

aroundealing | spring 2025

around
ealing

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Making a difference

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'LIKE AUNTIES OR MUMS'

Helping families p28

LOCAL HEROES

Could you be one? p30



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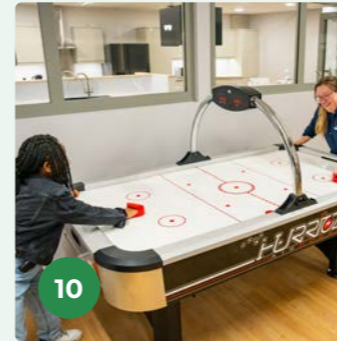
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spring 2025

Editorial

The promise of spring is upon us, that time of year when we can look forward to enjoying lighter evenings and spending more time in the fresh air.

You will find plenty of stories in this edition about people enjoying time outdoors whilst doing good deeds in their communities. It's inspiring to learn just how many there are among us doing amazing things – and how easy it is for you to get involved. Find out more, starting on p16.

You can also read about the re-opening of the Southall Young Adult Centre, which has had a big refurbishment and is proving a huge success with the young people that it serves (p10).

I hope this edition puts a spring in your step, and maybe even offers some inspiration for a photo moment in keeping with our latest Seasons of Ealing photo competition (p20-1).

Verity Adams
Deputy Editor

Contributors: James Bird (photography), Hester Christmas, Richard Nadal, and Alex Sturrock (photography). Front cover image taken at in Pitshanger Park by Simon Hay.

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- facebook.com/EalingLondon

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

CONTACT US
aroudealing@ealing.gov.uk

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Leader's notes

'we will not be stopped by the financial challenges'

Council leader Peter Mason



This time of year is when we, as a council, have to set a budget for the financial year ahead – from 1 April.

We have a legal duty to set a balanced budget and, by being prudent, we have always done so.

This has been achieved without making some of the significant cuts other councils have needed to make.

We have lots to live up to. In last year's residents' survey, 92% of people said they like the area they live in and 87% said the council does a good job. We will do all we can to make sure this sense of pride and identity continues in the year ahead.

We face challenges, as does every local authority across the country, but we are weathering the storms that have crippled some councils in recent years. This includes the cost of living crisis having driven an ever-higher number of residents to ask the council for support – people of all ages.

And London, as we all know, has been in the grip of a housing crisis. 1-in-50 Londoners are currently homeless and living in temporary accommodation. We are doing everything we can in

Ealing to prevent people from becoming homeless. For example, carefully investing £150million in new council-owned temporary accommodation, to provide desperately needed homes for families who are unable to find, or afford, one.

The new government has been able to give us a little bit more money this year to help cover the gap in funding for essential services that it is our duty to provide you with – from social care and schools to rubbish collection and pot hole repairs.

In recent years, we have experienced a very difficult economic climate. However, by continuing to be sensible and prudent with your money, we will not be stopped by the financial challenges from finding new and better ways to deliver for our communities.

Councillor Peter Mason
Leader of the council



New paving in Northolt

The year ahead will be another busy one. Here are some highlights:

- town teams will be set up, and they will start to spend money on community projects of your choice. It follows the Your Voice, Your Town programme of more than a year of meetings, events and asking you what your priorities were in your neighbourhoods
 - this localised spending will be made possible through the new **Community Infrastructure Levy** starting this year. This will make sure money received from developers (as part of building projects across the borough) gets spent on community priorities
 - we will publish our new **community charter** this year, to ensure we have a new approach to engaging with you
 - work on building the new **Gurnell Leisure Centre** should move closer, with initial planning permission having recently been given
 - we will continue working towards a new **regional park** for the borough, following last year's opening of **Pear Tree Park** and the early completion of our pledge to see **fruit tree orchards** in all 7 of our towns
 - we will be seeking **Local Nature Reserve** status for Horsenden Hill and the rewilded Warren Farm,
- meaning long-term protection for these green spaces
 - after opening the new **Library of Things**, we will continue finding new ways to help people to reuse and recycle things
 - we will set up hundreds more **apprenticeships**, and help even more local employers become **London Living Wage** accredited
 - we will help improve community safety through our **alleyway gating** scheme, better **street lighting** (323 new LED lamps were installed last year, with 1,500 more to come) and the new **Safer Ealing** website (saferealing.co.uk)
 - and, we will strive to give our children a **fair start** in life by making sure the right early help services are available in the right place; and by continuing to support our fantastic local schools – 98% of which are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted – by providing more facilities for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.



New cycle lane

Our record **£28million transport investment** programme will continue:

- £6.25million will be spent on improving **roads and pavements** – including 8km of road resurfaced in the spring, and 7.5km of repaving
- this follows the work done in 2024, when 3,208 **pot holes** were repaired; and almost 4.5km of new or improved **cycle ways and pavement** was added
- this year, the **Get Southall Moving** programme will bring new, wider pavements, new cycle routes, safer crossing points and the removal of litter and overgrown vegetation
- cycling** will get a big push in 2025, with 2 new cycle paths and other improvements along Boston Road in Hanwell and Park Royal in Acton
- this follows the work of 2024, which included 95 new **parking bays** for e-bikes and e-scooters being added across Greenford, Northolt and Southall and 25 new **bike hangars** boroughwide

CREATING GOOD JOBS

TACKLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS

FIGHTING INEQUALITY

More school heroes...

You may remember our gallery of unsung heroes, nominated by you – our readers – for their outstanding contributions to schools in the borough from our Schools Special magazine last year?

And, because of popular demand, we are shining a light on more of these nominees in recognition of the incredible work they do – and to say thank you. You can still nominate by emailing aroundealing@ealing.gov.uk – so keep an eye on future editions of this magazine to see more heroes.



Nayab Bhati, a teacher at **Brentside High School, Hanwell**, was nominated for the positive impact she has on young people's lives.

The nomination read: "Miss Bhati changes lives wherever she goes. She is a dedicated, resourceful and insanely knowledgeable teacher who goes above and beyond to inspire, encourage, and support her students.

"Students frequently remark on how influential she has been in their emotional and educational lives.

"Her ability to connect with young people and create a safe space is truly remarkable. It goes without saying that her impact reaches far beyond the curriculum; she makes every student feel like they matter, and that's what makes her a hero in the truest sense."

Sally Stafford, works as a welfare officer at **Ravenor Primary School, Greenford**. She was nominated by a parent for her 'patience, kindness and unwavering support.'

They said: "Sally is a dedicated and compassionate member of the school staff who has made a profound impact on my child's life. She has gone above and beyond in building a strong, supportive relationship.

"Sally consistently took the time to understand my son's unique needs, always looking out for his well-being and creating an environment where he could thrive academically and emotionally.

"Her dedication, empathy, and care set her apart, and we are so grateful for everything she does."



Do you want to work in a local school?

School staff are proud to teach in a borough with an award-winning learning partnership and its vision of 'No learner left behind; no school left behind', which means working together to improve the life chances of all children and young people. Find out more online at jobs.ealing.gov.uk/working-for-schools or email ELP@ealing.gov.uk



Mandeesh Chana, learning support assistant at **Lady Margaret Primary School, Southall** was nominated by a colleague.

Her nomination read: "She throws herself into her job role with incredible enthusiasm despite challenging circumstances working with children with a wide range of high needs, including autism and attachment disorder.

"She runs a nurture type group in the afternoons, allowing children with special needs to explore sensory resources, meaning they are coming into school happily and presenting with significantly less stressful behaviours in class. Her after-school club is a happy environment where children feel very safe and well looked after.

"She also took on the role of parent ambassador and is an incredible link for the school to our parent body, of whom there are many vulnerable and isolated mums in particular who rely heavily on the support she gives them."

Bilquis Bachoo, a teaching assistant at **Derwentwater Primary School in Acton**, was nominated by a parent for her caring nature.

They wrote: "She brightens the day of parents and children alike. She nurtures every child in the most positive and encouraging way, helping all children, regardless of their background, or their feelings about going to school, to settle into school life.

"She understands each child's particular needs and temperament, and remembers every little thing that will make a child feel safe and happy while away from their parents.

"My partner and I, and numerous other parents, feel incredibly lucky to have such a wonderful person guiding our daughter in her first year of school."



PROUD
TO
TEACH
EALING SCHOOLS



Ealing needs foster carers

Ealing needs foster carers to provide loving homes for the children we care for.

We're excited to announce some fantastic new benefits to support our foster carers.

Foster carers with Ealing Council will receive:

- full council tax exemption for Ealing residents and reimbursement for out of borough carers
- highly competitive fees and allowances - recent payment uplift of 18.5 %
- free parking in resident-controlled parking zones (CPZs) borough-wide
- free garden waste collection
- dedicated therapeutic support from our clinical psychologists
- discounts at council leisure centres
- excellent support including dedicated out of hours support, peer support and Mockingbird scheme
- bespoke training and other incentives



Contact us

Phone: 020 8753 1075

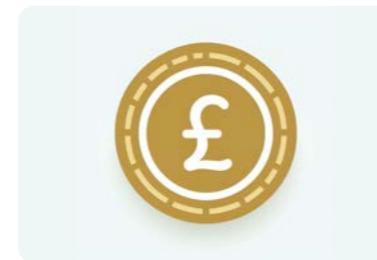
Make an enquiry: ealingfostering.co.uk

(*Fee uplift from Jan 2025, Council Tax exemption for band 2 carers and above whilst child is in placement, parking and garden waste incentives from April 2025, for band 1 carers and above)



What's your view of 'early help' services?

You can give your views during a 12-week consultation on Ealing Council's 'early help services' for children, young people and families. The council is carrying out a review, looking at ways to make services more accessible, flexible and tailored to families' needs. It will also look at how children's centres are organised and ways to return key centres into vibrant hubs. The consultation can be found at www.ealing.gov.uk/consultations until 27 April.



Council tax for the year ahead

Continuing financial pressures to councils are expected to lead to an increase in council tax. As Around Ealing magazine went to press, the decision was due to be taken at a meeting of the full council on 4 March, as part of the budget for the 2025/26 financial year. It was anticipated council tax would rise by 2.99% for the year ahead. In addition, it was expected that the 'social care precept' would be added to bills (by councils across the country) to help pay for social care in the area, and this would account for a further 2% rise on council tax. Go to aroundealing.com/news for more up-to-date details.



Hootie to get Hanwell rocking

The Hanwell Hootie free music festival is back for the 12th time on Saturday 10 May. Top-notch talent will be playing in pubs and venues stretching right across the town and there will even be a busking boat on the canal. Since it was first held in 2013 by local people, backed by international giant Marshall Amplification, the Hootie has showcased hundreds of bands from across the UK, supported local musicians and also brought back some famous 'oldies'. Visit aroundealing.com/news/hootie-2025 for more.



The Your Voice, Your Town votes are in

Residents across the borough's 7 town centres have had their say on their top Your Voice, Your Town priorities for change. They were invited to vote for their top priority from a selection including: clean and pleasant, feeling safe, green spaces and more community facilities. Residents and community groups, supported by the council, will lead the way on turning the priorities into reality this year using a total of £480,000 of council funding. Go to: www.ealing.gov.uk/your-voice-your-town

‘Where young people can thrive’

Scores of young people have been pouring back through the doors of Southall Young Adult Centre, since it recently reopened.

Following an extensive refurbishment, the centre, in Park View Road, welcomed its regulars and new members back to a whole new look, featuring an indoor and outdoor gym, a music room, sports court, gaming area and a large kitchen to host group cooking sessions.

There is also new disabled access, as well as a wide choice of activities, including air hockey, pool, badminton, table tennis and more.

Some of the young people who use the centre were heavily involved in its new design and even had a say in colour schemes, equipment and flooring.

Ealing Council invested more than £2million in renovating the building, which had been closed since April 2023. Young people had been using a temporary service at Dormers Hub in Southall while they waited for the works to be completed.

The official opening event took place at the end of January and sessions resumed in the centre at the start of February.



Lumiere playing pool

Bright and inviting

Laura Frost, 25, has been going to the YAC for the last 15 years. She said: “It is so much better here now, it’s much brighter and more inviting, and so nice to have all this new equipment.”

Rubi, 12, added: “I can’t wait to use the new kitchen and do some cooking and I’m glad that the new fenced outdoor sports area means we won’t be losing any more balls in the bushes.”

‘Where young people can thrive’

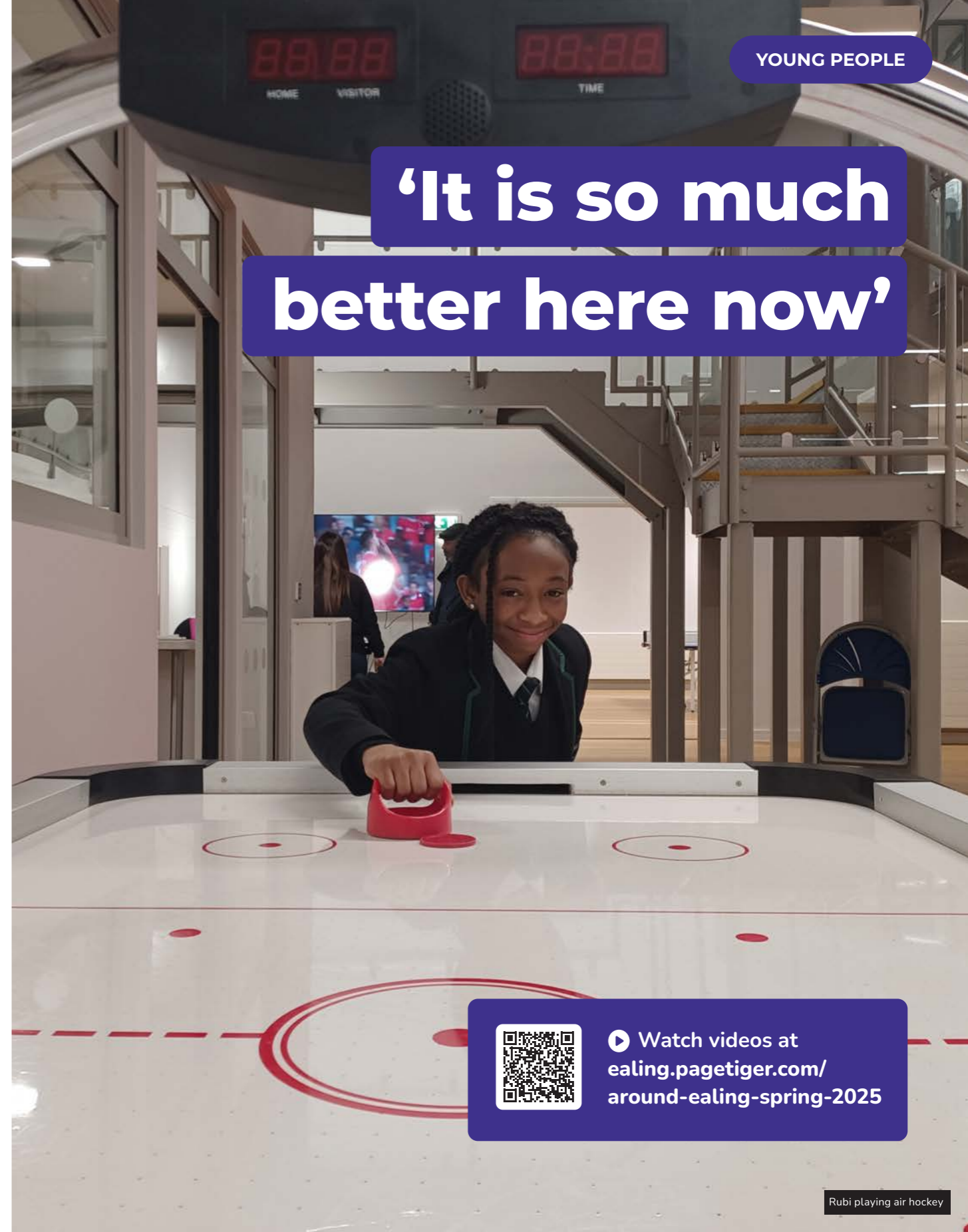
Council leader Peter Mason said: “This is a fantastic community

resource and a place where young people can grow, learn new skills and thrive for years to come. As a council, we responded to their needs and how best we could support them, encourage their development and see communities grow.”

Councillor Josh Blacker, the council’s cabinet member for a fairer start, added: “The positive reactions and high energy we saw at the opening event in January is a good indication that we have achieved something really good here.”

For more information about the YAC, go to: youngealing.co.uk or call 020 8825 8666

‘It is so much better here now’



Rubi playing air hockey



▶ Watch videos at ealing.pagetiger.com/around-ealing-spring-2025

GET VACCINATED. GET WINTER STRONG.



Flu and COVID-19 can be serious.

People most at risk of serious illness are invited to get a free **COVID-19 and/or flu vaccine** to protect against these viruses over the colder months.

Those over 75 and people more than 28 weeks pregnant can also have their **RSV vaccine** this winter.

To check your eligibility, visit:
nwlondonicb.nhs.uk/winter



LEISURE

Artist's impression of the new centre

'A major step forward'

Plans to redevelop the Gurnell Leisure Centre site have been approved by Ealing Council's planning committee.

The committee agreed on the plans in January, including a 50-metre swimming pool, which would make it one of only 3 Olympic-sized indoor pools in London, with one of them in Northolt. Plans also include a new gym, climbing wall, much-needed affordable housing and more.

This marks a big step forward in the council's Gurnell masterplan, which reflects the thoughts and comments made during a 2-year consultation that started in 2022, asking residents what they would like to see in the new leisure centre and around the site.

As a result of this, the site would

offer a new wet area, including a waterpark, slides, and lazy river, as well as exercise studios, a soft play area and café. The plans also include a new skate park, cycle track, and more.

Outline planning permission was also given for around 300 homes by the committee, with around a third of them being classed as affordable. The planning committee's decision is now being reviewed by the Greater London Authority (GLA), before planning consent can be granted. A decision was due to be made as Around Ealing went to print.

'The face of leisure'

Council leader Peter Mason said: "The Gurnell Leisure Centre was not just a hub for health and fitness – it was the face of leisure for multiple generations of the community.

"With the new plans being approved, we're pleased that we've taken a major step forward in providing a new venue that can continue the Gurnell Leisure Centre's legacy on an even larger scale."

'Opportunities for the community'

Councillor Blerina Hashani, the council's cabinet member for thriving communities said: "While the new leisure centre will provide facilities for residents to prioritise their health and engage in sports, the exciting proposal offers a boost to the local economy and will supply new employment opportunities to the community."

For more, visit aroundealing.com/news

'we focus on...creating spaces where people feel they belong'



Watch videos at ealing.pagetiger.com/around-ealing-spring-2025

Sarah Sulemanji, founder of Our Moving Stories

Transformed space 'helps people connect'

On the outskirts of Southall, a transformation is taking shape on the Havelock estate, with community-focused organisations turning derelict spaces into vibrant places for residents to connect with one another.

The Open Havelock project is being co-ordinated by Peabody housing association in partnership with Ealing Council, City Hall, and the Canal and River Trust, with significant input from the local community.

We talked to Our Moving Stories (OMS), a non-profit community interest company and the first business to open its doors to the community through the project. OMS brings residents together through dance, movement, and craft activities, aiming to reduce isolation, promote creativity, and support wellbeing among the Havelock community.

Bringing people together

OMS founder, Sarah Sulemanji, a local dance artist and lecturer with a background in the arts, works to share the transformative power of creative arts with as many people as possible – starting with her own community.

"It's well researched that the arts really help people connect with others and yourself, and boost social and personal well-being," Sarah explained.

OMS hosts a regular rotation of activities for the estate's residents, including Move and Make – a session aimed at parents and carers, and their babies and children up to 5-year-olds. It offers movement and art activities that bring families together.

Sarah continued: "We focus on activities that welcome everyone – parents, grandparents, and even extended family – creating spaces where people feel they belong."

Overcoming barriers

Jenni, a participant-turned-volunteer, describes the impact OMS has had on her life: "This is the only time in the week that I properly get to talk to other adults. Doing something creative while socialising makes it feel less socially awkward and more engaging."

Sarah's approach puts residents at the heart of the process. "You can't tell people what they need; you have to listen and then deliver," she said.

For instance, women-only sessions were introduced because of feedback from residents, and plans are underway to launch a

'Move and Make Senior' session for older people. This approach not only strengthens community ties but also offers residents the opportunity to shape how the space is used.

Sarah said: "I operate a service to the local community, not the other way around. I listen to people first and assess what the need is and then gear activities to that need."

OMS programmes emphasise accessibility, offering all activities free of charge to overcome financial barriers. Sarah added: "There are already so many barriers to access here, it's our responsibility to remove cost as one of them."

'Come together and connect'

Councillor Kamaljit Nagpal, the council's cabinet member for decent living incomes, said: "By transforming underused spaces into places where residents can come together and connect, Open Havelock is introducing a new lease of life into the area."

"If you have an idea for a community project or business, there are more spaces available at the Open Havelock Community Centre."

Want to hire a space at Open Havelock? Email junior.cheeseman@peabody.org.uk



Western Road Urban Garden

Getting out there

If you are looking for a chance to volunteer, or just to get outdoors and meet new people, then there are lots of opportunities to get involved. Here are some of the groups we met recently.

Clean Up the River Brent (CURB) is working to remove litter from the River Brent to improve its habitat and biodiversity.

Since the group was set up by residents in 2021, CURB has removed more than 100 tonnes of rubbish from the River Brent with the help of volunteers and groups like LAGER Can. It has been an ongoing job to help a key section of the 18-mile-long river's environment, which is home to kingfishers, herons, ducks and invertebrates (including lots of insect species).

Founder Ben Morris said: "We're always looking for more volunteers to join us. It's great to be with a group of people in the outdoors – doing something good, making the world a bit better."

The group is supported by Ealing Council's park rangers. If you'd like to get involved, you can find CURB on Facebook or go to [brentriverpark.org](https://www.brentriverpark.org)

'Great to be outdoors'

A group of volunteers in Ealing tend to an **historic walled garden** in Walpole Park and are seeking new recruits to join their efforts.

Twice a week, between 10am and midday on Wednesdays and Thursdays, volunteers meet to maintain the kitchen garden that once served Pitzhanger Manor, performing tasks such as mulching, sowing, weeding, watering, and



Walled garden volunteers

harvesting crops.

Volunteer Ali Thurm said: "Volunteering is a great way to meet people. It's great to be outdoors with others, and good for your mental and physical health."

The team, which grows lots of fruit and vegetables, is supported by a council park ranger and put in more than 1,000 hours of work last year.

Growing community roots

A previously derelict piece of land in

Southall is being transformed into a thriving community garden.

The Western Road Urban Garden project aims to serve the community by providing food growing and educational opportunities, and a chance to socialise outdoors. It was planned to use its first harvest of food to support food banks and local charities.

The transformation has been made possible through the efforts of Southall Community Alliance (SCA), various other local groups, the council and volunteers.

Janpal Basran, director of SCA, said: "Something like this doesn't happen without the magic of volunteers."



Amanda Rutkowski

A meadow with more

The **Katherine Buchan Meadow** in Hanwell has also been transformed by residents. It is now an award-winning community haven for wildlife and local people who live around it.

The meadow has become a popular spot for people of all ages and is used by the neighbouring primary school. It has been recognised with 'green flags' from Keep Britain Tidy and a gold award from London in Bloom. It also provides a habitat for wildlife such as stag beetles, birds, squirrels, and foxes.

But it needs regular maintenance and the team behind it is always looking out for volunteers.

To get involved, email katherinebuchanmeadowtrust@outlook.com

Amanda Rutkowski was one of those who started the project. She said: "More than the awards, the biggest accolade is that it is used by the local school and it is used by all ages, young and old, and it is now a genuine community space."



▶ Watch videos on all of these projects at [ealing.pagetiger.com/around-ealing-spring-2025](https://www.ealing.pagetiger.com/around-ealing-spring-2025)



Clean Up the River Brent



LAGER Can volunteers

Make a difference

The Great British Spring Clean is the nation's biggest mass-action environmental campaign, and there's lots you can do to take part locally.

You can invest as much or as little time as you want when the Great British Spring Clean and Great Big School Clean return, from 21 March-6 April. It really is the taking part that counts.

By joining forces with other litter heroes, including the council's street sweepers and cleaners and community volunteer groups like Litter Action Group for Ealing Residents, better known as LAGER Can, you can help to make an immediate difference to your neighbourhood.

Last year, LAGER Can members donated more than 15,600 volunteer-hours (equivalent to the

work of 9 full-time employees) and removed at least 29,000 bags' worth of rubbish and large items from the borough's open spaces.

Members can work on their own, or as part of organised LAGER Can events, and in local neighbourhood groups working independently but with the support of LAGER Can.

'We can make a huge difference'

For last year's Great British Spring Clean, the group's members removed the rubbish from all 11.5 miles of the Grand Union towpath within the borough. The year before, they cleared litter from every street in Greenford – and in Northolt and Southall the years before that.

This year, LAGER Can is aiming to clean all 146 of the council's parks and open spaces.

Cathy Swift, who runs the group, said: "It's not about having to pick up 20 or 40 bags of rubbish, it's

about making a commitment to take part. Whether it's clearing up litter in the street outside your house or picking up rubbish you see while you're out walking the dog – our combined efforts can make a huge difference."

Councillor Paul Driscoll, the council's cabinet member for climate action, added: "We are so fortunate in the borough to have such a strong sense of community, where residents want to do something good for the environment and make our towns a more pleasant place for everyone. I for one will be taking part in some of this year's activities. Who's joining me?"

For more information or to become a LAGER Can member, email lagercan2020@gmail.com, or join its Facebook group.

For more information about the Great British Spring Clean, go to www.keepbritaintidy.org



Deborah in training

A marathon effort

Hanwell resident and LAGER Can member Deborah Dickey is running the London Marathon on 27 April to raise funds for the group.

She said: "LAGER Can is an incredibly positive force for local good and deserves all our support. As always with community groups like this, a little goes a long way, so please donate any amount you can spare."

Read more and watch video at ealing.pagetiger.com/around-ealing-spring-2025 or visit Deborah's Just Giving page: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/deborah-dickey-2

Want to arrange your own?

If you want to arrange your own community litter-picking event, any time of year, the council can give you equipment to help you do this. You can also arrange for the bags to be collected when you have finished. Find out more on the 'street cleaning' page on the council's website www.ealing.gov.uk



Litter picking along the canal



Simon Hay - My partner and pooch in Pitshanger Park

Seasonal snaps

Picture house

This is the Seasons of Ealing winter photo competition winner voted for by thousands of you, our readers. Why not enter the spring contest to see if you could be our next winner?

Once again, we received more than 100 entries to the winter competition, that our judges whittled down to a shortlist of 12 – slightly longer than our usual list of 10 because the standard was so high. Thousands of you then voted for your winner online, and it was a close call between the most popular pictures.

The wintry wonders were taken all across the borough – from landmarks to wildlife, and pets to days out.

And the winners were...

It was not an easy task trimming the vast number of entries down into a shortlist of 12 photos. These were then put to a public vote to choose the winner, during January.

The winner was Simon Hay, of Ealing, and his picture of ‘my partner and pooch in Pitshanger Park’.

As well as the photo appearing here and on Around Ealing website, he will receive the top prize of 4 tickets to watch a film at Ealing Picturehouse cinema - the proud sponsor of the competition.

In second place was Marina Zia-Stripp, of Hanwell, and her photo of wintry trees at Horsenden Hill.

And, in third place was Jennifer Plummer, of Ealing, with a photo of a frosty sunrise in Gunnersbury Park.

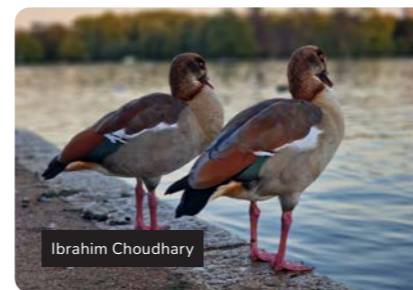
Well done to everyone who was shortlisted and thank you so much to everyone who took part.

Could you be a spring winner?

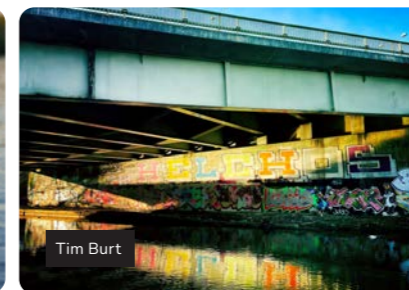
The spring 2025 Seasons of Ealing competition is now open and will close on Sunday 13 April 2025 at 11.59pm. At that point, a shortlist will be selected and the winner will again be chosen by the public and published in Around Ealing magazine. They will also win cinema tickets. Our aim is to run the competition every season, giving you multiple opportunities to enter throughout the year.

The idea is for you to enter your own snaps of anything that has a springtime feel to it. It could be taken in your local park, back garden or even in your street; it’s up to you. The key is that it has to have been taken in the borough – and must have been taken by you.

Runners-up and other shortlisted entries



Ibrahim Choudhary



Tim Burt



Szymon Golebiewsk

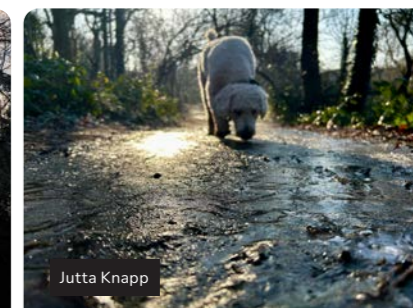


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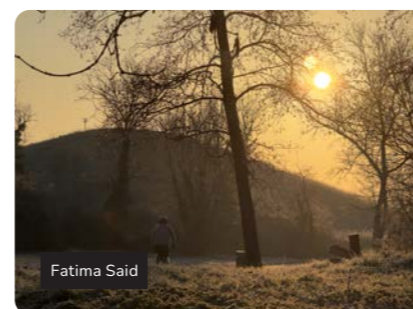
Marina Zia-Stripp



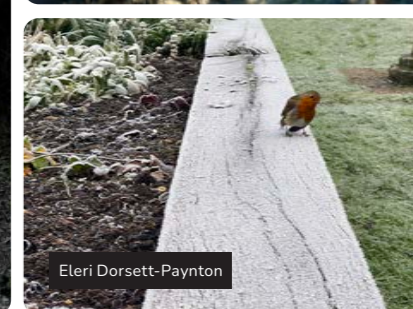
André Sharma



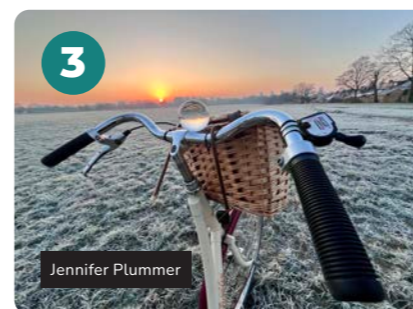
Jutta Knapp



Fatima Said

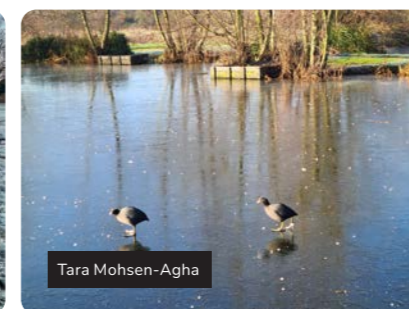


Eleri Dorsett-Paynton

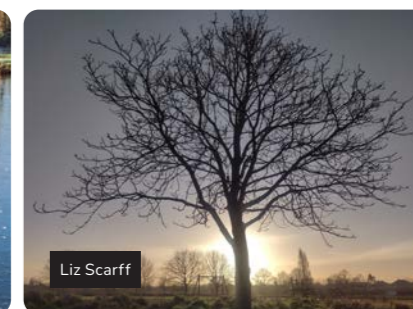


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Jennifer Plummer



Tara Mohsen-Agha



Liz Scarff



For full details of how to enter (and the rules), visit aroundealing.com/news/spring-ealing-seasons



Picture credit: Liz Scarff

Growing for gold

You don't need a garden to boost the borough's biodiversity and be in with chance of earning a cash prize – everyone can take part.

Building on last year's successful competition to find the most biodiverse front gardens, balconies and outdoor spaces in the borough, entries are now being accepted for the Ealing Biodiversity Awards for Gardens and Green Spaces 2025.

The competition is being run by Cultivating Ealing, in partnership with Ealing Council, and ActForEaling, a local organisation created by residents to promote climate and nature positive activity in the borough. Entry to the competition is free, it's open to all residents and there are cash prizes for the winners.

The borough has around 75,000 front gardens but a great many of these spaces are covered in hard surfaces. There are also hundreds

of community spaces, thousands of balconies and even more windowsills. Even the tiniest of outdoor spaces can contribute to the borough's biodiversity, so why not upcycle an old container and get planting?

You could invite neighbours to join you to create a community wildlife garden, whether that's across a group of balconies in a block of flats or an abandoned patch of soil.

By incorporating more pots, bug hotels, bird baths and plant varieties in your front garden or balcony you can create a home for birds and wildlife, transforming your doorstep or outside space into an oasis of biodiversity and beauty.

Celebrating creativity and commitment

Councillor Paul Driscoll, the council's cabinet member for climate action, said: "This competition highlights the incredible power of community action in making our borough cleaner, healthier and more beautiful. By creating biodiverse

spaces, we can improve the local environment and enhance our health and wellbeing.

"It is also an opportunity to celebrate creativity and commitment. We can't wait to see the innovative ways our residents transform their gardens and balconies into thriving hubs of biodiversity."

How to enter

There are 5 entry categories:

- front gardens
- micro gardens and balconies (including terraces, narrow boats)
- street/community space
- schools
- allotments – sites and plots

Everyone is welcome to take part, whether you are a long-established gardener or are just starting out.

Entries close at 11:59pm on 30 June, but schools must enter by 23 May and allotments by 9 June.



What is biodiversity?



Biodiversity is the variety of animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms, like bacteria, that make up our natural world. All work together to maintain balance and support life.



Harvey Gallagher

Exercise your good will

Some people's new year's resolution may have been a pledge to do more good deeds in 2025; for others, it might have been promising themselves to keep fit. Well, guess what? You can do both.

GoodGym is a registered charity that describes itself as 'a community of people who get fit by doing good'. Its members run, walk or cycle to locations to lend a hand to community groups by volunteering, or to go and do practical tasks for isolated older people who need help – like weeding their garden or picking up shopping.

The Ealing team started in 2016 with a series of tasks that included painting sheltered housing, moving steelpan drums at a parish church and creating artwork in Hanwell

Community Centre. The good deeds haven't stopped since – especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when they were particularly prominent and part of the Ealing Together alliance formed by the council.

'A big surprise'

Harvey Gallagher has been a member of Ealing GoodGym for 6 years. He said: "What I found amazing is that I went into volunteering to help others but, actually, I probably got more out of it than them. It was a big surprise to me. I enjoyed it and felt better for having helped.

"The social element is massive. In a big city like London, you make your life here but it can sometimes be socially isolating, and GoodGym provides a natural network of people where it's easy to chat and make friends."

'We're very friendly'

You can easily join-up, donate – or even request help – by visiting the GoodGym website www.goodgym.org

"You don't need to worry about not being fit enough," said Harvey. "You choose if you walk, cycle or run, or a mixture. We run taster sessions, where we walk and chat and help someone and go for a coffee. And there are local groups and activities in different parts of the borough, so you choose the things you do. We're very friendly."



Watch videos at ealing.com

pagetiger.com/around-ealing-spring-2025

Ambassadors for health

This month, the borough's ultra marathon and trail run is back – taking runners and walkers on an adventure through the borough's scenic parks and green spaces.

The event is run by We Run Ealing, the charity arm of the award-winning Ealing Half Marathon. It was set up to support inclusive, community-focused running activities.

This community spirit is also to be found in We Run Ealing's ambassadors scheme, which is a group of local people passionate about encouraging people in their area to get physically active and also champion the chance to try, or return to, running.

'Good for everyone'

Tom Kerry, chair of We Run Ealing, said: "We know not everyone loves running, so we are trying to create a range of activities that appeal in different ways to help people get active on their own terms.

"We're not about how far or how fast people can run, but giving people good experiences, connecting communities and making running fun and enjoyable.

"We live in a lovely part of London. It's all on your doorstep; and getting out there is good for everyone; for better health, for mental health. And there is always a great atmosphere at our We Run Ealing activities."

The charity is still looking for more volunteers to become ambassadors. You can find details about this, and more, at www.werunealing.com

'Social event outdoors'

The first ever Queen of the Suburbs ultra event took place last year and, on 22 March, its new Trail 25k and Ultra 50k routes will finish in

Dickens Yard in central Ealing.

Both routes take in several local landmarks and beauty spots including the River Brent, Grand Union Canal and Horsenden Hill. You can find out more at www.queenofthesuburbultra.com

Tom said: "The aim of the event is to encourage people to get active and enjoy the outdoors, as much as anything else. The event is not just a race; it's a celebration of endurance, community, and the vibrant spirit of Ealing. It's a social event outdoors. Come along and cheer the runners and enjoy the market at Dickens Yard, too."



We Run Ealing ambassadors



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January 2024



Court action for protester

A protester from Wales has been ordered to pay more than £7,500 after breaching a designated safe zone outside a reproductive health clinic in Ealing. Read more: aroundealing.com/news/protester-breaches-safe-zone
Councillor Jasbir Anand, the council's cabinet member for tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, said: "I hope this result sends a clear message; that any breaches will be taken seriously."



Big plans for school's 'Tiny Forest'

Hundreds of trees have been planted by children as part of a project to create a pocket of woodland in a primary school's grounds. Staff and pupils at St Gregory's Primary School in Woodfield Road, Ealing, all helped plant sweet chestnut, alder and hazel tree saplings at a special 'Tiny Forest' planting ceremony. Read more: aroundealing.com/news/school-tiny-forest



More homes on the way

Residents are set to benefit from more affordable homes in Southall, thanks to a £157million regeneration project at Merrick Place. The project will include 42 genuinely affordable homes, to let at London Affordable Rent, which is priced to meet the needs of local people on lower incomes. A further 132 homes will be available as shared ownership. Councillor Shital Manro, the council's cabinet member for good growth and new homes, said: "These new homes will help address the chronic shortage of genuinely affordable housing in our borough, offering local families much-needed security, stability, and the foundation for a better quality of life." Read more: aroundealing.com/news/merrick-place-homes



Ant and Dec, and gingerbread

So, recently, we've had an Oscar winner hanging around, Clare Balding feeling healthy, Ant and Dec knocking around and the streets of Ealing turned into gingerbread. What on Earth do these all have in common? Well, it's the council's West London Film Office, which helps TV and movie types get creative in every corner of our borough. Their Reel Life blog is back to tell you more about all of these exciting goings on and more – including Martin Freeman and a new detective series. Read Reel Life at aroundealing.com/reel-life/gingerbread-streets



Cheryl at Maytree Court

Community champions

We have lots of hidden heroes in our communities but many of them fly under our radar, so, we have unmasked a few. Are you a secret superhero, too?

Sarah Lubanga is part of the council's Community Champions programme, which currently consists of almost 90 volunteers who live or work in the borough.

The champions have teamed up with the council and its partner organisations to help bring individuals and local groups together. The aim is to improve the long-term health and wellbeing of people in their communities by giving them places to go for support and, importantly, to also make new social connections.

Sarah said: "I want to do something good for my community and the champions programme has given me so many tools, skills and information that I can share with groups I have already built a strong connection with."

She is a founder member of Hanwell2Hanwell, a charity that helps residents access health services and provide food to those in need. Sarah is also heavily involved with the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Hanwell, and the work it does locally. She recently organised a 'community freebies day' at the church, putting together a day of talks on cancer prevention and detection, health checks, and more, to support her community in accessing crucial local support.

She said: "Being a community

champion has allowed me to help members of my community groups to find resources they didn't know were available."

Champions meet regularly and are given training opportunities to gain skills, engage with council consultations and team up to contribute and support each other's projects, helping to unite communities.

Sarah added: "It's a great way to make connections and share information."

For more information, go to www.ealing.gov.uk/communitychampions

Sowing joy

"Volunteering, especially gardening, helped me at a really bad time, and now I carry on because I enjoy it," said Northolt resident Cheryl – who transformed an unexpected redundancy into an opportunity to contribute to her community.

Cheryl discovered the power of gardening during the COVID-19 pandemic, which soon became a way to connect with others and bring positivity to her neighbourhood.

Living in a flat without a garden, Cheryl's journey into volunteering started with helping members of her family in their gardens, before helping the caretaker in her own building.

This led to her gardening as a volunteer at Maytree Court, a neighbouring sheltered accommodation block of flats for older people.

Cheryl's creative touch has transformed the communal garden at Maytree Court, turning bare patches into vibrant flower beds to brighten the days of residents – many of whom are in their 90s and unable to garden themselves.

Councillor Louise Brett, the council's deputy leader and cabinet member for safe and genuinely affordable homes, said: "By taking action and ownership, residents like Cheryl go to show how individual efforts can seed a positive change within a community and build a stronger, more vibrant neighbourhood."

Read more at ealing.pagetiger.com/around-ealing-spring-2025



Cheryl at Maytree Court

GET INVOLVED



Recycling champion Pauline

Trash to treasure

Did you know there are lots of ways you can recycle items that often end up in your black bins?

Items that can't go in your blue recycling bins like crisp tubes, bread wrappers and some tea and coffee packaging, can be recycled through collection points at supermarkets and Terracycle drop-off points.

To find your nearest one, go to www.terracycle.com. Or, you could do what Hanwell resident Pauline Britton decided to do.

Money to be made

Some years ago, Pauline discovered a scheme that pays for waste. She first noticed she could earn a free mug in exchange for her used coffee packaging. But Pauline then

realised if you sign up to the scheme you can send off these items, which can't go in your household recycling, and earn points that turn into cash for a charity.

Pauline said: "I decided to do this on behalf of my local church and introduced a storage box there with a board to show what I collect."

"There are people in the area, not those that just use the church, that have started using the box too, so it's become very well-used. I take it all home, sort it and send it off."

Over time, Pauline has rescued more than 6 tons of waste that would have ended up in black bins, and that has been turned into more than £5,600 for St Thomas's, in Boston Road, Hanwell. The money has gone towards paying for essential repairs, maintenance and

other projects there.

Waste less

Pauline is also a big advocate of reuse and recycle at home. She added: "As far as possible, I waste nothing. Rather than buy a notebook, I'll use scrap paper. I don't throw food away, I'll freeze leftover veg and use it later in the week in a fajita or casserole – there's lots of little things we can all do to reduce waste."

For more tips and information about recycling, visit ealing.gov.uk/recycling

Remember to book a slot if you are planning to visit the Greenford reuse and recycling centre, via the council's website.

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Open Day

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Gunnersbury Park



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BETTER



Easter fun for young people

The spring holiday activity and food programme (HAF) is a great way for eligible children and young people to get involved in activities, socialise and meet new friends during the Easter break. They can learn about nutrition, and spark some new interests and hobbies, from archery, arts and crafts, dance and drama, swimming, to football and outdoor sports activities.

Go to: www.EalingHAF.org.uk



Caring couple handed award

A couple who have cared for a group of siblings for more than 7 years were handed Ealing Council's Foster Carer of the Year Award recently. The eldest of the 4 children who Zeineb Sebri and Mukhtar Hassan care for was among those who nominated the couple, saying: "They made us feel safe and protected when we were at our most vulnerable."

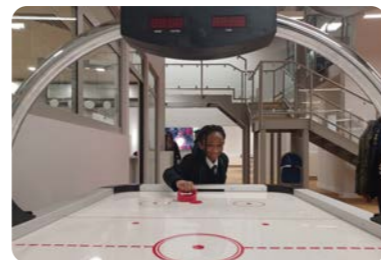
Read more at aroundealing.com/news



Garden waste collections

Garden waste collections have started up again following a pause over the winter months. Current subscriptions will run out on 31 March 2025 and will not automatically renew. So, if you're thinking about doing some spring cleaning in your garden, you'll want to sign up again to the council's garden waste collection service by 1 April.

Go to: www.ealing.gov.uk/gardenwaste



PM finds out how AI helps council service

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer met with staff members from Ealing Council recently to talk about how its adult services team is using artificial intelligence (AI) to radically reduce paperwork and help provide better social care. Feedback from carers and staff has been overwhelmingly positive. This view was supported by a report from the Local Government Association. Councillor Polly Knewstub, the council's cabinet member for healthy equal lives, said: "We are extremely proud of the work."

Go to: aroundealing.com/news/prime-minister-council-ai

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HANGER HILL	 Fabio Conti Conservative 0781 717 4279 ContiFa@ealing.gov.uk	 Athena Zissimos Liberal Democrat 0208 825 6690 ZissimosA@ealing.gov.uk	 Jonathan Oxley Liberal Democrat 0208 825 8198 JOxley001@ealing.gov.uk
EALING BROADWAY	 Julian Gallant Conservative 0780 222 1393 GallantJu@ealing.gov.uk Leader of second opposition	 Seema Kumar Conservative 0796 131 7110 KumarSee@ealing.gov.uk	 Anthony Young Conservative 0791 700 7969 YoungAn@ealing.gov.uk
WALPOLE	 Grace Quansah Labour 0736 181 2763 QuansahG@ealing.gov.uk	 Binda Rai Labour 0752 238 8741 RaiB@ealing.gov.uk	 Gareth Shaw Labour 0778 991 4379 ShawG@ealing.gov.uk
EALING COMMON	 Praveen Anand Labour 0203 612 3587 AnandP@ealing.gov.uk	 Jon Ball Liberal Democrat 0208 810 1078 BallJ@ealing.gov.uk	 Connie Hersch Liberal Democrat 020 8825 7188 HerschC@ealing.gov.uk
NORTHFIELD	 Paul Driscoll Labour 0784 932 8223 DriscollP@ealing.gov.uk Cabinet: Climate action	 Ian Kingston Labour 0797 038 5225 KingstonI@ealing.gov.uk	 Kim Nagpal Labour NagpalK@ealing.gov.uk
LADY MARGARET	 Karam Mohan Labour 0794 752 2084 MohanKa@ealing.gov.uk	 Swaran Padda Labour 0795 080 6210 PaddaS@ealing.gov.uk	 Kamaldeep Sahota Labour 0741 280 8803 SahotaK@ealing.gov.uk
DORMERS WELLS	 Kanwal Kaur Bains Labour 0793 015 8585 BainsKa@ealing.gov.uk	 Ranjit Dheer Labour 0789 422 8032 DheerR@ealing.gov.uk	 Mohinder Kaur Midha Labour 0795 084 2599 MidhaM@ealing.gov.uk
SOUTHALL BROADWAY	 Sarfraz Khan Labour 0740 466 5858 KhanSar@ealing.gov.uk	 Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal Labour NagpalKK@ealing.gov.uk Cabinet: Decent living incomes	
SOUTHALL WEST	 Surinder Kaur Jassal Labour 0208 825 6378 JassalS@ealing.gov.uk	 Faduma Mohamed Labour 0750 611 0026 MohamedF@ealing.gov.uk	
NORWOOD GREEN	 John Martin Labour 0793 095 6902 MartinJ@ealing.gov.uk	 Ghulam Murtaza Labour 0790 350 2566 MurtazaG@ealing.gov.uk	 Tarept Sidhu Labour 0744 800 2067 SidhuT@ealing.gov.uk
SOUTHALL GREEN	 Jasbir Anand Labour 0794 920 2851 AnandJ@ealing.gov.uk Cabinet: Tackling crime	 Kamaljit Dhindsa Labour 0796 150 5808 DhindsaK@ealing.gov.uk	 Peter Mason Labour 020 8825 6833 MasonPe@ealing.gov.uk Leader of Ealing Council

PERIVALE	 Munir Ahmed Labour 0758 242 8643 AhmedMun@ealing.gov.uk	 Tariq Mahmood Labour 0795 731 3079 MahmoodTa@ealing.gov.uk	 Charan Sharma Labour 0775 764 5967 SharmaC@ealing.gov.uk
HANWELL BROADWAY	 Yoel Gordon Labour 0796 078 3825 GordonY@ealing.gov.uk	 Monica Hamidi Labour 0737 797 2559 HamidiM@ealing.gov.uk	 Polly Knewstub Labour 0781 487 0375 KnewstubP@ealing.gov.uk Cabinet: Healthy, equal lives
NORTH HANWELL	 Louise Brett Labour 0781 691 6808 BrettL@ealing.gov.uk Deputy leader and Cabinet: Safe and genuinely affordable homes	 Claire Tighe Labour 0785 169 6138 TigheC@ealing.gov.uk	 Ray Wall Labour 0738 344 1885 WallRa@ealing.gov.uk
NORTH ACTON	 Daniel Crawford Labour 0208 992 9353 CrawfordD@ealing.gov.uk	 Hodan Haili Labour 0757 734 1614 HailiHo@ealing.gov.uk	 Blerina Hashani Labour 0208 825 6833 HashaniB@ealing.gov.uk Cabinet: Thriving communities
EAST ACTON	 Kate Crawford Labour 0208 992 9353 (evenings) CrawforK@ealing.gov.uk	 Stephen Donnelly Labour 0771 409 3099 DonnellyS@ealing.gov.uk Cabinet: Inclusive economy	 Hitesh Tailor Labour 0799 063 7183 TailorHi@ealing.gov.uk
SOUTH ACTON	 Josh Blacker Labour 0793 477 3372 BlackerJ@ealing.gov.uk Cabinet: A fairer start	 Yvonne Johnson Labour 0208 9953 4166 JohnsoY1@ealing.gov.uk Mayor of Ealing	 Katie Douglas Labour 02088258213 KDouglas001@ealing.gov.uk
SOUTHFIELD	 Gary Busuttill Liberal Democrat 0798 544 3860 BusuttillG@ealing.gov.uk	 Gary Malcolm Liberal Democrat 0781 320 5218 MalcolmG@ealing.gov.uk Leader of the opposition	 Andrew Steed Liberal Democrat 0773 664 9664 SteedA@ealing.gov.uk
NORTHOLT MANDEVILLE	 Miriam Rice Labour 0741 559 2153 Ricem@ealing.gov.uk	 Chris Summers Labour 0751 987 2341 SummersC@ealing.gov.uk	 Dominic Moffitt Labour 020 8825 8209 DMoffitt001@ealing.gov.uk
NORTHOLT WEST END	 Bassam Mahfouz Labour 0794 910 4656 MahfouzB@ealing.gov.uk	 Dee Martin Labour 0778 887 2191 MartinD@ealing.gov.uk	 Lauren Wall Labour 0752 545 2812 WallL@ealing.gov.uk
NORTH GREENFORD	 Muhammad Iqbal Labour 0759 594 5843 IqbalMu@ealing.gov.uk	 Amarjit Jammu Labour 0796 075 4646 JammuA@ealing.gov.uk	 Shital Manro Labour 0795 837 6745 ManroS@ealing.gov.uk Cabinet: Good growth & new homes
CENTRAL GREENFORD	 Shahbaz Ahmed Labour AhmedShah@ealing.gov.uk	 Aysha Raza Labour 0772 031 2035 RazaA@ealing.gov.uk	 Sanjai Kohli Labour 0790 409 5990 KohliS@ealing.gov.uk
GREENFORD BROADWAY	 Vartlene Alexander Labour 0748 433 5273 AlexanderV@ealing.gov.uk	 Harbhajan Kaur-Dheer Labour 0782 515 7044 DheerHK@ealing.gov.uk	 Anthony Kelly Labour 0777 174 0912 KellyA@ealing.gov.uk Deputy Mayor of Ealing

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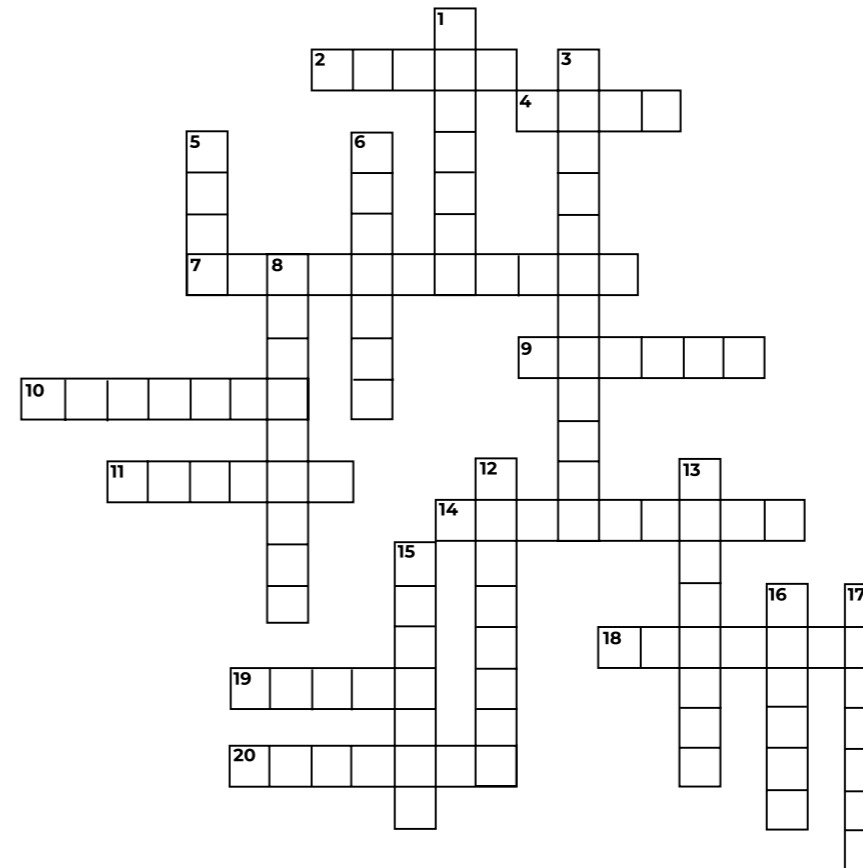
To find out how to enter, visit ealing.pagetiger.com/around-ealing-spring-2025



BEFORE YOU GO

Crossword

Have a go at our crossword. Stuck? The answers can be found in the digital edition of the winter magazine at aroundealing.com/around-ealing - where you can also leave ideas for future crosswords.



Across

- [2] ____ Can, the name of the litter-picking hero group
- [4] The number of categories in borough's garden competition
- [7] Where this year's Queen of the Suburbs ultra marathon finishes
- [9] The type of building that recycling hero helped by turning waste to cash
- [10] Name of group that runs to help people
- [11] Music festival in Hanwell, in May
- [14] Name of local charity helping families with young children
- [18] Name of park the walled garden volunteers work in
- [19] Name of river kept clean by CURB volunteers
- [20] Work is expected to get under way on this leisure centre

Down

- [1] ____ of Ealing, our photo competition
- [3] Winner of our photo competition got tickets to this cinema
- [5] special educational needs and disabilities
- [6] School hero Sally is a welfare officer at ____ primary school
- [8] Community ____, improving wellbeing of other residents
- [12] Young adult centre reopened here recently
- [13] Space available for community projects at Open ____
- [15] ____ Court. Volunteer's gardening skills helped transform this sheltered home
- [16] St Gregory's Primary School has a 'tiny' one of these
- [17] ____ Place, more affordable homes in Southall

Coach trips

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



Coach Trips from London Ltd. 2025 Schedule

- Sat 5 April Isle of Wight (the Needles or Osborne House)
 - Saturday 26 April Sheffield Park Garden and Brighton
 - Saturday 17 May Salisbury Cathedral Flower Festival
 - Sun 25 May Worthing Sunday 29 June Swanage, Dorset
 - Sat 19 July Great Yarmouth Weds 9 July The Cotswolds featuring Bourton on the Water & Bourton House Garden
 - Sunday 27 July Hastings Saturday 2 August Althorp
 - Sun 17 August Oxford + Thames cruise to Abingdon
 - Sat 30 Aug Bognor Regis or Chichester Festival Theatre matinee Saturday 6 September Southend on Sea
 - Friday 12 September Bedfordshire Steam Fayre also featuring the Shuttleworth Collection of ancient flying machines
 - Sunday 21 September Norfolk Broads cruise
 - Sunday 19 October West Midlands Safari Park
 - Saturday 1 November Marlborough with pub lunch
- Xmas market trips this year will be to Rochester & Canterbury
- NB: Booking conditions apply to all trip bookings.
- 2025 prices £27.50 upwards (depending on what is included)
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Where am I?

Where in the borough is this?

Take a look at this detail from a photograph and have a go at guessing at pagetiger.com/around-ealing-spring-2025



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



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.

Yes please:

- Cardboard and thin card
- Paper, envelopes and junk mail
- Newspapers and magazines
- Plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays
- Metal tins and cans, aerosol cans and clean foil
- Glass bottles and jars
- Food and drink cartons

No thank you:

- Garden and food waste
- Carrier bags, black sacks and cling film
- Crisp packets and sweet wrappers
- Crockery, pyrex and glassware (vases and drinking glasses)
- Polystyrene packaging
- Nappies
- Batteries and electrical items
- Textiles