THE ENFIELD SOCIETY
Enfield Society News
Autumn 2025

Setback for the Charity School

Richard Stones

For all of us who are concerned with the future of the Charity School, the announcement in May that the National Lottery Heritage Fund had turned down a bid for development funding was a severe blow. The bid was submitted by the conservation charity London Historic Buildings Trust (LHBT) working with Learning for Life Charity (LFLC). The aim was to create a flexible space which could be used by West Lea School and by the local community, together with a café which would have provided work experience for pupils of the school. Achieving these aims would have involved substantial alterations to the fabric of the building. It was intended to restore the nineteenth-century classroom built on the back of the original school hall (the classroom was turned into toilets as part of a twentieth century modernisation) and to build a quite substantial extension at the rear of the mistress's cottage to form the café and a circulation area.

The NLHF's reasons for rejecting the bid have not been explained in any detail, but it appears that a factor was the plan for a café. This was considered to be "high risk", with concerns that "the potential risks outweighed the anticipated outcomes". The NLHF made it clear that it would not consider any amended version of the proposals.

At the time of writing LHBT and LFLC have not announced any future plans. This leaves the responsibility for the Hall with the Trustees of the Girls' Sunday School Foundation, the lineal successors to the trustees of the original charity formed in 1778. The Society has provided small amounts of funding to the charity in the past to keep things going, and has provided practical and administrative support to the charity's Trustees. But what is to happen now?

We are fortunate that for the immediate future the buildings continue to be usefully occupied by artists, under an arrangement with The Florence Trust, an arts charity. Continued use of the buildings for this sort of purpose, at least for the medium term, seems a reasonable target. This would not require the level of reconstruction or equipment envisaged by the LHBT plans, but it would require repairs to make the buildings economically viable: At present there is a leaking roof gully which makes parts of the building only usable by people willing to put up with water dripping into buckets, quite apart from long-term damage to the fabric. Rewiring and other improvements to the buildings are also urgent.

All this will require funds to be raised. It is conceivable that the NHLF would be prepared to consider a different (as opposed to amended) bid, and since the buildings are on the national Heritage at Risk list it is possible that Historic England might be able to provide some funding for repairs. But on any analysis there will need to be a major fund-raising effort to secure the future of these fascinating buildings.

Colin Kerr



The Charity School in Church Street Edmonton. To the left is the mistress's cottage.

Colin Kerr



Chair's Column



Dave Cockle

One of the advantages about being Chair is the various invitations I receive to represent the Society at various official functions. These events are great opportunities for networking whilst spreading the word about the work of the Society. I recently attended the official opening of a section of the Enfield Town Broxbourne Active Travel Route, which follows the New River and the quiet local streets in the area. There is a new riverside section between Tenniswood Road and Carterhatch Lane, which previously had not been accessible to the public.

A brand new wider bridge has been constructed to cross Turkey Brook. This involved acquiring a small portion of land from St Ignatius College, which was generously gifted by the College. One of the benefits of the path is that some cul-de-sacs ending at the New River now have links directly onto the path, creating shorter routes for walking/cycling. The whole project reflects the power of partnership, involving National Highways, Enfield Council, The Borough of Broxbourne and Transport for London.

Another such event which John Cole and I attended was a Community Rail Conference. We talked about the "Stations Group" of the Enfield Society and the work undertaken by volunteers to enhance the appearance of Enfield Chase and Gordon Hill Stations. It is pleasing to note the following comment on a social media platform from an individual who had set out to visit all six hundred National Rail Stations in Greater London: "I was impressed by the community heritage at Enfield Chase where posters and artwork give the place a lift".

Having been Chair of the Society for the past twelve years, I have now decided to resign due to a health issue (Parkinson's disease) at September's AGM. It has been both a privilege and an honour to have been Chair of the Society. I would like to thank the Management Committee for its support during my tenure. I look forward to seeing my successor continue the excellent work which the Society undertakes throughout the borough.

Improving Enfield Town Centre – an Update

John Cole and John West

There are two planning initiatives taking place in Enfield Town -

- Consultation on the Enfield Town Liveable Neighbourhood Project (phase 2) and
- The Town Centre Action Plan

The **Liveable Neighbourhood Project** seeks to improve the public areas and follows on from the work already carried out in the Town (*see photos*). It is designed to promote the Town Centre, making it a more attractive place to visit and shop. Planned works involve a rationalisation of bus stops to make bus interchange easier; new cycle routes; improvements to the Enfield Town Station "Plaza" including a dedicated drop-off point; and improvement to the crossing point at Market Square and pedestrian safety generally.



In terms of the **Town Centre Action Plan**, consultants Augarde & Partners have been engaging with local stakeholders to gather feedback about the Council's intention to establish an independent organisation to oversee and lead improvements to Enfield Town Centre.

The Council believes the Town Centre needs a representative body to oversee and drive the delivery of the plans, ensuring that opportunities are fully developed. The aims include

- Improving open spaces and streets and wayfinding;
- Animating the evening economy, e.g., lighting, leisure/cultural events, food outlets etc.;
- New spaces for young people;
- Making use of vacant units;
- Improving safety and reducing crime.



The Society attended a meeting on 12 June with other community groups and interested stakeholders. This group will review how the town centre could look and feel like in five years' time. It will also look at potential governance structures already in place in the UK and what might work in Enfield. Possibilities might include a forum, trust, steering group or other body which could be community or business led.

The group also looked at including the involvement of the wider public in later stages when the organisation is set up.



Liz Rhodes

Dave Cockle giving guests on the launch of the Enfield Town - Broxbourne walking/cycling route a brief history of Hoe Lane Pumping Station.

Conservation and Heritage—Updates on issues of concern

Broomfield House

Members will know about the current plans to apply for National Lottery Funding to "unlock" Broomfield Park. It is envisaged that:

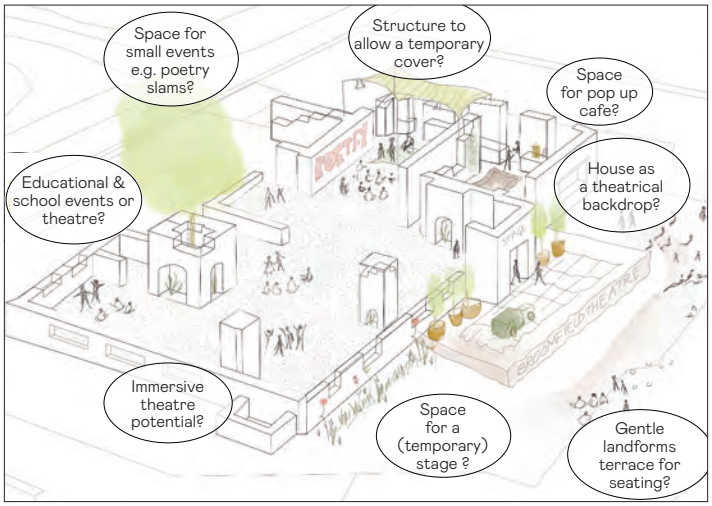
- Broomfield House will be dismantled, with scaffolding and dangerous parts of structure removed. The house remains will be memorialised in some way, as a "ruin" within the landscape – see one possibility illustrated below;
- The upper and middle lakes will be restored, desilted and water quality improved;
- The landscape surrounding the lake and house will be restored, with the house "ruins" at its centre; making it a focus for the wider park.

The Society is a stakeholder in the project and alongside other community groups attends the Community Steering Committee. In July the team leading the project ran a questionnaire asking for people's views about how these ideas should be developed and how the priorities of nature, heritage and community should be balanced.

The target is to obtain the National Lottery grant in 2026, with the project being completed by 2029. There will be further public consultation, including a Drop In Public Engagement Session on 25 October at the end of the Concept Design Stage.

John Cole, Trustee of the Society and the Council's Community Engagement Officer for the project, will give a talk on Unlocking Broomfield on 7 October – see page 5.

LBE



A theatrical ruin?

Lavender Hill Cemetery Chapel

The London Historic Building Trust has completed the consultation to establish options for the future use of the Chapel. There are several options including some 'meantime' uses to bring the building back into use. Views are being sought from Enfield's Property and Cemeteries teams. The situation is complicated by decisions over the medium/long term use of the cemetery for burials. In addition, there is a change of officer at the LHBT.

The invisible Clarendon Arch

The Clarendon Arch, built in 1682 to carry the then quite "new" New River over Salmon's Brook, is one of Enfield's oldest listed structures, but the view below is now impossible to see. A number of years ago Thames Water built a platform over the arch (accessible from Bush Hill). From the platform a path led down to the north bank of Salmon's Brook, from which the arch could be seen.

Unfortunately, pressure from a neighbouring resident led to the platform being locked. Now it has been virtually obliterated. At the time of writing the platform itself has been used a dumping ground for felled trees and the land where the viewing platform was has been taken over by the owner of the adjacent land (see photos).



The Enfield Society

The Clarendon Arch

Last year a contact at Thames Water suggested that Thames Water might grant a licence to the Society to enable us to provide access to the viewing platform. We contacted Thames Water and in July 2024 they said that they had "been undertaking some background reviews to see if this would be possible." We have heard nothing since then, despite a couple of reminders, the most recent on 21 May.

We checked the ownership position at the Land Registry earlier this year. From this it appears that Thames Water Utilities then owned a strip of land on the northern side of Salmon's Brook so – unless it has disposed of the land again— it should be in a position to provide access to the viewing platform, whatever the adjacent landowner is doing. We will continue to press Thames Water for action.

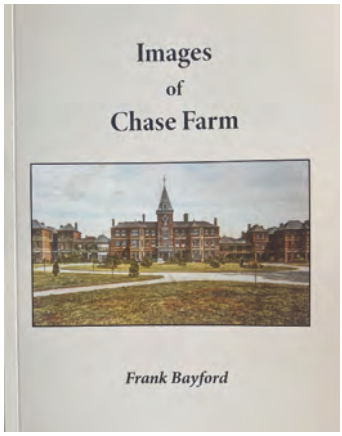


Andrew Lack

The platform as it is—on the right the path down to where the viewing point should be.

Publications

Our footpath map (£5) and eight self-guided walks booklets (£1 – £2.50) are ideal for making the most of summer - all are available from our online shop.



Frank Bayford, one of our local authors, has published a new title, 'Images of Chase Farm', a pictorial supplement to his autobiography, 'Memories of Chase Farm'. This includes photographs of its 19th century buildings, many now demolished, as well as scenes from life at both the poor law school and the old hospital.

Alison Parker

Membership

A warm welcome to all the new members who joined since the last Newsletter:

D and C Bowen, B Coyne, J Davenport, S Gahagan, S Gaughan, J Guarnieri, J Horwood, J Jobson, B Kapadia, V Kumar, P Laws, P & L Lewis, D Lipniewska, S Lloyd, A Mardell, P Mari, B Muffett, A Okereafor, H Rees, K Richardson, S Rickard, L Royan, A Salter, P Smith, L Somuah, A Viney, M Wood.

Alec Tyler

Annual General Meeting and Accounts

Our 2025 Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 18 September at Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield EN2 0AJ. Doors will open at 7.30 pm and the meeting will start at 8 pm.

The meeting will be followed by a talk: *A Brief History of the Enfield Society.*

The following documents will be available on the Society's website from the beginning of September.

- The Statutory Reports and Accounts of the Society for the year ended 31 December 2024;
- A more detailed agenda for the 2025 Annual General Meeting; and
- The Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting.

Members of the Society are legally entitled to receive a hard copy of the Reports and Accounts, and if you wish to receive them and/or copies of the other documents listed above, please write to the Secretary at Jubilee Hall or email him at `secretary@enfieldsociety.org.uk`.

Changes to our Rules

Under the Society's Articles of Association the Management Committee has the power to make Rules to govern the proper conduct and management of the Society. At its meeting on 12 June 2025 the Committee adopted a new rule which sets out how the Committee may make decisions by email and/or phone communication in between meetings. Copies of the Rules, as amended, are available on our website, or you can ask the Secretary to send you a copy. If you have any queries about the new rule, please contact the Secretary.

Richard Stones

Your Society needs YOU

Our Society depends totally on the work of its volunteers. And there are not many of us. So if you value what the Society does, please think about whether there is something you can do to help. There are opportunities for people who like to be active and outdoors – clearing footpaths, gardening, leading walks, staffing our stand at events —and for people who prefer to use their administrative, marketing and creative skills—running and promoting the Society and campaigning for our heritage and planning objectives. Please contact us on `info@enfieldsociety.org.uk` to find out more.

Specific needs at the moment—

Talks Organiser

After three years organising daytime and evening talks for members, Joe Studman has decided to stop. This means we now need to find a new volunteer to arrange talks for members. This is a very popular benefit of membership and we regularly get 50 or more at talks. If you think you might want to give it a try, please do contact us and we can give you more information. It would be a shame if talks were to stop after December 2025.

Newsletter Editor

We currently have no editor for our quarterly Newsletter. It is being put together by a group of us, which risks us neglecting other priorities. We are ideally looking for someone with the skills to

- assemble and edit the content;
- either design the Newsletter using desk-top publishing software, or interface with our professional designer;
- review and correct the proofs;
- liaise with our printer/distributor.

Even if you could not manage all of these tasks, it may be possible to divide and share them.

Society Talks and Other Events

Visit to Bruce Castle Museum



Deborah Hedgecock

Friday 17 October, 10.30am

Bruce Castle has been collecting and caring for the history of the area and the people of Haringey for over 115 years. Housed in a magnificent 16th century manor house, the museum and archive is the borough's key heritage resource, telling stories of innovation, migration, radicalism and resilience.

Society members will be given a behind the scenes tour by the curator Deborah Hedgecock before the museum opens to the public at 1pm.

Cost £8.00 per person including refreshments.

If you are interested in coming please contact us by email at `visits@enfieldsociety.org.uk` or send an SAE to Museum Trip, Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AN with a cheque payable to "The Enfield Society". **Numbers will be strictly limited so please book early.**

Society Talks

Thursday 18 September, 8pm
SOCIETY AGM— A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ENFIELD SOCIETY
In anticipation of the Society's 90th anniversary in 2026 this short talk will celebrate the history, successes and aspirations of the Society over the past nine decades.

Tuesday 7 October, 11am
UNLOCKING BROOMFIELD
Enfield Trustee and Gordon Hill Station volunteer **John Cole** is the Council's Community Engagement Officer for a National Lottery funded project focussing on Broomfield Park and House (*see page 3*). He will talk about the project.

Monday 17 November, 7.30pm
WHERE ARE LONDON'S MONASTERIES?


Joe Studman

Last year **Andrew Gray** gave us an enlightening talk on heraldry. He will now tell us about the monasteries that existed in London before the dissolution. Expect an entertaining and well researched presentation.

Tuesday 2 December, 11am
PLEASURE GARDENS: A PLACE TO SEE AND BE SEEN



Before the days of amusement parks and fairgrounds, Londoners enjoyed an evening in a pleasure garden. Famous for their entertainment and notorious for the fun and frolics that went on there, pleasure gardens were the places to see and be seen. Take a stroll through London's famous pleasure gardens with **Julie Chandler** and enjoy what goes on after dark.

Talks and activities of other Societies and Groups

Enfield Archaeological Society

Talks in person take place at Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm (doors open from 7pm). Open to non-members for a fee of £1.50 each payable at the door. For "Zoom" access please visit `www.enfarchsoc.org`

Friday 12 September
Imperial Logistics in Early China, the First Emperor's Mausoleum and the Making of the Terracotta Army (rescheduled) by Andrew Bevan (in person).

Friday 10 October
Tudor Coin Hoards in England and Wales by Murray Andrews (by Zoom)

Friday 14 November
The Battle of Barnet 1471 by Peter Masters (in person)

Friday 12 December
Roman painting and decoration by Han Lie (by Zoom)

Historical Association (North London Branch)

Talks take place at Jubilee Hall at 8pm. Non-members are welcome to attend for a fee of £2 each, payable at the door.

Tuesday 9 September
Pre-literate societies and the impact of writing by Dr. Jennie Somerville (Branch member)

Tuesday 14 October
'Wives of The Devil and His Brood': Eleanor of Aquitaine and Her Contemporary Queens by Dr. Gabrielle Storey (Historian and author)

Tuesday 11 November
James II and the Glorious Revolution by Dr David Smith (Cambridge University)

Tuesday 9 December
Christmas on trial during the English Revolution by Dr. Ariel Hessayon (University of London)

Tuesday 13 January 2026
Nicholas II and Stalin: a comparison in tyranny? by Dr George Gilbert (Southampton University)

The Arts Society Enfield

Meetings are held on the last Thursday of the month at Revival Christian Church, 47, London Road. Enfield EN2 (**note change of venue**). Lectures start promptly at 10.40am (doors open from 10am). We are always pleased to welcome new members and visitors. The visitors fee for a single meeting is £10.

Thursday 25 September
Banksy: Fraud or Genius? by Pepe Martinez

Thursday 30 October
Annual General Meeting (starts at 10.20am) followed by *Shakespeare's Monarchs: Power or Progress* by Gabriel Chanan.

Thursday 27 November
'Resurgam' – The Music of St Paul's Cathedral by Patrick Craig

Thursday 18 December
Christmas in Bach's Leipzig: The Christmas Oratorio of 1734/5 by Sandy Burnett

There will also be a **Special Interest day on Wednesday 12 November** in Jubilee Hall — *The Story of British Musicals*, Speaker Ian Gledhill. A three lecture day with music, lunch, coffee and biscuits included. 10.30am - 3pm. Cost £38. Apply to Janet McQueen on `jntmcqn@gmail.com`


Julie Chandler

The Gaiety Theatre, Strand

A reminder —

Christ Church in Chase Side – 150th anniversary celebrations

To coincide with London Open House Week the church will be open on **Saturday 13 September from 11am to 4pm**. There will be refreshments and guided tours around the church. There will also be historical visual displays and exhibitions about the Grade II listed church, its predecessors Zion Chapel and Chase Side Chapel and the people and activities associated with the churches past and present. At **3pm on Wednesday 19 November** our own Stephen Gilburt will give an illustrated talk *From Zion Chapel to Christ Church – a story of Congregationalists in Enfield* in Jubilee Hall to the Edmonton Hundred Historical Society. All Enfield Society members will be welcome.

Baker Street, Enfield, Part 2

Stephen Gilburt

Enfield Local Studies and Archive



Picture 1

This view looking north around 1900 shows a coster's cart with baskets of racing pigeons and a group of children outside the Wheatsheaf public house which is first recorded in 1826. It had three bars – saloon, public and private with a clubroom on the first floor. A covered way led through to a rear yard and garden. There were also an outhouse, coal shed, pot house, toilets and sheds.

The Enfield Society



Picture 2

The Wheatsheaf was considerably rebuilt in 1938 at a cost of £4,319. It was enlarged with an additional floor and a new roof. The covered way was built over and the interior bar lay-out was changed. In 1965 land at the rear was sold to the Borough of Enfield for £150 and council flats were built on the site. A new extension, known as the lounge and dining room, was added to the rear of the saloon. A new off-licence service counter and saloon bar lobby were built. In 1984 the off-licence was abolished and a darts playing section was created from part of the public bar.

Enfield Local Studies and Archive



Picture 3

In this 1905 view looking north some of the cottages on the left hand side have had shops inserted on the ground floor. One sold furniture and another pianos. They were demolished in the 1960s for road widening and were replaced by a parade of shops with flats above.

Next to the Wheatsheaf the shop on the right with an awning was for many years a "general furnishing and builders ironmonger, stove and range manufacturer, plumber, bell hanger, gas fitter and hot water engineer".

Frank Bayford



Picture 4

This ironmonger's shop was founded by Edward Mann, who is probably the man with his dog in this photograph. It was later run by his son George and grandson Ernest before being sold to H.L.Girling. Bird cages displayed in the shop window reflected a time when many people kept song birds such as canaries, linnets and bullfinches as pets. Among the items sold were electric bells and fittings, gunpowder, shot, lamps, oils, bar, hoop and sheet iron and zinc and iron guttering. Baths were available for sale or hire to those without their own bathroom. In 1911 the shop was taken over by William Henry Gale who expanded the business to include cycle and motor repairs. This continued into the 1940s.

In the 1950s the shop was a general grocery store. I remember going there with my mother who used the family ration book when buying various foodstuffs. These would often be measured out by the shop assistants as required. Loose broken biscuits could be bought cheaply. After various changes of use it was rebuilt after a fire in 1998 and became offices.

Enfield Local Studies & Archive



Picture 5

This 1909 view is looking south at the junction with Churchbury Road. On the left James Folkes sold stationery, postcards and fancy goods. On the opposite corner was James "Nobby" Garner's menswear and outfitters shop with suits hanging outside. Further along were Edward Paryer confectioner; F. E. "Gunner" Smith who sold Pratt's Motor Spirit, varnish, oil, tarred string, creosote, beeswax (for polishing furniture) bath bricks (to burnish knives) and gunpowder (to blast soot from chimneys); and Elizabeth Barney who was a pawnbroker.

For more information see the publications listed in part 1 of this article plus *Visits and Reminiscences, a Personal Travelogue: Volume 2*, *Enfield* by Frank Bayford, 2024. Several of the photographs in this article are also in Frank Bayford's book including No. 4 which was supplied by Mrs J. Seymour great-granddaughter of Edward Mann.

The Enfield Society

Picture 6

This view from around 1914 is looking north. On the left is a man operating a hurdy-gurdy (a mechanical stringed musical instrument). The 19th century weather-boarded shops behind were demolished in the 1960s.



The Enfield Society



Picture 9

To the north of the former Co-operative store are Claremont Villas, two pairs of three storey early Victorian townhouses.

Enfield Local Studies & Archive

Picture 10

Further north a "ragged school" was set up in this building about 1865. It gave a basic education on summer Sunday afternoons and a few evenings in winter to between 20 and 30 very poor children. They were described by the Enfield Observer as "the outcasts of society who could not, in their present condition, be taken in to other schools where it is desirable that the children should be decent." It was paid for by voluntary subscriptions and it also provided a penny bank savings scheme. In summer Mr Biscoe the local postmaster provided a treat of an outdoor tea and games afterwards for both the children and teachers there.





The Enfield Society

Picture 7

On the far side of Bell Road is the Enfield Town Industrial Co-operative Society store. Although now converted into offices, the original terracotta plaques and green mosaic around the words Co-operative Store and the date 1900 can still be seen on the upper floor. I remember that in the 1950s the shop operated a vacuum tube system to whizz payments to the cashier and return the change to the customer.

The Enfield Society

Picture 8

The Old Bell, (previously known as Five Bells), was first recorded in 1708 although there may have been an inn on the site as early as 1502. An 1881 sketch shows a weather-boarded structure with two gables. The building which replaced it in 1881 had a single central gable and the façade was covered with vertical tiles. It had two public bars, a saloon bar and a private bar. There was originally a cottage for staff alongside. The Old Bell has recently been replaced by a block of flats with a shop on The ground floor.



Enfield Local Studies & Archive

Picture 11

Yarra House is thought to have been the boyhood home of the writer, critic and humanist Walter Pater (1839-1894). He was a pupil at Enfield Grammar School. Among his writings were "Studies in the History of the Renaissance" (1873) and a fictional biography "Marius the Epicurean" (1885) set at the time of the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius. The name was given by a successful Australian gold miner who considerably enlarged Yarra House about 1860. It was demolished around 1980 and the site is now used by Enterprise rent-a-car.



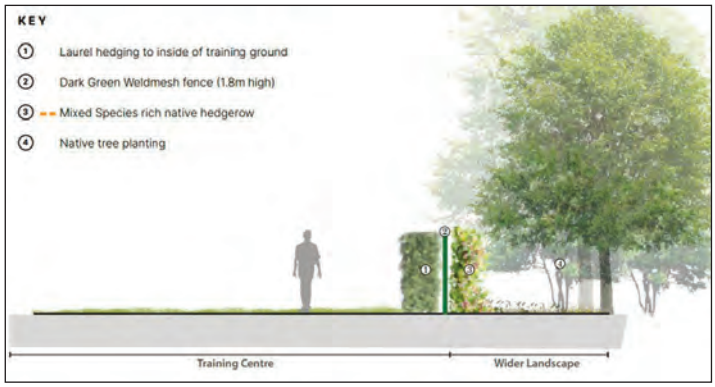
Whitewebbs Park Watch Group

Bob Fowler

In the previous edition of the Newsletter, we provided an update on the Whitewebbs Park situation which concluded that there was a need to monitor progress with a view to holding Tottenham Hotspur Football Club (Spurs) and the Council to account if they fail to honour the commitments they have made. Since then the Mayor of London has announced his approval of the scheme, so there is no obvious further obstacle to it proceeding. In the light of this, we are setting out our plans and inviting volunteers from the Society membership to join us in forming a group to monitor progress of the works and their ongoing management.

It is worth noting that from the foundation of the Society in 1936, protection of the natural environment has always been a key element of our core objectives. In regard to Whitewebbs Park, we explained in the previous article the reasons why we believe the Spurs proposals are broadly acceptable, provided that they deliver the community benefits set out in the planning application. We have made our concerns known about the impact this will have on the park and the need for scrutiny of the plans and their implementation.

LBE



To be monitored – Spurs' plan for their perimeter fence

The recent destruction of a 400 year-old oak tree in Whitewebbs Park by the management of the Toby Carvery has raised local and national concern and led to calls for stronger controls to protect trees and the natural environment. This incident further highlights the need for vigilance over all of the park on an on-going basis. In discussions with the Council and Spurs, the Society has stated its concerns for the development at Whitewebbs and the need to ensure protection of the country nature of the park. We are firmly opposed to the use of non-native species of plants, particularly the use by Spurs of laurel hedges to screen its facilities. We are encouraged that Spurs now propose that the laurel hedge will be inside the security fence with an outer screen of hawthorn and other indigenous species. We also welcome Spurs announcement not to reinstate the original drive to Whitewebbs House. But the commitments written into the planning process are easily lost sight of, and can be amended by agreement between Spurs and the planners without much publicity.

We have been considering how best to proceed and believe that it would be worthwhile to establish a Whitewebbs Park Watch Group (WPWG) to monitor developments on a regular basis and engage with Spurs, the Council, and other stakeholders. The WPWG will be a sub-committee of the Society Management Committee and



to be monitored – the Conduit House

make regular reports to that Committee on at least a quarterly frequency. Possible Terms of Reference of WPWG could include:

- Monitor all future planning applications – submitting comments/objections, as appropriate
- Regular walking surveys to monitor implementation, raise issues etc
- Seek to establish regular engagement with Spurs, the Council and other stakeholders
- Specifically monitor compliance with the terms of the planning consent in regard to the following:
  - o The landscape generally
  - o The Historic Carriageway
  - o Perimeter of the Spurs Women's Academy enclosure
  - o Floodlighting
  - o Paths and signage
  - o Southern Clubhouse
  - o Parking
  - o Public access
  - o Heritage:
    - The Stable Block (Northern Clubhouse)
    - Walled Garden – remains
    - The Conduit House
    - New River Loop
- Report to the Society Management Committee.

If you would like to become a member of the proposed WPWG, we would be pleased to hear from you. Please get in touch by contacting whitewebbs@enfieldsociety.org.uk.

We plan to arrange an initial meeting of the group to take place in the autumn.

Does your park need more trees?

At the Society's tree nursery at Trentwood Side we have a number of Black Walnut trees ready for planting out in the autumn or early spring. The trees are pot grown and are about 0.75 metres tall. If you are involved in any of the Friends of Parks Groups, please let us know if you are interested. We also have other species including oaks, yew and maple. Again, they are ready for new homes in parks or open spaces. Contact john.west@enfieldsociety.org.uk.

John West

That's what it's stall about…

Henry Frederick Richardson, known as Charlie, has been running a family vegetable stall in Leeds Street Market, Edmonton, for over 80 years, making it the longest-serving business in the area. He was born in 1937 and has been involved in the family business since his youth, taking it over full-time in his twenties after leaving a draughtsman job. ***Avril Nanton****, a Trustee of the Society, interviewed Charlie in June 2025.*

Avril: Your real name is Henry. So where did Charlie come from?

Charlie: That was my dad's name. People still think of me as "little Charlie".

Avril: How long have you been married? And what's your wife's name?

Charlie: My wife's name is Lilian, and about 64 years.

Avril: How old are you, Charlie?

Charlie: I'll be 88 at Christmas.

Avril: Have you got any children?

Charlie: I've got four. Well, I had four, now I've only got 3. My middle son died. He'd be about 55 now.

Avril: So tell me how you came to be here today.

Charlie: Because it's a family business you didn't have any choice. During the Second World War, my father was in the army. My uncle, whose stall it was, and my aunt, took me under their wing. I think retailing and this market business is in your blood.

Avril: So it came naturally to you?

Charlie: Yes. At the time national service was in, and I worked for a company in Tottenham as a contract draughtsman.

Avril: What sort of company was it?

Charlie: It was called Keith Blackman. They were the biggest fan manufacturers in Europe. Did an apprenticeship there. At the time my wife was the post girl. Our eyes met and that was it!

When we got married I was still working there, but I was also still working on the stall.

Avril: So you had two jobs?

Charlie: Yeah. When the three stalls were here, there was about 19 people working on them. The fruit stall and the salad stall were next to each other. To get your queue down you used to have two sets of scales on each side. Eventually, I was given an ultimatum

LBE



The "Charlie" mural in Fore Street. The artist, Agwa, also created the Library mural discussed on page 11

Avril Nanton



Charlie's stall today

by my mum - either you pack up work and come on full time or the stall's going to have to pack up because we can't cope.

So, I packed up and left the other job, and I've been doing it ever since.

Avril: So you preferred this job to the office job?

Charlie: Oh yes, you're kind of born into it. Even my old granddad, he was 96. He used to walk along the High Road with a tray selling bootlaces and handkerchiefs.

All my family have historically been involved with market stalls. The business has been passed down through the generations and I'm one of the last ones left.

This High Road in the 70s was really busy. It was because we had a Marks & Spencer's but Enfield Town didn't have one then.

Avril: Do you have a credit system with your customers?

Charlie: Yes! There are far more honest people than there are dishonest.

Avril: When we had the riots in 2011 did anything happen to your stall?

Charlie: No. There was some trouble, but it was more Tottenham way and it had fizzled out by the time it got here.

When you look at the High Road nowadays, it's all take aways and stuff. There are about four or five amusement arcades which don't bring the right sort of people here.

One of the problems is that I only sell basic English vegetables but not everybody eats it around here anymore. It's very multi-cultural nowadays.

Avril: But you're the only person I know that sells duck eggs. Where do you get them from? And have you always sold duck eggs?

Charlie: No, I haven't always sold them. They're delivered to me every Friday morning. The fella on the fruit stall used to sell them and when he became ill I took over selling them to keep the trade going. That was a few years back. I sell quite a few. With the duck eggs they're mostly brought by Chinese or Irish people.

Avril: So how do you get the regular stuff in?

Charlie: I go and get it from Spitalfields, the new market. We've always gone there. The old one was right near Liverpool Street in a built-up area, the new one's in Stratford. I get to it by driving.

Avril: So how comes you're now in a chair?

Charlie: I fell over a few months ago and a customer came and gave me one of these chair walkers.

Avril: Do you use electronic payment or is it all cash?

Charlie: Cash. Because of the little amount some things are, say £1 for a cabbage, it's not worth it. Anything technical that I have to do, I get my grandchildren to do it.

Avril: So how did you get a mural of you on the wall?

Charlie: From some sort of funding, they decided to put these murals all over the borough, and because I've been here longer than anyone else, they put me up there.

Avril: Did you meet the artist? His name is Agwa.

Charlie: I might have done but I don't remember. It brightens up the area.

Avril: You would have seen a lot of changes over the years in this area. What do you think the future holds.

Charlie: I think the next big change will be in the next 15 years. All the shops on one side are going to come down. They're going to build 3,500 dwellings there. That's a lot of people coming into the area to give us business. The last time they did this was in the mid-50s. They say the current flats aren't suitable, but we lived in them and they were marvellous. That was about 1954.

Avril: Thank you for speaking to me Charlie, it's been great meeting you!



Henry Richardson

Charlie as a youngster on his family's stall

The Local Plan—the Inspector hears the case for Crews Hill development

Andrew Lack

July was the crunch month for the Enfield Society and the Local Plan. After four years of preparation there were five very important Hearings in July: Crews Hill; proposed development near M25 Junction J24; Vicarage Farm; Enfield Town and Southgate and Palmers Green.

Together with Carol Fisk from our partner group Enfield RoadWatch, I attended the two days of Crews Hill. We had to endure the sticky heat of the first day and a marathon second day which didn't finish until 6.45pm. Some of the discussion went into very tedious technical aspects of planning, while at other times we had an opportunity to remind the Inspector of our submitted evidence.

There has been a huge amount of documentation published by the Council by way of evidence, all of which the Inspector is expected to have digested. Hearings take the form of questions from the Inspector to the Council which have been informed by what he has read. The questions are designed to test that the Plan conforms to National Planning Policy and is 'sound'. The questions asked gives us confidence he has understood the essential problems.

It is interesting to see that no one person from the Council understands the entire plan; different staff and consultants working for the Council come to the table to answer the questions. The Council is permanently represented by a barrister, Matthew Reed KC. At times this gives rise to some delicate answers to some of the Inspector's questions.



The Examination in session—the Council's team on the right, 'objectors' on the left.

Once the Inspector has finished his questions to the Council, he invites comments from others. If you are watching any of the proceedings on YouTube (links are on our website) those sitting with the Council on the right are typically developers speaking in support of the Plan, with those on the left labelled as the 'objectors'. The Inspector allows the Council final comments which often seek to rebut our points, giving the impression that the process in not entirely level.

It is impossible to know what the Inspector thinks of the proposals. He has picked up that there are significant amounts of land being removed from the Green Belt at Crews Hill but with no plans for development. These are at risk from future housing even if that is not the current intention. We have argued that, as a minimum, the railway line must remain the western boundary.

We are expecting a letter from the Inspector in late summer with his thoughts about the proposals.

You can read my longer assessment of the Crews Hill Hearings on our website.
`enfieldsociety.org.uk`

All Aboard for Ale: Launch of the Hertford Loop Line Rail Ale Trail Booklet

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, John Cole has organised the creation of *The Hertford Loop Line Rail Ale Trail*. Designed to fit easily into a pocket, this booklet takes readers on a journey through twelve stations from Alexandra Palace to Watton-at-Stone, highlighting top spots for real ale, historic pubs, breweries, taprooms, and community favourites within walking distance of each stop. It features hand-drawn maps for each station area and local illustrations by Enfield-based artist and educator Kremena Dimitrova (whose public art includes the mural on Platform 2 at Enfield Chase station.)

The free guide is available at staffed stations and many of the pubs listed.

The Society received funding from the Community Rail Network, Great Northern and some top-up funding from McMullens brewery.



A digital version is available on the Society's website. For more information see:
`railway200.co.uk`

Why We Shouldn't Censor Art—A Word on the Enfield Mural Debate

John Cole

Who gets to decide what counts as "real" art—or where it belongs? When we start considering the censoring of considered public art, it's not just about taste: it's about cutting off conversation, silencing voices, and shrinking the richness of our shared culture.



'To Autumn' is by Tottenham based artist Robert 'Agwa' Clegg, founder of Bud Studio, who is already known in Enfield for his N18 College Gardens mural of Charlie (part of Angel Edmonton's Fore Street Murals project), inspired by Market Stall Holder Charlie, who has run a market stall on Leeds Street for over 70 years (*see page 9*). Agwa and Bud Studios also helped install Palace Garden's *A Stroll Through Enfield Town* Mural by Anna Nicolò.

'To Autumn' is not simply a mural, it's part of the Enfield Town Liveable Neighbourhood project. It brings colour, story, and meaning to a public space we all share. It's not random graffiti; it's Council-backed, community-shaped, and professionally done. Locals helped choose the colours, schools joined in workshops, and it shines with our own identity. It celebrates the journey to the park gates and enlivens the children's library space. It reflects nature and biodiversity.

It celebrates:

- John Keats and his poetic legacy in Enfield;
- The beauty of local seasons and green spaces;
- The diversity of people who live and create here.

And it helps build the future too—supporting up-and-coming Enfield artist Brebmass Arts, growing our creative sector.

When people say, "This isn't the right place for art," it's about whether we want a town full of colour, culture, and courage—or one that plays it safe and stays silent.

Let's shift the question. Not "Should this mural be here?" but "What kind of place do we want Enfield to be?"

Instead of fighting over a mural, let's focus on real issues: businesses, night-time economy, saving local heritage, tackling litter, supporting artists, and celebrating public spaces that bring us together.

Art should challenge, inspire, reflect—and yes, sometimes even spark debate. That's what makes it worth having.

An alternative view

I quite agree that public art should reflect the different strands of our culture, and that it should challenge as well as delight. But I do think we can ask "Is this the right place?"

First, Enfield should be the kind of place which caters for different moods and different tastes. Library Green is an oasis of calm, a quiet green space, linking the town with its "lung", the Town Park. It provides a welcome contrast with the brasher aspects of commercial Enfield. The colours of the mural cut across this mood – they are striking and vibrant, but not remotely calm or restful.

Second, the Library is itself a work of art. In my opinion the architect managed a nice balance, with the modernist glass and steel façade set between the original Carnegie Library at one side and the traditional dressed stone on the other. This vision has been compromised by the very different style of the mural. It seems strange to damage one work of art for the benefit of another – particularly since painting over the stonework is definitively non-reversible.

Finally, Enfield should be the kind of place which consults its residents. The Council often does consult on changes of this kind, but as far as we are aware there was no general consultation in this case. The mural is in a prominent place in a conservation area, and I suggest there should have been more discussion of such a radical change.

Richard Stones

We organised a poll about the mural on our website. 11 responses were in favour of the mural and 21 against. So it is evident that opinion is divided.

Meeting with the Council Leader

Dave Cockle

The regular quarterly meetings which we have historically had with Senior Council Officers and/or the Leader had become more difficult to arrange since the meeting frequency was reduced.

On 25 June we were pleased to have a meeting with Councillor Ergin Erbil (Leader) and Brett Leahy (Strategic Director of Planning, Growth and Infrastructure).

The following topics were discussed:-

- The Local Plan;
- Colisseum Retail Park;
- Whitewebbs Park;
- Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and school zones;
- Plans for Edmonton Green Shopping Centre;
- Heritage Buildings at Risk.

From the Council's side we were given an assurance that a "Brown Field First Policy" would apply in developments; and assured that there was to be a clamp-down on unlicensed Houses of Multiple Occupation, and that the Government and the Council were working to stamp out the practice of land banking.

We are grateful to Councillor Erbil agreeing to reinstate our regular quarterly meetings. They are valued as it gives us the opportunity to let the Council know the issues that our sixteen hundred members have. It also gives us an opportunity to work together in an endeavour to improve the borough's civic and natural environment.

Society Directory

President: Colin Pointer

Vice Presidents: Stephen Gilburt, Janet McQueen, Matthew Saunders MBE, Alan Skilton

Chairman: Dave Cockle

Hon. Secretary: Richard Stones

Hon. Treasurer: Tony Foster

Management Committee (*Trustees*): Dave Cockle, John Cole, Tony Foster, Robert Fowler, Andrew Lack, Jan Metcalfe, Stuart Mills, Hilary Morris, Avril Nanton, Alison Parker, Richard Stones, Alec Tyler, John West.

Office: Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield EN2 0AJ

Telephone: 020 8363 9495
Messages left on this number will be dealt with as promptly as possible.

enfieldsociety.org.uk

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How to contact us

To contact our specialist groups either use the relevant contact details given below or use our general enquiries e-mail: info@enfieldsociety.org.uk

Architecture and Planning: John West, 020 8886 6080

Cleaner Neighbourhoods Group: Alison Yates

Conservation & Heritage Group: John West

East Enfield and Edmonton: Dave Cockle

Footpaths and Open Spaces: Stuart Mills

Green Belt: Dave Cockle, 020 8366 2242

IT Admin: Andrew Lack

Jubilee Hall bookings: Janet McQueen

Membership Secretary: Alec Tyler

Publications: Alison Parker

Records and Research: Hilary Morris, 020 8372 3080

Stations: Enfield Chase: Dave Cockle, *Gordon Hill:* John Cole

Trees: John West

Volunteer Coordinator: Claudia Deutschmann (volunteers@enfieldsociety.org.uk)

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Spotlight on a Trustee – John West



Born in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds, John came to London for University. Having gained a degree in Geography at UCL, he never left. Starting work in the GLC Planning Department, as a trainee planner, he later joined the Inner London Education Authority training as a buildings project manager. A career over 41 years with ILEA, the London Docklands Development Corporation, Southwark Council and finally Enfield Council followed. John specialised in major building projects, a highlight being work in the London Docklands where he was involved in the construction of four new schools.

Joining the Society in 2005, John currently chairs the Architecture and Planning Group, the Conservation and Heritage Group and coordinates the Trees Group.

As a walks leader he has led many Society walks. John moved to Palmers Green in 1986 and notes that he has never seen Broomfield House without scaffolding. He is looking forward to seeing the current sad state of the building commemorated in some way and is the Society's representative on the Steering Group. John is currently working with Avril Nanton on a Heritage Street Furniture List which will be an annexe to the Council's Local Heritage List. He has also represented the Society at the Enfield Local Plan Examination arguing for the protection of the Green Belt.

John enjoys travelling, having recently toured in the USA, Egypt, Jordan and India. An aim is to visit Sri Lanka where his grandparents worked in the 1950s.

Society Activities – Please join in!

Cleaner Neighbourhoods

On **Saturday 6 September** we will return to Turkey Street and the New River Path near Myddleton House.

Please meet on the corner of Turkey Street and Bull's Cross EN1 4RJ. (What3Words.com//pipe.whips.safety)

Bus stop Turkey Street on the A10, served by routes 217 and 317, is the nearest public transport. Walk west on Turkey Street past St Ignatius College and over the bridge and continue until the road meets the junction with Bull's Cross.

On **Saturday 18 October** we will be at the Cemetery Walk in Edmonton. The start of the footpath is on Plevna Road N9 0BX (What3Words.com//priced.undulation.loud) Edmonton Green is on the Weaver Overground line and the bus station is served by routes 102, 144, 149, 191, 192, 259, 279, 349, 491, W6 and W8. Walk south on the Hertford Road and take West Mall to its end on Plevna Road and the footpath is on the opposite side of the road.

On **Saturday 6 December** we are on the New River Path next to Palm Court, 56, Shapland Way N13 4DF (What3Words.com//parts.indeed.shout). Palmers Green train station is nearby or alight at the Broomfield Lane stop of bus routes 121/329 and walk west turning left at Shapland Way.

As usual we will meet at 10am and finish at 12pm for all of these litter picks.

Please bring your own gloves and let me know if you require equipment.

Alison Yates 07818 682073

Join The Enfield Society

Become a member of the Society from as little as £5 per person. Members receive quarterly newsletters and can participate in walks, talks and other activities. Non-members are welcome to come along to talks for a charge of £1 before deciding whether to join. Why not give membership as a gift? You can join or renew membership via our website enfieldsociety.org.uk/join, or scan the QR code.