

IslingtonNow

Issue 9 October 2007

your local magazine from Islington Council

No place like home

Islington's a vibrant borough and a lot of people want to live here, which puts pressure on housing. But we're doing our best to make homes available to those in the borough that most need them...

Everyone knows that Islington can be an expensive borough, and buying or renting property here can be out of reach for many people. But we want families and key workers to be able to afford to stay in the borough, so we're doing what we can to make more homes available – and affordable – for them.

Last year, over 800 new affordable homes were completed. This is more than the three neighbouring boroughs of Hackney, Camden and Haringey put together. Since 2004, we've worked with housing associations and developers to deliver 1,683 new affordable homes, and Islington now has 3,000 more affordable homes than it had in 2000. Projects like these really help to regenerate different parts of the borough, as well as helping us make homes available to those who need them.

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

Hornsey Street is home to several new developments that provide a range of affordable housing options to key workers. Primary school teacher Shelly Wragg was the first person to move in to her building, which she rents from the charitable housing association, Newlon Housing



Trust, which works in partnership with Islington Council. She moved in this June with her boyfriend Alex.

"I teach in Duncombe School and I really wanted to live locally," said Shelley. "But I never thought we'd find a place like this. It's so lovely here, and there's a great community feel which I didn't know I could get in this part of London.

"The whole building is for

key workers and I think it's really important that people like teachers and nurses have affordable housing options open to them. It doesn't benefit the community if teachers are having to move away from the area because they can't afford to live there. I love my school and I would

have hated to be forced to leave. And we work in a giving profession, so it's nice to get something back!"

She added: "Developments like this are brilliant and I'm really impressed that there are projects like this in Islington. I can't imagine ever wanting to leave my flat!"



For more information, please go to www.islington.gov.uk/housing/housing_development or www.newlon.org.uk

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2 LETTERS



Councillor James Kempton, Leader of the Council, answers your letters...

I've made listening to what residents have to say about life in Islington, and what the council can do to improve it, top of my priorities. That's why I became a councillor in the first place.

I can't promise to solve every problem - especially when different residents have different views - but as Leader of the Council I do promise to read and consider all your letters carefully and get the council to help wherever it can.

Send your letters to:

Cllr James Kempton, Leader of Islington Council
IslingtonNow, Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD
Email: islingtonnow@islington.gov.uk
Phone: 020 7527 3416

Take part in our budget consultation

Make sure you have your say

The first thing I'd like to say this month is congratulations to the borough's students, who gained record-breaking GCSE results. People sometimes say the exams are getting easier, but as a former teacher myself I think the pupils deserve a bit more credit for all their hard work and effort. So well done, and keep up the good work!

I hope you've noticed the budget consultation leaflet included with this edition of IslingtonNow. I would really appreciate you taking the time to fill it out. This is a council that believes in listening to residents and what you tell us will directly

affect our spending in the coming year. Last year, for example, you told us you wanted safer streets, so we funded more Police Community Support Officers. You also said you wanted cleaner streets, so we've recruited wardens to tackle environmental crimes such as littering, graffiti and dog poo.

We had over 2,000 responses to last year's consultation, but we want to beat that this time round. And every person that returns their form is entered into a prize draw to win £250 gift vouchers.

For more information on the consultation, turn to p13.

Dog poo problem

I realise it is not a particularly pleasant subject, but I would like to raise the issue of dog fouling on pavements. After recently moving to the borough, I have been shocked by the level of the problem here, particularly on the street I live on. This is a residential area with many young families, so not only is it hugely unpleasant, but also presents a real health hazard to the children of Islington.

I realise there is no simple solution, as it's not easy to regulate the behaviour of dogs and their owners. However I would urge you to look into possible solutions to this problem, for example introducing more dog waste bins (I can't recall seeing any in this area), more signs and more risk of penalties if people don't clear up after their dogs.

David Barnett, N19

You're right, it's not a pleasant subject for anyone - least of all the people walking along our streets. We have a responsibility to keep the borough's streets clean but dog owners also need to be responsible for cleaning up after their pets. And it's not as difficult as many people think, as once the dog mess is in a poop scoop bag you can actually place it

“ It's not easy to regulate the behaviour of dogs and their owners ”

into any street bin.

The good news is that we will soon have greater powers to issue fines to dog owners that are guilty of letting their pets foul the streets, and I hope this will help make a difference. I'm concerned that you mention your road in particular is blighted with this problem, so I've asked our street environment team to monitor your road to offer advice and challenge dog owners, and I've asked the street cleaning team to ensure any dog fouling is removed quickly.

Let me recycle!

I live in a block and would like to recycle, and have requested a green box several times over the past year. Each time we are either told that one will be delivered (we are still waiting), or that one will be delivered but it's likely to get stolen.

The recycling depot near Holloway Road is fantastic for car owners, but pretty poor for

everyone else.

Most blocks have room enough for several large bins, so surely there is room for us to keep green boxes there too? If you give us green boxes we wouldn't need so many bins anyway. This shouldn't make life any harder for refuse collectors, and it would certainly make life a lot easier for us residents.

Kate Lloyd, N1

It's good to hear you're keen to recycle and I can only apologise for not making it as easy as possible for you. Recycling on estates does cause us some practical problems but we are trying to work through them as quickly as possible. We've piloted various solutions on estates and have listened to residents to get their views on the best ways for them to recycle. We want to ensure that every resident in the borough has doorstep recycling available as soon as possible.

We don't offer green boxes to any residents living on estates as they are quite bulky. However, where it is suitable we have provided recycling sacks. Our recycling team has already visited your block and has assessed what's possible to improve your ability to recycle and I hope we will soon be able to provide you with better facilities.

In the meantime there are three recycling sites very near you, including one at the Business Design Centre.

PICTURE OF THE MONTH



This is an artist's impression of the new Sustainable Living Centre that is opening soon at 222 Upper Street. You'll be able to drop in for energy saving tips and advice and check out interactive displays. Check out next month's IslingtonNow for more information!

If you would like IslingtonNow in large print, audiotape, or another format, please call 020 7527 3416

IslingtonNow is printed on 100% recycled paper. Please use your green box to recycle IslingtonNow when you have finished with it.

Contact us:

IslingtonNow, Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD
Email: islingtonnow@islington.gov.uk
Phone: 020 7527 3416

Tell us what you think of IslingtonNow - contact us at the above address or drop us an email
Please include your full address on all correspondence. Anonymous letters cannot be published, but names and addresses can be withheld on request.
We cannot guarantee to publish all letters received, and we reserve the right to edit letters for both length and content.

NEWS

New 'green' parking permit prices

The price of your parking permit has changed following the council's hugely successful referendum in July.

We asked you to tell us whether you thought the price of a parking permit should depend on the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) vehicles emit. You voted yes!

The new charges were introduced on 1 September. For more information, visit www.islington.gov.uk/parking and select Parking your vehicle.

Academy opens its doors



St Mary Magdalene Academy has opened its doors to its first intake of 180 Year 7 students, together with all the pupils who transferred from the former St Mary Magdalene primary school.

The new students were really impressed with the building and the cool new

equipment. Interactive whiteboards will be a part of the normal day, as well as computers that fold away into the desk, leaving a smooth surface for other lessons. One pupil in Year 4 said: "It's all so grown up, it feels like being in college!"

NOT JUST LESSONS...

As well as everyday lessons, there are lots of other activities on offer including sports, arts and languages. Sarah in Year 7 is looking forward to learning cookery and Chinese as her chosen extension activities!

Principal Paul Hollingum

said: "We are delighted that we are now open. Pupils, parents and staff are thrilled with the new facilities. There is a tremendous spirit amongst the staff. It's been a great start."

 **You can see the new Academy for yourself at Open Days on 4 October (6-7pm), and 9 and 16 October (6-7.30pm). For more information e-mail firstcontact@smmacademy.org or go to www.smmacademy.org**

IN BRIEF

Carrier bag consultation

Everyone in London can have their say on whether there should be a charge – or even a complete ban – on throwaway shopping bags. In the UK, billions of carrier bags end up in landfill, and plastic bags can take over 400 years to break down.

To take part, visit www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/thebigquestion by 26 October.

Booklet for retailers

An A5 booklet is available to help retailers avoid selling restricted products like alcohol and cigarettes to young people. It's available by calling 020 7527 3198 or emailing trading.standards@islington.gov.uk



British Sign Language clips online


Linda Drinnan and her daughter Georgina are some of the first Deaf people in Islington to benefit from a great new service offered online. The Islington Council website now has some clips of information in British Sign Language (BSL) to make them accessible to our Deaf community. We worked together with Islington's Deaf Campaign Group to ensure that the clips would communicate information in the best way possible.

BSL HANDS

By clicking on the hands symbol (the sign for 'interpreter') on the front page of our website, www.islington.gov.uk, you will be taken directly to the pages about our Sign Language Interpreting Service. Click on the hands again on any page in this section, and you'll be able to view the clips in BSL.

Linda was impressed with the clips: "It looks good, and the clips are really clear. It's very helpful for Deaf people to have this on the website."



 **For further information please contact Hazel Harrison in the Access and Delivery Team on 020 7527 3501.**

Parking advocate wanted!

Islington Council is currently seeking a residents' parking advocate. The advocate's role is to help find resolutions for residents over parking disputes, and make a difference to the parking service. Find out more on the back page of the public notices insert in this month's magazine.

PC recycling!

City and Islington College is making sure that old computers don't go to waste when they update their equipment. All old computers are donated to Computer Aid which provides equipment to developing countries. The college is donating around 500 computers this summer.



Good news for shoppers


You can shop with extra confidence at Nag's Head thanks to the expansion of the council's Islington Trader Scheme (ITS).

For businesses to be approved, they have to demonstrate basic knowledge of consumer law and be aware of customers' rights. Training is offered to retailers if they need a helping hand.

Nag's Head town centre manager Joyce Pollaya supports the scheme: "The Nag's Head is a continually improving town centre and an



excellent location to expand the scheme. ITS gives our local retailers recognition for providing high standards of customer care and that means shoppers can buy with confidence locally."

 **Businesses who wish to apply to the scheme can contact Islington Business Partnership on 020 7527 3185 or e-mail businesspartnership@islington.gov.uk. More information for consumers and businesses can found at www.islington.gov.uk/shopping**

did you know?

The council is using £12million from the sale of local shops to help revamp and rebuild every secondary school in the borough.



A brighter future for Cornwallis

Fostering not just another job!

Islington Foster Carers

- change children's lives
- offer a home in or near Islington
- can be single people or couples
- receive allowances up to £600 per week



0800 073 0428
or email us at fostering@islington.gov.uk
www.islington.gov.uk/fostering



An area of Upper Holloway has been given a new lease of life, making it a more pleasant space for everyone in the community...

Cornwallis Square was once an underused open space but, thanks to a £200,000 makeover, is now one of the brightest green spaces in Islington. As a square surrounded by a late 1980s housing estate, there was potential for it to appeal to many users, however problems such as anti-social behaviour, lack of facilities and noise disturbance had to be addressed.

MAKING CHANGES

Residents were consulted, and they expressed concerns about the area and were determined to see some changes made. They made suggestions to help improve the local area, such as adding a fence in front of an existing adventure playground to prevent easy access and to stop children playing there from running out onto

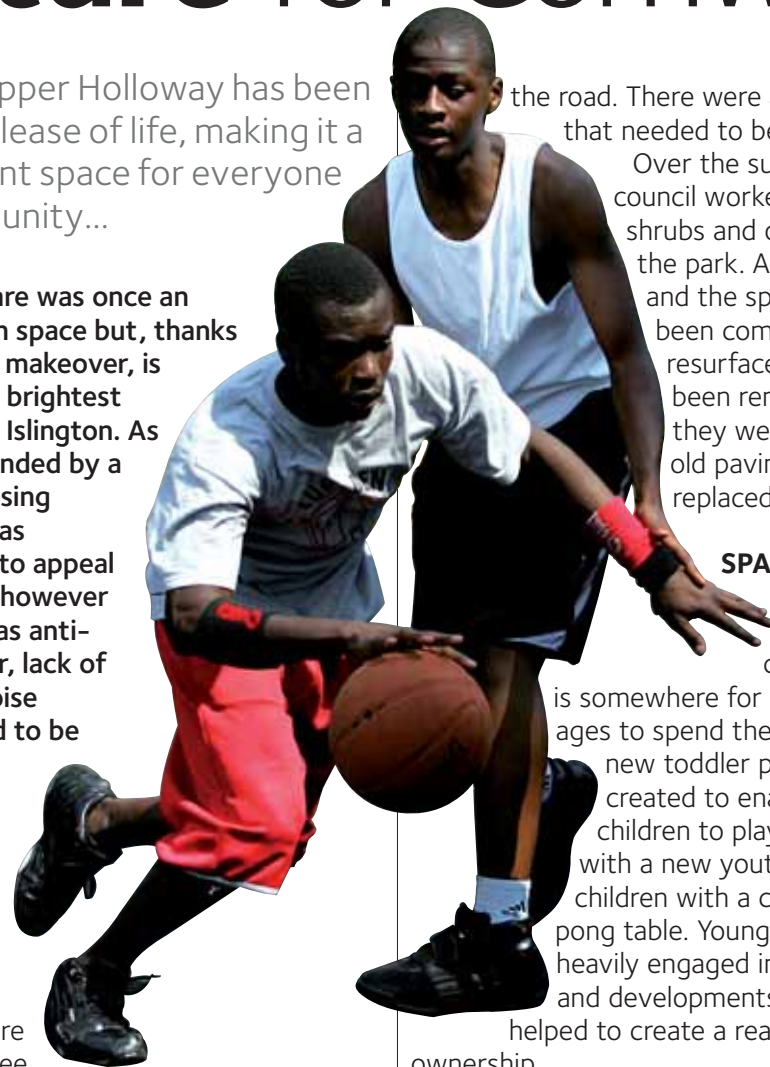
the road. There were also hidden areas that needed to be opened up.

Over the summer, the council worked to thin out shrubs and open up areas of the park. A fence was added and the sports area has been completely resurfaced. Paths have been removed where they weren't needed and old paving has been replaced.

SPACES TO PLAY

New play areas have also been created so there is somewhere for children of all ages to spend their spare time. A new toddler play area was created to enable young children to play safely, along with a new youth area for older children with a concrete ping-pong table. Young people were heavily engaged in the consultation and developments, which have helped to create a real sense of ownership.

A fun launch event for all the family included activities like face painting, basketball, football, stories and music. Over the coming months, work will continue to ensure that the area keeps getting better for the local community.



260,000

visitors to the Household Reuse and Recycling Centre since it opened in September 2005

5



Modern makeover for Islington Green

Work to turn Islington Green into a new pedestrianised zone has been completed. The former slip road that connected Upper Street and Essex Road is now the perfect place to relax and 'people watch' over a drink from one of the local bars and is giving a welcome boost to local cafe culture.

Angel is one of London's most busy and popular town centres, and improvements include new bike racks and a level surface to make crossing the road easier for wheelchairs and buggies. The new vehicle-free area is safe, fully accessible for disabled people and provides a cool new space that will attract more shoppers and restaurant-goers.

CAFÉ CULTURE

Roger Davey, general manager of Browns Restaurant, said: "The opening of this pedestrian zone is great for café culture in Islington and fantastic news for everyone

“
Islington Green
has always
been a great
place to relax
”

associated with the area. Browns will certainly be playing its part in making Islington Green a relaxed, vibrant destination and we would like to congratulate Islington Council for turning this concept into a reality."

Danielle Dhiman, manager of Waterstone's bookshop, said: "Islington Green has always been a great place to relax but these new works make it even better. It's an enormous difference and will bring more people to this part of Islington."

Clean up in the community!

Our Greener Cleaner Safer days are really popular with residents who can help make some positive changes in their local area. Everyone is welcome to come along and help out on the day, and anything you can do can help to make a difference.

Provisional dates for October are:

3 October St Johns Square
4 October Cornwallis Square
7 October Stroud Green
10 October St Marys Green Space

Please call 020 7527 2000 for confirmation of the dates

It is Bird Week in Islington from 22-30 October. Check p14 for events taking place.

What do you think?

Do you like the new look Cornwallis Square and the revamped Islington Green? Give us your views by emailing islingtonnow@islington.gov.uk

WILD ABOUT ISLINGTON

October feast?

It's October and the leaves have begun to change colour, the trees are shedding their leaves and there is a hive of activity as many animals are preparing for the coming winter by making use of the seasonal fruits, berries and seeds on offer. It's also when winter migrating birds arrive in the UK from colder, northern regions. You may start to spot redwings, fieldfares and even waxwings in your garden or local park.

A HELPING HAND

Although there is a bumper crop of food available, our feathered friends still need a helping hand as some of the most popular and once common garden birds are under threat, such as the starling and house sparrow. Putting out supplementary foods, providing a source of fresh water and suitable nesting sites can make a real difference to their survival through the cold months.

TOP TIPS TO HELP BIRDS OVER THE WINTER:

- Install a birdbath - if you are limited for space you can get birdbaths that attach to windows, walls and sills. Change the water regularly and scrub the bath out now and then.
- Leave some seedheads standing - don't cut them all back as they provide food and shelter for wildlife.
- Make a leaf pile for hibernating mammals and ground-feeding birds. Leave a range of food out for different birds. As well as birdseed, try household scraps such as mild grated cheese, sultanas, raisins and currants.

For more information about birds, contact Islington Nature Conservation Team on 020 7354 5162, email ecologycentre@islington.gov.uk or go to www.rspb.org.uk/feedthebirds



Design delights

A former garage for crash repairs, this site on Melody Lane has been transformed into bright, modern townhouses, and recently won the Small House category at the prestigious Housing Design Awards. Three other Islington developments also made the final shortlist of 51 projects.

Apply for funding to get greener!

The Climate Change Fund has been set up to support green energy projects that reduce carbon dioxide emissions and benefit the whole community. Islington residents will soon be able to apply for funding to install renewable energy technologies in their homes.

For more information go to www.islington.gov.uk/environment/gettinggreener or email louise.quarrell@islington.gov.uk

Sniffing out counterfeit cigs

Illegal trading has long been a problem in the Nag's Head area, but the local Safer Neighbourhood Team has come up with an effective new way to beat the counterfeiters. The team is now using sniffer dogs to help them sniff out counterfeit cigarettes.

Sellers of counterfeit cigarettes often stash their goods in hidden places such as bins. These wares can be hard to find by officers patrolling the area, but for dogs like Jake it's easy to sniff out the stashes. During a recent test run, the cunning canine not only tracked down several stashes of tobacco that had been planted by the team, he also found two further lots which had been left hidden by illegal street traders. On his second visit to the area, the German Shepherd found a stash of 1,500 cigarettes, as well as other hidden goods.

Jake's handler Lee Hutchings of Islington Parks Patrol says: "This is a great way to help tackle the issue of illegal cigarette traders in this area. Jake can find stashes that are hidden from sight, so he's a massive help to us."

DIFFERENT METHODS

The team is using a variety of methods to crack down on illegal traders, and this work has contributed to a 70 percent reduction in the number of sellers in the area in the last nine months. It is

hoped the new sniffer dogs can do even more to help.

Police Sergeant Stuart Simpson from the Nag's Head Safer Neighbourhood Team said: "Using the dog should deter illegal traders and provide us with intelligence which will ultimately help secure a conviction. I would like to reassure the local community that the sale of counterfeit goods in the Nags Head area will not be tolerated."

The local Primary Care Trust has tested counterfeit cigarettes sold in the area, and they found them to be up to nine times more dangerous than normal cigarettes.

“**Jake can find stashes that are hidden from sight, so he's a massive help to us**”



D-Day for rowdy drinkers

Streaking, singing and street drinking had been an unwanted feature of Kinloch Park. But a Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) is putting an end to the unruly behaviour that has been blighting the area.

The order means that the police, police community safety officers and

other officers have powers to control the consumption of alcohol within that area. They can ask anyone drinking to stop and can confiscate alcohol, including unopened drinks. Anyone failing to comply can be fined, arrested and prosecuted.

Firework safety

Bonfire night should be fun for everyone – but we all need to take care with fireworks. We want to make sure shops don't sell fireworks to anyone under 18, so we're advising retailers on safe storage and underage sales, as well as warning them that we

will take legal action against them if they're found to be in breach of the regulations.

Help us keep the community safe by reporting rogue retailers to trading standards on 020 7527 3198 or by emailing trading.standards@islington.gov.uk

YOUNG ISLINGTON

7

Sarah (pictured here with Moriam Durosinmu) couldn't believe how well she'd done!



“

We set high standards and have high expectations for our pupils - they have a right to a top education

”

GCSE joy!

Congratulations to our GCSE students! Thanks to all their hard work, our schools are celebrating their best exam results ever

Our GCSE students and their parents have a lot to be proud of, with Islington recording its best results ever. The number of pupils getting five or more GCSE passes at grades A*-C has hit 50 per cent for the first time, and the number gaining the top two grades - A and A* - has also increased.

The most improved school was Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, with an 11 per cent improvement on last year. One of the school's star pupils was Kristiana Xhuxhi who scooped an incredible 10 straight A*s. Most amazing of all, Kristiana spoke no English when she moved to London from Kosovo in 1999.

Kristiana's friend Rujina Begum also had a lot to celebrate after getting As and A*s across the board, as well as in a module of A-level maths. She said: "I thought I had done quite well, but I expected a few Bs to creep in here and there! I can't believe I got all As and A*s. I'm going to celebrate today!" Rujina is now going on to complete her maths A-level, along with A-levels in psychology, sociology and philosophy.

TIME TO CELEBRATE

Fellow student Sarah Henry was also delighted with her results: "I did better than I thought I would and I'm in shock! I don't think I'll be ready to

celebrate tonight - I need about a week for it all to sink in!"

Islington's best performing school was St Aloysius, where 60 per cent of pupils achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C. In four years the school has managed to double its results. Commenting on the success, deputy head Danny Coyle said: "We set high standards and have high expectations for our pupils - they have a right to a top education. We focus on things like uniform, punctuality and good behaviour, because they make a huge difference to the boys' attitude and the bigger picture. And, of course, we have fantastic teaching. I am absolutely delighted for the boys, as is everyone else."

Primary school students impress

There was also good news for our primary school pupils, with Key Stage 2 results showing that Islington schools are improving faster than the national rate.

Nationally, results in English, maths and science improved by one per cent, but Islington's improvement was six times better in maths and science, and three times better in English.

Kristiana and Rujina got As and A*s in all their GCSEs



What do 48 Islington residents with ages ranging from 25 to 81, with very different cultural, social and political backgrounds, have in common? Simple - a desire to improve their community and help local people. Who are these 48 people? They are your local councillors elected last year to serve the borough of Islington and work as your representative.

Democracy in action



Katie with Abel and Eve

Elected every four years, local councillors represent their local community. They are there to help people if they are having problems with council services, and can offer advice and support to help resolve issues. Councillors also run regular surgeries which everyone is welcome to attend to discuss problems and ask questions.

Councillors also help make decisions about council services and sit on committees that make decisions about local planning or licencing issues, as well as act as community leaders to improve the areas they represent.

To find out more about what they do, we spoke to three of Islington's councillors to get a first hand account of the highs and lows.

KATIE DAWSON
Katie is the first Green councillor to be elected to Islington Council. She works part-time for a publishing company and has three children: Eve, 8, Saul, 5, and 18 month old Abel.

It was a total shock when I was elected as a local councillor last year. I was persuaded to stand as a candidate to make up the numbers in my ward, having only joined the Green Party relatively recently. I saw myself in a supportive role to the more experienced candidates. Getting elected was exciting and horrifying in

equal measure!

My main concern was that I wouldn't be able to do the job justice - after all I had a job and three young children. But it was such a breakthrough for the Green Party to win their first seat in Islington that I felt a big responsibility to get stuck in and do my best for the people who'd voted and all the others who'd encouraged me.

The role can be frustrating and certainly has its ups and downs, but if you are clear about your goals and committed to working hard you can make a difference. As a working parent, time is often in short supply and sometimes I find I'll start work on council matters at midnight, as it's the first chance I've had all day. It's easy to feel guilty that I'm neglecting one or other areas of my life, but this is the reality for lots of people who juggle work, family and other commitments, so if the council is to be truly representative it must include people with busy lives.

Anyone who cares about their local area should

consider standing as a councillor. Big changes globally can start with small changes locally. It is hard work and also work that is never finished, but passion and motivation are more important than loads of spare time. For me the single biggest motivating factor is the need to do something, however small, to leave a better world for our children to inherit.

GREG FOXSMITH
Greg is a criminal defence lawyer, and has been a Liberal Democrat councillor for a year. He has a three year old son, Adam, and a four month old son, Daniel.

I always had an interest in the local environment, and it

“ Anyone who cares about their local area should consider standing as a councillor. Big changes globally can start with small changes locally ”

16 the number of wards
in Islington48 the number of
councillors in Islington

9

Greg with
Daniel

Who is my local councillor?

You can find out who your local councillor is, as well as more information about councillors, at www.islington.gov.uk/councillors

You can also find out who your councillor is by phoning 020 7527 2000.

You may be asked to give your street name and postcode so we can find out which ward you live in. We will then tell you who your councillors are and give you their contact details.

and can eat into your day job! I have actually taken a pay cut and dropped to four days a week, but councillors do receive an allowance which helps with that.

JAMES MURRAY

James is 24 years old and has been a Labour councillor since last May. He grew up in Shepherds Bush, and moved to Islington two years ago.

I became a local councillor because I wanted to get

involved with the local community. Islington is a borough with diverse people and diverse problems, and I see my role as being to listen to people in my area and stand up for them.

It's a challenging job and sometimes I feel like I'm spinning plates – you have to keep your eye on so many things at the same time and juggle a lot of responsibilities. Even though being a councillor is supposed to be part-time, I

think about it full time. There are loads of issues to get involved with and it's a lot of hard work, but it's very enjoyable and rewarding. Of course it can also be frustrating at times – there are lots of things I would like to change but I can't!

But even when you can't change the world overnight, the small achievements make the hard work worthwhile. Like getting more affordable housing in particular developments, or helping people with an ongoing problem they've been having – whether it's unfair parking tickets, problems with repairs, or when people aren't getting the right benefits.

I would absolutely recommend it to anyone to consider becoming a local councillor. It's a lot of hard work, and it takes a lot of emotional energy, but it's a great way to get involved with your local community and really help people. You can make sure that people are listened to and that they get treated fairly by the council, and it doesn't matter who you are or what your background is.

was a natural step for me to become further involved and campaign for things I believe in. And although I know that I'm not going to reform the nation's health or education system, I do believe that local politics has an important role to play with local issues. It's about quality of life and you have to start with the basic things. I really believe in the greener, cleaner, safer agenda.

I got into this when I was working to help young people. I'm a criminal defence lawyer, and in my spare time I was mentoring these kids to help prevent them reoffending. I was part of a BBC documentary that followed me around for a year and then from that they made a show

called 'Make Me Honest'. I got loads of support and goodwill from people, and I wanted to build on that, so I approached Islington Council to ask about the chances of financing the project, and I was really surprised with the good response I got from them.

In fact I was so impressed and they were so open to ideas that I basically fell into being a councillor from there!

It's a great way to take ideas forward. I did research the position – I spoke to other councillors about the workload and requirements involved.

I'd recommend this to anyone who wants to input into how their community is run. But I have to stress that the time it can take is huge,



James Murray

How to become a local councillor

If you're interested in finding out more about becoming a local councillor, or to find out who your local councillor is and how to get in touch with them, there is lots of information on our website at www.islington.gov.uk/councillors

What do you think?

Have you had a positive experience with one of our local councillors? Would you consider becoming a councillor yourself?

Let us know by emailing islingtonnow@islington.gov.uk

Celebrating **Black History Month**

Black History Month (BHM) 2007 is a time for everyone in the community to come together and celebrate the achievements of the black community. The theme of this year's BHM is freedom, recognising the 200 years since Parliament passed the act to abolish the slave trade in the British Empire.

There are loads of events for people of all backgrounds to enjoy in Islington throughout the month, from debate and opera to workshops and dancing. We also spoke to two prominent members of the black community about their work and their role models. For more on BHM, go to www.islington.gov.uk/bhm or call 020 7527 3433



“Black history should be on the curriculum”

Natalie Suliman, 22, works for Listen Up, the council's project for young people in Islington.

ON WORK

“I work on the Listen Up Project and there is a panel of young people that manages a government fund for Islington, which helps disadvantaged young people aged 13-19 to lead their own projects. These projects must benefit themselves and their wider community in some way. When I was young I wanted to be an entertainer, so it's good being able to help people do things like that and succeed.”

ON ROLE MODELS

“Some of the Listen Up panel members are young people that we at Listen Up have worked with before on previous projects. We are constantly recruiting new members aged 12-21 from all different backgrounds in Islington – being in this environment means we are with good role models.”

ON BLACK HISTORY MONTH

“It's really good, as is anything to celebrate and educate people about black history. I do think black history should be part of the national curriculum, and not only for a month. A lot of young people I speak to say that they are only taught a very small part of black history, and it can be negative, such as about slavery. I don't think schools are teaching the massive role black people played in Britain and the world's development.”

“I've never been limited by my colour”

Atiti Sosimi runs her own business, Distinctly Different, on Holloway Road, an organisation specialising in personal development and learning within the education, VCS and corporate sectors.

ON WORK

“I work with everyone aged 14 and upwards, and only in the last 18 months have I worked with young students because of their racial profile. My areas of expertise are in personal development, employability skills training, and business skills development. I have a degree in Sociology and Anthropology, I am a published author, publisher, businesswoman and mother of six.”

ON ROLE MODELS

“I was born in the UK and went to Nigeria when I was about eight. I grew up believing – and still believe – that I can do and be anything I choose because I saw black people like me working as or becoming doctors, dentists, accountants and architects. I believe ‘the world is my oyster’ and it is yours too – you can become just like all of these talented people. That's why Black History Month is so important – it showcases black talent and culture.”

“It is important for established people to be role models, but even more so for people on the brink of success to be showcased because they are often more accessible and can show you how to make success happen.”

ON BLACK HISTORY MONTH

“I have a strong sense of identity and I've never been limited by my colour. I believe in the struggle for recognition and acceptance and support BHM, my only criticism being that it shouldn't be confined to a one-month affair and then forgotten about. The achievements of the black community need to be integrated into our everyday life.”

ON FREEDOM

“Freedom is a state of mind. I am free because I believe that no shackles, chains or words will restrict or confine me. People died so that we can be free and we need to live in the present so they didn't die in vain. Irrespective of age, there are people today who do not feel free and they let life impose limitations and restrictions on their freedom. Everyone – no matter what colour – needs to believe they are free. Then dare to dream and make it happen!”



 For more information about Listen Up, go to www.young.islington.gov.uk or email listenup@islington.gov.uk

What's on

Freedom Fest

A day of fun for everyone! Including DJs, food, a penalty shootout with the Arsenal mascot and face painting.

When: 6 October
12noon-4pm

Where: Highbury Fields

Treemonisha, an opera

A performance of the opera composed by African-American ragtime composer Scott Joplin. Incorporates ballet, black folk music and dance.

When: 20 October 7pm

Where: Lilian Baylis Theatre, Sadlers Wells

How much: Free

Portraits of Success

Renowned photographer Robert Taylor will chair a discussion panel exploring the personal successes of five guest speakers.

When: 24 October
6-8.30pm

Where: Committee Rooms 1, 2 & 3, Islington Town Hall, Upper Street N1



Full programme details are available at council buildings, online at www.islington.gov.uk/bhm or by phoning 020 7527 3433.

Licence to enjoy

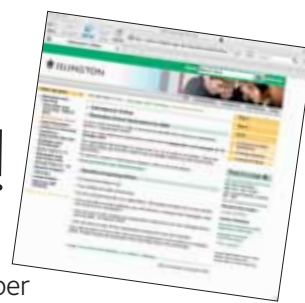
Islington is one of the capital's most thriving, vibrant boroughs, with an amazing range of bars, restaurants, pubs, cafes and entertainment venues. As you can imagine, managing the happy co-existence of all of these venues and our residential areas side by side is quite a challenge!

The licensing policy that we published in 2005 to ensure that the borough's licensed premises are safe, secure, crime-free and well managed, is now up for review. We are keen to find out your views on how effective it is and how successfully it has been implemented.

If you would like further information on the licensing policy or would like to give us your feedback, contact the licensing team on 020 7527 3879 or email licensing@islington.gov.uk



Apply for school online!



Is your child due to transfer from primary to secondary school in September 2008? Make your application to the school of your choice online!

The application process is quick and easy. Your details are kept secure and you can log back in to change your application any time up to 19 October 2007.



For further details go to www.islington.gov.uk/education/admissions_online.asp



Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who filled in our post offices petition. We had an amazing response and we will be working hard to protect Islington from any planned post office closures.

Literary longlist hits library shelves

Keen Islington readers have the opportunity to share the excitement in the lead-up to the nation's leading literary award, the Man Booker Prize for Fiction. All 13 titles on the longlist will be available in all our libraries.

The overall winner is announced on 16 October, so see who you would pick!



For more information about Islington libraries, visit www.islington.gov.uk/libraries or call 020 7527 2000.

For more information about the Man Booker Prize, visit www.themanbookerprize.com

Autumn Amble

Fancy a stroll with a literary twist? Then join Islington's big annual walk! Be entertained by Islington's famous authors, past and present, as you stroll through some of our lovely parks and green spaces. Refreshments are provided for hungry walkers after the walk. The over 50s are particularly welcome!

When: 5 October, 11am - 1pm
Where: Meet outside Central Library, Fieldway Crescent, N1



For more information contact Emma Charlton on 020 7527 2626 or email emma.charlton@islington.gov.uk



Islington Children's Information Service

for more information about:

- Childcare provision
- Help with childcare costs
- Working with children
- Parenting and family support
- Special needs
- Health
- Education
- Recreation and leisure



ISLINGTON

CALL

020 7527 5959

www.islington.gov.uk/cis
www.islington.gov.uk/childrensdirectory

GET YOUR FIVE A DAY!

Purée fruit and pour into ice lolly moulds. It's a great way to get your kids to eat more fruit!

Finsbury signs up!



Finsbury Leisure Centre is the latest to join the London Fitness Network. Members can now access over 80 gyms, over 50 swimming pools and over 2,000 exercise classes around London.

Go to www.londonfitnessnetwork.org or ask at your local centre for more information.

Get active

Get scoring goals on the new football pitch in Rosemary Gardens, Southgate Rd, N1. Advance booking is required. Phone Islington Tennis Centre on 020 7700 1370 to book.

Ping pong anyone?

There are now eight table tennis tables at Finsbury Leisure Centre thanks to the addition of five new tables to meet popular demand. Coached sessions for juniors are available every Friday from 5-7pm and for adults from 7-9pm. A new league has also started and all levels of player are welcomed. Just turn up on Friday evenings. Bats and balls are provided for the coached sessions.

Visit the centre or call 020 7253 2346 for more information.

Last chance for free fitness

Aquaterra Leisure is giving away 500 free seven day memberships! You will be able to enjoy seven days free gym, swim, exercise classes, aqua aerobics and sauna at your local leisure centre. Simply make an appointment at your local centre to qualify for your free membership.

The offer is limited to one per adult and runs to 28 October 2007. This offer does not apply to current members.



Free swimming for families

Local families with children aged from six months to five years can apply for a space on a fantastic free 10 week swimming programme. Towels will be provided free of charge and help will be available in the changing room before and after the sessions.

Courses start in November and February, so apply now as spaces are limited. Priority will be give to people on lower incomes.

For more information contact Cally Pool on 020 7278 1890.

Help for young smokers to quit

From the 1 October 2007 you will have to be 18 or over to be legally able to buy tobacco. So if you're a young smoker, now is a good time to quit.

The Islington Stop Smoking Service provides help, information and advice specifically for young people

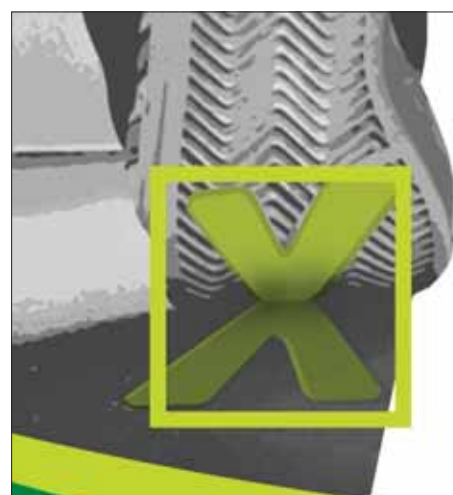
to help them quit smoking before it becomes a bad habit of a lifetime.

The stop smoking clinics are in a variety of locations in Islington and there are trained staff on hand to help and advise you. Young people can also get advice over the

telephone by calling freephone 0800 093 90 30 or by emailing smokefree@islingtonpct.nhs.uk



For more information about the change in the law visit www.tobacco18.co.uk



Join the voters' list now

make your mark

Register to vote

Call 020 7527 3110 or visit www.islington.gov.uk



YOUR VIEWS

Tell us

The council makes a lot of decisions for the community, but we don't want to make them without knowing your thoughts and views on issues that may affect you and your area.

Below is a list of consultations that you can contribute to. You will be able to find out more on the council website. Consultations are open to everyone unless specified.

Better mental health

Islington PCT is consulting on its draft strategy for promoting mental health and wellbeing in Islington. This is a long-term strategy that hopes to transform how we think about and respond to mental health needs. The consultation is open to anyone living or working in Islington.

For more information visit www.islingtonpct.nhs.uk, or to receive a printed copy, or a summary in a different language or format, please call **020 7527 1093**

Running until 26 October 2007



To view all current consultations, go to www.islington.gov.uk/consultation

You told us...

In June, as part of our sustainable communities strategy, we asked you what you thought the priorities for improvement in the borough should be. Your responses have helped the Islington Strategic Partnership with their long-term plan, 'Islington - Looking Forward', a vision for Islington over the next 10 to 15 years.

Thanks to all of you who took part - we had over 200 responses. The full plan will be available online at

www.islington.gov.uk/consultation at the end of October, but here are just a few of your suggestions:

- reducing isolation, especially for older people
- improving Islington's secondary schools must be a priority
- young people should be advised and encouraged to go to school up till university because knowledge is power
- the safety of Islington residents should be increased
- tackling poverty is essential and should be put before recycle bins and car parking.

Your money your views

Every year we spend over £200 million on services to improve Islington so we think it's important to ask you - our residents - what you think about how the council should spend your council tax next year. And we want to know how much you're prepared to pay in council tax to fund your priorities for investment.

We are inviting all Islington residents to tell us what they think by taking part in our budget consultation, and it really does make a difference. Last year we also consulted residents on their budget priorities, and over 2,200 people responded. You told us your main priorities were for crime and anti-social behaviour to be tackled, and to see cleaner streets and public spaces. In return we made sure that your priorities were reflected in our budget for this year.

For example, we helped fund more Police Community Support Officers to work in local neighbourhoods. We've also strengthened the on-street enforcement teams to tackle environmental crime such as dog fouling, fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles. We're investing £800,000 more on recycling and reducing waste, and we have set up a Climate Change Fund to take positive action to tackle the causes of climate change locally (for more on the fund, go to www.islington.gov.uk/environment/gettinggreener).

FILL IN THE FORM

This year your priorities may be different, so once again we want to know what you think. You can fill in your questionnaire and post it to us, or if you prefer you can complete it online at www.islington.gov.uk/consultation

This year we want to hear from even more people than last time. And to encourage you to tell us what you think, we're offering a prize of £250 of gift vouchers to the lucky respondent whose name is drawn from the hat at the end of the consultation!

And of course once the budget and spending priorities for next year have been set we will let you know what you told

“ We made sure that your priorities were reflected in our budget for this year ”



Our on-street enforcement teams are doing more to get rid of abandoned vehicles



Please fill in and return the leaflet included with this issue of IslingtonNow by 29 October

us and how we will respond to your comments.

But remember, we must receive your comments by Monday 29 October.

WE MEAN BUSINESS

And it's not just residents we are listening to. We are also consulting with local businesses to find out what they think and whether they highlight other priorities they think we should address.

HOW TO OBTAIN A FORM

Whether you are a resident or a local business owner (or both) you can obtain an electronic copy of the questionnaire by visiting www.islington.gov.uk/consultation or emailing consultation@islington.gov.uk. If you didn't have a copy in this magazine, you can call 020 7527 3480, pick one up at your local library, or we will post one to you if you write to Budget Consultation, Room G12, Islington Town Hall, FREEPOST LON 18606, London N1 2BR.



There are now more PCSOs on the streets of Islington

14 | OUT AND ABOUT

COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 2 October 7.30pm Town Hall, Upper Street Council Meeting
- 4 October 7.30pm Town Hall, Upper Street Overview Committee Meeting
- 9 October 7.30pm Town Hall, Upper Street Sustainability Review Committee Meeting
- 15 October 7.30pm Town Hall, Upper Street Council Meeting
- 16 October 7.30pm Town Hall, Upper Street Performance Review Committee Meeting
- 18 October 7.30pm Town Hall, Upper Street Executive Meeting
- 29 October 7.30pm Town Hall, Upper Street Regeneration Review Committee Meeting



For more information call Jakki Crowder on 020 7527 3251, email jakki.crowder@islington.gov.uk or see www.islington.gov.uk/democracy

All meetings are subject to change. Please check the website before attending.

email us at events@islington.gov.uk

1 IN 9 WOMEN WILL GET BREAST CANCER



LOVE YOUR BREASTS?

All Women need to be **BREAST AWARE**

Women over 50 are entitled to a free 3 yearly NHS Breast Screening.

Contact your Doctor's surgery for more information.



Festivals

Freedom Fest

As part of Black History Month, Freedom Fest promises a fun day out for all the family! With performances, music, food, DJs and face painting.
Where: Highbury Fields
When: 6 October, 12noon-4pm

Centre 404 Information Day 2007

Information Day for parents of children with special needs
Where: LVSRC, Northern Health Centre, 580 Holloway Road, N7
When: 10 October 9.30am-3pm
 For more information call 020 7445 8005 or email centre404@hotmail.com

Green-living

London's waste

Want to know what's happening to the 3.4 million tonnes of rubbish London produces each year and what's planned for the future? Join an interesting and informative panel discussion on managing London's rubbish. Refreshments provided.
Where: i-recycle centre, 1 Cottage Road N7
When: 3 October 6.30-8.30pm
 For more information call 020 7527 5996 or email irecyclecentre@islington.gov.uk.

Planting in Wilton Square

Greenspace rangers will be inviting volunteers to give them a hand improving Wilton Square. There will be a number of tasks including pruning and planting of shrub borders. Tea and coffee will be provided so just turn up with a packed lunch!
Where: Wilton Square N1
When: 6 October 10am-4pm

Community Bulb Planting

Bring along the whole family to help us brighten up Quaker Gardens.
Where: Quaker Gardens, Banner Street EC1
When: 7 October 11am-1pm

Rubbish and all that

Become a 'rubbish' detective and follow the rubbish trail on this family fun day. Contribute to a craft collage from recycled material, and much more. Goody bags and prizes on offer. Most suitable for over 5s, children must be accompanied by an adult.
Where: Central Library, Fieldway Crescent off Holloway Road
When: Saturday 13th October, drop in anytime between 10am and 3pm
 For more information please



contact Kathy Galashan on 020 7527 5782 or email kathy.galashan@islington.gov.uk

Autumn Plant Sale

A range of plants raised organically at Culpeper Community Gardens will be on sale. When you've finished browsing, enjoy some homemade cakes!
Where: Culpeper Community Garden, Cloudesley Road N1
When: 14 October 11am-2pm
 For more information call 020 7312 6906.

Community Bulb and Shrub Planting

Bring along the whole family to help us brighten up Lever Street Gardens.
Where: Lever Street Gardens, Lever Street
When: 18 October 1-3pm

Edward Square Nature Event

Come along and help improve the nature area in Edward Square. Activities will include building a stag beetle loggery, planting spring bulbs and making bird feeders. Everyone is welcome but children must be accompanied by an adult.
Where: Edward Square, Caledonian Road N1
When: 25 October 2-4pm.
 For more information please contact ranger Lynn Hebblethwaite on 020 7527 4953.

Make a Difference Day

Join the Friends of Olden Gardens as we help them make a difference to this wonderful community garden - one of Islington's hidden gems.
Where: Olden Gardens, Whistler Street N5
When: 27 October 10.30am-3.30pm
 For more information contact the Islington Ecology Centre on 020 7354 5162

Planting at the Shrubbery

Help us increase biodiversity by creating new habitats, planting schemes and wildlife enhancements. Come and learn new skills and contribute to a conservation action day
Where: St. Paul's Shrubbery, St Paul's Place N1
When: 27 October 10am-4pm
 Please call 07958 741762 to book a place.

Arsenal's October fixtures



Sunday 7, 12pm
Arsenal v Sunderland

Saturday 20, 3pm
Arsenal v Bolton Wanderers

Tuesday 23, 7.45pm
Arsenal v Slavia Prague

All fixtures are subject to change. Please check www.arsenal.com/fixtures.asp for the most up-to-date information.

If you want to see your event listed here, email us at events@islington.gov.uk

We can't guarantee that all events will be published

Feed the Birds

Join the Greenspace rangers to celebrate Islington Bird Week. Learn how to appreciate them in the wild or make a bird feeder to attract them to your doorstep.

Where: Elthorne Park Playground, Hazelville Road N19

When: 26 October 3-5pm

Winter Wreaths for Birds

Birds need a helping hand at this time of year, as food becomes scarce. Join us on National Feed the Birds Day and help us make winter wreaths made from some of their favourite foods. Suitable for all ages.

Where: Islington Ecology Centre

When: 28 October, 1.30-3.30pm

How much: £3 / Concession £1. There is no need to book.

For more green activities, go to www.islington.gov.uk/environment/parks

**Reusing and recycling around the world**

Meet author Ruth Thompson and her amazing recycled artefacts collected on her travels around the world. Listen to her stories of how other cultures reuse and recycle, and create your own recycled object to take home. This session is suitable for children over 5 accompanied by an adult. All children that attend will receive a free goodie bag.

Where: i-recycle centre, 1 Cottage Road N7

When: 25 October 2-3.30pm

To book a FREE place call 020 7527 5996 or 4766 or email irecyclecentre@islington.gov.uk

Caxton House Playscheme

Caxton House offers a wide range of activities during half term for children aged 5 to 13, including games, sports, arts and crafts.

When: 22 to 26 October 8am-6pm

Where: 129 St John's Way N19

How much: £60 a week or £15 a day per child (for help with fees through Working Families Tax Credit call 0845 300 3900)

To book or for further details contact Celia Facey between 2.30 and 3.30pm on weekdays on 020 7263 3151, mobile 07982 653453. Email oosc@caxtonhouse.org or go to www.caxtonhouse.org

Spooky Halloween fun**Halloween Party**

Bring your little monsters to the free Halloween Party in the Park. Come in fancy dress for guesome games, scary stories and fearsome face painting. Suitable for children aged 5-12 years.

Where: Spa Fields, Northampton Road EC1

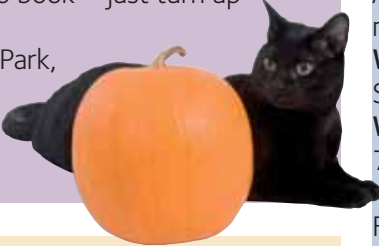
When: 31 October, 3-5pm

Scary Stories and Spooky Fun

A free family event to celebrate Halloween in atmospheric Dartmouth Park. Lanterns and glow-in-the-dark skeletons will set the scene for storytelling, traditional Halloween games and a prize for the best Halloween fancy dress costume. No need to book – just turn up on the day.

Where: Dartmouth Park, N19

When: 31 October, 6-8pm

**Half-term activities****Wildlife Lanterns**

Join us as we make wildlife lanterns to light our way through the park. An event for children aged 7-11 accompanied by an adult.

Where: Islington Ecology Centre, Drayton Park N5

When: 23 October 5-7pm

How much: £3 / £1 Concession

Booking is essential, contact Islington Ecology Centre on 020 7354 5162.

The arts**Eye of the falcon**

A showcase of paintings and collages by Israeli artist and musician Ofer Ben Zvi. Ofer's art is influenced by Dali and Picasso, as well as American Indian art.

Where: studio laDanza, 89 Holloway road, N7

When: 6 October - 3 November, with a private view on 7 October, 5-7pm with live music by the artist.

For opening times or more information, please call 020 7700 3770, email wallspace@hotmail.co.uk or see wallspace.digitalblonde.co.uk/index.html

The Barber of Seville

A stylish new production of Rossini's comic masterpiece.

Where: Rosemary Branch Theatre, 2 Shepperton Road, N1

When: October 12, 16, 18, 20, 23, 26, 28 7.30pm

How much: £15/£12

For more information call 020 7704 6665 or go to www.rosemarybranch.co.uk

Awake and Sing!

Passionate and funny, Awake and Sing! beautifully captures the hopes and struggles in a frenetic family apartment in the Bronx.

Where: Almeida Theatre, Almeida Street, N1

When: Until October 20, 7.30pm, Saturday matinees 3pm

How much: £6 - £29.50

For more information call 020 7359 4404, email ticketenquiries@almeida.co.uk or go to www.almedia.co.uk

CONTACT ISLINGTON

Contact Islington is the council's telephone and customer service centre based on the ground floor of **222 Upper Street, N1**. Contact Islington can help you with a range of services including housing advice and environmental queries.

The service centre is open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday (8.30am to 6pm on Wednesday only) for your face-to-face service needs. It also opens every fourth Saturday of the month, from 9am to 1pm (third Saturday if coinciding with Bank Holiday weekends). **Phonelines are open from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday, and 9am to 6pm every Saturday.**

Phone: 020 7527 2000

Email: contact@islington.gov.uk

Minicom: 020 7527 1900

Fax: 020 7527 5001

Other useful contact numbers

CEA@Islington

020 7527 5800

www.isingtonschools.net

HFI Direct (repairs)

0800 694 3344

(minicom 0800 073 0536)

repairs@homesforislington.org.uk

Islington Police

020 7704 1212

Report non-emergencies at

www.online.police.uk

NHSDirect

0845 46 47

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Local leisure centres

Archway Leisure Centre

020 7281 4105

Cally Pool

020 7278 1890

Finsbury Leisure Centre

020 7253 2346

Highbury Pool

020 7704 2312

Ironmonger Row Baths

020 7253 4011

Islington Tennis Centre

020 7700 1370

Sobell Leisure Centre

020 7609 2166

www.aquaterra.org

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLOR

Islington has 48 councillors. Councillors make decisions on council policy and spending. They are the people who know what's going on in your local area, and are there for you to talk to about any problems you may have with council services. They can take up your case themselves or point you in the right direction to get more advice.

You can meet any of your ward councillors in person at one of their regular surgeries, write to them at the Town Hall, email or telephone them.

For councillors' contact details, to find out when they hold surgeries, and for details of your local Member of Parliament, Member of European Parliament and Greater London Authority representative, please call 020 7527 2000 or visit www.islington.gov.uk/councillors



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

OCTOBER
07

Highlights Include:

LAUNCH - CELEBRATING OUR FREEDOM

Friday 28 September - 6pm-8pm, Islington Town Hall

FREEDOM FEST

Saturday 6 October - 12noon-4pm, Highbury Fields

TREEMONISHA, AN OPERA

Saturday 20 October - 7pm

Lilian Baylis Theatre, Sadler's Wells

PORTRAITS OF SUCCESS

An audience with Robert Taylor

Wednesday 24 October

6pm-8.30pm, Islington Town Hall

FINALE and FOOD FAYRE

Tuesday 30 October

12noon-4pm, Islington Town Hall

Full programme details for Black History Month are available at council buildings, online at www.islington.gov.uk/bhm or by phoning the Equalities and Diversity Unit on 020 7527 3433.



ISLINGTON