

# around ealing

Spring 2024

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# SPRING24 EDITORIAL

**W**elcome to the spring 2024 edition of Around Ealing magazine. The weather is (hopefully) getting warmer which means more time can be enjoyed in our beautiful green spaces.

We've got our pick of the bunch in the borough, being one of the greenest in London. If you fancy exploring some of them you could sign up to the borough's first ever ultra marathon, and you don't even have to run – more about that on p30-31.

You can read more about wild meadows and planting too, as well as a community garden that's really taking shape, and even be in with a chance to win a compost bin (p28-9).

Speaking of competitions, check out the winner of our winter Seasons of Ealing photo competition. If you didn't take part, or weren't lucky this time round, please do enter the spring one (p20-21).

**Verity Adams**

**DEPUTY EDITOR**

**Contributors:** Rachael Coutinho, Cheryl Curling, Quinton Drawbridge, Iva Manova, Richard Nadal. Photography: Alex Sturrock and James Bird.

**e** aroundealing.com  
**X** @EalingCouncil  
**f** facebook.com/EalingLondon

**PUBLISHER**  
 Ealing Council, Communications, Perceval House,  
 14-16 Uxbridge Road, Ealing W5 2HL, Tel: 020 8825 5000

**CONTACT US**  
 aroundealing@ealing.gov.uk

**ADVERTISING**  
 advertising@ealing.gov.uk

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**♻️ Please use your blue recycling bin when you dispose of this and other magazines.**



## Council tax 2024/25

**1** The **Hanwell Hootie** is back for the 11th time on Saturday 11 May. This time it is a little different to usual but will still have the same rock and roll spirit as it takes over the town for an afternoon and evening of wall-to-wall live music. Local bands can apply to play, too. And anyone who wants to be a part of this year's festival in other ways can email [volunteers@hanwellhootie.co.uk](mailto:volunteers@hanwellhootie.co.uk) – read more at [aroundealing.com/news/hanwell-hootie-returns](https://aroundealing.com/news/hanwell-hootie-returns)

**2** The **safe zone** around the Mattock Lane clinic in Ealing will remain in place until at least 2027. When put in place originally, back in 2018, it was a national first. The public spaces protection order (PSPO) was due to end in April. When originally introduced in 2018, the PSPO was the first of its kind outside a clinic in the UK. Read more at [aroundealing.com/news/mattock-lane-safe-zone](https://aroundealing.com/news/mattock-lane-safe-zone)

**3** The council has agreed on a plan to help tackle homelessness, and save money, by investing **£150million** in buying properties to provide much-needed temporary accommodation for households that have no option but to turn to the council for support. Read more at [aroundealing.com/news/homelessness-investment](https://aroundealing.com/news/homelessness-investment)

**4** Plans are progressing for an impressive new sports facility at the **Gurnell Leisure Centre** site. At a meeting in February, Ealing Council's cabinet gave approval to start the next phase of the project, which will include submitting a planning application in the spring. Read more at [aroundealing.com/news/one-step-closer](https://aroundealing.com/news/one-step-closer)

speedread

'The biggest financial pressures councils have ever experienced' were expected to lead Ealing Council to raise council tax by 2.99% from April, like other local authorities across London.

Councillor Steve Donnelly, the council's cabinet member for inclusive economy, said: "It's a sad reality that every single council in the country is currently having to do more with less money.

"The spiralling costs of providing social care to an ever-increasing number of people, a national shortage of genuinely affordable and decent housing, and a consequential steep rise in homelessness, have all added to the biggest financial pressures councils have ever experienced.

"Additionally, taking into consideration the huge rise in inflation, increased costs of borrowing and the cost of living crisis, Ealing Council has done extraordinarily well in balancing its budget in recent years and delivering vital, high quality public services."

When the government set out the details of this year's financial settlement for councils for 2024/25, it made it clear it expected councils to meet the rising costs of providing services by increasing council tax to the maximum level allowed – 2.99%.

The decision was due to be taken at a meeting of the full council on 5 March as the magazine went to press.

The council is also having to add the government's 2% adult social care precept, helping with the increasing costs of caring for the borough's older people and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Visit [aroundealing.com/news](https://aroundealing.com/news) for more information.

### FINDING HELP

Financial support is available through the council to the people who are struggling most to pay their bills, including council tax. Visit [www.ealing.gov.uk/costofliving](https://www.ealing.gov.uk/costofliving)

## Petition: lifeline funds

Residents have been encouraged to support the council's campaign and sign a petition to urge the government to extend the Household Support Fund (HSF) – which is due to end on 31 March.

The HSF helps to provide food, warm spaces and one-off payments for essential items for those struggling with the cost of living crisis.

Read more and sign at [aroundealing.com/news/petition](https://aroundealing.com/news/petition)

# Leader's Notes

'Ealing Council is having to do more with much less money'

**Councillor Peter Mason**

Leader of the council



→ Despite some reports in the media, the cost of living crisis is not easing.

Whether you are having to deal with paying extra for your weekly shop, are facing the highest electricity and heating costs you've ever received, have seen your rent increase or your mortgage payments spiral, everyone has experienced the challenge of having to pay bigger bills.

In many ways the challenge was very similar when the council agreed its annual budget in recent weeks, and set out what we will spend and save in the coming year.

As rental prices skyrocket and housing benefit continues to be frozen, we are spending more on supporting the rising number of people who are becoming homeless.

Last year, 4,360 families approached us for support because they were either homeless or about to be made homeless. And we do not expect the number of families asking us to help them find somewhere to live to reduce anytime soon.

We are also supporting more children and young people with complex needs, who often need to live away from their homes. The cost of this care has also increased substantially. And, this is true, too, for the social care support we provide to adults.

## HAVING TO DO MORE WITH LESS

Of course, we cannot turn people away in their time of need, despite this ever-increasing demand on our services. Yet, since 2010, the funding we get from the government has been sliced in half – it has fallen by nearly 56% in real terms.

The number of well-run councils declaring bankruptcy grows, and with even more saying they are close to being unable to fund the services that legally they must, I know some people are worried about what support and help they might expect from the council when they need it most.

Putting our financial situation in context, Ealing Council is having to do more with much less money.

But, despite the tough time ahead of us, we will continue to work with communities who need the most support and invest in helping to make each one of our 7 towns thrive.

We take our responsibility to you, our residents, incredibly seriously.

That means always being honest about the challenges we face, transparent in the decisions we make, and including you at every step along the way.

The years ahead, just as the last few years, will not be easy. So, we will continue to be prudent and level headed with your money, and invest wisely in the future of the slice of west London we all get to call home.

## Our plans

For 2024/25, we have agreed to allocate:

- £11.6million to adults' social care
- £20.6million to children's social care

■ £5million to housing and environment, with £2.4million from this amount to be invested in tackling homelessness

We also pledged to spend £150million on new temporary accommodation properties to reduce the number of people being placed in commercial hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation.

These new investments sit alongside our existing commitments for:

- a new leisure centre at Gurnell
- a regional park
- and a new lido for the borough

But, of course, we will also be continuing to work hard on our missions to create 10,000 new, well-paid jobs, 4,000 genuinely affordable homes and 10 new parks, as well as so much more.



## A royal welcome

Crowds welcomed His Majesty The King to Ealing during the first official royal visit to the borough since 1993.

The King stopped by the Christmas market at the Broadway Centre, where he met the Mayor of Ealing, Councillor Hitesh Tailor, and shook hands with shoppers in December.

He then went on to Pitzhanger Manor in Walpole Park and greeted there by Ealing's council leader Peter Mason.

This was the first official royal visit by the monarch to the borough since HRH Queen Elizabeth II visited St David's Home in Ealing in 1993. The late Queen also opened the Broadway Centre in 1985.



Read more at [aroundealing.com/news/royal-visit-ealing](https://aroundealing.com/news/royal-visit-ealing)

## Free laptops

Some of the borough's most disadvantaged residents are being gifted laptops to give them greater access to online services, thanks to a new re-use and recycling scheme by Ealing Council.

More than 1,000 council staff devices have been replaced with upgraded equipment as part of the Refresh Project, and the council is providing the old machines to environmental businesses and digital inclusion charities, Reconome and Good Things Foundation.

The old computers are serviced and refurbished, with all files erased, before then being distributed to people in need.

If you are over 18 and from a low-income household, you can also get free mobile data sim cards at one of the council's community hubs.

Read more: [aroundealing.com/news/recycling-laptops](https://aroundealing.com/news/recycling-laptops)

## Competition time



Have you ever visited Pitzhanger Manor and Gallery in Walpole Park? It's one of the borough's cultural gems that hosts a range of exhibitions, events and activities all year round.

And, if you are a borough resident you can even visit for free on certain days.

Pitzhanger Manor itself is the Grade I listed home of visionary British architect Sir John Soane. In 2019 it reopened its doors to the public after a 3-year restoration project.

What's more, you could be in with a chance of winning a year's membership and visit as often as you like.

All you have to do is enter our simple competition. To enter go to [aroundealing.com/history/pitzhanger-competition](https://aroundealing.com/history/pitzhanger-competition)

The competition closes at midday on Friday 26 April.

## £5m for health

The council has been awarded £5 million from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to improve health in the borough.

The money is helping to create a new team, with the local community and leading academics, to address challenges that lead to inequalities in health – factors like education, social connection, housing, and good jobs.

These inequalities can lead to poorer health and shorter lives, particularly for disadvantaged communities.

The new team, has successfully bid for funding that, over the next 5 years, will help the council better understand where health challenges lie, through new data and insights.

Read more: [aroundealing.com/fighting-inequality](https://aroundealing.com/fighting-inequality)



## Regional park update



The council is proposing to create a new regional park in the borough that could be as transformative for west London as the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park has been for east London.

More than 6,000 people shared their views in a public consultation from October to December 2023.

The council received significant support for the proposal of a regional park in the borough, with 77% of respondents saying they liked the idea.

When asked how people feel about an outdoor cultural venue in the new regional park, the average sentiment was again very positive (73%).

In January, the council appointed the master planning and planning specialists, Prior + Partners, to develop more detailed plans for the regional park. They will also help with further consultation later in the year.

Detailed analysis of all the responses is underway and will be shared with residents soon on [www.ealing.gov.uk/regional-park](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/regional-park)

## On your marks...

There is still time for people to recognise sporting achievements across the borough by nominating local athletes, volunteers, coaches and sports clubs for the 2024 Ealing Sports Awards.

Run by Ealing Council and local leisure provider Everyone Active, the awards recognise and celebrate the sporting achievements of the borough's clubs and individuals between 1 May 2023 and 30 April 2024.

Categories are open to any club, organisation, group, association, partnership or individual in the borough. There is no limit to how many categories you can make a nomination for.

For more information and to submit your nominations go to [www.everyoneactive.com/news/ealing-sports-awards-2024](http://www.everyoneactive.com/news/ealing-sports-awards-2024)

Nominations close midday on 1 May 2024.



Read more: [aroundealing.com/news/recognise-and-celebrate](http://aroundealing.com/news/recognise-and-celebrate)



## New local plan

We are reaching the final stages of a new Local Plan for the borough which will help shape growth and development in the borough for the next 15 years.

After various stages of public consultation between November 2021 and February 2023, all of your information and views have helped the council to draw up this latest version of the Local Plan.

It will be available on the council's website to view at [www.ealing.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/localplan) and click on 'New local plan' and the document will be called 'Regulation 19', which is its official title. There will be information on the website about how you can comment. These comments are called 'representations' and they are the final stage of the consultation process before the plan is sent to the Secretary of State for their independent examination.

Councillor Shital Manro, the council's cabinet member for good growth and new housing, said: "We received 13,000 consultation responses to the proposals so far and I would like to thank all who provided comments. In this updated version of the plan, we have considered residents' views and we have made modifications accordingly."

## Your Voice

Almost 1,000 residents took part in the 'Your Voice, Your Town' engagement, aimed at bringing more local people into the decisions that are made about the places where they live.

The survey also revealed residents' key concerns. Main concerns among older residents included fly-tipping, street cleanliness, crime and overcrowding. For younger people, public transport and active travel took precedence.

For information and to see the full results, go to: [www.dosomethinggood.org.uk](http://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk)



Read more [aroundealing.com/news/your-voice-your-town-engagement](http://aroundealing.com/news/your-voice-your-town-engagement)

# Reserved for nature

A revised plan for creating a local nature reserve alongside a renewed sports ground in Southall could see stars of the future polishing their skills within a short bird flight of a protected green space.

**T**he potential new plan for Warren Farm was due to be discussed by Ealing Council's decision-making cabinet in the first week of March, as *Around Ealing* went to press.

## WHAT'S THE BACKGROUND?

The Warren Farm Sports Ground is a 24.8 hectares site, off Windmill Lane in Southall. It is owned by the council and was the borough's largest sports ground, previously used by multiple clubs. However, it was left unused for 14 years while its future was discussed and the buildings and facilities became dilapidated, while the green areas were reclaimed by nature.

It was identified in the council's sports facility strategy for 2022-2031 that there was an urgent need for new sports facilities in the Southall area – with a particularly strong demand for football and cricket. Meanwhile, the council's climate action strategy committed to providing rewilded green spaces.

A public consultation took place between March and May 2022, and more than 1,500 residents took part and gave their views on the future of the site. Using feedback, some initial proposals were drawn up for bringing the sports facilities back to life, while preserving the rest of it as a rewilded nature reserve.

Imperial College land where new sports facilities could be sited



Aerial view of Warren Farm





Boundaries are approximate and indicative only

## A BOLD VISION

Some concerns were raised about disturbing wildlife that had made its home on the site. And ecological surveys were carried out last summer, between July and September, to further assess the biodiversity of the area.

The council has continued discussions with Imperial College London and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust about the land in their ownership that is next to Warren Farm, to the northwest. Both organisations confirmed they supported the council's intentions to create a nature reserve and provide much needed sporting facilities. And they agreed to the idea of the council acquiring it.

If acquired, this additional land next to the current Warren Farm boundary could provide space for the new sports facilities to be built, while leaving the rest of the existing Warren Farm site to become parkland – in fact, as stated last year, the council would then apply to grant it Local Nature Reserve status to protect the wildlife there.

## 'THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS'

Council leader Peter Mason said: "I look forward to working with the community further as we move towards something resembling the best of both worlds: fantastic new sports pitches meeting the needs of local people, alongside a separate 20-hectare nature reserve – a large area of rewilded land that we can all be proud of.

"In light of the opportunity to permanently add the parcel of land to the north of Warren Farm, some revised site layouts have now been drawn up to enable the development of new community sporting facilities, while also being able to better preserve and enhance the ecology of the local area.

"We have committed to be a council that listens, and we were aware of the concerns that the proposed parkland boundaries might not have provided the perfect scenario. We take our climate action commitments very seriously and our Biodiversity Action Plan is absolutely key to that, so we looked for potential solutions. I'm delighted that we may have found one." <sup>26</sup>

Watch video at  
[aroundealing.com/  
 news/excellence](https://www.aroundealing.com/news/excellence)

Learning Mandarin at Stanhope Primary School

# Excellence in learning

Our 7 towns are home to some fantastic schools. 99% of the borough's schools are judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted, including all of the 27 schools inspected in 2022–23.

**A**cademic outcomes remain well above the national average across all key stages and Stanhope Primary School in Greenford is no exception. A recent Ofsted inspection graded the school for the first time as outstanding in 3 categories, and good in the other 2.

Ofsted's report noted that children are 'happy and excited to learn' and displayed 'exemplary calm and positive behaviour'. Parents and carers also told Ofsted how happy they are with the school, noting that teachers involve them closely in their children's education. And staff were extremely

positive about the support that they receive, including the introduction of a 'well-being charter'.

## 'HIGH AMBITIONS'

Headteacher Hannah Widdison said: "At Stanhope, we have exceptionally

high ambitions and standards for all students. Our wonderful team go above and beyond to provide our pupils with the best education and enrichment experiences."

Ofsted highlighted the school's work on social responsibility and performing arts as real strengths of the school, noting that it 'has purposefully intertwined diversity and equality into all areas of the curriculum'. Last July the school was named as an IQM Centre of Excellence for Inclusion, reflecting its efforts on equality, which includes a vending machine full of books on the theme of equality. Every week, a child who has shown a



Cllr Nagpal (left) enjoyed her school visit



commitment to equality wins a gold token to pick a book of their choice from the machine.

Ofsted also noted that 'from early years onwards, the school provides pupils with multiple enrichment opportunities.' It operates a series of arts partnerships, including with drama school LAMDA, the Primary Shakespeare Company, and classical music organisation The Mozartists. These relationships, and an array of extra-curricular clubs and visits, help to ensure that the school's pupils develop the self-confidence which will propel them to future success.

### 'NI HAO'

Another partnership offers the opportunity to learn Chinese. By working with the Confucius Institute at South Bank University, the school runs Mandarin lessons for children from nursery to Year 6. With 900 million native speakers, Mandarin is the most spoken language on earth, and the ability to speak it could one day present the children with great opportunities.

Kat Pietruszka, Stanhope's deputy

headteacher, said: "Immersing our pupils in Mandarin is not just about words; it's about creating an authentic connection with China and its people. Having 3 native Mandarin teachers makes the connection so much more meaningful for all of our pupils."

The school's Year 2 pupils were announced as the winners of a national Chinese Bridge competition, for their excellent achievement in Mandarin speaking. Initiated by the Confucius Institute's Centre for Language Education and Cooperation, the competition provides a platform for young learners worldwide to showcase their Chinese language proficiency. Last summer, Stanhope pupils competed against 30 other schools around the UK.

### SENSORY LEARNING

In May 2023, the school opened a brand-new sensory room, designed to support pupils' development and improve wellbeing by stimulating their senses. Equipped with aromatherapy diffusers, calming music, fibre optic lights and a bubble machine, the



Tedwin enjoys the sensory room

sensory room helps children learn how to interact mindfully with the world around them, in a safe environment.

The room is for everyone, but it is particularly useful for some children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). 19% of Stanhope's students have SEND, compared to a national average of around 13%, and Ofsted found the school has extremely high expectations of them, with access to the same ambitious learning programme as their peers and specialist support where required.

Having achieved Ealing's Family School Partnership Award last year, the school is now working to achieve the Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Family-School Partnership Award this summer.

Councillor Kamaljit Nagpal, Ealing Council's cabinet member for a fairer start, said: "I was really impressed when I recently visited Stanhope and am very proud of their achievement in the Chinese Bridge competition. Ensuring that every child in our borough can access the very best education and schooling in life is a top priority for us." 



Mandarin lesson



# NO CHANGES OVER EASTER

Your usual collection day for recycling and rubbish, including communal bins, will NOT change over the Easter period. So, please carry on as normal. Thank you for recycling.

## Please remember

- ✓ Place your bins out for collection at the edge of your property by 7am on your collection day
- ✓ Put your bins back after they have been collected, or they can cause an obstruction
- ✓ Check your collection schedule at [www.ealing.gov.uk/collectionday](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/collectionday)

## PLEASE DON'T MIX US UP

Your **BLUE BIN** is for household recycling only. All your recyclable items can be put in here. If your bin contains the wrong materials it will not be collected.

Your **BLACK BIN** is only for household rubbish that cannot be recycled. Rubbish must be bagged.

**FOOD waste**. Line your food waste bin with newspaper or use a compostable bag to help prevent smells and stop food sticking to the bin.



# Helping parents to help

“We all have a part to play, it is a community effort to help parents make informed decisions and find the right opportunities for their children.”

Ade Bankojo is a director of Parents Action and Resource Centre (PARC), an independent community organisation of volunteers, which started a new education advice service for local families in January, based at Northolt High School.

A number of recommendations relating to education were made by the independent Ealing Race Equality Commission's report to Ealing Council in 2022, which had been requested by the council. Council leader Peter Mason accepted all of the recommendations which, among other things, aimed to tackle the gaps in the educational attainment of local black school pupils.

Although PARC has been working with the council's schools team for a number of years, its new service will provide advice and guidance for all local parents of black and black dual heritage children on improving the educational experience and attainment for their children. Along with regular coffee

mornings and events, PARC already ran a Saturday School Club to provide pupils with extra tuition, to supplement the school curriculum.

The new service, funded by the National Lottery, will provide an online drop-in clinic and 4 workshops led by specialist education advocates – with Northolt High supporting PARC by providing a base.

Angela McGowan, another of the directors of PARC, said: “We know that parents want to do all they can to support their child's educational experience and ensure they get the best academic results they can. The drop-in and workshops give them the support they need to do this.”

## ‘FOR THE GOOD OF EVERYONE’


Ade added: “We are all volunteers at PARC, made up of teachers and parents; but we all think it is an important thing to help everyone know what's available, get involved and help shape policy too for the good of

everyone.

The advice service tackles issues parents say they want help with, from choosing a school to advocating for their children; and from support for SEND provision, to just being able to talk to others in a similar situation.

“We have grown mainly through word of mouth, and we'd like more people to come along.”

The drop-in clinic runs during term time on Wednesday evenings (6-7pm) and Thursday afternoons (12-2pm). In addition, PARC is providing 4 Connected Community Champions workshops, a free programme aimed at parents who are members of parent forums or would like support in starting a parent forum.

 Find more information about PARC at

[parentsactionresource.org.uk](https://parentsactionresource.org.uk)

Ade Bankojo of  
PARC at Northolt  
High School

Watch video at  
[aroundealing.com/  
news/parc](https://aroundealing.com/news/parc)

# Bring your photo ID to vote



You will not need to provide photo ID to vote if you choose to vote by post. Visit [www.ealing.gov.uk/elections](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/elections)

Residents are being reminded that you must take your photo ID when voting in person at polling stations across England.

**T**he next scheduled elections in the borough are The Mayor of London and London Assembly elections on Thursday 2 May 2024.

Photo ID is now required because of a change in legislation introduced by the government.

Voters will only need to show one form of photo ID, but it must be the original. Copies will not be accepted. You will be able to use expired photo ID if you are still recognisable from the photo.

## ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF PHOTO ID:

- **passport** issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, a British Overseas Territory, an EEA state, or a Commonwealth country
- **driving licence** issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or an EEA state (this includes a provisional driving licence)
- **a Blue Badge**
- **older Person's bus pass**
- **disabled Person's bus pass**

- **Oyster 60+ Card**
- **Freedom Pass**
- **a PASS card**
- **biometric immigration document**
- **a national identity card issued by an EEA state**
- **a voter authority certificate** issued by a local authority

## IF:

- you don't have any of the accepted forms of photo ID shown in the list above, or
- you are not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, or
- you are worried about using an existing form of photo ID for any other reason, such as the use of a gender marker

## YOU CAN EITHER:

- apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate online. You will need a recent, passport style digital photo of yourself and your national insurance number.

Go to [www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate](http://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate) or

■ apply to vote by post instead. You will not need to provide photo ID to vote if you choose to vote by post. You can apply to vote by post online at [www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote](http://www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote) or download a postal voting application form by visiting [www.ealing.gov.uk/elections](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/elections)

The deadline to apply for a postal vote for the GLA Elections on 2 May is 5pm on Wednesday 17 April 2024.

This year's elections will use the same voting system used to elect MPs to the UK Parliament, which is called first past the post.

You get one vote and the candidate with the most votes will become Mayor.

## NEED A HAND?

For further information on the changes, visit the council's website at [www.ealing.gov.uk/elections](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/elections) or you can contact the elections team at [elections@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:elections@ealing.gov.uk) or call the helpline on 020 8825 7777. 





Ealing Music Service percussionists  
(Bishop, second from left)  
photo credit: Dan Tsantilis

# A cultural beat

Ealing Music Service (EMS) is one of the organisations backing Ealing Council's bid to become London Borough of Culture, with the winner due to be announced this month.

**T**he music service encourages children to embrace the borough's musical heritage and learn new skills and supports the delivery of music education in more than 60 schools in the borough.

It provides singing and instrument tuition, choirs and ensembles, workshops and performances, instruments for loan and hire, professional development for music teachers, and much more.

We spoke with EMS percussion tutor Ben Gale, to find out more about the work he does.

Ben said: "I've worked for the music service for the past 5 years but have spent the last 20 years teaching. I was lucky to have access to a music service when I was at school and given the opportunity to try out many different instruments before

choosing percussion, and from that I went to the Royal Northern College of Music.

"I also work for Cadenza, an EMS activity, that any young person with an interest in music can come to and receive tuition.


"Before going into teaching, I was a touring percussionist and spent time in America working in musical theatre and also at Disney in both Orlando and Florida.

"There are things that the music service does which may surprise some. Recently we delivered 'Indonesia comes to Ealing' in 4 schools, bringing gamelan, with is Indonesian ensemble music, along with puppetry and storytelling. Students had the opportunity to work with live gamelan instruments and experts in that field.

"We are planning a 'Celebration

of Ealing Music' at the Royal Albert Hall in 2025. All of the ensemble groups will be playing, including the Ealing Jazz Orchestra."

## DRUMMING UP NEW TALENT

One of Ben's students, Bishop, is a young, gifted drummer, who has already toured with the Ealing Percussion Academy to Belgium and is heading to Germany later this year to play. To read more, go to [aroundealing.gov.uk/news/sound-of-music](https://www.aroundealing.gov.uk/news/sound-of-music) 

For more information on the music service visit [www.ealingmusicservices.com](https://www.ealingmusicservices.com) or email Caroline Swan [swanc@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:swanc@ealing.gov.uk)



Vivian and Connie  
playing with their  
foster brother

# The unsung child heroes

Watch video at  
[aroundealing.com/  
news/foster-heroes](https://aroundealing.com/news/foster-heroes)

It is well-documented that foster carers do an amazing job, but what about the children who also share their home – and their parents' love and attention – with a foster child?

**B**irth children of foster carers can be heroes, too: welcoming the new arrivals with the same level of warmth and empathy as the main carer does.

We spoke to some of these young people about what it's like to be part of a foster family.

## 'IT'S NICE TO BE AN OLDER SISTER'

Sisters Connie and Vivian welcomed younger foster brother Matthew\*, 7, to their family in April last year. They have had other children previously come and stay, but for much shorter amounts of time.

Connie, 13, said: "I always wanted a brother, and Matthew's really funny, makes interesting noises and says the funniest things."

Vivian, 10, added: "It's nice to be an older sister for a change, and not the youngest in the house."

But, as the sisters explained, it can take time for everyone to adjust. Connie said: "You have to have some understanding about what the children might have been through, and that can have an impact on their behaviour."

According to the girls, Matthew loves colouring, football and playing with Playmobile. They said when

he first came to live with them, they noticed that he played quite aggressively with action figures but, over time, has become much calmer in his imaginative play. They enjoy spending time playing with him.

Vivian said: "It can sometimes be hard to share the attention, but the younger ones sometimes need more support, they can often be behind on their schoolwork for example. Matthew's just part of the family now and we feel protective towards him, the experience has brought us closer together as a family."

Connie added: "It can be a bit



strange hearing other children calling our parents mum and dad, but you get used to it. My parents are great, they always make sure we have what we need."

The girls added that being made to feel that they have been part of the decision-making when a child comes to live with them has helped to make their experience a positive one, and they have family meetings where they can talk about how they are feeling.

\*Names changed to protect their identity.

### 'I'M REALLY PROUD OF MY MUM'

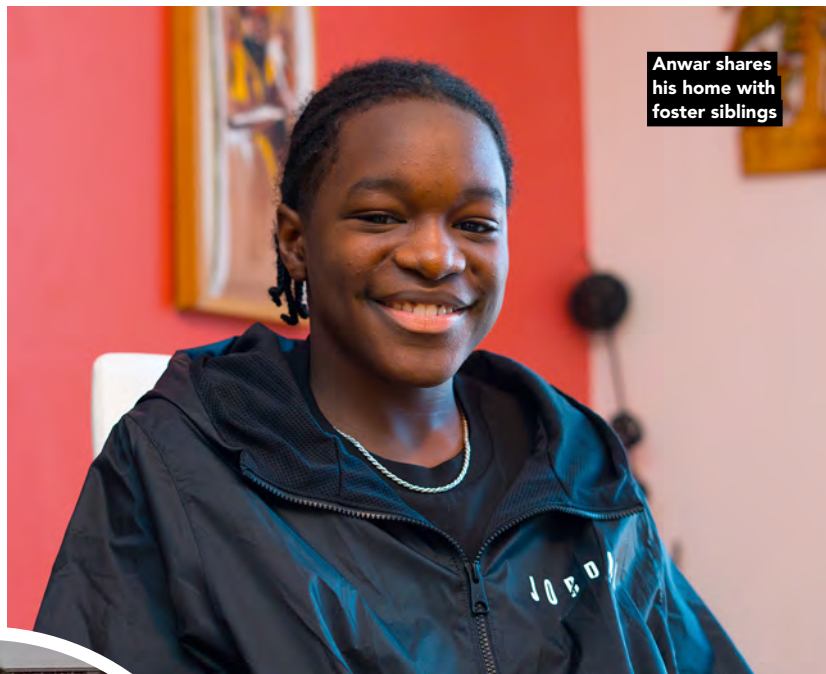
Anwar, 15, lives at home with his mum Tracey, his 14-year-old cousin and 15-year-old foster sister Sasha\*, who came to live with them more than 3 years ago.

The family has had a handful of young people stay with them over the years, but Sasha is the longest-term placement and hopes to remain with them until she is an adult.

Anwar said: "The best part of being part of a foster family is the activities, we go bowling and ice-skating together and have games nights, I like that.

"It's about helping children who have gone through a rough patch in their life helping them to see the good in life. I'm really proud of my mum and what she does, she changes lives for the better."

Tracey was named Ealing's Foster Carer of the Year at an annual award



ceremony in November, following a nomination by Anwar's foster sister.

Anwar, who enjoys playing sport and video games, said he has learnt to adapt to the changes in family dynamics as he has grown

older, but that saying goodbye to children can still be hard.

He said: "It can be upsetting when they go because you've built a bond and a connection, but we still see and speak to some of our previous placements and saw some of them at Christmas time.

"It makes me happy when you see a child growing and developing – going from being quite angry to knowing and making the right choices." ae

## Becoming a foster carer

Councillor Kamaljit Nagpal, Ealing Council's cabinet member for a fairer start, said: "The level of compassion and understanding shown by our foster carers and their families never fails to impress and inspire me. Fostering is not an easy job but it's lifechanging, and so rewarding. If you're thinking about fostering but not sure how to approach it with your family, there is lots of help and support available."

For more information, contact Foster with Ealing on freephone 0800 731 6550, email [fosteradopt@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:fosteradopt@ealing.gov.uk) or visit [www.ealingfosteradopt.co.uk](http://www.ealingfosteradopt.co.uk)

Read more on the awards at [aroundealing.com/news/foster-carers-awards](http://aroundealing.com/news/foster-carers-awards)



# THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO FOSTER

Can you give one weekend a month?



**If you have been thinking about fostering but are unable to commit full time, becoming a respite foster carer is the ideal way to be involved.**

A respite foster carer looks after children or young people for short periods, often at weekends or during school holidays. In the same way as our full time foster parents, a full assessment is undertaken and training and financial support is given. We do ask that you have a spare room available for the child or young person to stay with you. Start your fostering journey today.



Call us free on **0800 731 6550**



visit **ealingfosteradopt.co.uk**



email **fosteradopt@ealing.gov.uk**



message us **ealingfosteradopt**



**Ealing**

[www.ealing.gov.uk](http://www.ealing.gov.uk)

**CHANGE THE FUTURE**

• EALING FOSTERING CONNECTIONS •

Filippo and carer



# Free to choose care

Looking after a loved one who needs care can take up a huge amount of time and effort, leaving little space for the carer's own needs. However, help is at hand.

To add some flexibility and choice back into carers' lives, an Ealing Council initiative offers an alternative way of arranging support.

The council's direct payments scheme gives money directly to local people to pay for their agreed care needs, rather than organising it for them. This enables them to choose personalised care for their needs, rather than being reliant on the services the council offers.

Dania receives a direct payment to help look after her son Filippo. "Direct payments put me in control," she told us. "His carer is like family. His quality of life is much better now."

## DANIA AND FILIPPO

Hanwell resident Dania receives a direct payment from Ealing Council, via a managed account company, to help look after her son Filippo.

She said: "Direct payments put me in control. I can choose his carers and manage their timetable to guarantee my son has the best support. Our quality of life is much better now."

28-year-old Filippo has Down's syndrome and lives with a series of health conditions, and he needs someone with him all the time.

Thanks to direct payments, Filippo now receives regular support every week from a carer.

Dania added: "Filippo needs to do a lot of exercise to manage his conditions, so his carer takes him to activities, or stays at home with him when he doesn't feel well."

"I'm so happy with the way his care works now - the direct payment has made a massive difference to our lives. I don't have to deal with money or payroll or reports - the company takes care of every single step."

"Knowing my son has a companion during the days means I don't have to worry about his safety. It also gives

me time to look after myself. And for him, it means he doesn't have to be treated as mum's little boy all the time. Having different people around makes his life happier."

## CARERS' COFFEE MORNING

A free, weekly coffee morning for carers is held every Tuesday (11.30am-1.30pm) at Sycamore Lodge, Acton, W3 8PH. It's a chance to meet other carers and share experiences.


Email [info@ealingcarers.org.uk](mailto:info@ealingcarers.org.uk) for more information.

## 'TAKE THE PRESSURE OFF'

Councillor Josh Blacker, the council's cabinet member for healthy lives, said: "Direct payments can help take the pressure off. For cared-for people and their loved ones, the payments offer real flexibility and peace of mind."

## FIND OUT MORE

Call 020 8825 8000 or email [sscallcentre@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:sscallcentre@ealing.gov.uk) or visit [www.ealingdirectpaymentsguide.co.uk](http://www.ealingdirectpaymentsguide.co.uk)

 Read the full story at [aroundealing.com/news/choose-care](http://aroundealing.com/news/choose-care)



**1** Photo of robin in song  
by Alice Jakubiak

# Winter wonders

Our photography competition Seasons of Ealing made a fantastic comeback over the winter, thanks to a combination of the exceptional photos sent in by readers and then more than 7,000 of you helping to choose our winner.

**S**easons of Ealing ran for a couple of years before the pandemic struck and produced some truly impressive photography. And it seemed like a good time to bring it back – not least with the bid for Ealing to become London's Borough of Culture for 2025.

## AND THE WINNERS WERE...

After receiving lots of entries, our panel had the task of trimming them down into a shortlist of 10 photos. It was not an easy task. These were then put to a 2-week public vote to choose the winner, during February.

The winner was Alice Jakubiak and her picture of a robin in full song in an Ealing garden.

As well as the photo appearing here and on Around Ealing website, she will receive the top prize of 4 tickets to watch a film at the new Ealing Picturehouse cinema (visit [picturehouses.com](https://picturehouses.com)).

In second place was Greg Swarbrick with his picture of trees in the early morning mist in Pitshanger Park.

And just a few votes behind, in third place was Kate Lombardi with a photo of birds over the boating lake in Gunnersbury park.

Well done to everyone who was shortlisted and thank you so much to everyone who took part.

## GET READY FOR THE NEXT ONE...

Feeling inspired? Get your cameras and phones out again and show off something

you love in the borough, or a moment in time, that reflects the spring. Let's show everyone how talented you are.

We want your snaps of the new season sent in. And the winners, again, will get a fantastic prize and be published in Around Ealing magazine and website.

Once again, the public will get to make the final choice, so even if you don't enter, you can still get involved.

The spring 2024 Seasons of Ealing competition opens on 22 March 2024 and will close on Sunday, 12 May 2024. At that point, a shortlist will be selected and a public vote will decide the winner. For full details of how to enter (and the rules), visit [aroundealing.com/news/spring-seasons](https://aroundealing.com/news/spring-seasons) 



## Runners up

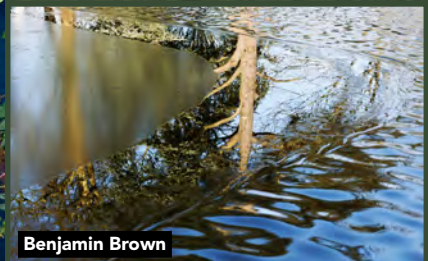
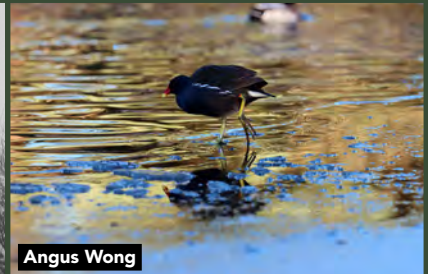
2



3



## Other shortlisted entries





Naeema and Sheila



# Combating loneliness

It's nice to have people you can call for a natter, take a stroll with or who just pop round for a cup a tea. But some don't have that luxury that many of us can take for granted.

**L**oneliness can leave you feeling isolated and disconnected from others. It can leave you afraid of social situations and impact on your health.

But BEfriend, a local charity of volunteers, provides much needed companionship to scores of residents who find themselves alone.

## COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Naeema, 30, joined BEfriend as a volunteer about 5 years ago. She grew up in the Caribbean before moving to the UK a decade ago and missed the strong sense of community she had left behind, so she decided to give something back to her new community.

Within weeks of signing up to

become a befriender, Naeema was paired with Sheila, 89. Sheila's son had suggested the service to his mum after he got talking to a volunteer at an information stand. He was moving away and wanted to be sure his mum would be seeing friendly faces on a regular basis.

Naeema was training to become

a teacher at the time, and she now also has a 3-year-old son and a newborn daughter – all wonderful journeys that Sheila has shared with her.

### 'A SENSE OF BELONGING'


Naeema said: "Before having my first baby I used to come and see Sheila on a Saturday as I was working full time, but since having my son I went part-time so I visit now on one of my non-working days while he's at nursery.

"When you do something like volunteering, it gives you a sense of belonging."

Sheila has 2 sons who live in Scotland, and 3 grandchildren, so is well-versed in parenting life and enjoys sharing stories with Naeema.

The pair say they look forward to their weekly chats, especially if it's with a slice of coffee and walnut cake, and they have also enjoyed going to a BEfriend social event together too.

Sheila said: "I'm quite a sociable person and like company, I enjoy Naeema's friendship. Some people aren't so lucky and sit in their house all day and have no one to talk to."

BEfriend also runs Linked Minds, a befriending scheme to support clients with mental health problems. For more information go to [befriend.london/linked-minds](https://befriend.london/linked-minds) 



## Benefits to volunteering

Volunteers play an incredibly important role in our community, and the benefits work both ways.

If you're looking to meet new people, interested in charitable causes or want to learn skills to help your career, volunteering could be just the thing for you. You also have the chance to make a difference in the lives of others.

So, if you think you can spare a couple of hours a week to visit someone in need, BEfriend would love to hear from you.

The charity offers training and plenty of support, and even organises social events for volunteers and their clients to get together, meet one another and have some fun.

Befriending co-ordinator, Jill Shaw, said: "There are lots of social benefits for volunteers and it can also be a way of getting into a caring profession. Both volunteers and clients have something to bring to the party, we all have something to learn from one another."

Councillor Josh Blacker, Ealing Council's cabinet member for healthy lives, added: "As well as a sense of satisfaction at doing something good, volunteering can provide you with new skills and has wider mental health benefits too. Research suggests that volunteers appear to experience less depression and improved mental wellbeing than others."

Find out how to become a befriender.  
Go to [befriend.london/volunteer](https://befriend.london/volunteer)





# In the zone

More than 600 residents have found help with brushing up on their digital skills and finding work since new learning zones were opened across the borough 2 years ago.

**L**earning zones are a one-stop shop for residents to access a wide range of training and learning opportunities. Ealing Council set up 4 of them: in Acton, Northolt, and Southall libraries, and in Hanwell community centre.

## A DIGITAL TRAINING ROOM

Digital technology has changed the way we teach and learn. Learning zones are digitally equipped rooms that have been set up to provide

training – both online classes and in-person sessions. Learners can link up with the other zones for simultaneous online classes. All digital training rooms have WiFi, laptops and cameras.

The zones also support the borough's 4 community hubs, which help residents to access council services.

## LEARN EALING


They are run by the council's adult learning team, Learn Ealing, and offer all kinds of subjects – from studying English, to improving maths and numeracy skills, to learning digital skills. Since 2022, Learn Ealing has helped 159 people get jobs and 62 learners have received promotions in their current roles or started a new voluntary position.

Married couple Ansam and Hamid moved to the UK from Iraq and are taking classes to improve their English.

Ansam said: "This is a great course. The classes are fun and interesting, and our teacher is always there to support us. She is the best. Our English has improved quickly in a very short time, and we never feel bored."

For more information about the Learning Zone courses, go to [www.learnealing.org.uk](http://www.learnealing.org.uk)

## DIGITAL ACCESS FOR ALL

Councillor Louise Brett, the council's cabinet member for decent living incomes, said: "Digital skills are important for work, learning and daily life. As part of the council's Good Jobs plan, we want to support our most vulnerable residents to upskill or retrain, so that they can get on a path to a good job. The learning zones bring us one step closer to giving everyone access to the devices and skills they need to get online." 



# Looking for work?

Are you looking to get into work but could do with a helping hand? The process can feel quite overwhelming, especially if you've been out of the loop for a while, but job clubs can make it that bit easier.



Job-seekers receive congratulations

**CREATING**  
GOOD JOBS

Whether you are out of work, taken a break or want to change your career, there are a series of free workshops you can join to give you a head start in getting that dream job.

CAP job club in Northfields is run by volunteers on behalf of the charity, Christians Against Poverty, at St Paul's church in Ridley Avenue, and is open to everyone, it's not just for church-goers. It's a 10-week course and each session focuses on a new topic, such as interview techniques, writing a CV and more.

## CELEBRATING A DECADE

In April, the club will have been running for 10 years and, in that time, it has helped hundreds of people.

Job club manager, Julia Sarson,

has been part of the group since it began. She said: "We've only been able to achieve what we have done thanks to a fantastic team that brings so much skill and experience with them. Community and church members have played their part too, helping with interviews, networking opportunities and even cooking lunches. They have helped to make this work."



Job club helped Fiona (left)

"The thing I love the most about this group is the support people give one another."

Fiona Winning attended the course recently after hearing about it from a friend. She had been out of work for some time and was looking for a change in career. Fiona said: "It's a really good course to be part of. There is a different stream of work every week, and you learn to identify skills that you may not have even noticed you have. The tutors are great and it's a very friendly atmosphere."

## GET INVOLVED

The next workshops begin on Tuesday 30 April. Registration sessions will be held on 16 and 23 April.

For more information, or to sign up, email [juliasarson@capjobclubs.org](mailto:juliasarson@capjobclubs.org) or visit [capuk.org](http://capuk.org)



# Wrap your scraps

You can line your food waste bin (or caddy) with newspaper or a compostable bag. This will help prevent smells and stops food waste sticking to the inside of your bin. Please do not use plastic bags to line your bins. Find out more at [www.ealing.gov.uk/foodwaste](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/foodwaste) and click on food waste recycling.



NO THANKS	YES PLEASE
✗ pet litter/faeces	✓ cooked and raw food
✗ any packaging	✓ meat and fish bones
✗ plastic bags	✓ vegetables, peelings and shells
✗ nappies	✓ dairy products
✗ tissue/kitchen roll	✓ tea bags and coffee grounds
✗ liquids	✓ newspaper (to wrap food) or compostable liners
✗ other general waste	



# 'More than just a library'

An award-winning network of community volunteers are planning a fun-packed programme of events for the spring including children's holiday activities, author talks and more.



Award winning volunteers

The trustees and volunteers at Northfields Community Library, in Northfield Avenue, were recognised for their outstanding contributions at the Ealing Community Network's voluntary sector awards last year and won the award for 'organisation led by volunteers.'

In addition to the usual library services of borrowing books and accessing computers, the volunteers are developing a hub of activities that will offer something for everyone and attract more visitors.

The volunteers already provide sessions such as rhyme time, digital skills classes and social events including knit and natter and book club.

## 'AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE COMMUNITY'

Emma Bailey has been working as a volunteer at the library for about 2 years. She has enjoyed building friendships

and discovering lots more about what's happening in her local area.

She said: "I feel that a library is a very important part of the community, especially for children. I think the joy of working in this library is that is more than just a library. We offer a lot of events and activities, I do the rhyme time session every fortnight and I love it."

The library also hosts other services such as the Ealing Repair Café, MacMillan welfare benefits advice service and Borough of Ealing Art Trail (BEAT) artists.

Most activities are free, but there is a small charge for evening events, and donations are welcome. You can also show your support by subscribing to become a Friend of the library, which gives you perks for a small monthly fee.

Trustee member, Angie Bell, said: "The trustees are grateful for all the local support we have had since

setting up in 2019, especially from volunteers and Friends. However, additional help is always welcome, so if you have some spare time to volunteer, or if you would like to become a Friend, or hire space in the library, please get in touch."

Councillor Polly Knewstub, Ealing Council's cabinet member for thriving communities, said: "The team here are well deserving of their award, they make a huge contribution to the community – thank you for all your hard work."

For the latest events, go to [northfieldscommunitylibrary.org.uk](http://northfieldscommunitylibrary.org.uk) or visit the library's Facebook page [www.facebook.com/northfieldscommunitylibrary](https://www.facebook.com/northfieldscommunitylibrary)

You can also sign up to a monthly newsletter.

For more information email [getintouchncl@outlook.com](mailto:getintouchncl@outlook.com)





# Treat yourself to a takeaway

Thousands of you already do this. It's easy to sign up. It is environmentally friendly. It saves you a trip to the dump. You can even share with your neighbour. Sounds great, doesn't it?

It's getting lighter, warmer and spring is around the corner. If you have a garden, chances are you will have a fair bit of unwanted leaves, twigs, and grass cuttings throughout spring, summer and autumn.

You can't put them in normal rubbish bins and so, you can either take it to the reuse and recycling centre, do some home composting, or you can sign up for the council's fortnightly garden waste collection service.

Councillor Deirdre Costigan, the council's cabinet member for climate action, said: "Ealing is consistently one of the top 3 boroughs in London when it comes to our recycling rate and more people using our garden waste service helps us go even further. Once collected, your garden waste is recycled into high quality compost and used on farms and other gardens. It's a perfect circle.

"Across the borough, more than 13,500 residents are already using the council's collection service – including some who take out a joint subscription with neighbours to split the cost."

Subscribers can choose between using green bags or a green wheelie bin and the collections will run between March-November.

Collections will pause during the winter months when the demand is very low. However, Christmas tree collections will still take place during January. The full garden waste collection service will then resume in March.

Between December and February, any garden waste can still be taken to the reuse and recycling centre in Greenford and disposed of for free.


## HOW TO SIGN UP OR RENEW

If you are an existing customer, your current subscription will not automatically renew when it runs out on 31 March and the annual payment is required when you sign-up.

Annual subscriptions cost £96.50 with concessionary rates of £73.80 available for those aged 65 or over and those on means tested benefits.

It is quick and easy to sign-up online using the council's My Account customer portal at [www.ealing.gov.uk/myaccount](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/myaccount)

Alternatively, you can call customer services on 020 8825 6000 during office hours Monday-Friday.

 For more information, visit [www.ealing.gov.uk/gardenwaste](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/gardenwaste)



# Mulchy marvel

One way to make use of your garden waste at home is to try composting. And the council is giving away 5 compost bins to readers in a competition.

**C**ompost is a natural fertiliser and is full of nutrients to feed your garden and it is also an environmentally-friendly way to recycle your food waste and cuttings from your garden.

Once laid down on soil, it can also help to retain moisture for your plants in dry weather during the summer months.

You can save money and make your own compost by using a compost bin. The council continues to offer compost bins to local people at a special discounted value. The bin is delivered to your home and comes with a handy user guide.



But in a special offer for 5 lucky Around Ealing readers, you can win a bin free of charge in our competition below. If you are not lucky enough to win, find out more about the discounted bins by calling Straight Plc on 0845 130 60 90.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- it takes between 9 to 12 months for your compost to become ready for use
- as well as composting garden waste and uncooked food waste, you can compost shredded cardboard, paper and newspaper
- it is estimated around 30% of an average UK household's waste can be composted
- composting at home for just 1 year can save global warming gases equivalent to all the CO2 your kettle produces annually, or your washing machine produces in 3 months.

Find out more about composting at [www.ealing.gov.uk/compost](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/compost)

## Enter the competition

To be in with a chance of winning, you need to correctly answer this question.

What percentage of the average UK household's waste can typically be composted?

Send your correct answers in by email to [aroundealing@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:aroundealing@ealing.gov.uk) using the subject line 'Compost bins' by the deadline of 11.59pm on Wednesday, 17 April 2024.

Please make sure you include your postal address to be considered in the draw. The 5 winners will be picked out at random from among the correct entries, after the deadline has closed. Only the winners will be contacted. No financial remuneration will be offered as an alternative.



Councillor Polly Knewstub  
and Tom Kerry



# Ultra keen to get out there

"It's less of a race, and more an amble right around the borough," said one of the organisers of a new event taking place this month.

**T**he Queen of the Suburbs Ultra is 50 kilometres long and will sweep through parkland, open spaces and along canal paths on Saturday, 23 March. There will also be a shorter, 25km route for those not wanting to go the whole way.

Rachel Job is director of EHM Legacy, the organisers of the ultra marathon. It founded the award-

winning Ealing Half Marathon and runs its community projects too. She added: "Walking and a mixture of running and walking is all encouraged. We aim to surprise even the most intrepid local by taking them down a path or trail they didn't know about."

#### **'IT SHOULD BE FOR EVERYONE'**

The route includes a central point at Horsenden Hill and the seeds of

the idea came about when the EHM Legacy team put together a challenge during the COVID pandemic to encourage local people to run in local parks and, perhaps, take in an open space they had not enjoyed before.

"We could see we were on to something," said Tom Kerry, chair of EHM Legacy. "And we wondered if we could create a new challenge that brought all of these great parks and



green spaces together. Something that showcases the whole borough and brings together the community.”

Tom is also the ‘running mayor’ for the borough – acting as an advocate for its benefits, both in terms of personal health and social interaction.

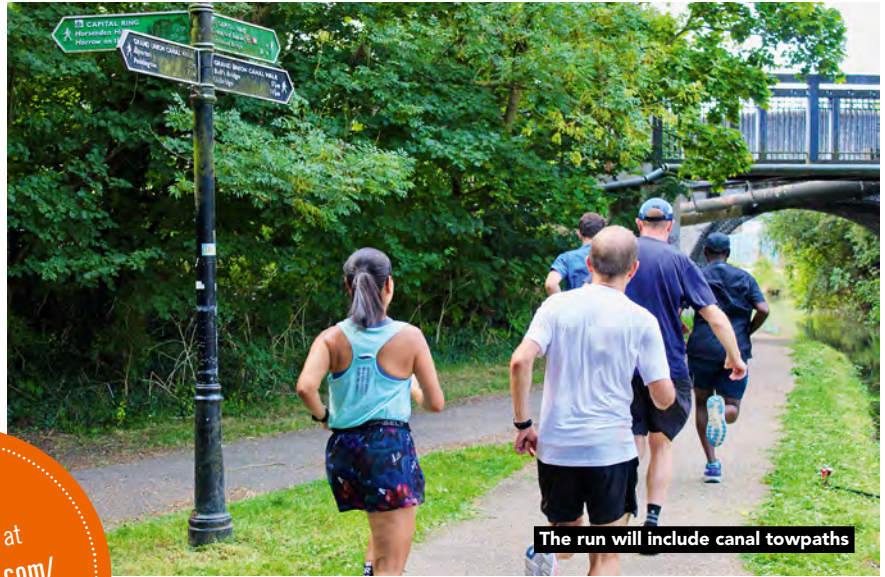
“We live in a lovely part of London,” he said. “It’s all on your doorstep; and getting out there and exploring the area on foot should be for everyone. It’s good for better health, for your mental health.

And there is always a great community spirit at these events, too. That’s what it is all about.

“A long distance can seem daunting but it’s important to us that it should be for everyone.

“The time it takes isn’t important. It’s all about spending time with other people, and the sense of achievement of completing the distance at the end.”


Watch video at  
[aroundealing.com/  
news/ultra](http://aroundealing.com/news/ultra)



The run will include canal towpaths

#### ‘A FANTASTIC IDEA’

Councillor Polly Knewstub, Ealing Council’s cabinet member for thriving communities, said: “The Ealing Half Marathon is a well-established fixture in the local calendar and it is great to see more ways to encourage participation in outdoor exercise.

“Whether walking, jogging, running, or a combination of all 3, it is so good for our physical and mental health. We have so many lovely green, open spaces in our borough and it’s a fantastic idea to connect the dots and showcase what we have on our doorstep while getting people active and socialising in the fresh air.” 



Running near Hanwell Viaduct

#### Dates for your diary

EHM Legacy is organising a number of running events locally in the coming months. Here are just some of them:

- 23 March: Ultra Marathon [www.queenofthesuburbsumarathon.com](http://www.queenofthesuburbsumarathon.com)
- Monthly Ealing Mile events [www.ealinghalfmarathon.com/the-ealing-mile](http://www.ealinghalfmarathon.com/the-ealing-mile)
- April, May, June: Guided ‘pop-up’ trail runs in partnership with [www.blendedtrails.co.uk](http://www.blendedtrails.co.uk)
- 8 June: Summer West London 10km [www.ealinghalfmarathon.com/west-london-10k](http://www.ealinghalfmarathon.com/west-london-10k)



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# Natural beauty

Wildflower meadows are beautiful spaces to enjoy all year round, and they provide a great source of food for wildlife including bees, bugs and butterflies.

And, with the help of new and modern machinery, Ealing Council can now more easily fill the borough's grass verges and green spaces with a riot of colour.

Councillor Deirdre Costigan, the council's cabinet member for climate action, said: "Improving the management of wildflowers in our borough and having many more of them helps biodiversity flourish, and provides residents and visitors with opportunities to re-engage with nature."

Boosting the area's meadows will support the council's Biodiversity Action Plan and follows hot on the heels of the return of beavers to the borough after more than 400 years and reintroducing harvest mice to the wild, too. You can read about both of those in previous editions of the magazine and on the Around Ealing website.

"Improving biodiversity is part of our ambitious target of achieving net zero carbon by 2030," added Councillor

Costigan. "We promised we will give back to nature through re-wilding and re-introducing wildlife. Taking care of our meadows will help us in building a more environmentally-friendly borough for generations to come."

The council, along with Citizen Zoo and The Selborne Society, was awarded funding for the projects to reintroduce beavers to London, provide homes for harvest mice, and create new wildflower meadows across the borough.

## TRY IT AT HOME

If you have a small growing space at home, you could create your own mini-meadow, just like local resident Paige Windust.

Paige said: "I was inspired by Ealing Common's beautiful wildflower meadow last summer and went about creating my own in my small garden. My patch is 1m x 2m; I generously sprinkled a box of 'wild meadow seed'

from the local pound shop on bare soil, no compost needed, and watered every few days. No chemicals required. I saw results in just 6 weeks. Very little cost and effort, but huge gain.

"The bees are loving the space, as well as caterpillars. The meadow has really enhanced the ecosystem of my garden, to the benefit of all my plants. There are also great mental health benefits to creating something wild and beautiful within London's concrete jungle." 

Wildflower meadow in Ravenor Park

 **TACKLING**  
THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Paige's homegrown wild meadow





# Growing community roots

Community volunteers helped to make the project happen

A new community growing space that was once a derelict piece of land is rapidly taking shape and attracting visitors.

**T**he urban garden project in Western Road, Southall, was something of a blank canvas when Around Ealing visited the site in springtime last year. Now the site is showing significant signs of growth and development, as was seen by the Leader and deputy leader of the council on a recent visit.

Thanks to the Southall Community Alliance (SCA), which is leading on the project, Ealing Council, which owns the land, and with the support of other local groups and organisations, including Southall Transition, Ealing Allotments Partnership, Feeding Ealing and LAGER Can, the space is already serving the community.

## 'THE MAGIC OF VOLUNTEERS'

Janpal Basran, director of SCA, said: "Something like this doesn't happen without the magic of volunteers, so as well as local residents coming to help, we've had lots of organisations come and really put in a shift.

"We've made a huge amount of progress. Our ultimate vision is to develop a site for the community, which they can enjoy for leisure, food growing and education. The education is about how we can make best use of our green spaces to grow food and get people coming together as a community."

When the project first began there was a lot of hard work needed to get

the site cleared. It had been neglected for a number of years and had become a dumping ground for rubbish.

Paul Carter, chairman of the Ealing Allotments Partnership, said: "Because the site was neglected for so long, some days were tougher than others getting it ready. There was glass, debris, bits of motorbike and we even unearthed a Spitting Image model of Margaret Thatcher. Looking back at photos from 12 months ago and seeing what it's like now gives us a big lift, it reminds us how far we've come."

The site now boasts a polytunnel, raised beds for growing, the beginnings of an orchard that will be dripping in fruit and community allotment spaces.





Now



And then

Mani Dhanda, chairman of Southall Transition, said: "As spring rolls round we can start growing and later on this year we'll have our first harvest and that will go to food banks, local charities, whoever needs the food – that's who we're growing it for."

### PLANT TO PLATE

Paul Carter added:

"What we want to do is try and encourage people to be able to see that full cycle of propagation in the first instance and understand how those crops become food that's nutritional that people want to eat."

Local school children have already started visiting the garden, to learn about the growing process and muck in and do some planting too.

Ealing Council leader, Peter Mason, said: "Supporting projects like this is part of our commitment to give residents greater access to green spaces and clean air. The fact that so many people have given their time to create this space just goes to show how much this is needed in the community."

Watch video at  
[aroundealing.com/  
 news/community-  
 roots](https://www.aroundealing.com/news/community-roots)


### 'GROW LOCAL'

Councillor Deirdre Costigan, Ealing Council's cabinet member for climate action, added: "It was brilliant to come down and take part in one of the school visits and see how enthusiastic everyone was about the project.

"We promised to create 10 new community growing spaces in Ealing and with Western Road community garden

we've already got to 5, halfway to our goal.

"These new community gardens are a fantastic way of growing food locally, reducing our carbon footprint and providing a home for wildlife."

While there is still plenty to do, including laying paths to make the site wheelchair-accessible, the transformation so far is quite spectacular. Watch out for further updates on [aroundealing.com](https://www.aroundealing.com) 



School visit with Ealing Council's leader and deputy leader



View at  
[aroundealing.com/](http://aroundealing.com/)  
around-ealing

# All of this edition's video stories in one place



## Coach trips

Pick-up points in Acton,  
Ealing, Hanwell,  
Greenford & Northolt

### Coach Trips from London Ltd. 2024 Schedule

**Sunday 14 April** Kent Villages with Sunday roast  
**Saturday 27 April** Weymouth on the Dorset coast  
**Sat 11 May** Gloucester Cathedral & Slimbridge WWT  
**Sun 19 May** Berkshire Thames cruise **Sat 15 June** Margate  
**Sun 30 June** Hever Castle **Sunday 7 July** Eastbourne  
**Saturday 20 July** Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight  
**Sun 14 July** Bath **Sun 28 July** Cotswolds Wildlife Park  
**Saturday 3 August** Southsea & Portchester Castle  
**Sun 18 August** Peterborough Cathedral & Elton Hall  
**Sat 24 August** Littlehampton beach or the Lionel Bart musical *Oliver!* at the Chichester Festival Theatre  
**Sunday 15 September** Bournemouth or Poole harbour  
**Saturday 28 September** Rye in Sussex and Dungeness featuring the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch steam railway  
**Sun 6 Oct** Suffolk Villages **Sat 19 Oct** Stourhead  
**Sat 2 November** The National Arboretum & Lichfield  
**NB: Booking conditions apply.** Xmas markets trips this year will be to Melton Mowbray, Winchester and Coventry  
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## Weekend Drivers Needed

As a minibus driver, you'll transport people with dementia to and from our weekend clubs!

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Call Linda or Mary on 0208 568 4448.

# Silence is golden

Your home should be a sanctuary from the hustle and bustle of the outside world, but what do you do if you've got noisy neighbours driving you round the bend?



Life can become tricky when you have nuisance neighbours who like cranking up the music, having parties, or own rather vocal pets.

Unreasonable or excessive noise can annoy even the most even-tempered resident, it can cause disturbed sleep and be quite distressing.

If it's a problem you don't feel you can tackle alone, you can seek the help of the council's regulatory services team.

It investigates complaints of excessive noise relating to residential premises, including loud music, televisions, and unreasonable voice levels. The team also investigates less typical complaints, such as dogs barking and cockerels crowing.

## A 'QUIET' WORD

Ewelina Kaczowka, Ealing Council regulatory services officer, said: "In the first instance, we would encourage you to talk to the person who is causing the problem

and explain how it is affecting you. We've often found that a simple word can prevent this from happening again.

"If you don't feel comfortable speaking to your neighbour, or you have been unable to resolve the

problem directly, you can report the problem to us. We will write to your neighbour to let them know a complaint has been received – your

details will remain anonymous. If this fails to resolve the issue, we will visit to experience the noise ourselves, in person, and make an assessment."

## LEGAL ACTION

In one recent case, the council received complaints from residents about a neighbour who was blasting techno music into the early hours of the morning. The blaring sounds were keeping them awake at night and causing distress. The regulatory services team investigated, and issued the noisy neighbour with a noise

abatement notice – a legal document demanding that the noise is stopped.

But, officers continued to witness excessive noise from the home and after several attempts to mediate, the council applied to the court for a warrant and, with the police present, seized the music equipment worth approximately £600. The owner also received a court fine of more than £600 and a criminal record.

## THE RIGHT TO PEACE AND QUIET

Councillor Louise Brett, the council's cabinet member for decent living incomes, said: "Everyone has the right to peace, quiet, and enjoyment of their own home without excessive disturbance from others.

"The council take complaints of excessive noise very seriously and work hard to investigate complaints and take action against those who persistently cause excessive and unreasonable noise."

For more information about the council's noise nuisance team, its operating hours and how to get help, go to [ealing.gov.uk](https://ealing.gov.uk)



EALING BROADWAY	PITSHANGER HANGER HILL	 <b>Rima Baaklini</b> Labour 0781 621 1810 BaakliniR@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Ilayda Nijhar</b> Labour 0744 448 9453 Nijhart@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Ben Wesson</b> Labour 0750 242 8483 WessonB@ealing.gov.uk
		 <b>Fabio Conti</b> Conservative 0781 717 4279 ContiFa@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Gregory Stafford</b> Conservative 0797 311 9625 StaffordG@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Athena Zissimos</b> Liberal Democrat 0208 825 6690 ZissimosA@ealing.gov.uk
		 <b>Julian Gallant</b> Conservative 0780 222 1393 GallantJu@ealing.gov.uk <b>Leader of second opposition</b>	 <b>Mrs Seema Kumar</b> Conservative 0796 131 7110 KumarSee@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Anthony Young</b> Conservative 0791 700 7969 YoungAn@ealing.gov.uk
		 <b>Grace Quansah</b> Labour 0736 181 2763 QuansahG@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Binda Rai</b> Labour 0752 238 8741 RaiB@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Gareth Shaw</b> Labour 0778 991 4379 ShawG@ealing.gov.uk
EALING COMMON	NORTHFIELD	 <b>Praveen Anand</b> Labour 0203 612 3587 AnandP@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Jon Ball</b> Liberal Democrat 0208 810 1078 BallJ@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Connie Hersch</b> Liberal Democrat 020 8825 7188 HerschC@ealing.gov.uk
		 <b>Paul Driscoll</b> Labour 0784 932 8223 DriscollP@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Ian Kingston</b> Labour 0797 038 5225 KingstonI@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Kim Nagpal</b> Labour NagpalK@ealing.gov.uk
LADY MARGARET	DORMERS WELLS	 <b>Karam Mohan</b> Labour 0794 752 2084 MohanKa@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Swaran Padda</b> Labour 0795 080 6210 PaddaS@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Kamaldeep Sahota</b> Labour 0741 280 8803 SahotaK@ealing.gov.uk
		 <b>Kanwal Kaur Bains</b> Labour 0793 015 8585 BainsKa@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Ranjit Dheer</b> Labour 0789 422 8032 DheerR@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Mohinder Kaur Midha</b> Labour 0795 084 2599 MidhaM@ealing.gov.uk
SOUTHALL BROADWAY	SOUTHALL WEST	 <b>Sarfraz Khan</b> Labour 0740 466 5858 KhanSar@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal</b> Labour NagpalKK@ealing.gov.uk <b>Cabinet: A fairer start</b>	
		 <b>Surinder Jassal</b> Labour 0208 825 6378 JassalS@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Faduma Mohamed</b> Labour 0750 611 0026 MohamedF@ealing.gov.uk	
NORWOOD GREEN	SOUTHALL GREEN	 <b>John Martin</b> Labour 0793 095 6902 MartinJ@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Ghulam Murtaza</b> Labour 0790 350 2566 MurtazaG@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Tarept Sidhu</b> Labour 0744 800 2067 SidhuT@ealing.gov.uk
		 <b>Jasbir Anand</b> Labour 0794 920 2851 AnandJ@ealing.gov.uk <b>Cabinet: Tackling inequality &amp; crime</b>	 <b>Kamaljit Dhindsa</b> Labour 0796 150 5808 DhindsaK@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Peter Mason</b> Labour 020 8825 6833 MasonPe@ealing.gov.uk <b>Leader of Ealing Council</b>

PERIVALE	 <b>Munir Ahmed</b> Labour 0758 242 8643 AhmedMun@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Tariq Mahmood</b> Labour 0795 731 3079 MahmoodTa@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Charan Sharma</b> Labour 0775 764 5967 SharmaC@ealing.gov.uk <b>Deputy Mayor of Ealing</b>
HANWELL BROADWAY	 <b>Yoel Gordon</b> Labour 0796 078 3825 GordonY@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Monica Hamidi</b> Labour 0737 797 2559 HamidiM@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Polly Knewstubb</b> Labour 0781 487 0375 KnewstubbP@ealing.gov.uk <b>Cabinet: Thriving communities</b>
NORTH HANWELL	 <b>Louise Brett</b> Labour 0781 691 6808 BrettL@ealing.gov.uk <b>Cabinet: Decent living incomes</b>	 <b>Claire Tighe</b> Labour 0785 169 6138 TigheC@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Ray Wall</b> Labour 0738 344 1885 WallRa@ealing.gov.uk
NORTH ACTON	 <b>Daniel Crawford</b> Labour 0208 992 9353 CrawfordD@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Hodan Haili</b> Labour 0757 734 1614 HailiHo@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Blerina Hashani</b> Labour 0208 825 6833 HashaniB@ealing.gov.uk
EAST ACTON	 <b>Kate Crawford</b> Labour 0208 992 9353 (evenings) CrawforK@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Stephen Donnelly</b> Labour 0771 409 3099 DonnellyS@ealing.gov.uk <b>Cabinet: Inclusive economy</b>	 <b>Hitesh Tailor</b> Labour 0799 063 7183 TailorHi@ealing.gov.uk <b>Mayor of Ealing</b>
SOUTH ACTON	 <b>Callum Anderson</b> Labour 0781 612 4603 AndersonC@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Josh Blacker</b> Labour 0793 477 3372 BlackerJ@ealing.gov.uk <b>Cabinet: Healthy lives</b>	 <b>Yvonne Johnson</b> Labour 0208 9953 4166 JohnsoY1@ealing.gov.uk
SOUTHFIELD	 <b>Gary Busuttil</b> Liberal Democrat 0798 544 3860 BusuttilG@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Gary Malcolm</b> Liberal Democrat 0781 320 5218 MalcolmG@ealing.gov.uk <b>Leader of the opposition</b>	 <b>Andrew Steed</b> Liberal Democrat 0773 664 9664 SteedA@ealing.gov.uk
NORTHOLT MANDEVILLE	 <b>Deirdre Costigan</b> Labour 0793 032 2315 CostiganD@ealing.gov.uk <b>Deputy leader &amp; Cabinet: Climate action</b>	 <b>Miriam Rice</b> Labour 0741 559 2153 Ricem@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Chris Summers</b> Labour 0751 987 2341 SummersC@ealing.gov.uk
NORTHOLT WEST END	 <b>Bassam Mahfouz</b> Labour 0794 910 4656 MahfouzB@ealing.gov.uk <b>Cabinet: Safe &amp; genuinely affordable homes</b>	 <b>Dee Martin</b> Labour 0778 887 2191 MartinD@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Lauren Wall</b> Labour 0752 545 2812 WallL@ealing.gov.uk
NORTH GREENFORD	 <b>Muhammad Iqbal</b> Labour 0759 594 5843 IqbalMu@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Amarjit Jammu</b> Labour 0796 075 4646 JammuA@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Shital Manro</b> Labour 0795 837 6745 ManroS@ealing.gov.uk <b>Cabinet: Good growth &amp; new housing</b>
CENTRAL GREENFORD	 <b>Shahbaz Ahmed</b> Labour 0754 080 1722 AhmedShah@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Aysha Raza</b> Labour 0772 031 2035 RazaA@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Sanjai Kohli</b> Labour 0790 409 5990 KohliS@ealing.gov.uk
GREENFORD BROADWAY	 <b>Varlene Alexander</b> Labour 0748 433 5273 AlexanderV@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Harbhajan Kaur-Dheer</b> Labour 0782 515 7044 DheerHK@ealing.gov.uk	 <b>Anthony Kelly</b> Labour 0777 174 0912 KellyA@ealing.gov.uk





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