell, drunk or suspicious”.

Following an employment tribunal in November, judge Frances Allen found that “no reasonable employer” would have sacked Narayan over the man’s death.

In his written decision, published on 16th January, he noted that the town hall grounds are open to the public at all hours and there was no agreed procedure on people drinking at night, unless they were also behaving badly.

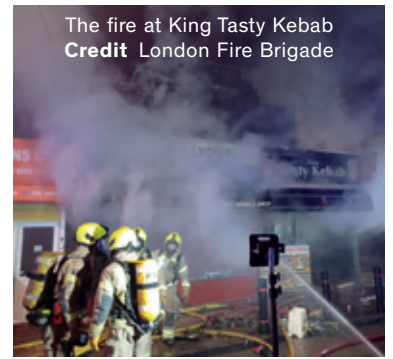
He wrote: “[Narayan’s] position is that he followed the correct procedure and CCTV operatives only report to the security guard if there is anti-social behaviour. The man did not appear to be displaying overt anti-social behaviour.

“None of the other employees interviewed as part of the investigation[...] make any reference to a known procedure when a person enters the town hall complex during the night and appears to be drinking.”

Employment judge Allen also did not accept that Narayan was obliged to check on the man, writing that “there was simply no evidence of this ever happening” previously with other drinkers.

Narayan is now entitled to compensation from the council-owned company for “unfair dismissal” and the amount will be agreed at a further hearing on 3rd April.

Following the incident, in September 2021, policy at the town hall was changed to ensure “special attention” is paid to anyone drinking on the grounds at night.

The fire at King Tasty Kebab
Credit London Fire Brigade

Kebab shop fire ‘caused by build-up of grease’

A takeaway in High Street, Walthamstow, caught fire last month, likely due to a “build-up of grease and cooking fat” in its extractor fan.

Ten fire engines and around 70 firefighters were called to a fire at King Tasty Kebab shortly before 10pm on 23rd January, which destroyed both the takeaway and two neighbouring shops.

Two residents from the flats above were led to safety by the London Fire Brigade and the fire was under control at around half past midnight the next morning.

Firefighters believe the cause of the fire was a “build-up of grease and cooking fat” in the takeaway’s extraction system, where the fire appears to have started.

A spokesperson said: “We’d like to remind restaurant and takeaway owners to ensure they don’t have dirty ducting. If you don’t clean the ducting in your extraction system regularly, you’re at a greater risk of ducting fires.

“You should also make sure you keep the hob, cooker hood and extractor fan clean too – built-up fat and grease can ignite and cause a fire.”

Advertisement

Widow seeks answers about condom factory asbestos

by Victoria Munro

A Chingford widow who believes her husband was exposed to asbestos at what was once Britain’s largest condom factory is seeking answers from former colleagues.

Charles Phillips worked at the London Rubber Company factory in Chingford, now a Costco, from approximately 1956 until 1992 and even met his partner of 37 years, Maria, there.

In June 2021, following a rapid decline in his health, Charles died at the age of 92 from mesothelioma, a form of cancer linked to breathing in asbestos.

Maria believes he was exposed to asbestos at the factory, where it was reportedly used as pipe insulation and in the industrial talc used to manufacture latex, and hopes his former colleagues will have the evidence she needs to get justice.

Isobel Lovett, partner at asbestos specialists



Charles and his widow Maria (courtesy of family)

Hodge Jones & Allen, said: “Historic asbestos exposure still affects many people like Charles, who develop mesothelioma decades after exposure to asbestos dust whilst at work.

“Mesothelioma is an awful disease and sadly Charles passed away long before information about his exposure to deadly cancer-causing asbestos fibres could be obtained from him directly.

“Unfortunately, Charles paid the ultimate price for being dedicated to his work. In cases like this, witnesses are crucial in the search for justice and we would like to hear from anyone who worked at London Rubber Company Limited.

“We hope that someone reading this will recall Charles and come forward to help us achieve justice for Maria.”

Anyone who can assist should contact Hodge Jones & Allen, who are supporting Maria’s claim, confidentially by calling 0207 874 8502 or emailing ilovett@hja.net.

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NEWS

Walthamstow post found dumped on Enfield estate



Kettering Road Estate in Enfield and a discarded mailbag (inset)

by James Cracknell

Multiple full mailbags of Walthamstow post were found dumped on an Enfield estate but will be redelivered “as soon as possible”, according to Royal Mail.

Between 1st December and 4th January, Mark Bellas, who lives on the Kettering Road Estate in Enfield Wash, said seven mailbags were found discarded in the estate’s communal bin.

He told *Echo* sister paper *Enfield Dispatch* that at least three were full of letters addressed to E17 postcodes, which he kept in his flat to save them from being destroyed.

It is understood that three of the seven dumped mailbags had already been incinerated after being discovered by the estate’s caretakers.

In a statement to the *Echo* last month, a Royal Mail spokesperson said that, following an investigation, the employee responsible

for the dumped post had “left the business”.

They said: “The security of customers’ mail is a high priority for Royal Mail. We have investigated this incident and identified an employee who was behaving in an unacceptable manner; the employee has left the business.

“We are working hard to make sure that all affected post is redelivered as soon as possible. We apologise for any inconvenience caused by this incident.”

Speaking previously to the *Dispatch*, Mark said: “I made a complaint to Royal Mail and they have not bothered to respond. Some of the post is from the NHS and says ‘private and confidential’.

“Two caretakers from the estate have reported it to Royal Mail as well but were told there was ‘nothing they could do’.”

Postal workers belonging to the Communication Workers Union took industrial action in December, walking out before Christmas in a dispute over pay, which led to long delays in deliveries and backlogs over the new year.

The problem was noticed across the borough, with one resident in a Chingford Facebook group claiming they received letters at the start of the year dated from early December.

Waltham Forest postcodes were not listed among the 28 areas expected to receive “reduced service” last month, which the company claimed was due to “workers being off sick or self-isolating” from Covid.



Mice-infested primary school kitchen shut down again

by Victoria Munro & Josh Mellor,
Local Democracy Reporter

The kitchen of a Walthamstow primary school recently fined £50,000 over a mice infestation shut down again after failing another food hygiene inspection.

Parents and carers of children at St Saviour’s Church of England Primary School in Verulam Avenue received a letter in January from headteacher Emma Cherry explaining the kitchen received a zero rating for food hygiene on 16th January.

She explained the inspector from Waltham Forest Council “found evidence of mice activity, a historical ongoing issue” in the kitchen, which is currently run by caterer Edwards & Ward.

In October, Genesis Education Trust, which runs the school, was fined £50,000 at Thames Magistrates’ Court for failing to act for months after a mice infestation was discovered in 2020.

At the time, the kitchen was run by a different caterer – The Pantry – which was fined £40,000 at the same court a month earlier for its part in the appalling state of the kitchen.

In the letter on 17th January, seen by the *Echo*, headteacher Emma Cherry wrote that “very importantly” the kitchen was closed by the caterer Edwards and Ward, rather than the inspector, as a “precautionary measure given historic events”.

She added: “We are confident that

Edwards and Ward are doing everything in their power to eradicate the issues with great urgency and they have been very proactive from the moment they were informed of the mice activity.

“We understand that this is a concern for you as well. We will be at the school gate this afternoon to respond to questions and queries you may have.”

Her letter explained that all food stored in the kitchen had been thrown away, that day’s lunch was “bought last night[...] and cooked off-site” and food for the breakfast and after-school clubs was purchased that day. It also stated that a “deep clean” took place in the morning, as well as a visit from pest control.

The kitchen’s last failed food inspection took place in October 2020, when inspectors found mouse droppings on the floor, inside machinery and on a shelf.

At the time, a chef working in the kitchen reportedly told inspectors that the school had known about the mice problem and not taken action for four months.

Last October, magistrates’ bench chair Reverend Abraham Lawrence awarded the school the highest possible fine due to the duty of care it owes its three to eleven-year-old students, the risk to the “352-plus staff” and the school’s knowledge that “something was going wrong”.

Genesis Education Trust is an “independent church multi-academy trust” that also manages St Mary’s Primary School in Walthamstow. It was contacted for comment and declined.

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FEATURES



Life in Blitz-era Walthamstow

by Fran Di Fazio

The discovery of a suspected WWII bomb at the town hall in December brought back memories for many of those who survived the Blitz in Walthamstow. These include Lionel P. Clyne, who was only eight years old when war broke out and spent almost the entire conflict living in the area.

During the initial Blitz, which lasted from October 1940 to June 1941, more than 700 bombs were dropped on the borough.

This forced Lionel's family to spend numerous nights inside an Anderson shelter in their garden, which was "very small, made of corrugated iron and covered with earth as protection".

Lionel said: "We were told to go down to the shelter at about six o'clock in the evening and to not get out until six o'clock the next morning. It wasn't very comfortable, but it was warm and it was dry.

"You'd leave your house [the next morning] and you didn't know whether the school would be there when you got there. And you'd leave school – I'd come back for lunch – and you didn't know whether your house would be there. They were very difficult times, but we survived.

"We had lots of interruptions [at school] because of air raid bombings, when we had to take

shelter, but we had some very good teachers there, very committed. They were very happy days, in spite of the war."

Lionel initially attended Markhouse Road School, directly in front of his house, before moving to George Gascoigne Secondary School in Queen's Road.

In a surprising similarity to children who lived through the Covid lockdown, he lost two years of education due to the war, meaning he had to take remedial reading classes at the age of nine.

After the initial Blitz, a terrifying new bomb appeared in the skies above London. V-1 flying bombs were unmanned aircraft that exploded as soon as they touched the ground after running out of fuel.

The "doodlebugs," as they

Markhouse Road School
Credit Vestry House Museum



were infamously nicknamed in Britain, were deployed from 1944 and, on 16th August that year, one hit the corner of Hoe Street and Church Hill, killing 22 people, injuring 144 and destroying dozens of buildings.

Lionel said: "You'd hear them buzz above you, then there was a sort of a deadly silence, and then you got the explosion."

So terrifying were these new bombs that once, while coming out of a shop with two friends, Lionel heard a "terrible roar" and immediately raced back inside to safety, only to discover the noise was "a van with a broken exhaust pipe".

However, the biggest lingering effect of the war was the rationing of food.

Lionel remembers the ration books and having two lamb chops' worth of meat per week and, importantly for a child, that sweets remained rationed until a decade after the fighting stopped, due to the limited supply of sugar.

Lionel, 91, now lives in Kent with his wife but says Walthamstow "will always be [his] home" and visited just before the Covid lockdown.

Asked whether he found it much changed, he replied: "I didn't, funnily enough. Some things change but that's inevitable.

"Now it's very cosmopolitan, and it's reflected in that you can get any sort of cuisine you like. It's fantastic, absolutely fantastic."

Getting to grips

Emma Levine from Waltham Forest Age UK on their free service for elderly residents

Like many older residents, Connie Borrowman finds it harder these days to get around, having developed arthritis in her legs that makes it difficult to move them.

The 79-year-old from Chingford noticed it most while getting in and out of the shower and had to hold onto the shower fitting itself to get in, despite knowing it "wasn't very secure".

As reported by the *Echo* in December [#93, p5], Age UK Waltham Forest is increasingly seeing elderly people discharged from hospital before vital safety measures like grab rails have been installed in their home.

Thankfully, we have stepped up to do our part to help and are offering to install up to three free grab rails for those aged over 60, whether in a bathroom or just outside their front door.

Our charity has 200 grab rails – available on a first-come, first-serve basis – which will be installed by our in-house handyperson Errol.

Connie is loving the new addition to her shower and said: "Now, I can just reach out and step into the shower, I feel so

much safer. The handyman did a great job – and so neat and tidy."

Ladun Thomas, a physiotherapist who works for the borough's Falls Prevention Service, said grab rails like this can have "huge benefits" for older residents.

She said: "It helps you transfer in and out of the bath or to sit and stand up if you have a stool and it gives you more confidence as you have something safe to hold on to.

"They enhance the quality of life you have in your home environment, and significantly reduce the number of falls."

Falls account for hundreds of thousands of A&E admissions among those aged 65+ in England every year and it is estimated that unaddressed fall hazards in the home cost the NHS £435million annually.

While the service is free to residents over the age of 60, any donations to Age UK are always welcome and can be made on our website: ageuk.org.uk/walthamforest/.

To apply for a grab rail contact 020 8558 5512 or email us on support@ageukwalthamforest.org.uk.



Connie with her new grab rail Credit Emma Levine

PHOTOGRAPHY



Walthamstow Arcade in 1987



Alice Mara took these photos of the long-demolished Walthamstow Arcade at the age of 15, when she worked a Saturday job in the shopping centre's Avante Garde hairdressers, earning £7 a day washing hair.

Alice is an artist who recreates buildings in ceramic and said she took the photos because she was already fascinated by "buildings, how people live in them and what happens in them".

The Arcade was built at the corner of High Street and Hoe Street in the 60s and, after years of growing disrepair, was demolished in the early 2000s. For a decade it remained an empty plot of land but is now home to Empire Cinema and a number of chain restaurants.

See Alice's work on her website here: www.alicemara.com



PHOTOGRAPHY



CRIME

Fifth teen convicted of gang-related murder

Murder victim Bubacar Jabbie Dukureh **Credit** Met Police



Afifth teenager was finally found guilty of a gang-related Walthamstow murder after avoiding a previous trial because he was abroad.

On 23rd October 2020, Bubacar Jabbie Dukureh – known locally as Buba – was ambushed by five people on his doorstep in Westbury Road and fatally stabbed in the chest.

Jurors at the Old Bailey heard the attackers were associated with the Priory Court Boys gang and targeted 17-year-old Buba because he “had the appearance” of a member of a rival gang, the Mali Boys.

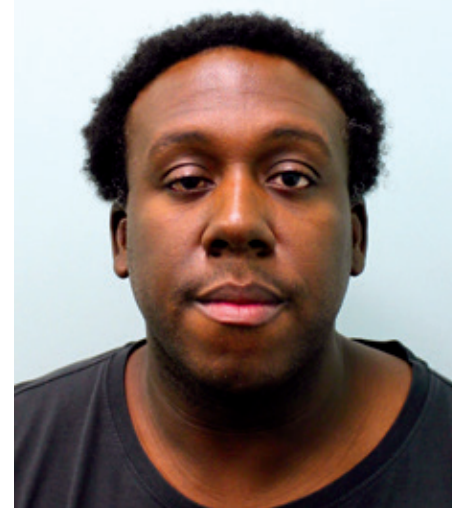
Four young men – Samuel Bartley, 19, Jamal Dakissaga-Benitez, 19, Alfie Ferguson, 19, and Kaiyan Decordova, 20 – were previously found guilty of the murder but the fifth and youngest suspect, only 15 at the time of the attack, was finally convicted on 9th January.

The boy, who cannot be named due to his young age, has been remanded into custody and will be sentenced at a later date, which has yet to be fixed.

At the trial, jurors heard the group had “carefully prepared” for a “ride-out to an area controlled by rival gangs” to “provoke and if necessary confront rivals”.

They were also played a video set to a drill rap, found on one of the killer’s phones, which focused on the victim’s address and appeared to be “glorifying” the murder.

Dean Gordon **Credit** Met Police



Paedophile who filmed children with hidden cameras jailed

A Leytonstone paedophile who befriended families with young daughters and used hidden cameras to secretly film them was jailed last month.

Police raided Dean Gordon’s home in August 2021 and uncovered more than 12,000 indecent images of children. These included some Gordon had made himself, such as a recording of him sexually assaulting the sleeping daughter of a friend.

The 41-year-old, of Rosewood Court, pleaded guilty to taking indecent photos of children, possessing child pornography, sexually assaulting a young girl and voyeurism.

The court heard that a three-day search of his home uncovered numerous hidden cameras, including some in water bottles or coat hooks, which Gordon had used to film unsuspecting naked women and girls he knew.

In total, Gordon had 12,529 indecent images of children, including over 2,000 of the most extreme images. This included 436 images of children he had covertly recorded himself.

On 16th January, he was sentenced to six years and eight months in prison at Snaresbrook Crown Court.

Detective Constable James Cronin said: “This has been a complex investigation involving specialist officers undertaking countless hours of work to uncover his wrongdoing and locate and assist victims of his abuse.

“The victims, especially the children, have shown incredible bravery by coming forward and sharing their story.

“Anyone who believes they have been a victim of child abuse should contact police on 101 and, as this case demonstrates, we will carry out a thorough investigation and bring perpetrators to justice.”

Man jailed for life for young dad’s murder

A man has been jailed for life after murdering a Walthamstow dad as he tried to defend his brother during a fight.

Mohammad Raza Gulzar, 29, lived with his wife and two young children in Walthamstow and was attacked just before 10.30pm on 17th June 2021.

Police were called to reports of a fight in High Road, Whetstone, in Barnet and found Mohammad with multiple knife wounds.

Over a month later, police finally arrested the culprit: Abraheem Sikander, a 24-year-old from Barnet. He was found guilty of murder at the Old Bailey in November and sentenced last month.

On 13th January, Sikander was sentenced to life imprisonment and must serve a minimum of 21 years before he

can be considered for parole.

Detective Chief Inspector Laurence Smith said: “Sikander is a dangerous man who is now behind bars for a considerable amount of time because of his violent actions.

“This was an extremely complex investigation which demanded the wide-ranging skills and total commitment of dedicated detectives, alongside a good deal of co-operation from partner organisations and local people in Whetstone.

“My message to men of violence is clear[...] if you kill or seriously injure someone on the streets of London or assist those involved in such crimes, Met officers have the tenacity and the technological tools to track you down and bring you to justice.”



Walthamstow dad Mohammad Raza Gulzar (courtesy of Met Police)

Man sought after Walthamstow stabbing

Police investigating a stabbing in Walthamstow last year are asking the public for help to find the suspect (pictured right).

On 28th September, at around noon, a man in his 20s was attacked in Forest Road, close to the junction with Spruce Hills Road.

The victim was approached by a stranger, who had a brief argument with him before stabbing him once and fleeing the scene.

He was discovered by police officers on patrol and taken to hospital by the London Ambulance Service. He has since been discharged.



The man police want to speak with **Credit** Met Police

Detective Constable India Allen, responsible for policing Walthamstow, said: “We have undertaken several lines of enquiry in an attempt to identify the suspect in this stabbing without success so we are now asking the public to assist us.

“Do you recognise this male? Can you provide any information which could help us locate him? If you can, please get in contact with police immediately.”

Anyone with information is asked to call police on 101 or tweet @metcc and quote CAD 2821/28Sep22 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

HOUSING

Council-owned developer could become landlord

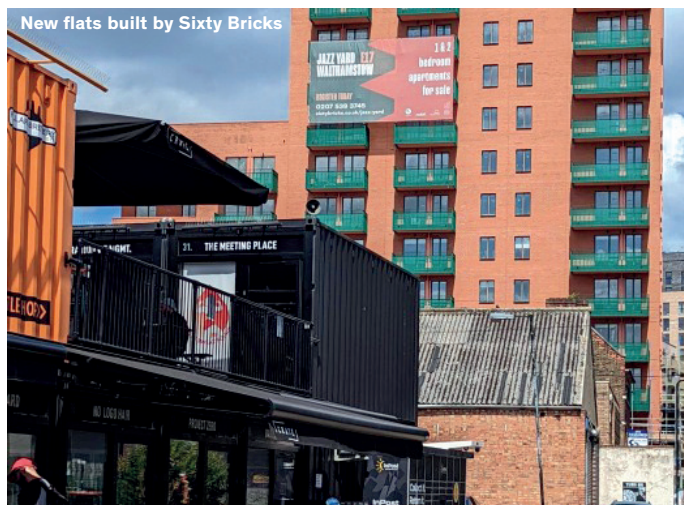
by Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

The housing developer owned by Waltham Forest Council could become a landlord to speed up its efforts to build thousands of homes in the next 15 years.

Set up in 2016, Sixty Bricks has so far built 299 new homes, about two-thirds of which are for social rent, with a budget of around £100million.

The council hopes this will increase to 5,000 homes by 2037, as part of its overall ambition to see 27,000 new homes built in the borough in this period.

Sixty Bricks' business plan, approved by cabinet on 12th January, shows it is considering a number of changes to reach this goal, including becoming a social housing landlord or "registered provider".



This would mean that, instead of passing finished homes to the council, Sixty Bricks could manage them itself in order to "accelerate housing delivery and improve scheme viability" by allowing government funding for affordable homes and income from right-to-buy to "pass through" the company.

Speaking to the Local Democracy Reporting Service,

Conservative councillor John Moss said the council "absolutely should not" approve the change.

He said: "It would be contrary to the purpose for which [Sixty Bricks] was established: namely to provide the council with new affordable homes, owned by the council.

"It would risk a return to the bad old days of Ascham

Homes, which cost the council millions of pounds."

Ascham Homes was an arm's-length organisation that managed the borough's council homes between 2003 and 2015. During that period, the council was forced to bail Ascham Homes out on two occasions to avoid financial collapse, costing taxpayers at least £7.6million.

The business plan presented to council leaders set out a number of other possible changes at the developer, including partnering with other developers, investing outside of the borough and building flats for rent on the private market.

However, the report also notes the risk posed by uncertainty in the housing market due to "high interest rates not seen in decades, rising build costs and a period of political uncertainty".

New flats on Marlowe Road Estate Credit Penny Dampier



Council offers to buy flat block developer cannot sell

by Victoria Munro

A block of flats on a Walthamstow estate that the developer cannot sell could be bought by Waltham Forest Council to prevent the project stalling.

The regeneration of Marlowe Road Estate by developer Countryside, also building the planned flats around the town hall, was first agreed in 2016. The plans entailed demolishing the 298 low-rise flats around Northwood Tower and replacing them with 448 new homes.

Last year, after it had already built more than 300 flats, Countryside won permission to add an extra 150 homes onto the site in the final phases of construction, citing a £10.5million "viability deficit".

However, a report prepared for council leaders last month states "it is important for Countryside" that it finds a buyer for a planned block of 47 shared ownership flats before the final stages of construction begin – and the council has decided to make an offer.

The report adds: "Countryside is looking to secure a buyer for these homes as it is not a registered provider and [is] therefore unable to sell the units directly itself as shared ownership.

"The acquisition of [the block] is considered to be a good opportunity and investment for the council [and] will facilitate the continued delivery of the Marlowe Road regeneration.

"In the event that the council did not purchase [the block], Countryside would need to find another registered provider[...] This would result in an additional landlord at Marlowe Road and result in a more complex management structure on the estate. This could also cause a significant delay to the scheme.

"Sales of the units will be prioritised to those already living and working in the borough, in line with the council's shared ownership policy."

Council leaders agreed to make a "financially viable and competitive offer" to Countryside for the flats, although the exact amount was not publicly revealed, using grant money from the Greater London Authority designated for affordable housing.

The report states a possible risk of the purchase is that a "prolonged market downturn could leave the council with units that it is unable to sell or that are devalued from the price that it paid".

However, the report notes that the flats are not due to be completed and ready for purchase until 2025.

Three new blocks being squeezed onto estate

by Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

Three new flat blocks with a total of 83 homes will be built between the existing buildings of a Walthamstow estate.

The £34million project will still require planning permission but was approved in outline terms by Waltham Forest Council leaders last month.

In addition to the new blocks, Priory Court Estate will also receive a "multi-use games area" and new CCTV and lighting.

Of the new flats, 43 will be sold on the private market and the rest will be either sold as shared-ownership or rented to council tenants.

At a cabinet meeting on 13th January, lead member for housing and regeneration Ahsan Khan said it was

"challenging" to ensure half of the new homes were affordable.

He added: "Hopefully this project is [good] not just for new buildings but also those who live around that estate."

Council leader Grace Williams, who is also the ward councillor for Priory Court residents, said she has been "working hard" to improve the estate since she was elected in 2014.

She said: "It's been done by consulting residents and identifying the existing benefits, which is why it has taken so long to get that scheme right."

Residents were first consulted on the plans in December 2019, when the council intended to build 118 new flats.

The new blocks will be built by the council-owned development company Sixty Bricks.

The private homes will be funded through a £17m loan to Sixty Bricks from the



council's general fund, while the affordable units will be funded by a £17m loan from the council's ring-fenced housing account.

Hinting at the "challenges" faced by financing the scheme, the report says build costs have jumped by 20% in the last 12-18 months due to "Brexit

and market conditions".

According to the council's "framework" for building new homes using its housing account funds, the affordable homes should generate enough money to cover their operating costs, generate one percent growth and be paid back within 40 years.

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LICENSING ACT 2003

Application for the Grant of a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that **Defrim Gagja** has applied to the London Borough of Waltham Forest for the grant of Premises licence at **ENDRI'S Café – Restaurant & Delicatessen, 54-56 Wood Street, Walthamstow, London E17 3HT**. The nature of application as follows:

- To permit the sale of alcohol consumption on and off the premises: from Monday to Sunday from 10:30 to 23:00, Recorded music from Monday to Sunday from 11:00 to 23:00 and opening hours of the premises from Monday to Sunday from 06:00 to 23:00 including Public Holidays and Bank Holidays.

The Licensing register listing full details of the application is kept by the Licensing Service, Town Hall, Fellowship Square, Forest Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 4JF. The application may be viewed Monday to Friday between the hours of 9am–5pm (except Bank Holidays).

Any person wishing to make a representation in respect of the above activities may do so in writing to the Licensing Service, Town Hall, Fellowship Square, Forest Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 4JF. or via email: Licensing@walthamforest.gov.uk.

Representations must be received no later than: **15 February 2023**.

It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application. A person is liable to an unlimited fine on conviction should such a false statement be made.

Dated: 18 January 2023
Bilimway: 07772 594087

If you need to advertise your licence application, your local paper will help you with that:



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Call 07711 057 096

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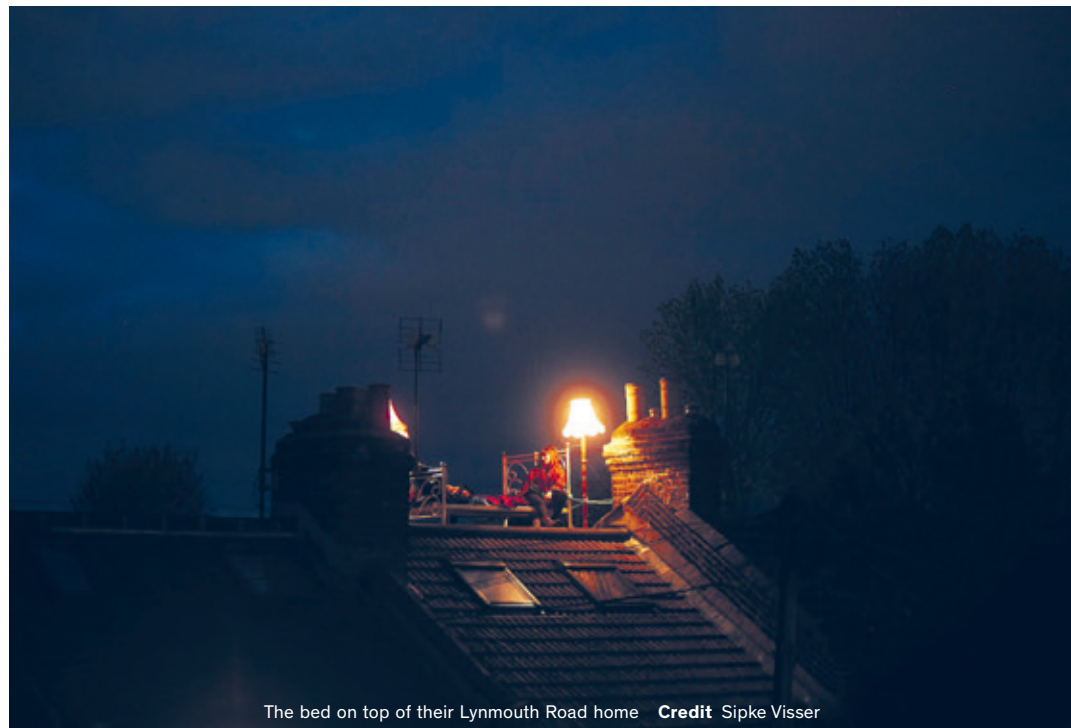
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ARTS & CULTURE

Rooftop stunt raises funds for solar panels



The bed on top of their Lynmouth Road home Credit Sipke Visser

Two Walthamstow artists have raised enough money to install solar panels on 35 homes in their road after weeks sleeping on their own roof. Dan Edelstyn and Hilary

Powell spent months raising money to turn Lynmouth Road into a local “solar power station”, with the first panels due for installation in March, and hope their street will act as a “template” for the rest of the UK.

After printing and selling their own currency to raise money last summer, the pair moved a bed onto their roof in late November and slept there for 23 nights in a bid to attract donations.

The tactic paid off and, on 15th January, they announced they had surpassed their target of £100,000, raising just over £113,000.

Hilary told BBC Radio London: “It’s not just about this one street, it’s about this as a trigger for a street-by-street approach.

“The kind of growing awakening that we’re seeing all around us [shows] that we can have the power to make change.”

The pair said the project was a “special experience” that brought the community in their road closer together, adding that some neighbours even brought them breakfast while they were on the roof.

The couple also helped Walthamstow’s Barn Croft Primary School create a Christmas single in a bid to raise money to install its own solar panels.

The song – titled *You’re The Voice* – reached number 21 in the UK charts, while the fundraiser has so far collected more than £50,000 in donations.

‘Cultural quarter’ wins £17m cash injection

by Victoria Munro

Walthamstow culture has won a multi-million cash injection from the government, despite apparent confusion on how the money will be used.

On 18th January, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities announced it had awarded Waltham Forest Council £17.2million to “restore and reimagine underused buildings in Walthamstow”.

In a document listing the successful bidders around the country, it added that the “Walthamstow Culture For All” money was intended to “offer new cultural and educational opportunities to disadvantaged communities”.

When asked to specify which underused buildings would receive the investment, Waltham Forest Council issued a press release stating the money would instead pay for “improvements to public spaces in High Street, Hoe Street and St James Street”.

These improvements, which “could include more lighting or new street furniture”, will reportedly be used “to make the town centre a more appealing, inviting place” in order to bolster the council’s vision of Walthamstow as a new “cultural quarter”.

The council’s co-deputy leader Ahsan Khan said: “I am very excited about the work that’s taking place in the town centre.

“The upgrades will support the Soho Theatre Walthamstow project and help bring extra visitors to our borough who will bring a huge economic boost to local traders and businesses.

“In the next few years, the borough will be bustling with extra energy and creativity as it becomes not just a place but a real destination.”

The plans are reminiscent of a £1.79m facelift for Walthamstow town centre, which the council announced in January last year.

At the time, the council said the far smaller chunk of money would be spent on street lighting to make the area feel safer and a side-entrance for Soho Theatre Walthamstow.

A further £1.9m would be spent turning nearby council properties in Hatherley Mews into commercial space and accommodation for performers.

According to a recent council report outlining the future of the borough’s council-owned cultural spaces, there are a number of “underused buildings” in Walthamstow that could have been the subject of the Levelling Up bid.

These include One Hoe Street, Chestnuts House and Walthamstow’s Assembly Hall, all of which the council hopes to see reopen and start turning a profit in the coming years.

New theatre about two-thirds done

by Victoria Munro

The hotly anticipated Soho Theatre Walthamstow is still due to open this year, despite only being approximately two-thirds complete.

The 950-seat comedy and theatre venue was originally due to open this March but, according to developer Willmott Dixon, was only 60% finished at the start of the year.

A Waltham Forest Council spokesperson told the *Echo* the first events will still take place at an unspecified time “later this year” but that the “full programme” will not begin until early 2024.

They added: “The new venue, which will be one of London’s biggest outside the West End, will host world-famous comedians, emerging stand-ups, pantomime, music, live theatre and much more.

“Ticket discounts and priority booking will be available for local people, and new

spaces in the theatre will allow opportunities for Waltham Forest schools and local groups to take part in creative community activities.”

The figure of 60% completion comes from an invitation to apply for a sneak peek inside the active building site in March, as part of the construction industry’s Open Doors Week.

Residents were invited to see inside the “substantially complete” project and “see the work that has so far been undertaken in converting and refurbishing the former EMD cinema into an elegant theatre”.

However, following the original publication of this article online, an Opens Doors spokesperson told the *Echo*: “Unfortunately, due to the pace of work at that site, they will be unable to take part in Open Doors Week 2023 and will not be opening this time.”

The listing on the Open Doors website adds: “The



Inside Soho Theatre Walthamstow last March

building is a Grade 2-listed building so the refurbishment has been complex, but thoughtfully undertaken to repair and maintain many of the Art Deco and historic features.”

By last March, the renovation of the former EMD cinema in Hoe Street had already cost

£30million, despite the project’s estimated cost being under £20m when first approved in 2019.

Waltham Forest Council estimates it will add about £52m to the local economy in the next decade and are investing millions in the surrounding area to encourage the night time economy.

HEALTH

GP urges NHS not to close end-of-life unit

by Josh Mellor,
Local Democracy Reporter

A Walthamstow GP has urged local NHS bosses not to close an “invaluable” end-of-life unit when Whipps Cross Hospital is rebuilt.

Currently, Whipps’ eleven-bed palliative care unit The Margaret Centre is the only service of its kind available to local residents but is not included in outline plans for the new hospital.

Instead, the North East London NHS (NHS NEL) plans to introduce a “hybrid” model of end-of-life care – supporting dying people outside hospital or on “designated” beds in other wards.

On 17th January, Walthamstow GP Dr Kayode Oremakinde told a meeting of councillors scrutinising the hospital rebuild that The Margaret Centre “provides an invaluable resource for the community”.

He added: “For doctors like myself it’s such a wonderful place to go and to share grief. Yes, some people want to die at home and that’s their choice but there are some that need this centre.”

NHS NEL argues that staffing a small, specialist team in a unit like

The Margaret Centre is “more expensive than other options”.

According to draft plans, their preferred model also provides “a choice of location” for dying patients and ensures those not in hospital are “receiving the right care in the best supportive environment”.

Resident Gail Penfold told the meeting the “many benefits” of the centre would outweigh any costs, claiming the public would gladly fundraise for it.

She added: “The fact is that we’re all going to die – dying in dignity in a pleasant, non-clinical environment is what we deserve.”

Despite concerns that the centre’s fate is already sealed, NHS NEL’s director of transition Siobhan Harper insisted her team is still “learning and listening”.

She said: “There is no agenda here around The Margaret Centre, we’re trying to do what’s right for the population.”



Whipps Cross Hospital

Grieving mum calls for more warnings about baby slings

by Josh Mellor,
Local Democracy Reporter

A Walthamstow mother whose newborn died after being carried in a sling told an inquest he “would still be here” if she had been better warned of the risks.

Toby Barwick, aged two months, died at Whipps Cross Hospital on 12th February in 2021 after he suddenly stopped breathing earlier that day.

His mother Briony had walked to her sister’s house with him in a sling, having followed NHS advice about waiting until he weighed enough for it to be used.

However, at the first day of a four-day inquest into his tragic death on 23rd January, she said there was a “dearth” of safety information about the suffocation

risk posed by slings.

She told the court: “If I had read [NHS] guidance then I truly believe that my baby would still be here. I wish to god I had taken on board the messaging that [slings] could be fatal.”

Following Toby’s birth during the pandemic, Briony’s postnatal appointments with maternity staff, held by video call, reportedly featured no advice “whatsoever” about slings.

While the sling, manufactured by Baby K’tan, had a label warning that the baby’s face should be checked for suffocation “at all times”, Briony said: “I must have read it but the message didn’t land... it simply didn’t land. God knows I wish it had.”

Recalling the day Toby died, she said he had “screamed” while she walked to her sister’s house but

fell asleep by the time they arrived.

She added: “The material was gently over his face and head but I had no reason to believe that there was anything to block his breathing because he had been screaming. I was unaware of the guidance and would never ever put the life of my son in danger.”

An hour or two after arriving at her sister’s, Briony realised Toby had stopped breathing and called an ambulance. Despite attempts to resuscitate him, he was later pronounced dead at Whipps Cross Hospital.

The inquest is due to finish after the *Echo* goes to print and will hear from manufacturer K’tan, University College London Hospital, where Toby was born, and Barts Health, where Briony received maternity care.

No sign of hospital funds promised in August

by Josh Mellor,
Local Democracy Reporter

Government funding promised last summer for the new Whipps Cross Hospital has yet to arrive.

During a visit to Whipps Cross in August, health secretary Steve Barclay announced he had approved “up to £28 million” for the first stage of the project.

The money will mostly pay for a new 500-space six-storey car park, needed to replace current parking spaces and thus free up land for the new hospital building.

However, on 12th January, Whipps Cross redevelopment director Alastair Finney said the money had not arrived, meaning the team can “see no way” construction will begin this year.

He told a meeting of the Whipps Cross joint health overview and scrutiny committee: “Steve Barclay wrote to [Chingford MP] Iain Duncan Smith saying that he had approved the funding.

“Then we were told by the national hospital team that they needed to review the business case before they were able to confirm funding.

“We now see no way construction of the car park can begin before 2024. The assumption is that the overall construction of the car park needs to be completed before the hospital can begin – so it’s not a positive picture.”

Finney added that he had expected “formal approval” of the car park to be agreed by the government’s major projects review group (MPRG) in December.

But he now understands that the new Whipps Cross building – which gained planning permission in November 2021 – was not discussed and that, “contrary” to what he had been led to believe, “no national progress” has been announced.

Demolition of old Whipps Cross Hospital buildings ended last June and, without additional funding, no further work to prepare the site can take place.

Committee deputy chair Beverley Brewer said it was “devastating” to hear that construction is unlikely to start before 2024. She added: “It goes without saying that residents will be disappointed and it’s unacceptable that there’s been no feedback to the trust.”

When contacted by the Local Democracy Reporting Service, a spokesperson for the Department



The Secretary of State for Health promised the next chunk of funding last August
Credit @SteveBarclay

of Health and Social Care (DHSC) said the department is working through the MPRG’s recommendations on value for money.

However, the spokesperson said the government remains “committed to delivering a new hospital” in Leytonstone by 2030 and will set out the next steps “in due course”.

They added: “Final funding allocations are only confirmed once the full business case has been reviewed and agreed, including by HM Treasury.”

Finney said the “elephant in the room” for the government is the shortage of funding for Boris Johnson’s flagship 2019 election pledge to build 40 new hospitals.

He added: “The original £3.7billion allocated to the national hospital programme, we all recognise, was never going to be sufficient.”

Due to increased construction costs, the price tag for a new Whipps Cross Hospital building is likely to have grown from the most recent estimate of £500million, given in 2019.

The DHSC is hoping the promised hospitals will be “built more rapidly” and at a lower cost by using a standardised design for several hospitals.

Sir Iain Duncan Smith told the LDRS he has had personal assurances from Steve Barclay about the funding.

He added: “I am in regular contact with the Secretary of State and his department, following the progress, and I will continue to do everything I can to ensure the funds are released.”

Ilford South Labour MP Sam Tarry said: “The NHS is facing a humanitarian crisis, with millions of people on waiting lists, while accident and emergency departments are stretched to breaking point.

“It’s therefore imperative that Whipps Cross Hospital is fast-tracked. Any failure on this would be a betrayal of patients and their families.”

AROUND THE BOROUGH

WALTHAMSTOW

Park 'as big as 23 tennis courts' planned

The immense housing development proposed for Blackhorse Lane will include a new public park "about as big as 23 tennis courts", new planning documents reveal.

Last month, Waltham Forest Council's planning committee received a briefing about outline plans for the Uplands Business Park, ahead of a formal meeting to approve or reject the proposal later this year.

Landowner BlackRock and developer NEAT plan to build approximately 1,800 homes on the industrial estate in towers of up to 145metres tall – nearly half the height of the Shard.

Following consultation with residents, in which more than 80% objected to the height of the towers, they told councillors they

Wetlands Waterside Credit NEAT



had removed one of the towers to have more room for the new "Wetlands Waterside" park.

However, despite reducing the number of towers, the number of planned flats has not decreased, suggesting the remaining buildings will be slightly higher overall.

The Uplands development will be built in two phases, with the first due to begin next year and the second "likely to start in 2026".

During the first phase, all existing businesses on the industrial estate will be moved into new spaces in Goldsmith Yard, near Uplands House, and a block of 119 flats will be built.

During the second phase, towers with the remaining approximately 1,700 planned flats will be built, alongside "retail, leisure and community spaces" and the new park.

According to the document distributed to councillors, the developers will pay around £16million to the council in Section 106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy charges, intended to pay for infrastructure to support new residents.

The development's industrial spaces will allegedly create more than 1,000 new jobs, with "a particular focus on enabling the food and beverage sector to flourish".

LEYTON

Girl, 10, grabbed by 'suspicious' man

Police are looking for this man after "suspicious behaviour" towards a ten-year-old girl.

In November, he allegedly approached her twice in the Flempton Road area and, on the second occasion, grabbed her by the arm.

While she was unharmed, Detective Constable Jaime Thorn said she was "understandably shaken and scared" and "continues to struggle".

The man is described as a 5'9' white man in his 40s with a "medium stocky build", a bald head and a bushy black beard. He reportedly has a black flower tattoo covering the front of his neck.

DC Thorn said police are "confident" anyone who knows the man will recognise him and should come forward.

He added: "While officers are keeping an open mind[...] initial enquiries suggest the girl was likely not approached at



An impression of the man police hope to find Credit Met Police

random and that the man may know her or those close to her. "We have no information to suggest that there is a wider risk to children in the area."

Anyone with information should call 101, giving the reference 4924383/22, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

LEYTONSTONE

Nursery 'inadequate' after safety risks spotted

A Leytonstone nursery has been rated "inadequate" after an Ofsted inspector spotted a number of "risks to children's safety".

Inspector Nataliia Moroz visited Docklands Day Nursery in Fairlop Road, which cares for more than 40 children aged one to four years old, last November and published her damning report last month.

She described "risks to children's safety", including "damaged radiator covers", babies sleeping "under an unsafe shelf with heavy toys on" and toddlers expected to use scissors "before they develop the necessary physical skills".

Responding to the report, a spokesperson from the nursery said management and staff "are very disheartened" by their poor rating but have been working since November to improve.

The inspection report alleged that "children's learning, safety and wellbeing are not prioritised" at the nursery but acknowledged that "staff are kind and build warm relationships with children".

The report reads: "Babies spend



Docklands Day Nursery Credit Google Streetview

long periods sitting at tables without any activity or engagement [and] staff working with toddlers do not think about what they need to have learned before they can move to the next step.

"Staff do not know how to put babies and toddlers down to sleep safely in line with government guidance. In addition, they do not identify and eliminate hazards in the environment.

"These included damaged radiator covers, damaged sleeping mats, paint used with babies that was unsuitable for their age, sleeping babies located under an unsafe shelf with heavy toys on,

building materials accessible to children in the garden, and children allowed to walk around while eating."

Docklands Day Nursery was last inspected in 2019 and given Ofsted's second highest rating of "good".

The nursery's spokesperson added: "We are doing everything we can to prepare for reinspection and we hope to have a better outcome in our next inspection.

"We are pleased to say that our current team of staff are working exceptionally hard to further improve the outcomes for the children in our care."

CHINGFORD

Teens barred from popular pub on weekend nights

A Chingford pub must now bar customers younger than 21 on weekend nights or the night before bank holidays after a string of violent incidents.

Rusty Bike in Station Road had new conditions added to its alcohol licence last month by Waltham Forest Council's licensing committee, on the request of local police.

The pub's staff will now have to conduct random bag searches and serve drinks in "toughened glass", after a woman had a glass broken over her head.

Anyone younger than 21 will be barred after 10pm on weekends or before a bank holiday and, on these nights, the pub must shut at 1am and stop serving half an hour earlier.

Police requested the meeting due to concern "about the

escalation of violence" after five crimes were reported in or just outside the pub in a year.

Most recently, on 11th November, police claim a 19-year-old was allowed inside the pub with a knife, later used to stab two young men nearby after a fight inside the building.

In her submission to the committee, PC Kerry-Ann Tilley said that, if either party involved had been asked to leave after the argument, "it is likely the assault [outside] would not have taken place".

She also noted that the suspect was not searched or asked to show ID when entering and that the pub seems to attract a younger crowd.

However, she conceded that the manager and owner "are passionate about the business" and "have shown willingness to implement change".



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