

HIGHBURY COMMUNITY NEWS

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20 years of the British Library at St. Pancras

The HCA AGM’s special guest speaker was Highbury resident, Roly Keating, the Library’s Chief Executive

By GILL SHEPHERD

This year’s AGM speaker was local Highbury resident, Roly Keating, who works just down the road as Chief Executive of the British Library in St Pancras. We were treated to a presentation about the Library’s changing roles given by an inspiring and charming speaker, who accompanied his talk with engaging power-point slides.

It is now 20 years since the Library moved to its new home from the old British Museum Reading room, after a challenging period of fund-raising to get the building built, with constantly wavering government support.

Roly spoke first of the manuscript treasures the Library has always held, from the Lindisfarne Gospels and Magna Carta to Jane Austin’s notebooks and the hand-written much crossed-out drafts of the words for Beatles’ songs.

But he was much more concerned to explain aspects of the Library’s new philosophy to us. Since 2015 ‘living knowledge’ has been the focus of its mission statement. Some changes are dictated by the changing dimensions of knowledge itself so that the Library is adding virtual access to physical access, expanding its collection of sound archives, and finding ways to archive the web. It has strong European and global connections and sees its role as ‘connecting’ quite as



Roly Keating (centre) meets local Highbury residents after giving his talk

much as ‘collecting’.

In marked contrast to the old British Museum library, its philosophy is to give physical access to the general public as well as to academics. It encourages visits from schoolchildren, and is further developing its role in the fostering of lifelong learning, and business use of the library (especially in the field of intellectual property). It runs a programme of cultural events through its talks and exhibitions, and is especially well-placed to do this given the range of materials at its disposal. For instance the newly opened ‘James Cook Voyages’ exhibition contains not only Cook’s journals, but a wealth of maps and drawings done by the artists, scientists

and sailors on board.

Finally, the British Library came to the realisation that it sat in a uniquely interesting location. The area within a mile of its piazza is now home to what is probably the greatest concentration of institutions of learning in the world. They have grouped together to call themselves the ‘Knowledge Quarter’. The quarter benefits greatly from the area’s redeveloped national and international transport links and recognition of this fact as well as the knowledge concentration has led Google to set up its European headquarters here. We in Highbury are lucky to live less than fifteen minutes from this fascinating part of London.

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Local issues discussed at the HCA Annual General Meeting

By GILL SHEPHERD

The AGM itself took place on Saturday 24th March 2018, Christ Church, 7-10 pm, and was attended by about 50 residents.

The chairman and others reported on the main issues acted on over the course of the previous year. Some receive specific focus in other parts of the newsletter.

(i) HCA is still concerned about plans for Highbury Corner, especially the curtailed 277 bus route, and the fact that more traffic will inevitably be thrown onto Baalbec Road (a very narrow road) and Fieldway Crescent as a result of the closure of Corsica Street.

(ii) HCA contributed to the initial consultation on the replacement of the buildings on Highbury Fields, but the funding of these is not yet secured.

(iii) We continue to be opposed to barbecues on the Fields: it is a very small site and is the only park for miles around that currently allows barbecues.

(iv) Ladbroke House has planning permission for use as a film school for 1000 16+ pupils, causing concern about congestion in the area. The project will not go ahead until next year.

(v) A recent Drayton Park and Gillespie Road traffic proposal will aim to ease congestion by narrowing the road near Arsenal station. However, this does not address the concerns of those who live in Gillespie Road.

(vi) The rebuilding of the Roundhouse is nearly complete. The building still needs fixtures and fittings, and applications for grants have been made to a number of bodies. This year's HCA charity, funded from proceeds of the AGM Raffle and Auction, is the Roundhouse.

Thank you to the local organisations and businesses donating prizes at the AGM

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Expanded summer 2018 festival season in Finsbury Park

By SARAH POTTER

This summer's festival season in Finsbury Park has expanded to include not only Wireless from July 6th to 8th, but also the Community Festival featuring rock music from June 29th to July 1st. Both these major London events have a capacity of 45,000 and will take up over a quarter of the Park. In addition, two smaller Dance events with bands and DJs are scheduled for May 26th and 27th and June 9th and 10th respectively.

Islington residents who normally enter the Park from the Seven Sisters Road in search of their local green space will find themselves for most of this summer deterred by having to find their way to the park past the perimeter fences barring off the festival site from the public, not just during the festivals themselves, but during the considerable time necessary for the setting up and dismantling of the stages.

The nuisance of drugs and gangs from last year's Wireless Festival affected Highbury residents in the area off the Blackstock Road, which was raised by the HCA representative on the Finsbury Park Events Stakeholders Group Meeting last August, with a request for a greater police presence during the festival. Noise and litter were also issues for local people. Please contact HCA if you find yourself affected this summer.

Details of the festival schedule can be found at this link: <http://www.haringey.gov.uk/libraries-sport-and-leisure/parks-and-open-spaces/z-parks-and-open-spaces/finsbury-park/events-finsbury-park>

All aboard for direct trains to Brighton!



By WILL PARKES

From May Finsbury Park will join the Thameslink network and connect our part of north London with the south coast of England.

Trains will head south from Finsbury Park National Rail station, calling at St Pancras, Farringdon, Blackfriars, London Bridge, and then continue onto stations to Sussex including Brighton and Gatwick Airport.

The additional services will benefit both commuters and those heading on holiday. Eight trains an hour will serve Blackfriars and six will go through London Bridge, offering many new travel options from Finsbury Park.

Travelling north, passengers will be able to travel direct to Peterborough or Cambridge via Stevenage. When the Elizabeth line opens at the end of the year passengers from Finsbury Park will be able to change onto the new railway at Farringdon, further improving links to Paddington and Canary Wharf.

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Highbury West Ward Partnership updates on Blackstock Road and Drayton Park

By DIANE BURRIDGE

These meetings are open to the public and are chaired by Highbury West Ward councillors, with officers and the police in attendance. At the last meeting, held 21 March 2018, two key issues were discussed.

BLACKSTOCK ROAD

The Highbury West Ward Partnership meeting was advised that some Blackstock Road residents and businesses (from both Hackney and Islington sides) had met to discuss community safety and the street scene generally. This followed a walkabout attended by councillors and officers from the two boroughs.

Drug dealing is noticeable, with many people, mainly young men, hanging around outside shops and on the pavement. Traders have complained about this as it affects their businesses. The drug dealing is carried out mainly in local dark alleyways and at the corners of streets. Unfortunately the Police Station on the corner of Ambler Road and Blackstock Road is no longer used. The 'safer neighbourhood' teams in the area have been merged and are based in Hackney, and the police officers who used to be at this station have been moved to the Holloway Road Station. This is a loss, as their presence was an effective deterrent to crime in the area.



DRAYTON PARK AND HOLLOWAY ROAD JUNCTION AND HGV RESTRICTIONS

Jeanette Arnold, the London Assembly member for Islington, attended the meeting to give a brief update on proposals from Transport for London for the crossing at Drayton Park and Holloway Road junction. There is also a lack of pedestrian facilities in this area. A Transport for London project team is developing proposals for the junction.

Regarding Drayton Park Road width restrictions to stop heavy goods vehicles using the road as a cut through from Holloway Road to Seven Sisters Road and Blackstock Road, several schemes have been developed and failed over the past five years. Tesco finally agreed in March 2018 to use smaller vehicles for deliveries. This will be requested in writing. Width restrictions were promised for May 2018. We will see what happens.

The contact at Islington Council for these meetings is: pamela.aristokle@islington.gov.uk

Do you have a local news story you would like to see in a future edition of Highbury Community News?
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Final proposals for Highbury Corner decided after public consultation

By DIANE BURRIDGE

Transport for London in March 2018 announced that they intended to proceed with the changes to Highbury Corner. Due to feedback from 2,863 responses to the consultation exercise carried out early 2016, changes now include the following:

- The arboretum is proposed to be partially open to public access in a way which protects existing trees. The new public space will incorporate the western arm of the roundabout and Highbury and Islington station forecourt. This will protect the most vulnerable trees.
- The proposed new pedestrian crossing, allowing for access to the south-eastern corner of the arboretum at the junction of Upper Street with Canonbury Road, will no longer be required.
- The eastern half of the arboretum, including the

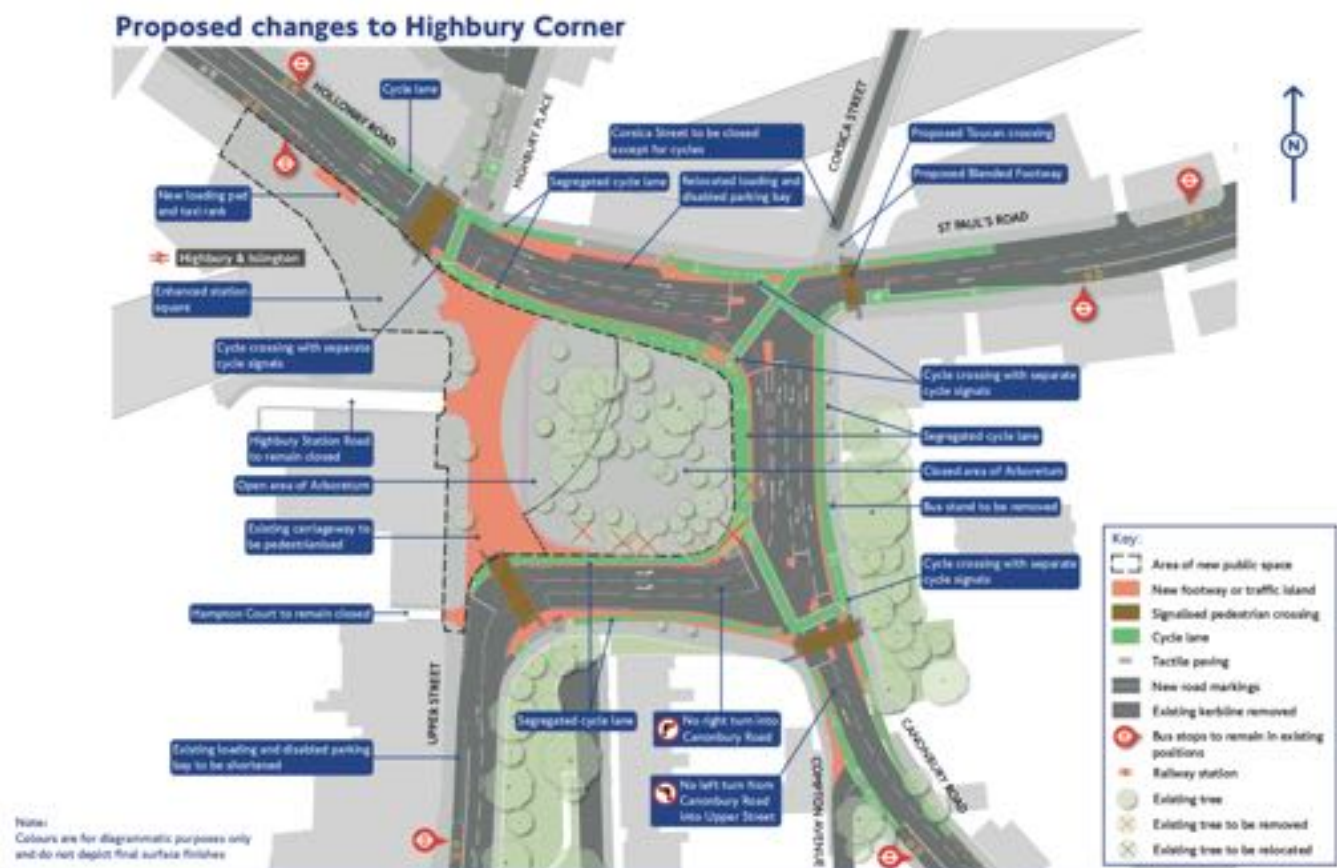
option to open up a path from the south-eastern corner, will no longer be required.

- The entrance to Corsica Street will be made a 'blended footway' which will provide a continuous footway over the junction to give pedestrians priority.
- A shared pedestrian / cycle 'toucan' crossing will be included across St Paul's Road to allow two-way cycling to and from Corsica Street.
- The cycle lane on Canonbury Road will be extended to Canonbury School.

Feedback to the consultation was that the proposals for the new layout for the corner/roundabout would: improve conditions for pedestrians (71 per cent); improve conditions for cyclists (67 per cent); improve conditions for tube/rail passengers (59 per cent); make conditions worse for motorists (35 per cent), and make conditions worse for bus passengers (33 per cent). See: [Updated map with changes following the consultation \(PDF 3.9MB\)](#)

Construction work is planned shortly, and is expected to take 12 months - subject to securing the necessary technical and governance approvals, including environmental screening. Transport for London have promised to update the consultation website as developments progress. Highbury Community Association responded to the consultation process, mainly supporting the proposals.

<https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/roads/highbury-corner-roundabout/>



HCA data protection policy - GDPR is coming!

By ROGER WRIGHT

The new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into force on 25th May 2018.

As a result, we are required to remind you of our data protection and privacy policies:

1) You may ask us for a copy of the data we hold about you at any time. Email your request to HCAnews@hotmail.com.

2) We only hold the following information about you anyway: name, address, email address (if supplied), phone number (if supplied) and the date you joined the HCA.

3) The only data we share with another organisation is the name and address of the hard-copy subscribers to our



newsletter, which we share with our printers. This data is only provided for the purposes of printing the newsletter, then is destroyed.

4) We do not keep a historic archive and members' data is deleted when they leave the association.

The **Highbury Community Association (HCA)** represents local residents and businesses living and working in Highbury, Lower Holloway and Finsbury Park. **Membership is free.** Members receive bi-monthly newsletters like this one. New members will receive the newsletter by email (unless you don't have email). To join or talk to us about anything Highbury-related, visit our website, or email hcanews@hotmail.com. The HCA can also be contacted on Facebook and Twitter.

The opinions expressed in Highbury Community News are not necessarily those of the HCA.

Please let us know if you move, so we can keep our membership list up to date.

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Exodus: a taste of the modern Mediterranean on Blackstock Road

By WILL PARKES

There are many good options for eating out on Blackstock Road, but a sign that things are continuing to improve is Exodus, a restaurant situated on the corner of Blackstock and Mountgrove Roads.

Exodus is a local, independent, family run restaurant specialising in Mediterranean cuisine, with a focus on a modern twist on many of the classic dishes from Greece. The restaurant is owned and run by Thakis, who greets all the customers and makes sure everyone is made to feel welcome. He is very attentive and gives the place a homely feel.

On a recent visit we ordered houmous to start, which was delicious and fresh, served with pitta bread, courgette fritters and meatballs. The starters are meant to be shared, which is inevitable as the food comes out of the kitchen as soon as it is ready.

There is a good choice of main courses, obviously some of the classics - souvlaki (chicken skewers), kofte (spicy minced lamb kebab) are available. The menu is supplemented with other dishes with a mediterranean focus. Fish of the day is also available, listed on the specials board in the restaurant. We ordered the moussaka which was delicious and hit the spot, and souvlaki which was well cooked and served with a light, mixed couscous dish, served on the side. The dishes were a good size, and a variety of side salads are also available, we had a Greek salad, which was very fresh and tasty. Other extras include fries cooked with garlic and rosemary, which are delicious! A couple of dishes are available for children.

We didn't have room for a dessert, but orange infused chocolate mousse, tiramisu and panna cotta are available.

Greece has not always had the best reputation for wine, but the options on offer are good, having tried the house

wine, produced by Omikron. Both the red and white are relatively light in flavour, but they go well with the fresh, modern feel of the menu. Greece's most famous beer, Mythos, is also available as well as other options.

I've been going to Exodus ever since it opened and have never been disappointed. What makes it special, as well as the quality of the food, is the family feel of the restaurant; you're made to feel very much at home and the chef (also the owner of the restaurant) always comes out of the kitchen to make sure you're enjoying your meal.

I would thoroughly recommend a visit. Starters cost £4-5, main courses £10-12 and wine starts from £19 a bottle. Exodus is closed on Monday, open in the evenings Tuesday-Sunday and also for lunch on Saturday and Sunday. It's a good idea to book if you are going on a Friday or Saturday evening. www.exodusbar.co.uk



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Local police listen to residents' concerns about drug dealing and anti-social behaviour

by WILL PARKES

Police officers from the Highbury West safer neighbourhood team attended a meeting earlier this month hosted by Rev. Stephen Coles of St. Thomas Church. Over 20 local residents were there - a good turnout given the meeting was at short notice and took place during a weekday lunchtime - and raised concerns over local anti-social behaviour and, in particular, the drug dealing that has been taking place openly on the streets in the 'Blackstock Triangle' (the area bordered by Blackstock Road, Gillespie Road and the railway lines). Cllr Andy Hull and officers from Islington Council were also present.

Since the meeting, police officers have increased their presence in the neighbourhood, which has been welcome and had some success with one person being searched and found to be in possession of cannabis. However, it is crucial that these patrols are maintained.

Contact your local police officers by emailing:

highburywest.snt@met.police.uk
or highburyeast.snt@met.police.uk.
Crime can be reported online or by calling 101. In an emergency, or if a crime is taking place, always call 999.

It is important that residents report all instances of anti-social behaviour and drug dealing to ensure the police have a full picture of what is happening in our community.

Local elections results: 5 Labour and 1 Green elected in Highbury

By GILL SHEPHERD

Following the local elections held on 4th May we would like to congratulate our Highbury West and Highbury East Ward Councillors, old and new, on their success. Across Islington, Labour won 47 seats, with the Greens winning one.

The HCA looks forward to working with our Highbury councillors over the next four years.

In Highbury West the Councillors are :

- Theresa DeBono (Labour)
- Andy Hull (Labour)
- Roulin Khondoker (Labour)

In Highbury East the Councillors are:

- Caroline Russell (Green)
- Sue Lukes (Labour)
- Osh Gantly (Labour)



Caroline Russell, Islington's only Green councillor



Theresa DeBono, Andy Hull and Roulin Khondoker



Osh Gantly and Sue Lukes, with local MP Jeremy Corbyn