

IslingtonNow

Issue 34, February 2010

your local magazine from Islington Council

Curtains up!

It's only a month until the magnificent Assembly Hall finally reopens its doors, and you could be one of the first to see the newly restored hall in all its splendour.

Located next to Islington Town Hall on Upper Street, the Assembly Hall was originally opened in 1930, before closing in the 1980s. But it has now been carefully and lovingly restored to its glory days, and is reopening next month to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the original opening.

To help us celebrate the reopening, we're tapping into our local talent to give you The Assembly Hall Showcase – a week of free events and performances. All Change, Islington Arts Factory and London Sinfonietta are just a few of the organisations that will be performing during the week. You can see the full programme on page 15 or at www.islington.gov.uk/assemblyhall

Local talent

We caught up with Jane Hackett, Director of Creative Learning at Sadler's Wells – which is putting on a dance performance on 10 March – who said: "Preparations for our performance are well under way and we can't wait to be



Dancers from Sadler's Wells try out the lovingly-restored Assembly Hall dance floor. Christopher Dunham, Betsy Field and Geoff McGarry will be appearing in Kaleidoscope, part of the Connect Festival, at the Assembly Hall on 10 March

one of the first to perform in the beautifully restored Assembly Hall. It will be great to showcase performances from our celebration of dance – the Connect festival."

Cubitt, an artist-led charity in the borough, is also performing. Daniel Baker, the organisation's Education Coordinator, said: "We are so happy to be part of the historic reopening of this fantastic venue. The hall suits our event perfectly, as we're holding a tea dance with a contemporary twist – a multimedia event featuring performances and

creative work by local artists, young and old, professional and amateur. We're very excited to have this venue reopen in Islington and be part of the celebrations that will officially bring it back to life."

Hottest tickets in town

If you fancy coming along to any of the performances, you can apply for free tickets, which are being allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis. The Pleasance Theatre has kindly agreed to run the box office for the festival, so to request your tickets, simply decide what

performance/s you would like to attend (see the list on page 15) and contact the Pleasance Theatre box office on 020 7609 1800 or visit www.pleasance.co.uk. You can also collect tickets in person at the Pleasance Theatre, Carpenters Mews, North Road, N7 9EF.

➔ For more information on the Assembly Hall, go to www.islington.gov.uk/assemblyhall, or email us at assemblyhall@islington.gov.uk

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Turn to page 12 for a 10% discount on all bike security and safety equipment


LEADER'S COLUMN


Council Leader, Terry Stacy, at the grand reopening of City Road Basin (see the full article on page 8)

With 2010 already well underway, I hope you're sticking to your resolutions! And I hope you like the new recycling bins we're trialling along Upper Street – making it even easier to recycle newspapers, bottles and food packets on the move. Following on from the plastics recycling we introduced last year, these bins are just one more way we're trying to reduce Islington's rubbish pile and increase the amount that gets recycled. Ten years ago only 3% of our rubbish got recycled – now it's over 30%.

We also do a lot of work with young people, and our main feature this month focuses on that work. As well as looking at how we can use design to help make Islington even safer, we're investing over £7m in six new youth hubs across the borough that will offer advice, support and a whole range of leisure activities – helping to keep our young people safe and giving them positive things to do.

But there are also things we can all do ourselves to reduce our chances of being a victim of crime – this month's issue offers some useful tips on how to secure your bikes to make it harder for bike thieves. Check out the feature on page 12, which also explains the range of

initiatives we've introduced to deter potential thieves.

March sees the official reopening of our lovingly restored Assembly Hall, 80 years after it originally opened, and we'll be celebrating the grand reopening with a week of free performances that I hope to see lots of you at. I've been lucky enough to have a sneak preview of the venue and it really does look amazing. I think it's wonderful to see this fantastic space become part of the community once more – gleaming and ready to play host to events, weddings, civil partnerships and so much more.

Everyone in the borough will also be receiving a copy of The really, really useful guide through their door this month. Please look out for it as it's got contact details for all the key council services, and is handy to keep around the house.

Send your letters to:

Leader of Islington Council,
IslingtonNow, Town Hall,
Upper Street, London
N1 2UD
Email: [islingtonnow@
islington.gov.uk](mailto:islingtonnow@islington.gov.uk)
Phone: 020 7527 3416

Car clash

I consider Islington to be one of the greenest local authorities in the country and I am proud to live in a borough that puts sustainability at the heart of its operations.

However, I couldn't help but notice the inconsistency of providing free parking in pay and display bays during four Saturdays in December, with your encouragement of people to shop locally and adopt greener lifestyles. Encouraging people to leave the car at home and cycle or walk to local shops would be a boost to their health, would save them money and would also encourage them to shop locally.

As one of the majority of Islington residents who does not own a car, I would enjoy shopping in Islington's town centres if the danger, pollution and congestion associated with heavy traffic were reduced. The success of Islington's Car Free Day, where Liverpool Road was pedestrianised for a day, shows how the absence of vehicles can be a boost to local businesses, with pedestrians free to shop and explore the area without the danger posed by cars.
Laura Hales, N1

It's a real priority for us at the moment to help local

businesses, many of whom are struggling during this challenging time, and one in four local businesses recently told us we could help them by providing more parking for customers. Businesses in Islington are suffering in the recession and we really want to attract customers to our town centres and shopping areas to support them.

I would much rather see people walk and cycle to their local shops, or use public transport, but there are some people who will always want to use their cars. It may also be easier for some people who have large families, people doing lots of shopping, or those with disabilities, to get in the car when they need to do their shopping. So if a shopper is definitely going to drive to the shops then we'd rather they drove to Islington shops rather than to an out of town centre such as Brent Cross which does provide parking. Our businesses also rely on customers that visit from further away, and much of our recent promotional activity for Islington businesses has been about attracting customers from outside the borough. We'll be monitoring this scheme really closely to make sure it's working for shoppers and businesses.

Of course, this doesn't mean we've forgotten our

green agenda. We've strived to make Islington one of London's greenest boroughs and this is reflected in several initiatives Islington has introduced during the past three years which we are very proud of. This includes being the borough with the highest number of car club bays in London, our payback system for residents who give up their parking permits and the ongoing list of car-free developments.

No mag?

I have not received the latest copy of IslingtonNow. Every household is supposed to receive the magazine and yet I have not seen a copy for months.

Name and address withheld,
N7

As soon as we received your email, a copy of the magazine was sent out to you, so I do hope you received it.

We are very sorry to anyone who did not receive the December/January edition of IslingtonNow, and everyone who got in touch with us was sent a copy. There are also always copies of the magazine available in council offices and libraries, and online at www.islington.gov.uk/islingtonnow

IslingtonNow is sent to every household in the borough, but with around 93,000 properties, it's natural that some get missed out. We also have many flats and multiple-occupancy properties, which can also cause problems with access for our distributors.

Despite these difficulties, we want to ensure that everyone in the borough receives a copy. So if delivery of your magazine is sporadic, or if you know of anyone else in the borough who does not get a copy, please phone us on 020 7527 3416 or email islingtonnow@islington.gov.uk and leave your full name, address and postcode so we can let our distributors know to ensure you get a copy.



Council Leader Cllr Terry Stacy and Cllr Lucy Watt, Executive Member for Communities, Skills and Business, with apprentices from last year's intake to the Islington Apprentices Scheme. The scheme is reopening this month and we're looking for brand new recruits! Please turn to page 6 to find out more.

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. Check out IslingtonNow online at www.islington.gov.uk/islingtonnow

Keeping our house in order

Throughout IslingtonNow last year, we let you know about a range of things the council and its partners are doing to help residents during the recession. For us to be able to provide these services and continue to offer you value for your money, we have had to tighten our belts too.

This is the case up and down the country as all organisations, including local councils, feel the pinch and look at ways to save money. So we're really pleased that a recent report by the Audit Commission has confirmed we're managing our money well.



The commission's report said the council:

- delivers on its annual budget plans
- has a good understanding of costs
- secured efficiency savings of £8m in 2008/09.

The commission also highlighted certain areas

in which we're performing well. These included the way we manage council housing. Properties were let on average 19 days after they became vacant in 2008/09, putting us in the top 5% of performers in the country.

The report also commended some of our green initiatives, such as us recycling over 212 tonnes of materials in the same period. Sustainability, says the report, "is one of the council's key priorities and strengths" and we were commended for our work with renewable energy technologies and recycling in council buildings.



My eAccount

My eAccount is the new way to manage your council accounts online – from council tax to parking. You can even see all the transactions you've made in your eAccount and what their current status is. My eAccount can also give you information about your local area. The wrap around this issue of IslingtonNow will give you the full low-down!

→ Why not sign up now? Just go to www.islington.gov.uk/myeaccount

Please note that the council is carrying out essential works on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 February, which will shut down our computer systems temporarily. During this time, you will not be able to register for or access My eAccount.

IN BRIEF

Small business owners

If you own a small business, you may be able to get up to 50% off your business rates bill. Your reduction will depend on the value of the property owned or rented by your business.

Please see www.islington.gov.uk/businessrates or call 020 7527 2633 for more information.

A cut above

Islington Council's tree service has shown it's a cut above the rest after winning the Forestry Commission and Mayor of London's Award for 'Excellence in Tree and Woodland Work by a Public Body'. Judges recognised that Islington is among the first councils to record all its trees on a database, and that it brings in regular maintenance schedules and establishes a monetary value for all the borough's trees.

The authority is now being used as a case study for other councils and has already been visited by experts from other boroughs.

It's really, really useful!

The really, really useful guide – which lists over 600 council services in the borough – will be landing on your doorstep in early February. If you still have not received your copy by the end of the month, just give us a call on 020 7527 2000.



Want it or need it?

As the sales come to a close and everything is reduced to bargain basement prices, it's still worth asking yourself: "Do I really need this?" Something is only a bargain if you would have thought about buying it at the original price. If you do succumb to buying in the sales, remember that you have the same rights as when buying goods at their full price. Find out more at www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

CREDIT CRUNCH
BITE BACK

Dispersal zone for Market Estate

A dispersal zone has been put in place in Holloway's Market Estate and the surrounding area to help combat anti-social behaviour by young people.

Officers will have the power to tell people to leave the area either immediately or at a stated time. Anyone under 16 will not be allowed in the area between 9pm and 6am. The Holloway Safer Neighbourhoods Team have increased patrols to ensure anti-social behaviour levels are reduced, and the Youth Engagement Team will also be on hand to look out for

vulnerable young people out on the streets at night.

Sergeant Paul Bristo from Holloway Safer Neighbourhoods Team said: "This dispersal zone and other preventative measures we are taking should reassure the local community that we are listening to them and are determined to bring down the rate of anti-social behaviour in Holloway.

"We will continue to work with Islington Council and the young people concerned to ensure everyone can live peacefully in their homes."

Ofsted praise for children's centre

Islington's Hornsey Road Children's Centre has been praised and rated as good by Ofsted. According to the inspectors, children attending the centre are "happy and confident" and develop "a strong sense of belonging as they feel included and welcomed" at the nursery.

The report said that children at the nursery have "good opportunities to be physically active" and are encouraged to play in the centre as well as taken on visits to local parks. Each

child's individual needs are well catered for, with "a wide variety of resources and activities", and children "learn and develop respect for themselves and each other". Ofsted also highlighted the way in which parents are kept informed about their child's development and are encouraged to get involved.

→ For more on Islington's children's centres, please go to www.islington.gov.uk/childrenscentres

New zebra crossing

Young commuters in N1 have a safer journey to school thanks to a new zebra crossing. Pedestrians can now cross at the brand new crossing on Baring Street, near Southgate Road, at a tricky five-way junction. The crossing was put in place after requests from local residents. The junction has also been spruced up with a new road surface, bike stands, and a new pavement.

Recycling on the go

Have you spotted the fantastic new recycling bins spanning the length of Upper Street? The new bins let you recycle while you're on the move...

Over 9,000 people walk along Upper Street every hour, and they can now recycle their papers, magazines, drink cans and other items that sometimes end up in the rubbish bin. This is all thanks to the 30 new recycling bins that have been placed the length of the road from Highbury Corner to Angel tube station.

The recycling bins are easy to spot and take the full range of recyclable materials, so shoppers can put all their glass bottles and jars, paper and card, food tins and drinks cans, and plastic packaging and cartons into the

bins. This is all part of Islington's commitment to making recycling as easy as possible and reaching our recycling target of 35%.

Cut the rubbish

There are also many ways to reduce your rubbish when you're out shopping. To start with, you can choose products that come with less packaging or packaging that can be recycled. And why not buy products sold in refill packs, concentrates or in bulk and use a reusable cotton or string bag when shopping rather than a plastic bag?



Local resident Alara Gee tries out Upper Street's cool new recycling bins, which take the whole range of recyclable materials

And remember, you can now recycle all your plastic packaging and cartons at home using your green box or recycling bag collection schemes.

All these things are helping us make a drastic reduction

in the household rubbish we produce, with a fall last year of nearly 8.5% in household rubbish compared with the year before. That's the second highest fall in London, so thank you – and keep up the good work!

➔ Find out more at www.islington.gov.uk/recycling. You can also join the debate and have any questions answered at our Facebook group, 'Recycling Islington'.

Come and celebrate LGBT History Month in Islington this February!

An exciting and inspiring programme of events includes:

- a launch event, with lively entertainment
- contemporary and classic book promotions
- enlightening historical talks
- 'choose your own history' open art studio
- a range of social events and quiz nights.

Pick up a free programme at your local library or visit www.islington.gov.uk/lgbthistory for more information.



Borough's kids are Copenhagen campaigners!

The pupils of Islington have been sending a message on climate change to world leaders through the council's Copenhagen Campaigners project. Ten of the borough's schools took part in the project, which saw them each learning about a different country such as China and Indonesia, and how it is affected by climate change. Pupils then attended a summit at the Town Hall and each class made a case for their country.

Participants engaged in a lively debate and decided it was fairest for developing countries to have less strict



Pupils from New North School took part in a Stand Against Climate Change event with nine other Islington schools, using visual messages to get their point across to world leaders in Copenhagen

targets for reducing their impact on the environment and to receive support from richer nations to help them deal with the challenges and

consequences of climate change.

Cllr Greg Foxsmith, Executive Member for Environment, said: "We're committed to tackling climate change, and I'm proud we were able to host such a fantastic project with our schools.

"Young people are sadly the ones

who will see the worst effects of global warming if successful action is not taken. At this summit, Islington's pupils showed how seriously they take the issue, and gave a shining example of working together that older people could perhaps learn from."

14 the number of tonnes of compost the council uses each week that have been recycled from green waste

9,000 the number of people who walk along Upper Street each day

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Delicious @ Aloysius

St Aloysius College boys were joined by Gardener's World presenter Joe Swift to help them celebrate a successful bid to the council's Edible Islington fund, which offers grants to community groups that want to grow their own food. Fourteen students from Year 10, all studying for a new Diploma in Business and Finance, applied for an Edible Islington grant to set up an allotment in their school grounds. They've christened the project Delicious @ Aloysius.



Joe Swift and the Delicious @ Aloysius boys

The students will be selling the produce they grow to the school and wider community, to help them learn the practicalities of setting up and running a business. They've attended food safety workshops and gone on many external visits

to allotments, shops and garden centres to help them with the project.

Edible Islington grants are available to help communities grow their

own food. The programme will support community food-growing projects on estates, in schools, on adventure playgrounds and in community gardens.

➔ For more information, please call 020 7278 1514, go to www.islington.gov.uk/edibleislington or email edible.islington@groundwork.org.uk

Archway Low Carbon Zone

The Archway area has been selected by the Mayor of London as one of ten flagship Low Carbon Zones across London to cut carbon emissions and tackle climate change. The new Archway Low Carbon Zone aims to cut carbon dioxide emissions in the area by 20.12% by 2012.

To achieve this ambitious target, there will be a large number of carbon cutting activities over the next couple of years. From home insulation programmes and energy efficiency advice for residents, to energy audits and low energy light fittings for businesses, the initiative will unite all areas of the community around the goal of making Archway a Low Carbon Zone.

Kate Calvert, Chair of the Better Archway Forum, said: "We are delighted that the Better Archway Forum is partnering this project which, as one of just ten zones across the whole of London, will really put Archway on the map."

➔ We'll let you know more as activities are rolled out across the zone. In the meantime, for more details, contact Victoria Howse on 020 7527 2347 or victoria.howse@islington.gov.uk

Warming by degrees

This winter Islington Council, Homes for Islington, and British Gas are working together to install a free package of energy saving measures in the homes of almost 1,000 council tenants and leaseholders living in Clerkenwell and Bunhill. The package includes reflective radiator panels, draught



excluders and electricity monitors, and homes also get a free energy survey. All eligible households will receive a letter before British Gas visits, but to make a specific appointment, households in these areas can call 0845 605 2535 choosing option 1 and quoting 'Islington'.



Tonne up for battery recycling

Over one tonne of household batteries have been recycled this year thanks to local residents using the battery recycling points in libraries. Inmates at Pentonville prison have also been collecting their batteries using the scheme. The scheme was launched last January to try and keep batteries out of the bin, which helps keep potentially hazardous materials, such as lead and mercury, out of landfill sites.



Money help for new parents

The Parent's Guide to Money is a free booklet produced by the Financial Services Authority (FSA). It is available to pregnant mothers through their midwife and you can also see a copy at www.parentsguidetomoney.fsa.gov.uk. The guide contains loads of information about benefits, childcare and the Child Trust Fund.



Register to vote



With the local elections happening on 6 May this

year and a general election due to be called for some time before June, it's really important you register to vote, if you haven't already.

In the next couple of issues of IslingtonNow, we'll be letting you know all about where and how you vote and how you can get up-to-date information about the upcoming elections, so watch this space...

→ For more information on registering so you can make your voice heard, contact Electoral Services on 020 7527 3110 or visit www.islington.gov.uk/voting

In September, IslingtonNow reported on the Islington Apprentices Scheme – an exciting new opportunity for residents looking for a career with the council. And this month there's another chance for people to sign up.

The Islington Apprentices Scheme is up and running, with the first 31 apprentices getting stuck into their two-year contracts – gaining hands-on experience in roles ranging from administration to care work and parks jobs. And the great news is that we're recruiting again this month.

One of the new recruits, Jenny Walsh, took a role in Islington Council's Planning department. "I think the Islington Apprentices Scheme is a great idea – particularly because there's no age restriction on joining," she said.



Emma is enjoying her role with the council

"When I started, I was glad to meet the other apprentices and discover there was a mix of ages.

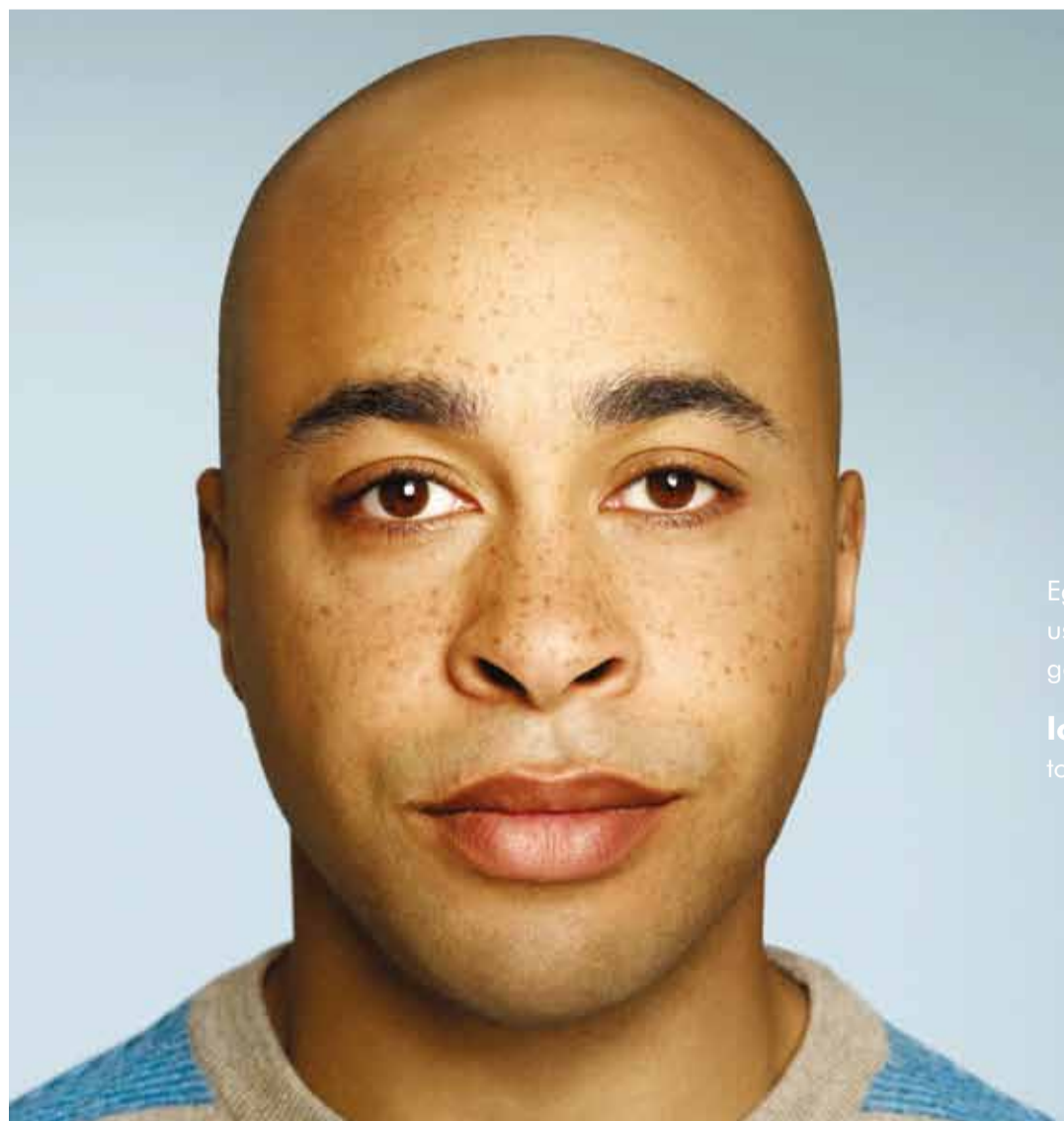
"I've had office jobs in the past but my office skills

definitely need updating, so it's been ideal for me. As well as getting a paid job, I study one day a week at City and Islington College towards a qualification in Business and Administration

Level 2. I'm really enjoying the work and as a local resident, it's interesting to work in the Planning department – to see some of the work that goes on behind the scenes to improve the area."

Another new apprentice, Emma Mallinson, started work with the council's Community Safety department. She said: "I love the team that I work with and am enjoying it so much that I want to apply for a full-time job. The apprenticeship system has been excellent and has shown me what career I want to go into in the future."

→ If you're interested in the scheme and missed out on the first round of recruitment, don't worry, as we'll be advertising more new vacancies this month. The scheme is open to residents over the age of 16 who are qualified below degree or NVQ Level 4. For more information, visit www.islington.gov.uk/apprentices, email islingtonworking@islington.gov.uk or call 020 7527 4486.



EGG LOVERS hate waste

Eggs are magic. After footie I do a big omelette for the kids using the leftovers. Veg, potatoes, meat... whatever, it all goes in the pan. Then I just pour over these eggs. Nice.

lovefoodhatewaste.com has more tips and recipes to help you waste less food and save up to £50 a month.



31 the number of apprentices who have now started their two-year contracts with us

£10 the cost of joining Aquaterra if you purchase inclusive membership before 28 February

7

Archway goes arty

With the festive season a distant memory, the lingering dark winter nights can be tough. But a trip to Archway this February could be just the answer, with the town centre becoming the focus of a major art installation.

For the past six months, artist Jane Watt has been photographing people who live, work or study in Archway and who have a passion for dance. She has then created an installation of 40 large translucent images, which are now on display in office and shop windows around Archway Mall, Junction Road, Holloway Road, Highgate Hill and Archway Close until 18 March. The images are lit from behind using existing shop lighting, creating a stunning effect you won't want to miss.

Jane said: "The response from local businesses, residents, students and employees has been incredible. So many Archway toes are tapping, I can't wait to see the streets of Archway animated by some of the movement I've seen over the past six months."

Alongside the photographs, three coloured spotlights will light up some of Archway's darkest corners. Local dancers, groups and passers-by will be invited to dance in the spotlights as part of a programme of events.

Cllr Lucy Watt, Executive Member for Communities, Business and Skills, said: "Archway has a lot to offer residents and visitors – with bustling shops, local markets and many lively pubs, bars and restaurants. But we know there's also a real demand



Jane Watt's photos of local people dancing are lighting up Archway

for contemporary art and I'd encourage all Islington residents to come and see the installations and performances and to take part themselves."

Trip the Light Fantastic is a joint project between Byam Shaw School of Art and

Islington Council, with funding from Transport for London.

→ You can find full details of the events taking place as part of Trip the Light Fantastic in our events section on page 15.

Don't forget – renew your Freedom Pass!

New style Freedom Passes to give older and disabled people free public transport are being introduced this year. Passes issued before January 2010 will stop working on 31 March 2010, so if you have one of those passes, you will need to renew it before then.

You can use the new pass on public transport outside London and it will be valid for five years rather than two. To reduce the risk of fraud, the new-style pass will include your photograph.

→ Cards can take up to ten working days to produce and will not be issued over the counter as before. For more information on the Freedom Pass, visit www.freedompass.org or call 020 7934 9633 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Win a year's free gym membership!



You can win a whole year of free swimming, sauna, gym and exercise classes at Islington's seven Aquaterra leisure centres. What better way to kick start your new year? Enter online at www.aquaterra.org/freeprizedraw

We're also offering a limited offer to new members to join for just £10 when you purchase inclusive membership. Membership includes up to six one-to-one gym sessions and three one-to-one swim sessions. Find out more by visiting or phoning your local leisure centre, or go to www.aquaterra.org/join-for-£10.

The deadline for the free draw and the £10 membership deal is 28 February – so don't delay!

→ More details of both these offers can be found in Aquaterra Leisure's Motivation magazine, which all residents should have received last month. You can also pick up a copy in your local Aquaterra leisure centre.

**CREDIT CRUNCH
BITE BACK**

Pledge support for your local shops

We always encourage our residents to support local shops, but it's more important than ever at the moment, with some smaller businesses struggling with the current economic climate. We can all do our bit to help,

so we're asking you to pledge to do half your shopping locally as part of our I Shop Local campaign, and in return we'll send you a reusable shopping bag. Look out for our FREEPOST cards in local shops, or visit www.islington.gov.uk/shopping. There are also vouchers for discounts in local



shops inside The really, really useful guide, which you'll be receiving through your door this month.

Peter Hamit, owner of Junction Barbers in Archway, is pleased to support the I Shop Local campaign. "Anything that

encourages more people to discover Archway is a good thing," he told us.

We're also continuing to offer free parking for up to two hours

in pay and display bays in the Archway area (Controlled Parking Zone P) until 29 May. See www.islington.gov.uk/parking for details.

Peter Hamit with customer Newman Ibrahim, enjoying a traditional hot towel shave



HEALTH

Keep smiling!

There are many things we can all do to help us improve our dental health, such as cutting down on sugar, brushing our teeth more effectively and stopping smoking. Alongside these things, it is also important for you to visit a dentist regularly.

In Islington, it has never been easier to see an NHS dentist. In fact, many of our dentists are available before 9am, after 5pm and at the weekend.

Visiting a dentist on a regular basis means dental problems can be treated at an early stage, preventing the

possibility of more serious and expensive problems in the future.

If you have children, it's really important to take them to a dentist when their first tooth appears and then at least every six months because children's teeth decay quicker than an adult's.

→ We can help you to find an NHS dentist in Islington. Call us on 020 7527 1182/3 or visit www.islington.nhs.uk/dentists.htm

Basin back to life

City Road Basin had been out of action for many, many years. But now it's back in business with a lovely new square and park for the public to enjoy.

One of Islington's best kept secrets is a beautiful stretch of water at City Road Basin. The site remained closed for 100 years, but now a multi-million pound project has brought it back to life. At a special Christmas launch, hundreds of local residents were among the first to enjoy the new square and landscape park, which overlook the Regent's Canal.

The basin is a former industrial site which dates back to the 1820s. It fell into decline in the 50s and 60s and remained undeveloped, unattractive and inaccessible to the public for many years. The opening means that more people will have access to the canal network, which stretches to Victoria Park in Hackney.

Islington Council Leader, Cllr Terry Stacy, said: "We have transformed two hectares of run down and under-used land at City Road Basin into a fantastic new outdoor space for residents and visitors to enjoy. It's doubled the amount of access the public have to the waterside, and creating the first new public square in London for years."

The opening of the new space is a major milestone in the wider masterplan for City Road Basin,



A local family enjoys the grand reopening of City Road Basin

which also saw the first building on the site winning two design awards. The masterplan will deliver further affordable housing and office space on the site. The masterplan was

developed by Islington Council, developers Groveworld, British Waterways, Miller Development, and Pembroke Real Estate, and master planners Bennetts Associates.

DIRECT DEBIT WINNER

Green trip for Carl

It may be cold outside, but Barnsbury local Carl Beange is smiling after winning a 'green' holiday in the council's prize draw for residents paying council tax by direct debit.

Carl and his girlfriend have won £500 to spend on an environmentally-friendly trip, and they're planning to explore Ireland in a hybrid car. Carl says: "I was really happy

when we got the news, and excited about all the different opportunities for green travel. I've wanted to visit Ireland for ages, so it was an easy choice."

And just by paying council tax by direct debit, Carl's already reducing his carbon footprint. Direct debit means less paperwork, less processing and less energy.



→ Find out more information about the draw at www.islington.gov.uk/directdebit or call 020 7527 2633.



UniQ
LAMBS PASSAGE

Enjoy stylish city living

Stunning one bedroom apartments from only **£83,313***

*Represents a 25% equity share of a one bedroom apartment valued at £333,250, sold on a New Build HomeBuy (part buy/part rent) basis.



LAUNCHING SOON
Two bedroom apartments at Old Street



0800 234 6242 sales@onehousinggroup.co.uk www.uniqhomes.co.uk

1820 the year City Road Basin was built

8,000 the number of calls received by Citizens Advice Islington since last April

9

Trees please me!

Our tree poster competition really got the borough's pupils thinking ... and getting creative...

Homes for animals, oxygen providers, shade givers and fighters of climate change – just a few of the reasons Islington's children think trees are brilliant! Taking part in a poster competition for National Tree Week, pupils from across the borough turned their thoughts to trees.

"I like trees because they give us oxygen," said seven-year-old Isabella Santana. "I wanted to take part to send a message of the importance of trees in an urban environment to fight climate change," Natalie Leeds, 14, told us. All the lucky winners, including Isabella and Natalie, will have a brand new tree planted at their schools.



Isabella Santana with her poster

Natalie Leeds shows off her winning design



The right advice

i Citizens Advice Islington has handled over 8,000 calls since its launch in April 2009. The helpline is part-funded by a £150,000 grant from Islington Council and provides free advice on housing, money worries, jobs and benefits as well as welfare and legal rights.

→ Local residents and workers can call 0844 856 3537 between 10am-5pm, Monday-Friday, or visit www.cabislington.org.uk

Beware gifts from the taxman!

HM Revenue and Customs is currently warning members of the public about bogus emails aimed at scamming their money. The emails claim that the recipient is entitled to a tax refund and asks them to fill in a form online or click on a link. This could result in them revealing key information, enabling the scammers to access their bank accounts.

If you're concerned about a dodgy email claiming to be from the tax office, you can forward it to phishing@hmrc.gov.uk or email phishing@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk

CREDIT CRUNCH
BITE
BACK

CEREMONY OF THE MONTH

Laura and Laura – yes they do have the same name – had their civil partnership in the glorious Council Chamber at Islington Town Hall after meeting over the fruit machine (the arcade variety) and a game of pool at their local pub in Stoke Newington.

Although now living in Clapham, they decided Islington was the best

venue for them, as it offered everything they wanted – good location, great photography opportunities and very close to their reception, only a two-minute walk away.

"The service was beautiful – it all goes so fast but we just remember smiling and laughing throughout. It was all very personal and intimate, even with 75 of our friends

and family!" Laura said.

The happy couple continued their celebrations on Upper Street at Pomegranate – a family-run Greek restaurant that made the day a wonderful and memorable occasion.

After the big day, the two Lauras headed across the Atlantic to New York where they shopped till they dropped!



Back on track

Young people can get a lot of bad press, but some just need a little help to get them on the right track. Here, we take a look at a few of the projects that we're running to help give young people a focus...



Dancers performed at the event to mark the centre's temporary closure for refurbishment

Ever heard a young person say they're bored or there's nothing to do? Some great new projects could make these words a thing of the past in Islington.

We're investing £7.5m to develop six fantastic new youth service hubs, which will bring together a wide range of activities, information, advice and support. We spoke to young people, their parents and local residents to make sure these hubs are in the right places and offer the right services.

The new Canonbury Project will be the first of the hubs to launch this spring. Located on St Paul's Road, it will provide great new facilities for young people in the borough, such as counselling, gang prevention work and sexual health services. There will also be youth workers doing street-based work to engage with some of the most hard to reach young people and encouraging them to go to the hub.

Roar no more!

The White Lion Centre at Angel has already closed its doors while it's transformed into a state-of-the-art building that will provide free and affordable activities and support to help local young people stay safe and healthy. A special event was held in December to mark

the closure, with singing, dancing and films made by young people all part of the celebrations. The new-look centre, due to open next year, will provide lots of free and affordable activities including sports and fitness, as well as advice and support for more vulnerable young people.

Dillon Williams, 22, has been a regular user of White Lion for about four years.

"I'm really looking forward to the changes," he told us. "As I have a disability, I'm particularly excited about the improvements planned for young people with disabilities such as a new lift which will enable wheelchair users to access all the floors. There will also be new facilities for young women which is great, as they don't tend to use the centre as much as young men. I'm looking forward to

getting involved in different services as there will be more organisations working in the new centre."

Islington Council's Executive Member for Children and Young People, Cllr Paula Belford, has also lent support to the new project. "The building is in need of updating and young people deserve to have access to first-class youth facilities. We've been working

with current users of the centre and also young people who don't use it, to find out exactly what they want to see at the refurbished White Lion Centre.

"The money being invested means that when it reopens in 2011, the centre will offer even better support, guidance and activities for local young people and their families in a much improved building."

More choice for young people

EDUCATION

Choice is an online guide to education and training for young people aged 14-19, covering all of London's 640 schools and colleges. It helps young people choose a career they would be suited to and guides them through all the steps they need to get their dream job. With online tools such as a career compatibility quiz and a CV builder, it's a fun way for young people to plan their future.

➔ Check the Choice website at www.mychoicelondon.co.uk



£7.5m

the amount being spent on Islington's six new youth hubs

18

the number of designing out crime projects that have been completed

11



Cllr Paula Belford at the White Lion Centre closing event, with some of the young people who have been helping to develop plans for the new centre



ACTIVITIES

Stuff to do

Nothing to do and nowhere to go? Think again. Islington has a wide range of youth groups and after-school clubs that offer a range of activities for the borough's young people. There are too many to list here, but you can find out more at www.islington.gov.uk/education and clicking on School Years 5-16 and then Services for Young People.

In the meantime, all White Lion Centre services will continue to operate from other locations across the borough. You can find information at www.islington.gov.uk/whitelion

A different approach

These new services will give young people loads to do, but we need to make sure that we look at ways to help if they are causing trouble. Some areas are more prone to these problems because of their layout and features, so the council has taken steps to try and 'design out' crime.

Bunning Way is one of the areas that has benefitted from this approach. The area was poorly lit and overhanging bushes made it easy for people to loiter unseen. Residents and passersby were also intimidated by groups sitting around on low walls in the area. So, we've now transformed the area to make it a peaceful haven for local people to enjoy by:

- cutting back and removing dead trees/bushes
- erecting lighting within the park
- repairing the surrounding footpaths
- erecting a fence to protect the area
- removing a section of wall to improve sight lines

- landscaping and redesigning the park
- removing hard-standing areas, knee rails and low walls
- replacing the path and grass.

To date, we've carried out 18 projects like this one specifically designed to reduce crime in identified areas, and we recently held a special event to mark these improvements and

raise awareness of the issue of anti-social behaviour. The family of murdered Islington teenager Ben Kinsella gave their support to the event, entitled 'Changing Neighbourhoods, Transforming Lives'. They were among an invited audience who watched a powerful play called 'It's No Joke!', which carried a strong anti-knife crime message. This was followed by a

moving speech by Ben's father, George Kinsella.

→ **Is there an area near you that's attracting anti-social behaviour? Tell us where and what the problem is and we will look into the possibility of 'designing out crime' in your neighbourhood. Email iasbt@islington.gov.uk or call 020 7527 4200.**

SPARKPLUG

Bright sparks

In 2002 the motorcycle project Sparkplug was set up in Bingfield Park to address the crime and anti-social behaviour that was making the park a no go area for local residents. Sparkplug is a registered charity that provides a programme of activities including mechanical skills, off-road motorcycle training, residential riding trips and evening youth clubs for local young people. The programme engages a wide range of individuals who may be hard to reach, not in education or training

and who may otherwise engage in anti-social behaviour. These activities help these young people develop a range of skills, and give them something positive to do, reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. The charity will soon be moving to a brand new building, which will help them offer improved services to young people.

→ **For more information, go to www.thesparkplug.org or call Martin on 07931 441058**



Life cycle

Don't let your bike be an easy target for bike thieves...

Cycling is a great way to get around the borough – it's healthy, reduces pollution and eases traffic congestion. But the downside of all the extra bikes around the borough is it encourages bike thieves. Between April 2008 and March last year there were 1,348 cycle thefts in Islington, and we're determined to help stamp this out.

We've teamed up with Islington Police to help catch would-be cycle thieves. Special decoy bikes, which can be put under police surveillance, are being left in cycle theft hotspots so anyone trying to steal them risks being caught red-handed.

Inspector John Frost of Islington Police said: "Cycle theft is a problem that the police take very seriously and we have carried out numerous operations to catch the thieves. "Recent operations have seen six individuals arrested for cycle theft and more operations are planned to target areas that have been prone to cycle theft. We are also working on a number of initiatives to improve the security of cycles for Islington residents."

Make a stand

The best way to protect your bike is to lock it to a proper bike stand. Please let us know



if there are any areas in the borough where you would like to see more cycle parking or if you want to report any problems, such as vandalised cycle stands, by emailing volkan.ulucay@islington.gov.uk or calling 020 7527 2829. For more information, and a

map of cycle stands in the borough, please go to www.islington.gov.uk/cycling

As well as ensuring your bike is locked to a proper stand, there are other ways you can help deter bike thieves:

- ➔ Avoid parking your bike or cycling in isolated or dimly lit places.
- ➔ If you have an expensive bike, don't leave it in the same place regularly, as it's more likely to be noticed and stolen to order.
- ➔ Lock your bike through the frame. Lock the frame and both wheels to the stand.
- ➔ Always lock your bike – even if you are leaving it on a shared balcony or hallway.
- ➔ Register your bike at www.immobilise.com. This website helps identify the owner of lost and stolen goods.

And if you are unlucky enough to have your bike stolen, make sure you report it by calling 0300 123 1212. Get more tips and helpful information at www.islington.gov.uk/saferbikes

➔ We also offer free cycle training to people who live and work in the borough. For more information, please contact William Pountney on 020 7527 4082 or email william.pountney@islington.gov.uk



MONEY OFF

We've teamed up with two cycle shops in the borough to offer a 10% discount on all safety and security items to cyclists who have a safer bikes voucher. The shops taking part in the offer are Mosquito Bikes, 123 Essex Road, N1 2SN, and Finsbury Cycles, 185 Seven Sisters Rd, N4 3NS. Just cut out the voucher on this page and take it in to one of the shops to claim your discount.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS
LOCAL POLICE. LOCAL KNOWLEDGE.

ISLINGTON

10% discount voucher

To help prevent cycle theft, we have teamed up with Mosquito Bikes and Finsbury Cycles to offer 10% discount on all security and safety equipment.

Just give this voucher to the cashier when paying.

This voucher can not be used in conjunction with any other offers.

<p>Mosquito Bikes 123 Essex Road London N1 2SN Tel: 020 7226 8765</p>	<p>Finsbury Cycles 185 Seven Sisters Rd N4 3NS Tel: 020 7263 0007</p>
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Go to www.islington.gov.uk/saferbikes for tips and information on other offers.

Your local safety newsletter

Look out for your Safer Islington newsletter coming through your door this month. The newsletters are from Islington Council and the police and aim to keep residents informed about local crime and safety.

If you don't receive your newsletter, contact your local Safer Neighbourhoods police team on 0300 123 1212 or go to 'Your Local Area' at www.islington.gov.uk/safer where you can download the newsletter for your ward. You can also find the details of your team in The really, really useful guide, which will be landing on your doorstep this month.

We'd also really like to know what you think about our Safer webpages, which have recently been revamped. Tell us by emailing csputeam@islington.gov.uk. You can also click on Useful Contacts at www.islington.gov.uk/safer and click on Let Us Know at the very bottom of the page.

Islington food strategy

We're lucky here in Islington to have such a wonderful diversity of food. With countless restaurants and cafés serving up cuisines from all corners of the globe, as well as around 2,000 food and drink businesses and plenty of street markets, there is much for us to celebrate.

But of course, the production, preparation and distribution of all this food, along with the consumption and waste, can have a



negative impact on our health and the environment. So the council, with NHS Islington and community partners, is launching a borough food strategy which aims to make healthy and sustainable food affordable and accessible to all.

➔ **For more information about the strategy, the launch event on 23 February and how to get involved, please email michael.calderbank@islington.gov.uk, call 020 7527 3035 or see www.islington.gov.uk/food**



Sirens, bird song, road works, church bells. . .

What noises do you identify with Islington? Are there some you like and some you don't? We're carrying out a new survey to help us find out about noise in the borough. We also want you to tell us where you go to find peace and quiet in the borough. The information will help us determine the noisiest areas and designate

quiet areas away from the hustle and bustle of the borough.

➔ **Complete the survey online at www.islington.gov.uk/noise, or contact the council's Noise Team on 020 7527 3258 or email issues@islington.gov.uk if you would like a printed copy.**

On the right track?

If you travel by train then you may be surprised to learn that the ticket clerk is not obliged to tell you about the cheapest fares. To get the best deal, check prices online first and then go to the station armed with the correct information. It is sometimes cheaper to buy two single tickets than a return, and buying tickets in advance and travelling off-peak are also good tips for cheaper fares. See National Rail Enquiries at www.nationalrail.co.uk

CREDIT CRUNCH
BITE BACK

Improving Highbury Barn

A vibrant shopping area in the heart of Islington is set to be spruced up, giving a boost to trade in the area.

Highbury Barn, N5, already boasts a range of independent shops including cafés, restaurants and stores. But the public square, off Highbury Park, is set to be made more attractive and accessible.

Islington Council consulted residents and local businesses on the proposed scheme in October. Now the council has given the green light for

improvements to the square including new paving, better lighting, more trees, shrubs, benches and dustbins, and more cycle parking.

Nearby streets will be made safer with step-free crossings for pedestrians and a wider pavement.

The consultation revealed nearly nine out of ten people supported the project, which must receive final approval from Transport for London and is due to get underway in the spring. We'll keep you posted!

Under 35? We want to hear from you

Are you an Islington resident under 35? If so, we'd love you to join the Islington Citizens' Panel.

Joining the panel means you can have your say about local issues from the comfort of your living room. You'll be sent a short survey three or four times a year, either online or by post, and it will take just a few minutes to fill it out and send it back.

There are already over 1,000 residents on the panel, who have answered questions about things like tackling crime, keeping healthy and what Islington should be like in 20 years time.

But we need more young adults aged 18-35 to better reflect the local community, and we're especially keen to hear from people under 25.

➔ **If you're interested in joining the panel or want to find out more, please visit www.islington.gov.uk/consultation or call 020 7527 3480.**



YOUNG FUN

Feed the Birds

Come and use recycled materials to make bird feeders for the park or to take home. For children aged 12 and under. All children must be accompanied by an adult.
16 February – Newington Green, 18 February – Highbury Fields, 19 February – Kinloch Street Gardens.
 11am–1pm.
greenspace@islington.gov.uk
 07825 098450



Tiny Tots Sports Academies

Fun and inspiring sport classes for two to five-year-olds, Tiny Tots lets your child play sport and discover their talent in a safe environment. Each week focuses on a different activity including tiny tennis, yoga, karate chop and happy feet.
St Mary's Church Community Centre, Upper Street, N1 2TX
 Every Tuesday (during term-time) 2.30–3.45pm and 4–5.15pm
 £10 per class
www.sportacademies.com
 Call Alex on 020 7713 8232
alex@sportacademies.com



The Selfish Giant

This much loved fairytale is brought to life using beautiful puppets and original music. The story is adapted to broaden its appeal, while keeping the charm of Oscar Wilde's story. Suitable for ages four and over.
Little Angel Theatre, 14 Dagmar Passage, N1 2DN
 17–21 February
 £8/£6 concessions
 020 7226 1787
www.littleangeltheatre.com

THE ARTS



Talk: A history of criminal Islington

Come along for a free talk on crime in Islington by Cllr Greg Foxsmith, civil liberties and criminal defence lawyer. Booking required.
Islington Museum, 245 St John Street, EC1V 4NB
 4 February, 6.30pm
 020 7527 2837
islington.museum@islington.gov.uk



Flamenco Festival London 2010

Enjoy a range of shows and performers as part of this colourful and exciting festival.
Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, EC1R 4TN
 13–27 February
 £10–£38
www.sadlerswells.com
 Box office: 0844 412 4300.

Hugging trees exhibition

An exhibition of works by Avis Saltsman, whose career spans 40 years. She is inspired by nature and uses a wide variety of media including printmaking – an area she developed since moving to Islington in 1989.
Islington Museum, 245 St John Street, EC1V 4NB
 20 February–20 March.
 Open 10am–5pm (closed Wednesday and Saturday).

Josie Long – Work in Progress

A new show about friendliness and belonging... and breakfast!
Hen and Chickens Theatre, 109 St Pauls Road, N1 2NA
 22–27 February 9.30pm
 £7.50
www.unrestrictedview.co.uk
 020 7704 2001.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Parks and Open Spaces

Be sure to check out your local parks noticeboard to find out about any forthcoming events and activities. Alternatively, you can email greenspace@islington.gov.uk or contact the Parks Team on 020 7527 3288.

Finsbury Fine Food and Farmers Market

Come and enjoy some exciting foodie treats!
Finsbury Square, 19 February, 12noon–6pm
 Contact Jim Smith on 07786 246954
cityfarmersmarkets@hotmail.co.uk


Blast from the past

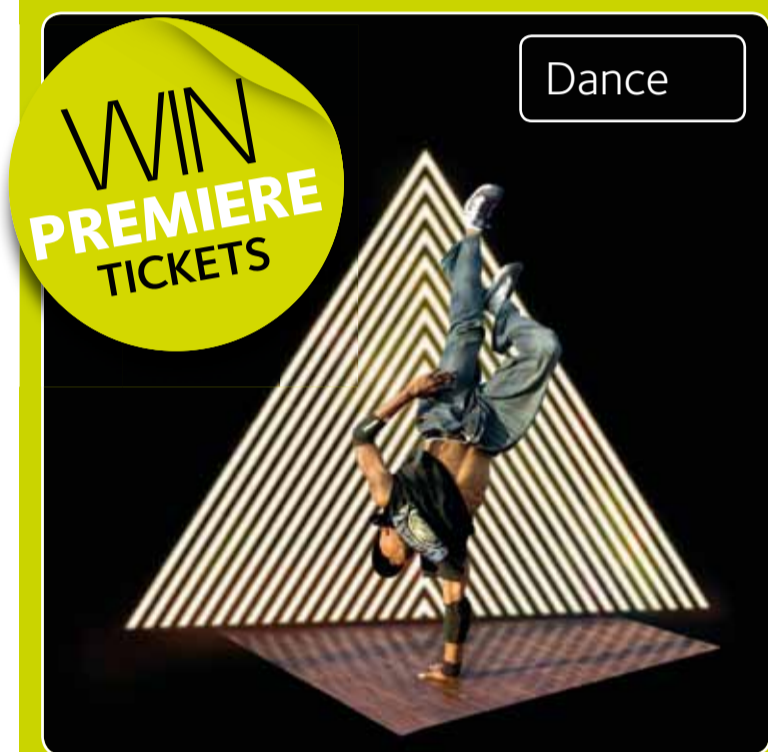
Pupils from St Andrew's CE Primary School and Thornhill Primary School enjoyed a blast from the past when they took part in an archaeological survey of Barnard Park. See their findings in a special exhibition charting the history of Barnard Park.
Local History Centre, Finsbury Library, 245 St John Street, EC1V 4NB
 until 6 March
 020 7527 7988
email.local.history@islington.gov.uk

Blaze is a brand new street dance show, which launches at the Peacock Theatre in London before going on an international tour. Mixing nightclub vibes with West End production values, Blaze is a high-energy theatrical show featuring some of the world's best DJs, B-Boys and street dancers. The Peacock Theatre is based in Holborn and is part of Islington's Sadler's Wells group.

For your chance to win a

pair of tickets to the world premiere of the show on 11 March at 7.30pm, simply email your name and address to islingtonnow@islington.gov.uk or send a postcard to Blaze Competition, Room G11, Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD to reach us by 17 February.

 To find out more about the show, go to www.sadlerswells.com/show/blaze



Museum object of the month

This red cotton swimming costume was left behind in lost property at Hornsey Road Public Baths in about 1900. At this time many people in London lived in crowded tenement buildings without running water, so the public baths, which boasted laundries, individual baths and swimming pools, were quite a luxury. Customers would pay as little as one penny (1d) for a towel and private soak.

Few Londoners knew how to swim before public baths were built, but it became quite a popular sport by 1879. The first swimming costumes were developed in the Victorian era and were extremely modest. They were made from cotton or



knitted wool, which sagged and became very heavy when wet.

 Enjoy more of Islington's history by visiting Islington Museum, 245 St John Street, EC1V 4NB. Open Mondays–Saturdays, 10am–5pm (not Wednesdays).

Dance

We have a range of amazing outdoor dance events taking place in Archway during February and March. There are more details on page 6.

Waking, Walking – performance by London Butoh Asylum
Archway Mall and Archway Tower Thursday
4 February 7pm, 7.30pm and 8pm

Sambando Para Ser Feliz – participation and performance led by Romero de Manguera
Archway Mall
11 February 5.30pm-6.30pm

Do they see what I see? – contemporary African dance performance by Francis Angol
Next to Sainsburys on Holloway Road
18 February 5.30pm and 9.30pm

Disco Archway – mixes by DJs Plankton and Marisco
Archway Mall
18 March 5.30-7pm

There will also be dance classes in Archway Methodist Church from 4-5pm before each Thursday event.

Call Islington Arts Factory on 020 7607 0561 to book.



➔ For more information on all these events, please go to www.archwayinvestigationsandresponses.org/trip, email alight@csm.arts.ac.uk or call 020 7561 3466.



LGBT month

February is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) History Month. Celebrated throughout the UK, this year's theme is Education, and the events that take place will emphasise the importance of education in creating an inclusive society.

As part of the nationwide festival, the council is joining community organisations and local venues to celebrate the rich heritage of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans community in Islington. Our borough has one of the highest populations of LGBT

people in the country, and we want everyone in Islington to join in the celebrations.

The festival opens on 2 February at the Town Hall with an evening event called 'Who am I?'. Members of the Islington LGBT community will share stories and memories and there will also be musical performances, an art exhibition and a chance to chat over wine and nibbles.

Other activities this month include interactive art projects, history talks, quiz nights, book displays and various social events. You

can also check out a range of contemporary and classic LGBT fiction in all our libraries.

Look out for your guide to LGBT History Month in Islington at council offices and local libraries. The full programme of events is also online at www.islington.gov.uk/lgbthistory

➔ For more information about the festival or to request a copy of the guide, please contact Thuvia Jones on thuvia.jones@islington.gov.uk or 020 7527 3054.

Assembly Hall

Check out our cover story to find out how to get free tickets to these fantastic performances. For more information on the events, go to www.islington.gov.uk/assemblyhall

- 5 March 7-8pm – Barefaced Productions presents **Every Now and Then**
- 6 March 3-5.30pm – Cubitt presents **The Spring Ball 2010**
- 8 March 11.30am-12.30pm – **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** – a classical celebration
- 8 March 5.30-6.30pm – **Music First** – a celebration of music making in Islington schools
- 9 March 6.30-7.30pm – **London Sinfonietta**
- 10 March 7.15-8.30pm – **Sadler's Wells** presents a special **one-off dance performance**
- 11 March 7-9pm – **All Change** – a celebration of young people's arts projects
- 12 March 1-3pm – **Tea dance**
- 12 March 7.30-10pm – **Islington Arts Factory**
- 13 March 7-8.30pm – **Islington Community Theatre** presents an inspirational piece of theatre.

