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WALTHAM FOREST ECHO

Free
Oct 2023, N° 103

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Two-thirds of council-owned schools contain asbestos

by Josh Mellor,
Local Democracy Reporter

Two-thirds of council-owned schools in Waltham Forest contain asbestos that could be deadly if it is not safely managed.

Fears about the safety of school buildings have increased since the government abruptly closed more than 150 school buildings across the country due to the presence of crumbling concrete known as unstable reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (Raac).

Although Waltham Forest Council says it is "not aware" of any school buildings in the borough that have Raac, it has confirmed that dangerous asbestos is present in many school buildings.

Until the year 2000 asbestos was commonly used as a building material and has been described as a "hidden killer" of thousands of people each year that can lead to an incurable type of cancer if it is disturbed and then inhaled.

However, when asbestos is identified in buildings, it is usually left in place with safety measures unless it is in poor condition or is likely to be disturbed.

The condition of the asbestos, and what parts of the schools contain it, is unclear. None of the 38 schools on the list have responded to requests for comment from the Local Democracy Reporting Service (LDRS).

A council spokesperson told the LDRS it carries out "regular



Credit Cory Doctorow via Flickr

management surveys" for the substance and an "annual review" of all 38 schools.

They added: "Where material containing asbestos is in good condition and is unlikely to be disturbed it will be clearly identified and left in place with a regular inspection regime.

"Any material containing asbestos in a poor condition will be carefully assessed by approved contractors before being repaired, encapsulated, or removed in accordance with legislation.

"The safety of school staff and students is our top priority.

"We will not hesitate before addressing any issues with materials containing asbestos in council-owned buildings that could

pose a risk to health."

According to the council's response to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request made by the LDRS, 27 of the 38 school buildings owned by the council contain white asbestos, or chrysotile, which was the most commonly used type before it was banned in 1999.

Eleven of those schools also contain brown asbestos, or amosite.

Two schools in the borough – Walthamstow School for Girls and Newport Primary School in Leyton – contain crocidolite, or blue asbestos, one of the most dangerous types.

Crocidolite is regarded as the most dangerous type of asbestos because it is made up of

extremely fine sharp fibres that can be more easily inhaled and lodged in the lungs or abdomen.

According to Public Health England, "short-term and high-level" inhalation of asbestos can lead to lung cancer, mesothelioma as well as pleural disorders, such as pleural plaques.

Asbestos, when inhaled, has a latency period of approximately 30 years, meaning that many only develop cancer decades after exposure.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), a government regulator, estimates that asbestos exposure is linked to around 5,000 deaths a year.

Since the 1980s, Waltham Forest Council has faced several controversies linked to the safe management of asbestos in its buildings, including at a school and the town hall.

Both the council and its part-owned property consultancy company NPS London Limited, now known as Evolve Norse, have criminal convictions for health and safety failings.

In 2012, the HSE prosecuted NPS London Limited and another two construction companies – leading to fines totalling £1.2million – for potentially exposing workers to asbestos at St Mary's Primary School in Walthamstow.

Records of council asbestos surveys show that in 2019 it carried out "targeted" surveys of asbestos in drinking fountains in 21 schools. The council told the *Echo* that it carried out "R&D

asbestos surveys in anticipation of upgrading school premises by installing drinking fountains".

Nick Tiratsoo, who runs local blog *Waltham Forest Matters*, has urged the council to be "open" about asbestos in schools to assure the public that the appropriate safety measures have been taken.

Nick, who has played a key role in investigating the council's safety breaches and reporting concerns to HSE, said: "In the past, and this is particularly true of the school in Walthamstow, there was a lot of confusion about different surveys done and who was in charge and so on.

"Sub-contractors and different agents were used to investigate and it seems quite often that confusion continues, in the town hall at least.

"For parents, I don't think anybody should panic necessarily, but I think they should ask for assurances as well."

Mick Holder, a local health and safety specialist, said: "If the building was constructed before the 1990s or so it will probably contain asbestos of one kind or another.

"Crumbly collapsing buildings are likely to expose and or disturb asbestos nearby. These buildings may have historically been releasing asbestos fibres anyway, Raac or no Raac.

"This is an opportunity to remove all asbestos in those

Continued on Page-3

NEWS

Council to remove 'pollution eating' plant wall covered in dead moss

The council has said it will look at 'alternative plant species' to replace the moss

by Marco Marcelline

Two "permanent" urban greening installations that use mosses to absorb air pollution are to be removed by the council because the plants have died.

The large moss-filled towers, called 'CityTrees', are both located in Leytonstone; one sits directly outside Leytonstone Station next to the A12, while the other is found at the intersection of Leytonstone High Road, Leytonstone Road, Cann Hall Road and Crownfield Road.

The CityTrees were designed by German startup Green City Solutions, and are powered by solar panels fitted on top. The installations also contain a water tank, automatic irrigation system and plant sensors that are powered using solar panels and batteries.

In official council documents the moss-walled infrastructure is described as having the ability to remove as much pollution as 275 trees.

On 6th September Clyde Loakes, deputy leader and cabinet member for climate and air quality, said the council will "shortly be removing both City Trees"



The dead 'CityTree' at the intersection of Leytonstone High Road and Crownfield Road Credit LDPS

to its depot after experiencing "ongoing irrigation and planting maintenance challenges".

The council did not specify what the irrigation or planting maintenance challenges were but said that it may identify "alternative plant species to fill out the City Trees" while "reviewing the future" of the two installations.

Cllr Loakes added: "We will carefully consider costs and sustainability to achieve a solution that means they have a role to play. We will publish a full update

as soon as we have thoroughly investigated all our options."

The council did not respond when asked if it could provide either a firm or rough date for when the CityTrees would be removed. As of 28th September both structures remain standing despite the council stating that they would "shortly" be removed.

Green City Solutions told the *Echo*: "The mentioned project is not under the purview of Green City Solutions, and thus we do not have influence on it. Therefore,

we cannot provide a statement regarding the progress and the current status of the project."

Green City Solutions added: "In this case, we would endorse the establishment of a direct communication and business relationship between Waltham Forest and Green City Solutions to work towards a solution. We are always happy to assist!"

In a case study document on street pollution published in October 2020, the council described the CityTrees as being located on "some of the most polluted areas and roads in the borough", with the stand outside Leytonstone Station particularly being in an area with some of the highest nitrogen dioxide levels in Waltham Forest.

In a council document the unit is described as "a free-standing outdoor air cleaning system that uses the power of biotechnology to emulate the pollution-reduction benefits of 275 urban trees".

The CityTree is also described as being "the world's first biotech pollution filter" that uses "living plants to filter pollutants from air, creating microenvironments of cleaner air that benefit residents and passers-by".

St Mary's Church nominated for architectural conservation award

The church and mixed community space is up against Battersea Power Station for a conservation gong

by Marco Marcelline

St Mary's Church in Walthamstow Village is up against Battersea Power Station for an architectural award.

The active church, which triples up as a community centre, arts hub and cafe, has been nominated for an architectural conservation award in a nod to the success of its regeneration project.

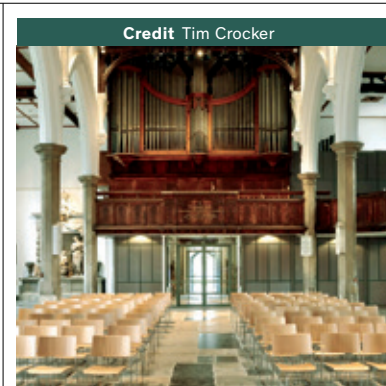
St Mary's began its regeneration project after an architect's report in 2015 indicated the church had to make urgent repairs to its building. The report prompted the church to look at how it could better serve

the community around it. Nowadays it is home to the popular Froth & Rind cafe, and an arts exhibition space.

The regeneration project received £1.67million from the Heritage Lottery Fund and has roughly cost £3.4m in total.

Reverend Vanessa Conant, the rector at St Mary's Walthamstow, said: "In 2016, St Mary's congregation began working to find a way to make essential repairs to Walthamstow's oldest building, to get our building open throughout the week, to make the church a more welcoming space, and to serve more people in Walthamstow."

"To be nominated for this award is a recognition of the many people who have supported this inclusive project, including Walthamstow residents, many of whom have donated money and are enthusiastically supporting the cafe and our many community activities."



Credit Tim Crocker

"It is also a recognition of the excellent professional work that went into re-designing, repairing and renovating this important ancient church and vital community resource. We're proud to be nominated for this award and thankful to all who have made this project possible."

The New London Awards (NLA), supported by the Mayor of London, celebrates projects of varying scales across London. Shortlisted projects are built and

unbuilt; their common thread is a sustainable, well-designed and considered approach.

Following the shortlist announcement, an international jury will select winners for each category. Winning projects will be announced at an award show taking place in November at the Guildhall and will include a three-course meal and after-party.

In its shortlist announcement, NLA London describes St Mary's Walthamstow as a "transformative heritage project which both preserves and enhances a historic asset, and creates a welcoming community and arts hub within a working church".

Recently, St Mary's hosted *Material Witnesses*, an exhibition that celebrated local people through the lens of fashion and textiles.

Voting closes on 8th October. You can vote here: nla.london/projects/st-marys-church-walthamstow



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NEWS

Walthamstow Empire cinema squatters evicted by council

Squatters were removed last month after the council regained full possession of the building

by Marco Marcelline

Squatters at the shuttered Walthamstow Empire were removed after the council reclaimed the lease from the cinema's owners on 12th September.

In a statement announcing the removal, Grace Williams, Waltham Forest Council leader, said that "all squatters were removed from the venue... thanks to the swift action of local police in partnership with council officers."

The council said the move came after it "regained full possession" of the property from Empire Cinemas.

Enzo Gomes, one of the squatters, told the *Echo* that a group of ten police officers demanded entry into the building. Enzo said he and the other squatters entered the building two weeks prior. He added that everyone cooperated with the police and that the eviction was peaceful.

The squatters had earlier plastered notices outside the cinema asserting their legal rights to occupy it and had threatened to prosecute anyone who forcibly entered.

In a statement, Cllr Williams said: "Following the unlicensed music event that took place at the former Empire Cinema building on Saturday 9th September, I'm pleased to say that thanks to the swift action of local police in partnership with council officers all squatters were removed from the venue."

"The council has regained full possession of the building



Police vans parked outside the Empire on 12th September

from the leaseholder – we have put security in place to keep it secure and are recording all the damage that has been caused to this important community asset by the squatters. I'd like to thank the police for their assistance."

The *Echo* asked the council what security measures were being put in place but we did not receive a response.

The Scene, the building that the 1,200 seat cinema is housed in, is also the site for restaurants, shops and 121 apartments. In an email sent to residents and businesses by The Scene's property team, the council was said to have "organised for 24/7 security at the commercial unit" while being "in the process of changing the locks, securing the premises and cleaning the area".

The Metropolitan Police said the removal of the squatters was a "matter for the landlord of the building" and added that "police are sometimes present in such circumstances to prevent any possible breach of the peace."

A resident living in an apartment above the cinema told the *Echo* that the removal of the squatters meant he would be able to sleep at night. Romas Valancius said: "The rave and the squatters presented a massive fire safety risk for us. People were smoking down there [during the rave] and there is a lot of combustible stuff down

there that could have turned our apartments into a barbecue."

Looking forward Romas hopes that the old cinema will be used as a community space that offers activities such as drama and art classes for children and young people. Meanwhile, the council has confirmed that it is in discussions with a "range of cinema operators" as it seeks to return the building to use as a cinema "as soon as possible".

Romas criticised the lack of maintenance or any safety checks on the property after its closure

on 7th July. He said: "The squatting could have been prevented altogether had there been fortnightly or weekly maintenance checks on the building. A premises of that size needs caretaking."

The council has said that the cinema owners retained all security responsibilities after the Empire shut.

The administrator of Walthamstow Cinemas 2 Ltd, the company that owned the cinema, confirmed to the *Echo* that it had disclaimed the lease.

Cinema squatter speaks to the Echo

"LONDON IS TOO EXPENSIVE. Here in London you just work like a slave to pay bills. I'm not a slave anymore." Enzo Gomes is one of the squatters who made the Empire their home for two weeks before being removed by the council. He speaks while sitting on a mattress in what used to be the ticket hall of the cinema.

Born and raised in Brazil, at 18 Enzo moved to Israel and volunteered in a kibbutz (a collective agrarian community) after being kicked out of home by his father. There, he "worked in watermelon fields in the desert".

He arrived in London via Egypt in 1989, and began squatting two years later.

Enzo says how he started taking drugs early in his youth. At 14 he was regularly smoking weed and a year later he began snorting cocaine. Now he only smokes cannabis, he says.

Gomes has three grown-up children; a 27-year-old daughter, and two 23-year old twin sons.

His ex-wife left him when his children were teenagers. Until

that point they were all living in squats; he smiles as he recalls how teachers at his sons' school had no clue that they were living in a squat. Enzo calls his kids "wonderful"; one of his sons has a four-month old baby, and his daughter is a mother to a five-year-old.

A gifted musician, producer and singer, Enzo uploads fast-paced remixes and edits of popular songs to his YouTube channel, FluorEnzo. His sons are also musically inclined and together the trio have busked on London street corners for years.

He doesn't hold back from dishing out words of wisdom that he has gathered from over three decades of squatting: "Once you have possessions you are in debt. We shouldn't have anything. Not having anything is my shield of protection; I don't get arrested, and I don't fear the police. I don't fear anything anymore – not even death."

The following morning Enzo was turfed out as the council regained full possession of the building. Speaking on the phone that afternoon he sounded unfazed and said he was already moving on to a new squatting spot.

Continued from Page-1

buildings and green retrofit or demolish and green rebuild, but the likely outcome will be extended closure, the provision of thousands of temporary [portable cabins] that become permanent and then crumble into disrepair as consecutive governments of all parties have done historically."

Which schools in the borough have asbestos?

All three types, including the most dangerous, crocidolite:

Walthamstow School for Girls, Newport Primary School.

Chrysotile (white asbestos) and amosite (brown asbestos):

Chapel End Infant School, Dawlish Primary School, Gwyn Jones Primary School, Henry Maynard Primary School, Leytonstone Secondary School, Mission Grove Primary School, Stoneydown Park Primary School, Thorpe Park Primary School, Whitehall Primary School.

Chrysotile (white asbestos):

Acacia Nursery, Ainslie Wood Primary School, Belmont Primary School, Chingford Church of England Primary School, Coppermill Primary School, George Tomlinson Primary School, Greenleaf Primary School, Handsworth Primary School, Jenny Hammond Primary School, Kelmscott Secondary School, The Hawkwood Group – Hawkwood Primary and Burnside Secondary, Low Hall Nursery, Oakhill Primary School, Parkside Primary School, Winns Primary School.

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A television company is making a social history series and is looking for moving image/footage of Walthamstow from the 1970s and 1980s.

If you have any footage from this time, please contact alexbooth@roganproductions.co.uk for more info about the series.

LICENSING ACT 2003

Application for the Grant of a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that **Cypriot Heights Ltd** has applied to the London Borough of Waltham Forest for the grant of a Premises Licence at Cypriot Heights, 170 Station Road, Chingford, London E4 6AN. The nature of the application is as follows:

- To permit the sale of Sale of Alcohol (ON sales): Sunday to Thursday, 12:00–23:00; Friday and Saturday, 12:00–02:00
- Late Night Refreshments: Friday and Saturday, 12:00–02:00 only
- Regulated Entertainment, Recorded Music, Live Music and Dance: Sunday to Thursday 12:00–23:00; Friday and Saturday, 12:00–02:00

The Licensing register listing full details of the application is kept by the Licensing Section, 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 Section, London Borough of Waltham Forest, Town Hall, Fellowship Square, Forest Road, Walthamstow, London E17 4JF or via email: Licensing@walthamforest.gov.uk

Representations must be received no later than **20th October 2023**.

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

Licences For Special Treatment Public Notice

Notice is given that **Nicole Badham** has applied to the London Borough of Waltham Forest for a Special Treatment Licence for:

- Waxing, manicure, pedicure, nail extensions, facials massage, body massage, ear piercing, ultra violet tanning, reiki, stone therapy, micro blading and mirco pigmentation
- Licence for the premises: **Ellie's Beautique, 42 Hatch Lane Chingford E4 6LQ**

Anyone wishing to oppose the application must give notice in writing to the Licensing Officer, Licensing Services, Public Control, Waltham Forest Town Hall, Fellowship Square, Forest Road, Walthamstow, London E17 4JF

WITHIN 28 DAYS OF PUBLICATION specifying the grounds of opposition. Persons objecting to the grant of a licence must be prepared to attend in person before a Committee of the Council.

To advertise your licence

Email licences@socialspider.com
Call 07732 000 430

NEWS

Single dad rehoused by council after 15 month wait

Petrus Burin was offered permanent accommodation days before bailiffs were due to remove him and his daughter from their rented home

by Marco Marcelline

A single dad facing eviction was permanently rehoused by the council just days before he was due to be turfed out by bailiffs.

Petrus Burin, a mental health worker, was set to be evicted from his private rented accommodation on 28th August after being served a section 21 'no-fault' eviction notice in March 2022.

Petrus had first contacted the council when he learned of the eviction early last year, but was only offered housing on 21st August 2023. He subsequently signed a twelve-month private tenancy agreement with a housing association, with the opportunity for renewal.

On 14th August, around 40 people attended a protest organised by the London Renters Union (LRU) to support Petrus and his 15-year-old daughter who is studying for her GCSEs.

LRU members at the demonstration, which took place outside council housing lead Ahsan Khan's surgery, demanded Petrus be rehoused in the borough before 22nd August.

In the week following the protest Petrus was contacted by housing officers to arrange accommodation for him and his daughter.

Petrus was then quickly offered viewings of properties and on 21st August he accepted a permanent offer of accommodation in Leytonstone which he has subsequently moved into. The new rented home is closer to his daughter's school and her friendship networks.

While grateful for the new accommodation Petrus said the past year and a half of housing limbo had been heavy for his emotional state.

Petrus said: "This has been 15 months of heartache and immense struggle. The council's approach has been impersonal and inhumane. People should

The London Renters Union (LRU) organised a protest in support of Petrus Burin on 14th August Credit LRU



not have to demand to be seen and heard; they should just be seen and heard."

Petrus added that the council's last-minute move to provide him with housing was triggered by the protest arranged by the LRU. "Without the protest [the council] wouldn't have acted. If they can [offer housing] for me, it proves they can do it for anyone."

Due to the stress caused by the threat of eviction and homelessness, Petrus has had to take leave from his job.

Petrus told the *Echo* how seven weeks after his sister died of cancer, his landlord told him his rent would be increased by 50%. After refusing to pay the rent increase, Petrus had arranged a six month tenancy agreement with the landlord while looking for a new home.

However, due to being on universal credit he said it was difficult to find suitable accommodation for him and his daughter. At the end of the agreement Petrus was served a no-fault eviction order.

Petrus said there was "no structure" to the interactions a council housing officer had

with him when he first notified the council about the eviction order last year. Inconsistent communication was then followed by "complete radio silence" before the council closed his case because there was "no imminent threat of eviction".

Through the entire process, Petrus said he was not offered any face-to-face meetings with any housing officers.

Liam Miller, spokesperson for the LRU, told the *Echo*: "Following our action Waltham Forest Council facilitated the rehousing of our member Petrus and his daughter in the borough."

"This was sorted out before he and his daughter were physically evicted from their home by bailiffs. As if losing a home were not stressful enough, to be unnecessarily put through bailiff eviction intensifies the distress and mental strain. Avoiding such an eviction and securing accommodation is a big win for Petrus."

Liam added: "Many local families in situations like Petrus' who face homelessness are placed in temporary accommodation outside the borough or even outside London, so we are relieved that Petrus and his

daughter will not be forced to move away from their social circles, work and school.

"It should not be necessary for London Renters Union to take direct action to get this issue resolved, but through this we have demonstrated the power that renters have when acting together in solidarity. We encourage all renters to join us and build our power further.

"Petrus' case has cast light on serious issues with how Waltham Forest Council approaches homelessness applications. Applicants often wait months with little or no communication from council officers and there is a total lack of availability of face-to-face meetings, which Waltham Forest still blames on the Covid pandemic despite many other London boroughs now offering them."

Cabinet member for housing and regeneration Ahsan Khan said: "After we were first approached by the resident in March 2022, we advised him that the eviction notice was not valid and offered to help get clarity from the landlord. Mr Burin engaged with our services again earlier this year and a homeless application was triggered. Mr Burin accepted our offer of accommodation on 21st August.

"We understand how difficult the threat of homelessness is for those who experience it. We always work hard using all the powers available to us to help those who approach us. We want to keep local people close to their friends, families, and support networks."

Cllr Khan added: "The behaviour of the London Renters' Union, who disrupted a ward surgery, deprived other residents of their chance to raise issues important to them with their elected representatives and did not influence Mr Burin's case in any way. All homelessness decisions are taken by trained officers based on housing law and local policy."

'Superloop' express bus to include stops in Chingford

by Marco Marcelline

A new express bus service from North Finchley to Walthamstow will include stops in Chingford, Transport for London (TfL) has confirmed.

Set to launch later this year, the Superloop 1 (SL1), will run alongside part of the existing route 221 between North Finchley and New Southgate and part of route 34 between Arnos Grove and Walthamstow.

The route includes stops at Crooked Billet, Walthamstow Bell Corner and Walthamstow Market, as well as Walthamstow Central which was already known to be the route's terminus.

The route will stop at various rail stations including New Southgate, Arnos Grove, Silver Street and Walthamstow Central.

The Superloop, which is a ring of express bus routes connecting outer London boroughs, was first announced in May.

A consultation on the SL1 route, which closed on 21st July, received largely positive responses. According to TfL 79% of respondents said the existence of a direct bus route between North Finchley and Walthamstow would make their journey more convenient, 76% said it would make their journey quicker and 71% said they would be likely to use the route instead of using a private car.

TfL said that the inclusion of stops in Chingford on the SL1 route is due to positive feedback during the consultation round.

At North Finchley, the SL1 route will connect with the Superloop 10 (SL10), a route that connects North Finchley to Harrow via Hendon.

At Walthamstow Central, the SL1 route will connect with the Superloop 2 (SL2), which will take riders to the Royal Docks and include stops in Gants Hill, Ilford, Barking and Gallions Reach. The SL2 has just finished consultation.

Buses on the SL1 and SL2 routes are set to run every twelve minutes Monday to Saturday, and every 15 minutes on evenings and Sundays. The SL2 will share parts of the route with the 123 bus, and at stops used by both the SL2 and 123, there will be a combined frequency of around eleven buses per hour during daytime Monday to Saturday.

TfL has said it is currently working closely with bus operators to confirm exact launch dates for the SL1 and SL2.

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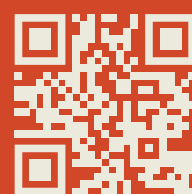
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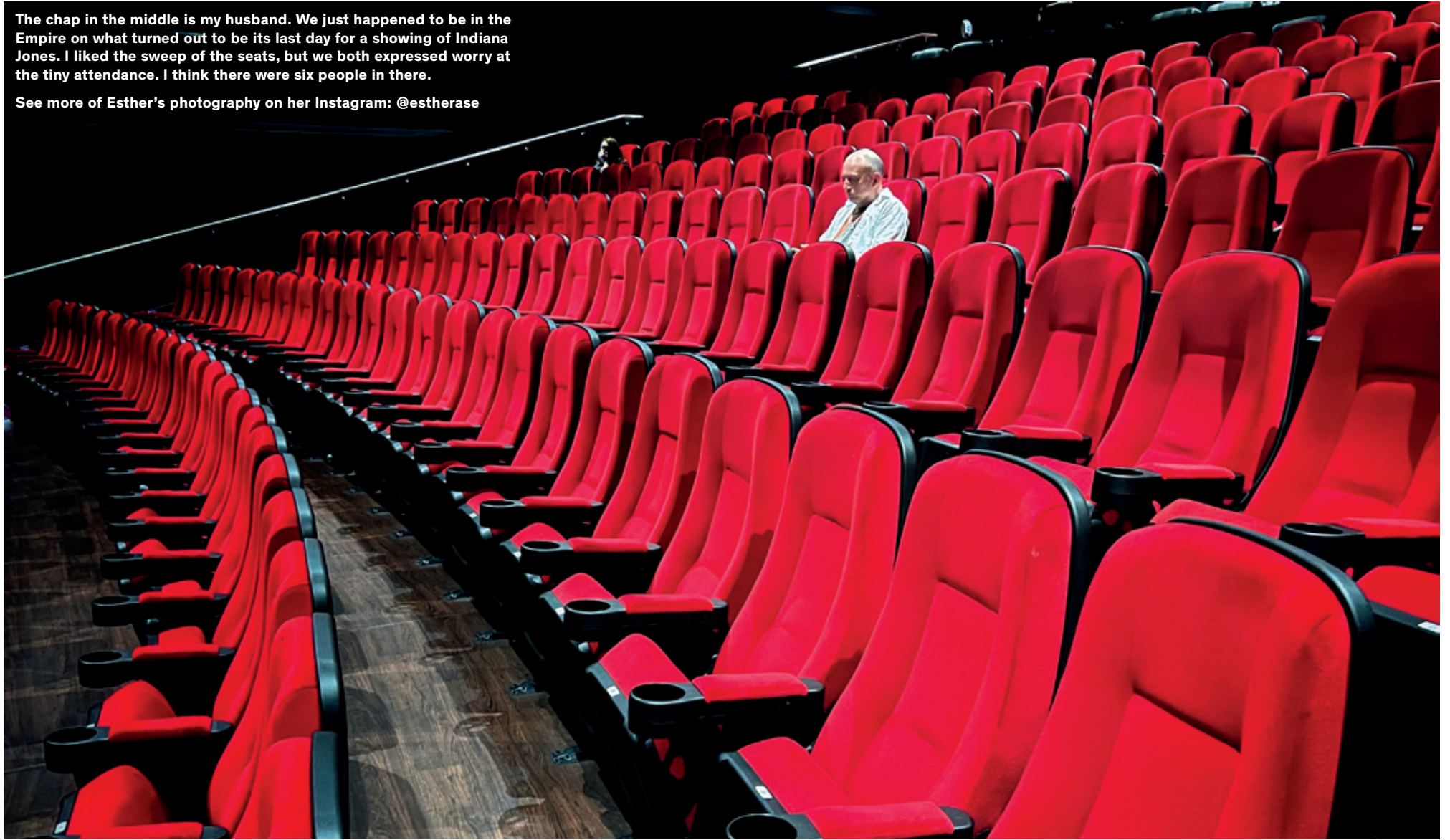
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PHOTOGRAPHY

The chap in the middle is my husband. We just happened to be in the Empire on what turned out to be its last day for a showing of Indiana Jones. I liked the sweep of the seats, but we both expressed worry at the tiny attendance. I think there were six people in there.

See more of Esther's photography on her Instagram: @estherase



Local photographer Esther Simpson likes to take unstaged and unusual photos, often of things that are overlooked or ignored. Esther especially enjoys images that include a suggestion of just how weird people can be. She tells us more about each snap.



I chose to take this particular picture as I liked the way the scale is off: the horse looks enormous and the houses and playing child are so dwarfed by it. I also like the fact that people in Walthamstow often leave things out on their walls for other people to take; I think that's what the horse was doing there.



The barber shop is on Hoe Street and opposite the new Soho Theatre. I just loved the cheeky sign. It was so sunny and busy that it was impossible to get a picture without all the reflections, but I like the fact that my ridiculous multicoloured dungarees are visible in the reflection.



The plant is a favourite thing of mine, it first appeared, fairly small, last year, and was such a joy. We thought it had died over the winter, so when it popped up again this spring we were very happy, and it's just kept growing. We're always slightly worried we'll walk round the corner and find the council have pulled it up, but so far it's escaped their clutch...

NEWS

Walthamstow pensioner faces contempt of court trial for holding a sign

Trudi Warner held up a sign informing jurors of their 'absolute right to acquit a defendant according to [their] conscience'

by Marco Marcelline

The Attorney General has confirmed that a Walthamstow pensioner will be prosecuted for contempt of court for holding up a sign outside a trial of Insulate Britain supporters.

The move means Trudi Warner, 68, could face up to two years in prison or a fine.

Trudi held up a sign outside a climate trial at Inner London Crown Court in March that stated: "Jurors: you have an absolute right to acquit a defendant according to your conscience."

Trudi had held the sign up outside the trial as jurors arrived at the court on 27th March. Trudi was also challenging judge-imposed restrictions on the defendants that prevented them from mentioning climate change or property insulation in their defence.

In a public statement, The Attorney General's Office confirmed that court proceedings would be launched against Trudi.



Trudi Warner holding her sign
Credit Just Stop Oil (Twitter/X)

The statement said: "Contempt of court is a serious matter and the power to issue proceedings is used sparingly.

"When investigating potential contempt issues, the law officers assess whether the evidential test for the specific form of contempt is met.

"In this case, the law officers considered the deliberate act of doing something that interferes or creates a real risk of interference with the administration of justice, and whether it is in the public interest to begin proceedings for contempt.

"We can confirm the Solicitor General has determined to institute proceedings against Trudi Warner in the public interest, it will now be a matter for the court."

Supporters and friends of Trudi rallied around to voice their opposition to the Attorney General's decision.

Friend Juliette Brown told the *Echo*: "It's shocking that contempt of court

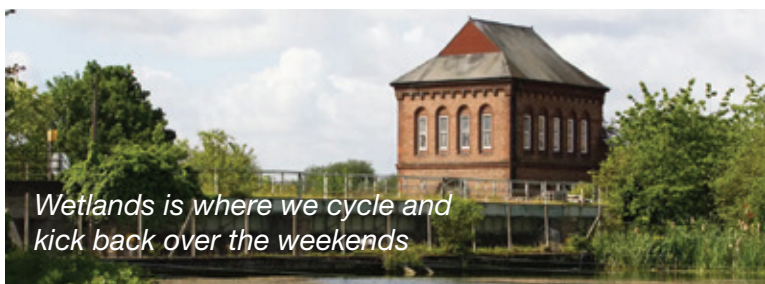
could be contemplated for holding a sign outside court. We still have a right to freedom of expression and Trudi was simply repeating an incredibly important principle of our justice system. Jurors must be allowed to do their job, to hear the whole truth and to decide based on the evidence and on their own conscience."

Members of the public have followed in Trudi's footsteps. In May of this year, 24 people held similar signs outside Inner London Crown Court. The climate activists have all been referred by Judge Silas Reid to the Attorney General.

In July, another 24 people held up the same signs as Trudi Warner's original outside Isleworth Crown Court. In response to the announcement that Trudi would be tried for contempt of court activists protested outside courts in England with her sign. Even though contempt of court is a civil offence it is punishable by imprisonment.

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HEALTH

Campaigners criticise experimental design plans for Whipps Cross

Campaigners said that the design method, called 'Hospital 2.0', will make patients 'guinea pigs for untried methods of construction'

by Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

Patients at the proposed new Whipps Cross Hospital risk being "guinea pigs" for a cheap new building method, campaigners have warned.

The Leytonstone hospital is one of the "40 new hospitals by 2030" promised by the government in October 2019.

But almost four years later, doubts have emerged about the cheaper standardised design, known as "Hospital 2.0" and the Treasury is unlikely to approve funding until "after 2025". This standardised design is also called the "minimum viable product".

According to a National Audit Office (NAO) review of the government's plans, the Hospital 2.0 buildings will have the same cheaper modular design.

The NAO says this plan – to build hospitals as quickly and cheaply as possible to provide the "minimum viable set of services" – risks resulting in buildings that are "too small".

The "minimum viable product" is also a marketing term for products that have just enough features to be usable by early customers, who can then provide feedback for better future models.

Speaking at a committee formed to scrutinise the Whipps Cross redevelopment plans, campaigners from Action4Whipps urged local councillors to challenge the government's plans.

Eva Turner said patients will be "guinea pigs for untried methods of

construction" because Whipps Cross is in the first group of hospitals to be built using the modular design.

Quoting the NAO report, she added: "It's understandable that the National Hospital Programme continues to want to build the hospitals, but there continues to be substantial risk to value for money and that the hospital is either too small for the community or that the costs are inflated because so many hospitals are being built at the same time."

Eva pointed out that a new low-cost, ahead-of-schedule hospital in Wales, The Grange University Hospital, has an emergency area that is "too small and unfit for purpose".

She asked: "Will we face the same sort of scandal as that of aerated concrete in our school buildings?"

Other concerns raised by the NAO and repeated by the campaigners include safety concerns about high bed occupancy in the new hospital, which is currently designed to have about 600 beds.

The government is hoping to take future pressure off acute hospitals by "shifting" care into the community to "cancel out" the demands of an ageing and growing population.

Most councillors and NHS representatives at the committee appeared not to respond directly to the campaigners' warnings.

However, Redbridge councillor and committee deputy chair Beverly Brewer said she was "concerned" about the Hospital 2.0 methodology and rising

costs of construction.

The exact budget for the new hospital, or the national programme, is unlikely to be confirmed before the next general election, which must be held before January 2025.

However, according to the NAO report a new Whipps Cross Hospital will cost between £500million and £1billion.

Hospital redevelopment director Alastair Finney said the government has given him a budget estimate for the new hospital but only "in confidence" due to commercial sensitivity.

He added that a "clear explanation" of how the government reached that figure "remains elusive".

Earlier this year, Alastair told the *Health Service Journal* a new hospital will cost at least £900million.

Waltham Forest's cabinet member for health and wellbeing Naheed Asghar later repeated the council's commitment to redeveloping the hospital with facilities that are "fit for purpose".

She added: "We're very happy with the funding for the next stage works but there's still a lot of work to be done with MPs, residents and councillors across the board to hold the government to account to ensure this happens without further delay."

Meanwhile, the site of the proposed hospital at Whipps Cross remains a large temporary car park that needs to be replaced by a multi-storey car park that has not been funded.



Alice Figueiredo died while a patient at Goodmayes Hospital in 2015. Credit: Family of Alice Figueiredo

NHS trust and ward manager charged with manslaughter

by Josh Mellor, Local Democracy Reporter

An East London NHS mental health trust and a former ward manager have been charged with manslaughter for the death of a patient eight years ago.

At the time of her death in 2015, Alice Figueiredo, 22, was a patient at Goodmayes Hospital, which is run by North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT). NELFT provides mental health care for Waltham Forest residents.

On 7th September, the Met confirmed it has charged NELFT with corporate manslaughter and former ward manager Benjamin Aninakwa, 52, with gross negligence manslaughter.

Aninakwa is a registered nurse and in August this year was listed online as head of NELFT's "patient safety and incident team".

NELFT provides in-patient psychiatric care at Goodmayes Hospital and mental health care services for residents of Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Havering and Barking and Dagenham.

The circumstances of Alice's death have not been released in the police's statement.

According to the *Health Service Journal*, the trust is the second NHS provider to ever be charged with corporate manslaughter.

The Met investigated Alice's death for six years before passing a file of evidence to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) in 2021.

The CPS considered the evidence for a further two years before authorising charges.

In total, the Met says it has charged the trust with two offences, corporate manslaughter and an offence under section three of the Health and Safety at Work Act, which covers an employer's duty to protect people from risk.

It has charged Aninakwa with gross negligence manslaughter and an offence under section seven of the Health and Safety at Work Act, which covers an employee's duty to protect people from risk.

They are expected to appear at Barkingside Magistrates' Court on 4th October.

A spokesperson for the NELFT said: "We would like to extend our most sincere and deepest condolences to Alice's family.

"We're fully cooperating with the Metropolitan Police and CPS at this time.

"We are unable to go into further details to protect the integrity of the ongoing legal process."

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LETTERS

Protest right Dear WFE

THANK YOU FOR REPORTING on the farcical referral of local hero Trudi Warner to the Attorney General for holding a sign outside court.

Trudi has been charged with contempt of court, the same charge made against numerous climate and social justice campaigners when they have attempted to explain their actions in court in recent months.

Bizarrely, Trudi's alleged crime is to hold a sign that mirrors one at the Old Bailey describing the right of jurors to acquit according to their conscience which is a principle of law applicable to all jury trials. They are unable to exercise this right if they are prevented from hearing the motives of defendants.

As increasing numbers of ordinary people are taking peaceful action against government failures on the climate crisis, it seems that Trudi is paying the price for highlighting a pattern of repressive measures taken by judges towards activists. As a member of the local community, I am overwhelmed by her courage and I hope we can find a way to support her.

Dr Juliette Brown,
Walthamstow

Building noise Dear WFE

I'M WRITING TO EXPRESS my concern about construction work on the Walthamstow Mall development.

Over the spring and summer months, construction work has continued until late, and there is noise from banging and crane movements that typically start at 7.50am and go on until 8pm.

I've recorded some footage showing construction work and the installation of modules for the Walthamstow Mall development at 7.21am. I believe that construction started even earlier than this.

Waltham Forest's Monday to Friday construction hours are 8am-6pm so unless the construction firm has been given a special permit they have been starting and finishing work outside of these hours.

Our residents group (Cleveland

Park Crescent & Cleveland Park Avenue) are not happy with these towers that are affecting our landscape and are in such close proximity to us. We are certainly not happy with construction work hours, especially as it's now getting earlier. We've also had no communication from the developer or council regarding noise disruption and work hours.

Joannah Webster,
Walthamstow

Speed humps

Dear WFE

I'D LIKE TO FOLLOW ON from Shanta Prasad's letter in issue 102.

The consistency of the house vibrations from buses and heavy goods vehicles going over speed humps are affecting the local community's health and wellbeing. The vibrations and added noise pollution cause lack of sleep, then anxiety. One resident said it is like being tortured. Since the speed humps have been installed the vibrations are causing damage to properties and we can see cracks appearing on our properties.

The community would be very happy to have their comfortable lives restored. It is quite shocking that we are not being listened to by the council.

Lee Gilbert
Chingford

Food hygiene

Dear WFE

YOU REPORT THAT DNR 17, at 10 Wood Street, was given a zero score by the Food Standards Agency (FSA), but the venue still has a sign up saying they scored four out of five.

I contacted the FSA but they passed me on to the council. I have contacted them using their rather clunky website, but so far no response.

It is unacceptable if venues that do not take food hygiene seriously are allowed to falsely advertise they scored well.

Francis Keegan,
Walthamstow

Send us your letters

Email wfecho@socialspider.com
by Monday 16th October.

COMMENT

The fight against racism must go on

Local historian Peter Ashan comments on the borough's Black history and record on racism



Peter Ashan (left) delivers a Black history tour
Credit Leytonstone and Leyton Historical Society

Growing up in Leyton I noticed that throughout my education little, if anything, was said about Waltham Forest's very diverse working class, multi-faith, and multi-ethnic community. So I made a vow to myself that, if I had the opportunity to do so, I would challenge this silence.

Since the late 1980s, I've been an educator in colleges, adult education, museums and galleries, and community settings in Waltham Forest and beyond. I've had to deal with institutional inequality and ignorance while promoting the cause of equality. And I have had to experience pain and racism directed at me by the management of museums and colleges that I have worked at.

Recently, I was shocked to be expected to deliver a curriculum for a major museum that ignored people of colour, effectively discriminating against them. This was during a careers workshop that was meant to encourage young people from working class backgrounds to choose a career in museums and galleries.

I also remember being informed about the terrible experiences of a Black cultural worker within Waltham Forest Council, who felt their only

course of action after battling racism in the role was to leave their job.

There is a lot of room for growth and change but there is also a lot that we can celebrate when it comes to the fight against racism in our borough. In September 2012, Waltham Forest came together to celebrate our diverse multi-ethnic and multi-faith community and protest the English Defence League who only offer hate.

And in the face of the brutal killing of George Floyd in the United States in 2020, residents joined the world in marching, campaigning, and taking the knee to show solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement.

In my capacity as a football coach it has been an inspiration to see the senior England male and female teams taking the knee against racism in football. More of course needs to be done; words alone will not make positive change.

I have seen and noted positive steps from the council that should be commented upon. Waltham Forest now has the connecting communities team who work hard to develop positive relationships between the council and the communities it serves.

Within the council we also have the mighty Waltham Forest

Race Equality Network that is made up of council employees who are committed to ensuring that the council stays on the right track when it comes to racial equality.

The council is also presently consulting the local community about the redevelopment of the Vestry House Museum's local studies library and archives. I have already informed them that equality needs to be central to any redevelopment, so hopefully we will see a cultural site reflective of our diverse community.

And if you look carefully on the streets of Waltham Forest you will find blue plaques installed by the council as well as large scale artworks like the ones on Walthamstow Market that celebrate our diverse heritage.

During the Open House Festival, I had the honour of delivering a 'Freedom Walk' from Leytonstone Station to the Good Shepherd Studios which features an outstanding artwork inspired by the spirit of Notting Hill Carnival that was completed by Wood Street Walls and the local community.

The artwork is inspired by Paul Dash, an inspirational Black artist, academic and long-time Waltham Forest resident. Paul came to England from Barbados in the late 1950 and was active in the Caribbean Artists Movement of the 1960s and '70s and Black Artists Movement of the '80s and '90s.

Paul is just one of a whole host of important Black residents who have made a difference to our borough and in my Freedom Walks I aim to highlight them.

We are all up against an economic system based on exploitation, where the 1% control the vast majority of the world's wealth and resources.

Until this changes, the fight for equality will always be an uphill battle.

Throughout Black History Month, Peter is delivering history walks all through Waltham Forest. You can reserve a spot for his Walthamstow Freedom Walk on 15th October here: walthamforest.gov.uk/events/walthamstow-freedom-walk-peter-ashan

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ARTS & CULTURE

The transformative power of 'stopping to notice'

Walthamstow-based author and actor Miranda Keeling is on a mission to stop, take notice, and record the world around her



Miranda Keeling
Credit: HeardInLondon

Miranda Keeling is an author, actor, and podcaster living in Walthamstow. Through her podcast, *Stopping to Notice*, and her book, *The Year I Stopped to Notice*, Miranda extols the values of taking a moment to stop, breathe in, and notice the world as it moves and takes shape around you.

The book and podcast originate from tweeted observations of the magic, humour and strangeness of ordinary life. Through the changing seasons, on city streets and on buses, in parks and cafes, Miranda notices things: moments between friends, the interactions of strangers, children delighting in the world around them, the quiet melancholy of items left behind.

Those documented observations have proved wildly popular, and her Twitter account has attracted 27,000 followers.

Stopping to Notice features short episodes of five minutes in length that capture the small but magical moments of everyday life in binaural sound.

Nominated for a British Pod-

cast Award, it includes episodes recorded in parks and iconic spots across Walthamstow such as St Mary's churchyard, Lloyd Park, and Vestry House.

Miranda has advice for anyone who is running through life, often without ever stopping to take notice: "Noticing takes me out of my head with its whirl of thoughts and away from the world in my phone and places me in the here and now. I'd recommend it to anyone because life is short and it can help to slow down for 30 seconds, notice a tiny, strange, silly, ordinary or even melancholy moment and really take it in."

"In a 24 hour news-cycle world, with endless, often negative distractions to grab your attention, a few minutes walking through a park, down a street or around a quiet supermarket or museum can offer an escape, which in turn can make you notice your own world more clearly."

Below Miranda shares some of the magical moments from her walks around Walthamstow that she's documented on her podcast.

What would it be like to be someone else for a few minutes? To hear the world as if through their ears? I'm working on a project that allows people in Walthamstow and across the world to do just that, with the sounds of our borough and beyond.

I have always been a people watcher. And not just people: pigeons, dogs, cats, buildings, trees, the way the breeze catches the fabric of a woman's sari at a bus-stop, a single fingerless glove left on the pavement, a man outside an office blowing on his tea to cool it down, and steaming up his glasses so he can't see.

For years I have noticed these things and turned them into little descriptions or poems and posted them online. Many of them are recorded in Walthamstow, where I live. Here's a couple of examples: I sit looking out over Walthamstow Wetlands. A little girl comes to sit beside me.

Little girl: Hello.

Me: Hello.

Little girl: (gestures to everything before us) Did you do this?

Me: (laughing) No.

She smiles at me, as if we both secretly know I did.

In a café, a woman stands staring down at the brownies as if they will eventually confess to something.

Little boy walking down Orford Road and counting on his fingers: "Dad, is it swearing to count the number two?"

Recently I have started noticing in a new way. Using a 3D binaural recording kit, I have been walking around and observing the world, through sound. What are the sounds of Walthamstow?

In Lloyd Park, birds chatter, tennis balls hit racquets, pigeons gather, a man tries to retrieve something from the pond with an enormously large stick.

A man carries a scooter over his shoulder, the same way a waiter in a restaurant would carry a towel. A woman in planet-patterned jogging



Artwork by Steven Rhodes

gear swings her arms wide open and then hugs herself, as if trying to keep something inside.

In Vestry House Museum, a woman looks at the displays, as outside the wind whips through the awnings of the closed café. A couple are holding hands, walking along. They've both got white hair. The woman's got bright blue eyeshadow on, like a mermaid's tail.

As an actor, I used to work in radio, and I love sound. Focusing through one sense makes us really

pay attention and notice the little things. It has real benefits too – it slows my breathing down as I concentrate on what I can hear and how to describe it. The act of noticing in this way calms my mind. I can't use my phone or get distracted while I do it. And because it is recorded in 3D audio, if you listen back to it through headphones, it has a similar effect – immersing you in that particular moment completely.

The borough I live in is bursting with sound, from the fountains in Fellowship Square, the markets, the playgrounds, the workshops and restaurants and cafes, and the wildlife in the wetlands. I can't wait to get out and record some more of it. So come and join me for a five minute walk around Walthamstow, and the world.

There are new episodes of 'Stopping to Notice' every Tuesday and Thursday. Miranda Keeling can be found on Twitter @MirandaKeeling

Her book, 'The Year I Stopped to Notice', is available now: uk.bookshop.org/books/the-year-i-stopped-to-notice/9781785787966

Like any of the illustrations? You can contact Miranda via her website: mirandakeeling.com



Artwork by Steven Rhodes

ARTS & CULTURE

The all-female music festival set to rock Blackhorse Lane

We speak to the founder of a new festival exclusively showcasing women DJs and artists at Signature Brew on 1st October

A new one-day festival at Signature Brew, Blackhorse Road is attempting to close the gap women face in UK festival lineups by exclusively showcasing female artists.

The 18+ festival will run from 1pm–11.30pm on Sunday 1st October and consist of six female artists, and four women DJs on the decks throughout the day.

Some of the names who'll be taking the stage are rising singer-songwriter Inés Rae, whose folky, DIY-style songs have appeared on TV soundtracks from *Emily in Paris* to *Love Island*; indie-pop star Molly Burman, who performed at Finsbury Park's Community Festival last year; and futuristic alt-pop artist Coupdekát, who is also a co-founder of the London-based all-female music collective, 'Loud LDN'.

The festival's founder, Talia Andrea, was inspired to set up FEMMESTIVAL after finding she was often the only woman in the room while working as a music journalist and concert promoter at university.

The 21-year-old would rarely find women working in behind-the-scenes music roles such as audio-visual technicians and wondered why even audiences at local gigs she attended were often predominately male.



Talia Andrea, FEMMESTIVAL founder Credit FEMMESTIVAL

Talia was also motivated to put together the festival upon reading a BBC study that revealed only 13% of the UK's festival headliners in 2022 were women.

The *Echo* asked Talia about her experience of piecing together the inaugural edition of the festival.

What has putting on this festival been like for you?

It's been a really valuable experience. As with any project, some elements of the planning stage have been challenging, but this has easily been balanced out with how rewarding it's also been.

During the period where applications were open for performance slots at this year's festival, I received a lot of emails saying how much the applicants loved the idea of the festival, and how it's something that they've really wanted and needed to happen. It means a lot to me to know that my grassroots project has already had an impact on women in London's music industry, and I hope it will be able to continue to grow and reach more.

What do you say to people who might respond to this festival by saying: "There aren't any festivals that exclude women performers so what's the need?" or "excluding male artists is discriminatory"? FEMMESTIVAL is an acknowledgement of this gender imbalance which continues to be upheld within the music industry, and an effort to provide these opportunities for visibility, representation and career progression for female and non-binary artists, which they continue to miss out on.

Secondly, it's crucial not to take the intention of the festival out of context, or decenter it from what it is fundamentally about: this being women in the music industry. FEMMESTIVAL is not at all about excluding men — it's about uplifting and celebrating women. It's as straightforward as that.

What should festival attendees expect?

My priority for this festival has been fostering a sense of community. I hope that our festival attendees will come with an open mind, and with the intention to really engage with those around them, and I hope that they'll leave having made strong, lasting connections — whether professional or personal.

Of course, they should also expect ten amazing live performances from some of London's most up-and-coming female artists and DJs! We'll also have some female-led creative workshops to get involved with on a drop-in basis, and a virtual gift bag exclusive to FEMMESTIVAL attendees, where they'll have access to discounts and freebies from a range of female-focused brands.

You can find out more information at femmestival.co.uk, or on their Instagram page @femmestival.uk Tickets to this year's FEMMESTIVAL can be purchased on DICE: Visit link.dice.fm/L9edf4847004

LISTINGS

LIVE MUSIC

Ben Tyzack

Sun 1st October, 7:30pm–10:30pm
Ye Olde Rose and Crown Theatre
Pub, 53-55 Hoe Street E17 4SA

Born in London but raised in the deep south of the United States, Ben's musical style reflects these experiences. His guitar playing is an intoxicating blend, from the raw delta blues of Robert Johnson to the powerful soundscapes of Jimmy Page. This combined with a soulful voice and commanding stage presence completes the picture of a very unique artist.

Tickets (£8/10)

Visit wegottickets.com/event/586107

EXHIBITION

The Invisible City

Every day until 27th October during Mammoth Tap opening hours
The Mammoth Tap, Arch 1 Station Approach, The Hitchcock Business Centre, E11 4RE

'The Invisible City' is an exciting new exhibition that features the work of London-based stills-photographer, Joe Donohoe. Shot exclusively on black and white film across different cities (including London, Stockholm and Copenhagen), the images in 'The Invisible City' offer a glimpse into the serendipitous and sometimes uncanny moments that occur in everyday life. Many of the images offer quiet observations of the city, whereas others highlight the violent clash between nature and the mechanised world. As a complete work, 'The Invisible City' provides an intriguing and highly personal study of urbanism and its impact on the human experience.

Free

Find out more: [Instagram.com/joedonohoephoto](https://www.instagram.com/joedonohoephoto)

RECORD FAIR

Leyton Record Fair

Sun 8th October, 11am–5pm
Patchworks, 258 Church Road
E10 7JQ

We're back on 8th October at Patchworks in Leyton. Come pick up your latest used and new record wants, fill those gaps in your record collection or have a dig for a bargain. We'll be in the Mobilstudio behind the amazing new Blondies Brewery. Expect a great selection of local craft beers, street food, two pool tables, and a dart board!

Tickets £2 on the door

Find out more: [instagram.com/leytonrecordfair](https://www.instagram.com/leytonrecordfair)

Email: simonlrowson@gmail.com

PAINTING

Sip N Paint, Black History Month edition

Fri 6th October, 7:15pm–9:15pm
CRATE, 35 St James St E17 7FY

We will be letting loose on canvas once again for a fun and creative freestyle 'sip and paint' freestyle session. All art supplies are included and food and drinks are available. Good vibes always. Come and join in our Black History Edition. You are free to paint whatever you wish! Get creative! Food is provided by Afrobbean Kitchen, and drinks are provided by Pillars Brewery.

Tickets £30

Visit bit.ly/3rJLjic

Email summerbee24@gmail.com

PERFORMANCE

Highams Park Live

Fri 6th October, 7:30pm–10:30pm
Upstairs at the County Arms, 420 Hale End Road E4 9PB

Highams Park Live presents an evening of live music performance with an eclectic programme of local songwriters, poets and storytellers. The event is free and if you want to be part of the audience then please come along on the night and be inspired by the creative atmosphere!

Free

Visit highampsparklive.co.uk

Email highampsparklive@btconnect.com

JAZZ

Alex Clarke Quartet

Tues 3rd October, 8pm–11pm,
East Side Jazz Club, Upstairs at
Leytonstone Ex-Serviceman's Club,
Harvey Rd, Bushwood E11 3DB

The Alex Clarke Quartet brings together her fresh sound, with its firm grounding in swing and bebop, with backing from some of the most respected names in British Jazz. Their latest album, 'Only A Year', released in 2022, features a mix of innovative arrangements of standards, original compositions and music by the likes of Phil Woods, Erroll Garner and Paquito D'Rivera. Alex is one of the most in-demand and versatile young saxophonists emerging on the British jazz scene whose melodic sound showcases an authentic homage to the art of straight-ahead bebop.

Tickets £12

Visit eastsidejazzclub.co.uk

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by Monday 16th October



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AROUND THE BOROUGH

WALTHAMSTOW



Coppermill Lane parklet damaged by car crash

The parklet on Coppermill Lane in Walthamstow has been removed by the council after it was struck by a car. The crash, which happened in the early hours of Friday 1st September, caused bench seating, bins and plant holders to topple over.

No injuries were reported, and there was no damage to any buildings or other street infrastructure.

Footage of the crash seen by the *Echo* shows a black four-door car crash at speed into the parklet at 4am.

The footage, captured by a private camera operated by a local business on Coppermill Lane, also shows the driver of the vehicle walking around it before the car was towed away. From the video it's clear that airbags inside the car were released.

The car was towed away by a

vehicle recovery company just before 7am. Waltham Forest Council contractors arrived after 12pm the same day to clear debris from the pavement and install barriers around the damaged parklet.

The parklet was removed by council contractors on 27th September. When asked if the parklet would be replaced the council said that "options are currently being considered" but did not give a definitive answer.

The parklet sits outside The Mill, a community centre in Coppermill Lane. According to staff at The Mill, bicycle racks on the pavement managed to stop the car from hitting and damaging the community centre's exterior windows.

The incident also resulted in damage to a van parked next to the parklet, with its right rear light

being broken and its front registration plate being destroyed.

Lantern Recovery, which towed the vehicle away, did not respond to repeated requests for further information.

Parklets such as the one in Coppermill Lane have been erected by the council across the borough in recent years. The council describe them as "small-scale semi-permanent structures that repurpose and transform parts of streets or parking spaces, utilising greenery, seating and other features".

The purpose of the parklets are to encourage active travel and improve the street aesthetics of neighbourhoods. Further parklets include one outside Froth and Rind in Orford Road in Walthamstow Village, outside Cove 17 in Wood Street, and outside the Stone Mini Market in High Road Leytonstone.

LEYTON

Police launch appeal after three-year-old hit by pick-up truck

A three-year-old child suffered serious injuries after being hit by a pick-up truck on a Leyton street last month.

Police were called to Shrubland Road, E10 at 3.39pm on Friday 8th September to reports of a

collision. The child was taken to hospital in a serious condition.

Police said they spoke to the driver of the vehicle who stopped at the scene and there has been no arrest.

Officers from the Metropolitan Police Serious Collision

Investigation Unit are appealing for witnesses, information and any dash-cam footage of the crash.

Witnesses or anyone with footage or information are asked to call police on 101 or contact via @MetCC on Twitter. Please quote CAD 5500/08sep.

LEA BRIDGE

House fire leaves ground floor gutted

A Leyton house fire on Monday 4th September was tackled by four fire engines and around 25 firefighters.

The cause of the fire was under investigation by the London Fire Brigade and the Metropolitan Police who were seeking to understand if the fire was suspicious.

The Metropolitan Police later told the *Echo* that they assessed the fire as being "non-suspicious".

The ground floor of the Melbourne Road mid-terraced property was destroyed, with part of the first floor also damaged. There were no reports of injuries.

The London Fire Brigade's 999 Control Officers said it took 17 calls to the blaze, with the first call coming in at 1.23pm.

Fire crews from Tottenham, Stoke Newington, Woodford and Hornsey fire stations attended the scene, while police officers put cordons in place.

BLACKHORSE ROAD



Second man charged after Blackhorse Lane shooting

Detectives have charged a second man after a shooting on Blackhorse Lane on 17th June left a man seriously injured.

Anthony Diamond Brown, 22, of no fixed address, was charged on 15th September. He was formally charged with possession of a firearm and ammunition with intent to endanger life.

In a statement, police said he appeared in custody at Thames Magistrates' Court on 16th September.

In July, Desharn Felix, 21,

also of no fixed address, was charged with possession of a firearm and ammunition with intent to endanger life.

Dasharn appeared in custody at Thames Magistrates' Court on 7th July. Police say he will next appear at Snaresbrook Crown Court on 22nd January 2024.

The charges are in connection with a Blackhorse Lane shooting on 17th June that left a 22-year-old man seriously injured.

He was taken to hospital in a critical condition. He has since been discharged.

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