THE ENFIELD SOCIETY

Enfield Society News

Autumn 2026

A Turning Point for Enfield's Local Plan?

John West

Following nearly five years of discussion, consultation, a Planning Examination at the Civic Centre, and a huge mass of documentation, Steven Lee, the Government-appointed Planning Inspector, has produced his report and recommendations. The Inspector and the Society have needed to review a main document that is over 500 pages long and has 7,000 pages of supporting evidence. The Inspector's letter sets out his view on the 'soundness' of the Council's Plan.

The Society's representatives, Andrew Lack and John West, attended over 15 days of the Inquiry, concentrating on the main concerns expressed by our members, with particular reference to the destruction of open countryside designated since the late 1940s as Green Belt. This includes Vicarage Farm (referred to as Chase Park), Crews Hill, fields at Hadley Wood, land west of Ramney Marsh, and Sloeman's Farm. There was also concern about tall buildings, particularly in the Enfield Town Conservation Area.

Crews Hill Golf Clubs



Crews Hill Golf course looking towards the Salmons Brook valley

A link to the Inspector's letter, dated 15 June, can be found on the Society's website. The letter is 37 pages long and sets out what the Inspector has examined and what he considers should be changed. The Inspector also noted that the Local Plan was not always consistent, and that it included unnecessary duplication and errors. All these matters had been raised by the Society and other participants.

Chase Park: Enfield's proposals included a country park to the north of new housing along Enfield Road in order to mitigate the loss of Green Belt and extend Trent Park. Comer Homes, who own the land, objected to this proposal, wanting to keep some farmland—presumably for future development. The Inspector concluded that the extension to the Park was important compensation for the loss of open fields and should be delivered. The Inspector also referred to the 'Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation' (SINCS), supporting the Society's view that these should be protected. The Inspector has questioned the density proposed at Vicarage Farm and noted that the land south of Enfield Road, owned by Fairview Homes, should only be developed in a way that protects neighbouring residential properties. We hope that these recommendations may force developers to reconsider their proposals.

Crews Hill: As with Chase Park, the Inspector has not rejected the proposals for development. He has recommended that no development should take place on the golf course or Kings Oak Plain. These are two areas where the Society raised serious concern, as the Council was proposing to exclude the land from the Green Belt with no clear proposals—presumably for future development! The Society was concerned about the impact on views from the Ridgeway caused by tall buildings proposed east of the railway line that would protrude above it. The Inspector has referred to this concern. The situation at Crews Hill is complicated because of the number of landowners. Some garden centres have already sold options to buy to housing developers. The new Council administration has confirmed to the Society that they will not be purchasing land at Crews Hill as previously proposed in the Local Plan. However, some development may therefore be inevitable as a result of the Inspector's report.

Hadley Wood: The Inspector has rejected the inclusion of this site as proposed in the Plan.

Land at Junction 24 of the M25: The Society's concern was that this fragmented the Green Belt, affecting views along the Ridgeway. The Inspector has rejected the inclusion of this land. However, earlier this year, the Council indicated its intention to sell the land for a large data centre. It is therefore unclear what effect the Inspector's report will have on this site.

Land at Whitewebbs Lane: The Council's proposals for this land were vague. The Inspector concluded that the Council's proposals for this area suggest that significant built form might be likely. Given this, the Inspector has concluded that 'very special circumstances' are needed for it to be removed from the Green Belt. The Inspector has included the following in his letter: "If the Council were intent on limiting the nature of development to that which meets the Green Belt exceptions, then this might be acceptable. However, it is quite clear that this is not what the Plan is proposing. In these circumstances I am not persuaded that it is appropriate to allocate land in the Green Belt for what amounts to 'inappropriate development' without proper assessment of the degree of harm likely to the Green Belt or what the Council would be willing to accept."

Sloeman's Farm: Part of the land is proposed for a burial site; other proposals are unclear in the Plan. The Inspector has suggested removing the proposed allocation, but does not exclude a future planning application coming forward.

Enfield Town: The Inspector comments, "I am not persuaded that the evidence justifies the appropriate heights proposed, particularly for Palace Gardens." The Inspector proposes a limit of 27 metres (nine storeys).

In conclusion, there are some positives in the Inspector's Report, limiting some of the most excessive developments. The new administration at the Civic Centre is currently reviewing the Plan and has said they will seek modifications. They will accept the principle of the Plan as amended by the Inspector. To reject the Plan at this stage would mean a new Local Plan would need to be developed, and that would have to be under the latest Planning Guidance, which has a greater presumption for development. We will continue to monitor progress. The threat posed by the government's New Town proposal remains and is not affected by the Local Plan.

Co-Chair's Column



The local elections in May marked the beginning of a new chapter for Enfield. With no party holding an overall majority, the new Conservative administration, led by Councillor Alessandro Georgiou, now faces the challenge of turning ambition into action while working across political boundaries.

It is, of course, still early days. The administration has been setting its priorities and reviewing existing policies, but residents will judge success by the improvements they see in their daily lives. The quality of our streets and public spaces, planning decisions, transport, housing, waste collection, and the protection of Enfield's heritage and green spaces all matter.

One of the great strengths of The Enfield Society is that we have always worked constructively with administrations of every political colour while remaining proudly independent and non-party political. Our role is to be a trusted voice, championing good planning, high-quality design, conservation and environmental improvement for the benefit of everyone who lives, works or studies in the borough.

In that spirit, John West and I recently met with Councillor Alessandro Georgiou. We had a constructive discussion about the opportunities and challenges facing Enfield and were pleased to share the Society's priorities. It was encouraging to find a willingness to listen and draw on the Society's experience and local knowledge.

We are particularly pleased that the Council intends to re-establish a Conservation and Heritage Group, bringing together councillors, officers and community organisations. The Society looks forward to playing a full part.

In our 90th anniversary year, John and I remain optimistic about what can be achieved when councils, community organisations and residents work together. There will undoubtedly be difficult decisions ahead, but the best outcomes are usually achieved through evidence, collaboration and a shared commitment to Enfield's long-term future. We look forward to working with councillors from all parties, council officers and our many partners to help shape a greener, more attractive and more sustainable borough for future generations.

John Cole

Don't Leave Our Walk Leaders Walking Alone

Stuart Mills

A walks programme has been a regular feature of the Society's activities for almost 60 years. From modest beginnings, it grew to offer members and friends almost 60 walks and visits each year.

In recent years, however, the programme has inevitably reduced to around 40 walks per annum. This is largely due to the ageing profile of our walk leaders and, unfortunately, a decline in the number of members able to take on this important role. We are extremely grateful to our existing leaders for the considerable time and commitment they give in planning and leading walks, but new leaders are always warmly welcomed. Anyone who enjoys walking and would like to help is encouraged to get in touch.

Equally important is the need to see more members taking part. Until only a few years ago, it was common for 20 to 30 people to attend a walk, with some attracting considerably more. During 2026, however, attendance has often struggled to reach double figures. This is naturally very disappointing for our walk leaders, who freely give many hours of their own time researching routes, carrying out reconnaissance walks and making all the necessary arrangements. After investing so much effort, it can be deeply disheartening to see only a handful of people turn up, and it is understandable if volunteers begin to question whether their commitment is truly appreciated. If participation continues to decline, it will become increasingly difficult to sustain a programme that has been such an important part of the Society's activities for almost 60 years.

During 2026, attendance has often struggled to reach double figures

Walking remains one of the simplest, healthiest and most economical ways to keep active. Just as importantly, Society walks provide an enjoyable opportunity to meet fellow members, discover new places and explore countryside and areas of historic or heritage interest that many people might not otherwise visit on their own.

Our country walks are generally within easy reach of Enfield, while London walks explore districts of particular historical, architectural or cultural interest. Wherever possible, walks make use of public transport, with full travel details provided in advance, together with information about any shorter walking option that may be available.

Since September 2024, the walks programme has no longer appeared in the Society's quarterly newsletter. Instead, details are published each month on the Society's website calendar, included in the monthly members' e-news, and circulated directly to the 165-plus members who subscribe to John West's monthly walkers' email list.

If you would like to join John's walkers' email list, please email `j.west@enfieldsociety.org.uk`.

Please be assured that emails are sent individually. Your email address is not shared with other members and is used solely for the purpose of circulating information about Society walks.

Whether you are a regular walker or have never joined one of our walks before, we hope you will consider coming along. You will be assured of a warm welcome, good company and the opportunity to enjoy some of the varied countryside and places of interest that surround us.

We look forward to seeing you on a walk in the near future.



Ian Reynolds

The Society walk group at the end of the Canada Water to Greenwich walk in May 2026, beside the statue of Tsar Peter the Great

Still Fighting for the Future

Bob Fowler

The mini touring exhibition has visited Enfield Town, Edmonton and Ordnance Unity Centre libraries. It is currently on display at Ridge Avenue Library until 10 August and at Edmonton Fore Street Living Library until 7 September. Further venues are planned and will be announced on the TES90 page of our website.

Andrew Lack's third article, *A Short History of the Enfield Society*, is included in this issue.

Heritage Walk leaflet No. 9, *Ponders End*, has now been published. It is available to order from our website and is also stocked at Waterstones Enfield, Forty Hall Farm Shop and other outlets. A guided walk of the route is planned for Sunday 23 August. Further details will be available on the Society website and in the monthly members' email newsletter.

The **MY ENFIELD** photo competition is now underway. It is open to everyone who lives, works, studies or visits the London Borough of Enfield. We invite you to submit photographs that capture the places, people, buildings, landscapes and stories that make Enfield special. Full details of how to enter, together with the competition rules, are available via `enfieldsociety.org.uk/myenfield/`

Work is also continuing on the Family Puzzle Trail. Look out for our flyer and further updates on the Society website.



Meeting with the Leader of the Council

John Cole

John West and I met with Councillor Alessandro Georgiou for a constructive discussion covering a wide range of issues affecting the borough and the work of The Enfield Society.

A significant part of the meeting focused on the proposed New Town. The Leader reaffirmed his commitment to protecting the Green Belt and avoiding development at Chase Park. He outlined his confidence that a revised Local Plan, together with the opportunities at Meridian Water and other housing sites, would strengthen the Council's case in discussions with Government and the Mayor. While he believes development on Council-owned land at Crews Hill can be prevented, he acknowledged that land already acquired by developers presents a more complex challenge.



Kaya Emin / Enfield Society

Cllr Alessandro Georgiou, Leader of Enfield Council

We also discussed Whitewebbs, where the Leader indicated that the Council's objective is to reach a solution with Tottenham Hotspur that avoids both development at Whitewebbs and further litigation. Heritage issues, including the future of the North Lodge, were also raised.

The Society highlighted concerns about the New River Loop, including the lack of water flow, the lack of access to, and the deteriorating condition of, Clarendon Arch. We agreed to prepare a letter for the Leader to send to Thames Water, setting out these concerns.

The Leader shared his aspirations for Enfield Town and Edmonton Green, emphasising appropriate development and indicating that further announcements regarding Meridian Water are expected.

We outlined the Society's extensive partnership work with the Council, including heritage, conservation, education, parks, station partnerships and environmental projects. The Leader agreed to investigate the future of the four listed telephone kiosks in Saddlers Square, expressed strong support for securing funding for the proposed Pymmes Park mural, noted concerns about the future funding of the Dugdale Arts Centre, and advised that a new Friends of Parks funding initiative is expected to be announced shortly.

Overall, the meeting was open, positive and constructive, and we look forward to continuing our dialogue on matters of shared interest.

Conservation & Heritage Group

John West

Members will recall that some years ago, the Society was an active participant in the Council's Conservation Advisory Group (CAG). That group monitored development in the Borough's 22 Conservation Areas. Under the previous administration at the Civic Centre that group was merged with the Transport Users Group and the Green Belt Forum to create an Environment Forum. That group tended to focus on one or two matters and was subsequently abolished. To create a forum for all those involved in Conservation Area Groups and those with an interest in Listed Buildings, the Society established a Conservation & Heritage Group. The group meets quarterly at Jubilee Hall. We are fortunate that the Borough's Conservation Officers have joined the group and play a valuable part in monitoring concerns over buildings at risk and major developments affecting conservation areas.

Council Officers have now contacted us to say that the administration plan to re-establish a new Conservation and Heritage Group, with elected councillors taking part. The Society welcomes this development, and we have passed the Council the names of the various groups who continue to monitor conservation matters.



John West / Enfield Society

A Society visit to Lavender Hill Chapel, led by Joe Studman

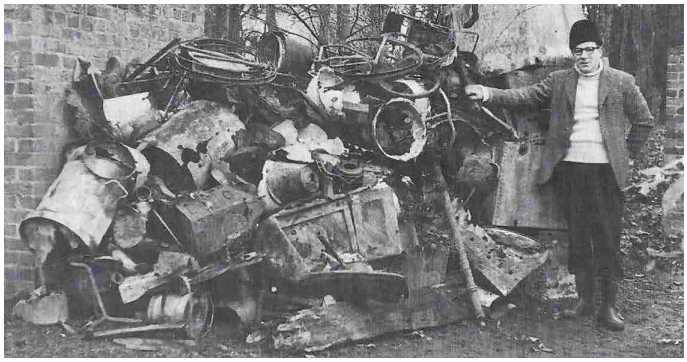
A Short History of The Enfield Society

Andrew Lack

Part 3 – From Rubbish to Restoration



Tony Lane & Don Gresswell clearing Coopers Lane Road in July 1963



EPS vice-President Robert Sykes with some of the rubbish cleared from the old course of the New River in Gough Park in 1965

Cleaning up the Borough

As Don Gresswell walked around the Borough in the early 1960s looking for lost footpaths (*see Part 1 in Newsletter 242, Spring 2026*) he was confronted with piles of dumped household rubbish in quiet country lanes. After seeing the state of Borough, the EPS asked Enfield Council to open a depot where households could take rubbish. Initially this was ignored but in 1965 refuse depots were opened, anticipating by two years the 1967 the Civic Amenities Act, which required local authorities to provide refuse depots.

The EPS began 'Operation Clean Up' on 12 July 1963 when six volunteers tackled two miles of Coopers Lane Road. A three-ton lorry was provided by the Council. A wide variety of rubbish was collected and from addresses found mostly the rubbish appeared to be from flats. A total of five tons was collected but the Lane had to be finished two weeks later due to the volume.

In February 1964 the EPS expanded the operation into urban areas by tackling a footpath running behind Kenilworth Crescent and Inverness Avenue. As work progressed the ten EPS volunteers were joined by local residents until 40 were involved, helping to clear 15 tons of rubbish from only two thirds of the path—the job being completed two weeks later. News of the EPS operation was spreading and the Ponders End Ratepayers Association asked for help. Together with youth clubs, 17 tons of rubbish was removed from several sites. The June 1964 EPS newsletter reported that 55 tons had been collected from just three areas!

But it wasn't only households littering the countryside. In the early 1960s the lakes at Forty Hill were used by Enfield Council to dump rubbish. After protests (and photographs) from the EPS were sent to the Council, this ceased in 1966—the Council minutes recording that "a member of the public" had complained. Fifteen years later the lakes were restored winning the Council an award from the Civic Trust.

Tingey Tops Pond

In January 1972 the EPS was told that builders' rubble was being dumped in the Pond. Investigation confirmed that the Pond was nearly half full with debris left over by work on an extension to the Golf clubhouse. After initially denying it was responsible, the Club applied to completely fill-in the Pond. EPS members were urged to write opposing the application and the Council refused permission and insisted the Pond be restored. Following clearing of the rubble, the Club accepted the EPS's offer to help restore the surroundings. This was completed by the Footpaths and Trees Groups.

Enfield Lock

After a period of absence, Don Gresswell visited Enfield Lock in 1982 and was shocked at its state. In response to complaints to the Council, they replied that the area was "somewhat isolated" as if that excused the situation. In March 1982 Hilda Dollery of the Eastern Enfield Study Group asked the EPS to help clear up the area. Don immediately volunteered and formed the Enfield Lock Village Clean Up Campaign. Thirteen working parties were organised, cutting the grass along the navigation and clearing huge amounts of dumped rubbish. The Trees Group planted daffodils and trees. One of the worst areas was Swan and Pike Pool car park, which had been completely submerged under fly-tipped waste. By Spring 1983 the area looked much improved, and the Lea Valley Regional Park became involved and planted more trees. Enfield Council erected barriers to the car park to prevent more fly-tipping and a derelict warehouse was turned into low-cost housing. With the sale of 23 cottages in Government Row, the scene was set for the regeneration of the area into Enfield Island Village.

As we reported in Part 1, Don received the Queen Mother's 80th Birthday Award partly for his work in clearing up Enfield Lock.

New River

The New River loop through Enfield was abandoned by the Metropolitan Water Board before WW2 and so eager was it to off-load responsibility it offered it to Enfield Council for nothing. However, one member of the infant Enfield Preservation Society warned that "unless great interest is taken it will become a noisome ditch". The Loop was formally handed over on 1st March 1938 and the Council proclaimed, "the water would not be stagnant but would flow".

The plan was to admit a small quantity of water into the Loop over a flume at Southbury Road, but the system did not work well, especially in the Summer when the New River level was low together with leaks along the length of the Loop. The banks were not properly maintained and in Summer there were unpleasant smells.



The angler's car park near Swan & Pike Pool, Enfield Lock in 1982 before clearing started



The temporary pond created in the Town Park to hold removed silt from Carr's Basin (1999)

Part 3



Revetment work underway near Parsonage Lane (1999)



Work to repair the leaking section at River Front (2001)

In 1974 the EPS decided that action was needed before the Loop became a nuisance and a team of 22 volunteers led by Brian MacDonald surveyed the entire length of the Loop and presented a report to the Council. The Council thanked the Society but at a follow-up meeting said that there was no money to carry out improvements and that Thames Water would not increase the flow into the Loop—though the diversion of Saddler's Mill Stream was suggested. However, the Society did offer to paint all the railing and cast-iron bridges which was carried out by volunteers in 1977.

New River Action Group

In 1985 Thames Water announced that it intended to abandon the New River south of Cheshunt once a new water "ring main" had been constructed round London. This would affect Broxbourne, Enfield, Haringey, Hackney and Islington.

The Society led efforts to retain the watercourse, fearing it would be sold off and developed. The EPS contacted the affected local authorities, MPs, local residents' groups, historical societies, wildlife organisations, angling clubs and the Ramblers Association, who all had an interest in the matter. On 30 April 1986 representatives of 34 organisations met at the Civic Centre and agreed to create the New River Action Group (NRAG). Valerie Carter (EPS Chair) was elected as the Chair.

The Group organised 'action days' which combined a walk along the River (where it was accessible) followed by a public meeting nearby. The first was held on the 14 of March 1987 with over 200 attending at the Civic Centre. Thames Water were asked to provided representatives who were confronted on all occasions with a hostile audience.

In February 1987 Thames Water announced a revised plan which was see the River retained from Cheshunt to Forty Hill. The plan allowed for an unspecified (but much reduced flow) to enter the southern section. When negotiations with Enfield, Haringey and Hackney failed to persuade them to take responsibility for the southern section, Thames Water announced it would retain ownership.

The NRAG continued to seek a meeting with Roy Watts, the Chair of Thames Water. This eventually took place on 2nd March 1988 with Lord Graham MP (Edmonton) and Chris Smith MP (Islington South) present. Roy Watts revealed that Thames Water intended to allow 60Ml (about 13 million gallons) a day into the Southern section. By July that figure had been raised to 80Ml.

What saved the southern section was the realisation by Thames Water's engineers that the chalk beneath Enfield and Haringey could be used to store water. At a cost of £7M, 15 boreholes were drilled and small unmanned pumps constructed to store water from the New River in the chalk, then extract it again when water demand was high. The EPS newsletter for Spring 1992 was finally able to announce that "the New River is safe at last".

The NRAG continued to operate, becoming a Registered Charity in 1994 and with 50 affiliated groups. Sadly though, records from the Charity Commission show it ceased operation in 2008.

New River Loop Restoration Project

At the EPS AGM in 1996 the Chair, Colin Pointer, announced that the Society would create a project to restore the Loop to mark the Society's Diamond Jubilee. He described the Loop as "a ribbon of green slime running through the heart of the Enfield Town Conservation Area" which caught the interest of the public and the local newspapers. Following a series of meetings with the Council it was agreed that a Heritage Lottery bid would be needed with the Society helping to raise funds.

The five-year project was estimated to need £2.4M and in September 1996 a bid for £1.8M was made requiring the Council and the Society to fund the remainder. In the Summer of 1997, the Council was able to announce it had been successful—making it the largest Lottery grant received by the Council at that time. The Society played a central role in the project raising £105,200 from individuals and businesses.

The work required the removal of thousands of tons of silt, new timber bank supports (revetments), new fencing, lighting, footpaths, improved in-flow at Southbury Road and a fountain at Chase Green Gardens. As part of the de-silting work, a huge lagoon was constructed in the Town Park to hold and estimated 4,600m³ of mud, two-thirds of which was water. Once this had dried out, the remainder was carted away. However, in June 2002, as the project neared completion, a major problem was found with the section along River Front. The clay bed of the river was found to leak and a further £400K was required, with £343K from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the remainder from the Council.

The completed Project was recognised in 2002 with a Civic Trust Award for the Best Restoration or Development Scheme in the UK involving Partnership between Private and Public Sectors.

The New River Loop Today

The Loop continues to cause concern for The Enfield Society, despite the huge investment 25 years ago. The flow is poor and weed has returned to be a significant problem. A pump installed by Enfield Council in 2018 to divert Sadlers Mill Stream into the Loop at Parsonage Lane, failed some years ago after providing only intermittent service. The Society continues to raise the state of the Loop at regular meetings with the Council.



Three views of the progress of work at River View (2000)

Part 4 will look at Heritage and Whitewebbs threats. All articles can now be found on the Society's website at `enfieldsociety.org.uk/enfield-society-history`

Society News

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 17 September 2026
Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane EN2 0AJ

Doors open: 7.30 pm
Meeting starts: 8.00 pm

This is to give formal notice that the 2026 Annual General Meeting of the Company will be held as detailed above. The business of the meeting will be to:

- Receive the Report of the Management Committee and the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025;
- Consider the re-election of the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer;
- Consider the re-election of members of the Management Committee who retire by rotation; and
- Consider the election of other members recommended by the Management Committee.

The Management Committee has recommended the election of **Helen Osman** and **Kaya Emin** who currently serve as co-opted members of the Committee. Helen Osman was born on 17 December 1953 and Kaya Emin on 12 July 2004. They are both British citizens and resident in the United Kingdom. Their address for communications is Jubilee Hall.

Any member may appoint another person as their proxy to exercise all or any of their rights to attend, speak and vote at the meeting.

The meeting will be followed by a talk by Andrew Lack, **A Brief History of the Enfield Society – Part 2**. This continues Andrew's well-received talk from last year.

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 2025;
- A more detailed agenda for the 2026 Annual General Meeting; and
- The Minutes of the 2025 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`

All members are warmly encouraged to attend.

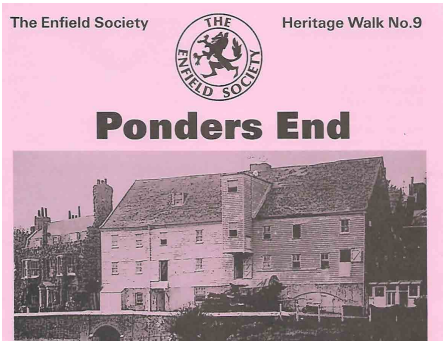
Memberships

We welcome the following new members to the Society:
J Anderson, S Beard, D Bounds, K Boxer, A Buhayer-Mach, J Cowley, V A Dyer, A Evangelou, J & A Fieldhouse, V Fryer, A Georgiou, M Gooding, D Hansley, B Hayward, J Hobman, A Ibeks, B Jephcott, P & S Jordan, Joshi, C Keogh, A Lea, N Littman, P McNulty, M & J Mote, R & P Munyard, A Pishardy, P Quin, S Robertson, V Simmonds, G & R Smith, L Syprou, G Taylor, P Underwood, D Valentine, M Webb, Z White, D Wiltshire, A Wingfield, L Woolf

Alec Tyler

Publications

We're pleased to announce that our latest Heritage Walk title for Ponders End is now available. An area full of history, the circular walk is packed with interesting



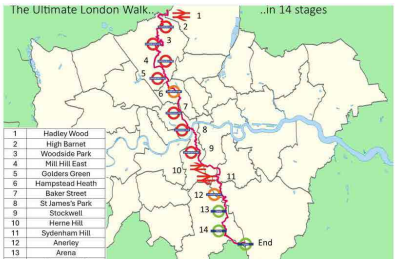
facts and tells of its origins centuries ago right up to the present day. The booklet is fully illustrated with a map of the walk

Price £2.50, available from our online store, at our talks at Jubilee Hall, Waterstones in Enfield Town and Forty Hill Farm Shop.

Society Talks

All our talks take place at **Jubilee Hall**. Please note that the talks alternate between evening and morning times. Evening talks normally start at 7.30pm (doors open 7pm), and morning talks at 11am (doors open 10.30am).

Tuesday 8 September (Morning)
Crossing the capital from Hertfordshire to Surrey by Charles Forman



This is a London first: a 42-mile guided walk right across the city, from north to south. Charlie Forman talks about the surprises and insights discovered by the group that first completed this 14-stage hike, with nearly 70% of the route off-road.

One of the biggest revelations is how London commandeered its surrounding countryside long before it was built over. There were staging posts, commuter villages for the wealthy, landed estates, market gardens, pleasure gardens, hay producers, quarries and cemeteries.

As the city expanded, Londoners held on to a patchwork of green spaces, but the extensive estates of many affluent business families became unsustainable in the aftermath of the First World War. This released vast swathes of land that became outer London, helping to realise the garden suburb dream in a new motor-driven city.

The ongoing battle to balance urban growth with green space is more than a century old. This marathon journey through every layer of London's history is packed into one exhilarating hour. No walking required!

Monday 12 October (Evening)
History of Black Classical Composers by Robin Walker

Robin Walker, known as '**The Black History Man**', uncovers this hidden history through musical excerpts and powerful performances. This engaging session features music by Ignatius Sancho, Le Chevalier de Saint-Georges, Florence Price and William Grant Still, promising a delight for the ears as well as the mind.

Tuesday 10 November (Morning)
Regency Healthcare by Nick Black

Based on real events, this is the story of how, in 1828, the young surgeon Thomas Wakley founded *The Lancet* and, by challenging the corruption, nepotism and lack of accountability within the medical profession, helped usher in the era of modern healthcare.

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 details, please visit `enfarchsoc.org`

Friday 9th October
The Ancient Near East by Mark Altaweel

Friday 13 November (Zoom Meeting)
Recent Finds from Roman Vindolanda and Magna by Barbara Birley

Friday 11 December (Zoom Meeting)
Maritime Archaeology in Palestine by Georgia Andreou

The Arts Society Enfield

Meetings are held on the last Thursday of the month at Revival Christian Church, 47 London Road, Enfield EN2. 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. Details of all our talks and study days can be found on our website: `theartssocietyenfield.org.uk`

Thursday 24 September
How symphonies were born in a London pub by Robert Samuels

Thursday 29 October
Paintings inspired by Poems by Raymond Warburton

Tuesday 17 November — Special Interest Day at Jubilee Hall!
London: One Capital, Two Millennia, Three decisive Moments—the evolution of London from the Romans to the 2012 Olympics by Charlie Forman (3 lectures) Lunch and refreshments included: £38 for Arts Society Members, £44 for visitors. Please book your place by emailing: `jntmcqn@gmail.com`

Thursday 26 November
The car in art and the car as art by Julian Richards

Thursday 17 December
Pantomime — When the Fairy's over Fifty! by Tyler Butterworth

The Enfield Philatelic Society

The Enfield Philatelic Society meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month throughout the year at 2.00pm, at the Bush Hill Park Fellowship Hall within Bush Hill Park, off Cecil Avenue, EN1 1PS. Visitors are always welcome to attend for free, and an annual subscription is only £20. You can find further details, including our programme of meetings, on our website, `enfieldphilatelic.org.uk`

Wednesday 7 October
The Postcard Printer by John Copeland

Saturday 24 October
Stamp fair at North Enfield Conservative Club *(see website for details)*

Wednesday 18 November
Pages from his collection by Ray How FRPSL

Trees Group

John West

During the spring, the group provided trees for Oak Hill Park and Bush Hill Park. The majority being Black Walnut trees. During the dry summer, watering the saplings has been a priority and we are grateful to all those members who have helped. A special thanks to members of the group who funded a battery strimmer to keep the grass under control.



John West / Enfield Society

A mature Black Walnut tree

Fountain marks Society's 90th

Andrew Lack



Lisa Smart



Lisa Smart

Before and after: the restoration and replanting of the Chase Green Millennium Fountain to mark The Enfield Society's 90th anniversary

The millennium fountain in Chase Green Gardens has not worked for some time and the Council do not have the resources to repair it. The sundial still works, as there are no moving parts except the sun itself.

At a recent regular meeting with the Council Leader, The Society raised concerns about the poor state of the water feature. As a result, the Society has worked with Council Officers and the Gentleman's Row Residents' Association and the agreed plan was to plant-up the fountain to make it more attractive.

Brixton Walk

Avril Nanton

In June, Avril Nanton led members on a Brixton walk to commemorate Windrush Day. The group explored Brixton's Black history, visiting places connected to significant events, beginning outside Brixton Underground station and ending at the Black Cultural Archives. The archives preserve the history of Brixton and of many people of Caribbean and African heritage, offering a valuable starting point for anyone researching their family history or cultural roots.



Avril Nanton

Ponders End Industry

Stephen Gilburt

Enfield Archaeological Society



Picture 1. There has been a water mill on the River Lea at Ponders End since at least the 16th century and possibly since the 11th century, as a mill is recorded in Enfield in the *Doomsday Book* of 1086. The Grade II listed, partly weatherboarded Wright's Flour Mill has sections dating back to 1697. It is Enfield's oldest working industrial building. The mill was originally powered by water from a mill stream diverted from the river. In 1909, electric power was introduced. In the centre is a projecting sack hoist. Since this photograph was taken by Geoffrey Gillam in 1968, a modern loading bay extension has been constructed at the front. The mill buildings, 18th-century miller's house and water meadows make up the Ponders End Conservation Area (*see Newsletter 180, Winter 2010*).

Stephen Gilburt



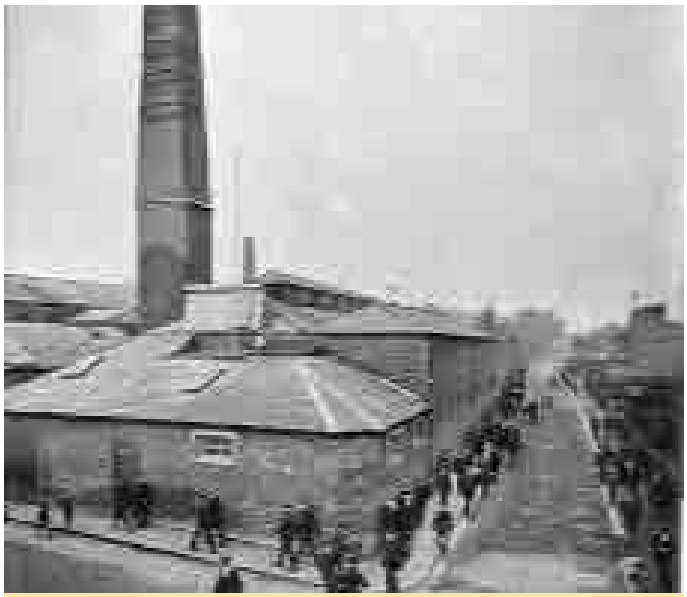
Picture 2. The River Lea historically marked the boundary between Hertfordshire and Middlesex to the west and Essex to the east. It flowed south into the River Thames at Bow Creek. In medieval times, it was used to transport wheat by barge to watermills on the river. Barley and malt were also taken down the Lea to London breweries. 'London manure' (i.e. human waste) and building materials, such as locally manufactured bricks and timber, which was also used locally to make furniture, were also transported by barge. From the 12th century, various improvements were made to the river. In the 18th and 19th centuries, cuts and locks, including Ponders End Lock, converted the river into the Lee Navigation. Many of the narrow boats now to be seen are moored at Ponders End. North of here, most journeys are now made for pleasure, although even in the 21st century, at least one of the narrow boats was offering to transport coal, oil and gas (*see Newsletter 208, Winter 2017*).

Enfield Local Studies & Archive



Picture 3. In 1809, Grout and Baylis opened a factory for the manufacturing, dyeing and crimping of crape at the junction of South Street with Scotland Green Road. In the 19th century, it was fashionable for people to wear dark-coloured crape clothes for long periods of mourning after a death in the family. Some of the up to 200 poorly paid, mainly female workers are shown here holding rolls of crape. Their male supervisors were better paid. Children were also employed. However, following a change in fashion, demand for crape fell and the factory closed in 1894.

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Picture 4. In 1898, the factory buildings were taken over and extended by United Flexible Metal Tubing. This view from around 1910 shows workers leaving the factory. The company initially made products for use in the gas industry. It later diversified, making tubing with an internal diameter ranging from 1/8" to 24" for steam, oil, gas, hot air, hydraulics and electrical screening.

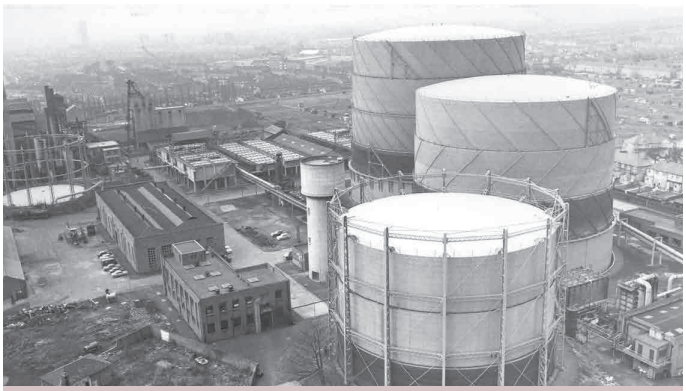
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Picture 5. This view of a workshop shows the belt-driven machinery in about 1910. In 1941, the factory was struck by an aerial land mine and then damaged again by a V1 flying bomb in 1944. It was demolished in 1991.

For more information see the publications listed in the previous newsletter and: *Industries of Enfield (which describes 89 companies in the former Enfield Urban District)* by Enfield District Manufacturers Association 1947 | *Industrial Archaeology in Enfield* by Enfield Archaeological Society 1971 | *Enfield's Forgotten Street, South Street Ponders End* by Gary Boudier 1999 | *The Built Heritage of Enfield, Edmonton and Southgate* by Stephen Gilburt Enfield Society 2025 | *History of Enfield* by David Pam Enfield Preservation Society 3 vols 1990-1994

Enfield Local Studies & Archive



Picture 6. Ponders End and Enfield Highway Gas Company was formed in 1859. The works, at the eastern end of South Street, were built in 1860 and extended in 1882. The company merged with Enfield Gas Company in 1879 and was taken over by Tottenham and District Gas Company in 1914. This photograph shows the works being reconstructed after the Second World War. The company was nationalised in 1948. By 1972, Enfield had been converted from coal gas to North Sea natural gas and manufacture had ceased, although gas continued to be stored there. Oasis Hadley School is now on the site.

Stephen Gilburt



Stephen Gilburt



Picture 7. In 1886, a former jute factory in Duck Lees Lane was taken over by the Edison Swan United Electric Light Company (Ediswan) for the manufacture of Sir Joseph Swan's (1828–1914) incandescent electric light bulbs. Sir James Dewar (1842–1923) invented the vacuum flask at Ediswan. In 1904, Professor Sir Ambrose Fleming (1849–1945) invented the thermionic diode valve, which marked the beginning of the electronic technological revolution. Britain's first radio valve and television cathode ray tube factories were opened at Ediswan in 1916 and 1936, respectively. The company became part of Thorn-EMI in 1961. The Ponders End factory closed in 1969. The only remaining building is the former Ediswan general office block of 1890, which has a plaque commemorating Swan, Dewar and Fleming. Following redevelopment, only the central part was retained, when it became the entrance to the Beavertown Brewery (*see Newsletter 176, Winter 2009*).

Picture 8. Following the construction of the Great Cambridge Road after the First World War, a number of light industrial factories were built in the Art Deco style. One of the few buildings remaining is the Grade II listed former Ripaults factory in Southbury Road. Designed by A.H. Durnford, it opened in 1936. The factory manufactured electric cables, automotive equipment and accessories.

Blooming Stations!

John Cole

John Cole



John Cole



Hertford Loop railway stations continue to benefit from dedicated volunteers who improve their gardens, heritage and community spaces.

At Enfield Chase, volunteers are maintaining the summer planting, while work is being explored to preserve the station's historic forecourt mosaics. The Enfield Society also continues to develop heritage artwork and interpretation around the station.

At Gordon Hill, volunteers have been busy gardening, planting and creating a new "luxury" bug hotel. Wildlife cameras have captured badgers and muntjac deer, alongside regular squirrels and foxes. New artwork is also being developed through Painting Our Place – Community Art at Gordon Hill 2026.

The Enfield Society is working with Palmers Green Action Team on a new station interpretation panel, while the Grange Park station garden group continues to enhance its Conservation Area station.

Several stations have entered Enfield in Bloom 2026, celebrating the contribution of community gardening and environmental projects. All station groups welcome new volunteers interested in gardening, wildlife, history or art.

Dave Cockle



Stephen Gacki

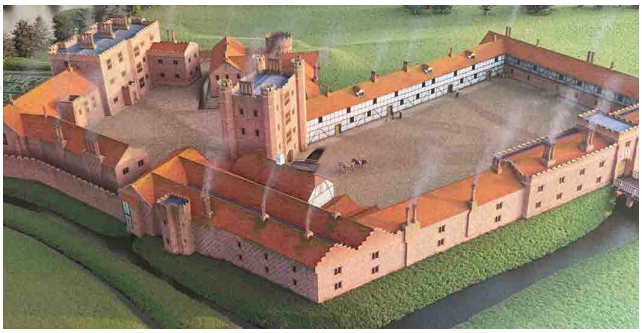


A Trip Through the History of Elsyng Palace

Jan Metcalfe

On Saturday 27 June 2026, an exhibition about Elsyng Palace opened in the Museum of Enfield's temporary exhibition space in the Dugdale Arts Centre, where it continues until Saturday 8 May 2027. The exhibition also continues on the 2nd floor of Forty Hall. This is a joint venture between the Museum and Enfield Archaeological Society (EAS), who have spent over 70 years excavating, researching, recording and publishing the archaeology of Enfield.

Enfield Archaeological Society



An artist's illustration of what Elsyng Palace might have looked like

A series of information panels tell the story of the Palace from the early 15th Century building, via the courtiers' palace expanded by Sir Thomas Lovell to the royal palace used by Henry VIII and his children from 1539. They also touch on the people who worked there and the family who were the last residents before its demolition in around 1657.

The displays then skip forward to focus on the rediscovery by EAS of the buried remains in 1963, its status as a scheduled ancient monument 4 years later and the 21st century excavations from 2004. These have concentrated on gaining a full plan of the buildings around the outer court and, in the last few years, focussed on the inner gatehouse between the outer and inner courts

The information panels are complemented by the 3-dimensional objects found during the EAS excavations of the Palace; from items found in the 1960s up to artefacts revealed as recently as last year. They include delft tiles, coins, personal possessions, moulded stonework, pottery, glassware, clay pipes and more.

As a souvenir of this exhibition, a second edition of Neil and John Pinchbeck's popular book '*Elsyng : Enfield's Lost Palace Revealed*' will be available for purchase at a cost of £6 at both venues.

Celebrating Windrush Day

Avril Nanton

Avril Nanton



The Mayor and crowd watches as Rudolph Walker unveils the Windrush talking bench

Since 2018, 22 June has been celebrated as Windrush Day in the UK, and this year was no exception.

Windrush Day was championed by Sir Patrick Vernon OBE after the harassment suffered by many Africans and Caribbeans during the Windrush scandal of 2017. The Windrush scandal involved the wrongful detention, denial of rights, and deportation of long-term UK residents from the Caribbean and Africa, exposing failures in British immigration policy and citizenship recognition.

In Enfield, the Enfield Caribbean Association, one of the borough's major African Caribbean groups, marked the occasion with the Black Heritage Hub and support from several other organisations by unveiling a new solar-powered talking bench — the first of its kind in Enfield.

Following the midday entertainment, Rudolph Walker CBE, best known for playing Patrick Trueman in EastEnders, cut the ribbon on the new bench, which is located in Pymmes Park near the Bowling Club. Visitors can scan its QR code with their phones to hear stories from people who came to the UK during the Windrush era (1948–71). Enfield's new mayor, Cllr Emma Supple, also attended.

If you want further information about the Enfield Caribbean Association and the work they do in the Borough, contact `theeca.org.uk`

Piccotts End. Visit, Hertfordshire

Avril Nanton

At the end of June, some members visited this amazing Grade 1 listed medieval cottage. A talk about the fascinating paintings on the walls which were discovered in 1953 was given to the group by Karen Murphy, the owner of the building, who told us the fascinating story of the find, the history of the building and what the pictures depict. We were treated to tea and biscuits which added to the delight of the day.

If you would like to know more about Piccotts End, to book a visit : `piccottsendpaintings.uk`

The cottage will be open again for Open House weekend on 19th /20th September



Avril Nanton

Continuing Concerns at Vicarage Farm

Andrew Lack

Society raises formal complaint about Vicarage Farm hedgerow removal

In October 2025 an extensive hedgerow was removed at Vicarage Farm without planning permission (*see newsletter Winter 2025, page 3*). Member Sarah Banbury raised a complaint with the Planning Department about the removal. The Council responded by saying the allegation that a hedgerow had been removed was "unfounded". The Society used a Freedom of Information request to better understand this curious response (*see newsletter Summer 2026, page 11*).

In March the Society opened a formal complaint into the Council's original investigation of our members' complaint as the Council appeared to have ignored their communication during the investigation that the hedgerow was part of a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

The Society's complaint asked the Council to formally record that harm to a SINC had been caused. The Council have declined this request saying that *The Council is unable to make a formal finding that harm to a SINC has been caused. Planning Enforcement is not an ecological assessment function, and the investigation did not identify a breach of planning control or a statutory regime that would allow the Council to certify ecological harm retrospectively.*

This apparent inability to record harm seems to cast doubt about the point of the SINC. The two-day Local Plan Hearing on allocation PL10 (Chase Park, Vicarage Farm) spent time discussing the SINC and the Council presented assessed evidence of the SINC. Was all that a waste of time?

The Society does not have the technical expertise to agree or refute this explanation and demonstrates the difficulty that volunteer bodies like The Society face when dealing with complex areas of legislation.

Trial Bikes

This Spring, as in previous years, youths on trial bikes have been seen riding at speed along and beside the Merryhills Way Public Right of Way. Other vehicles have also been seen racing around the landscape. The issue was reported to the Society by concerned members in April and reported to the Met Police and the Ridgeway Ward Councillors.

The anti-social behaviour was subsequently observed by one of the Committee, who obtained video evidence and the incident reported to the Met Police. The youths involved are believed to be the grandsons of the current tenant "farmer".

We understand that skylarks nest on Vicarage Farm. As members will know, these are on the Red List [RSPB] and are ground nesting birds. Apart from the obvious nuisance, as well as the illegal act of riding a motor bike on a footpath, the behaviour further illustrates the casual attitude of the tenant towards their responsibilities to the landscape and wildlife.



Andrew Lack / Enfield Society

The gap (circled green) left by the unauthorised removal of an extensive hedgerow at Vicarage Farm in October 2025.

As this newsletter was being prepared we had received no further information about any follow-up action from either the Ward Councillors or the Police.

Feryal Clark MP: Vicarage Farm development is "excessive"

A number of local residents and Groups received an e-mail from Feryal Clark at the end of June. The letter followed the publication of the Inspector's Letter (*see page 1*) on the Draft Enfield Local Plan and a meeting Ms Feryal had with the Housing and Planning Minister, Matthew Pennycook.

In her letter Feryal Clark reflects on the very real housing crisis, which the MP sees every week in her case load. She says that it is necessary to balance the need for more housing whilst "ensuring that any development of this scale only proceeds with the infrastructure, environmental protections and community involvement that residents rightly expect".

She criticises campaign Groups (and by implication The Enfield Society) saying "anyone who thinks this situation can be allowed to continue or can be solved by only building on disused factory sites or vacant car parks is, at best misunderstanding the reality of the issue or at worst misleading people as to the stark reality and scale of the challenge facing current and future generations in Enfield."

Importantly, the MP has seen the boundary of the proposed New Town — something that the Society and other Groups have consistently called for to be made public. Having weighed up the evidence though, she concludes that "development is excessive. By removing Chase Park (Vicarage Farm) and other areas of high-quality Green Belt, the number of homes could be reduced while still making a significant contribution to housing need and reducing the impact on valued green spaces."

You can read the full text of her letter on her website: `feryalclark.org.uk`



Andrew Lack / Enfield Society

One of the off-road motorcycles observed on Vicarage Farm during spring 2026.

Society Directory

President: Colin Pointer

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

Joint Chairs: John Cole, John West

Hon. Secretary: Richard Stones

Hon. Treasurer: Tony Foster

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

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Instagram @enfieldsociety
bsky.app/profile/enfieldsociety.bsky.social

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

Architecture and Planning: John West, 07904 193098

Cleaner Neighbourhoods Group: Alison Yates

Conservation and 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)

Newsletter Editor: Kaya Emin

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Enfield Town Action Team

John Cole

Enfield Town has taken another positive step forward with the appointment of Adrian Dayas as the first independent Chair of the newly renamed Enfield Town Action Team. Formerly the Enfield Town Steering Group, the Action Team brings together local businesses, community organisations, cultural groups, the public sector and The Enfield Society, with the shared aim of making the town centre a safe, welcoming and thriving place.

Adrian, an experienced brand and communications consultant, has been appointed for an initial one-year term. He will provide strategic leadership and help develop a long-term funding strategy. The Action Team is also coordinating projects and events to attract visitors and encourage community involvement, including a self-guided heritage trail promoting local businesses and important sites, and a community play.

The Enfield Society is pleased to be an active member and looks forward to working with Adrian, partners and local residents to help shape the future of Enfield Town.

Society Activities – Please join in!

Cleaner Neighbourhoods

There are three more Society litter picks scheduled for this year.
All take place from 10:00 am – 12:00 noon.

Saturday 3 October
Litter pick at the junction of Bulls Cross Ride and Whitewebbs Lane, almost opposite the Spurs Training Ground, EN7 5HT (What3Words: ///hush.nets.shine). Bus routes 217 and 317 go north along the Great Cambridge Road. Alight at the Manor Road stop, walk north, turn left onto Bullsmoor Road and then right onto Whitewebbs Lane.

Saturday 14 November
Meeting point is the footpath next to Aulay Lawrence Court at the end of Menon Drive, N9 0GE (What3Words: ///vibe.sharp.client). Edmonton Green is on the Weaver Overground and is served by buses W6, W8, 102, 144, 149, 191, 259, 279 and 349. Walk south along Hertford Road and turn left onto West Mall at the junction with Plevna Road. Turn left and Menon Drive is the second turning on your right. side of the road.

Saturday 19 December
Meet at the start of the footpath adjacent to 191 Carterhatch Road, EN3 5EA (What3Words: ///jelly.edge.brief). Alight at the Sherborne Avenue stop on bus route 191 and walk to the roundabout with Hertford Road. Walk north and Carterhatch Road is on your right. It is approximately a 10-minute walk to No. 191.

Open House Festival

This year's festival in London runs from 12 to 20 September. There are 12 Enfield venues on the programme (see programme.openhouse.org.uk and select "Enfield"). Most of the Enfield venues are open on 19 and/or 20 September, but one or two in Edmonton are open on 12 and/or 13 September. Of particular interest to the Society are:



Jubilee Hall
Jubilee Hall is open from 11 till 5 on 19 and 20 September. We plan to provide information on the history of the building and the Society, and the TES90 Travelling Exhibition will be on show.

The Charity School, Edmonton
This is a rare opportunity to explore the interior of this historic structure and to learn more about its history and the challenges we face in ensuring its future. It will also be possible to view the work of some of the artists who are currently using the buildings. The School will be open on 12 and 13 September from 11 till 5. The history of the Charity School is closely bound up with the neighbouring All Saints Parish Church, which will be open on the same days.



Tickets are not required for any of these venues – just drop in!

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.