

Southgate District Civic Trust

Newsletter
No. 250
Oct. 2019



www.southgatedistrictcivictrust.org.uk

Twitter: @southgatetrust

Facebook: www.facebook.com/southgatedistrictcivictrust

Contact us: info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.org.uk

COMING EVENTS



OPEN MEETING

**SATURDAY 26th OCTOBER 2019
at 2.30pm**

Walker Lower Hall, Christ Church Parish
Centre, The Green, Southgate

“Working with Natural Processes”



With the range of environmental pressures that both rural and urban areas across the country face today and in the future, Thames21 and their project partners are exploring methods to reduce the risk of flooding, improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitats by working with natural processes.

All Welcome

**Entry free for members,
£2 for non-members**



Other Dates for your Diary:

Sat. 16th Nov. 2019 LAMAS Local History Conference at the Museum of London
“In Sickness and in Health - The Wellbeing of Londoners through History”
(See page 5 for more details)

Contributions to the January 2020 newsletter should be sent by Friday 13th December 2019

to the Editor: Colin Barratt, 48 Maplin Close, Winchmore Hill, London, N21 1NB

Tel: 0208 360 3979. e-mail: colin_barratt@yahoo.co.uk

Copies will be emailed, hand delivered or posted during week commencing **13th January 2020.**

Southgate District Civic Trust ~ Established to conserve and enhance the environment in Southgate, New Southgate, Cockfosters, Palmers Green, Winchmore Hill and Hadley Wood.
(Registered as an amenity society with **Civic Voice**).

CIVIC VOICE UPDATE

Southgate District Civic Trust has been a member of Civic Voice since it began nearly 10 years ago. We believe this organisation has been transformational in getting the message of civic societies like ours heard by Government.

As you may know, I am a member of the Civic Voice Regional Forum. This group represent civic societies from different regions across the country, including London and we meet every few months at the Civic Voice headquarters in the Coffin Works, Birmingham. This gives us all a chance to bring issues to the attention of the Civic Voice board, as well as sharing experience across the country. At the September meeting, as well as my presentation on our *Southgate Office Village community event*, we had a wide ranging discussion, in including the use of design codes and Civic Voice's review of Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

I was pleased to see that Enfield does have an SCI, which many authorities do not. It was adopted in November 2015, so will be due for review next year. SDCT look forward to being able to help shape the new version with ideas raised by the regional forum, particularly improving the involvement and listing of civic societies as a 'non-statutory consultee'.

Some SDCT members attended the recent London Member Briefings, where we discussed our views on the planning system, particularly in London. These meetings will help shape policy for Civic Voice, as well as provide case studies they can use in their meetings with ministers.

We are pleased to find that this year the **Civic Voice AGM** will take place in London on 4th December at the Palace of Westminster. All our members can attend this free event – book via Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/civic-voice-agm-2019-tickets-65693124905?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>.



Do sign up as it is always interesting to meet up with other like-minded groups. If nothing else, it is an opportunity to see inside the amazing Palace of Westminster!

The convention normally held in October has been moved to April to coincide with the 10th anniversary celebration. More details will be included once available.

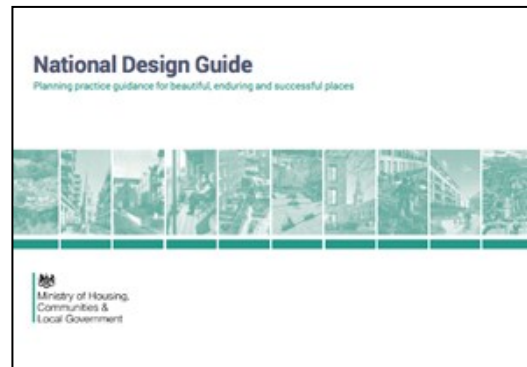
In other news:

Ian Harvey, Executive Director of Civic Voice, has been invited to represent the voluntary sector on the **Grosvenor working group** as it considers "*How do we rebuild public trust in the planning system?*". A YouGov survey in March 2019 found that of the 2,183 members of the public who responded, just 2 per cent trust developers and only 7 per cent have faith in local authorities when it comes to planning for large-scale development. In response to the survey, Grosvenor is gathering together developers and London councils to agree a joint 'manifesto' of pledges to rebuild trust. The representatives from the local councils and developers will be senior enough to be able to bring their executive and boards along, so that commitments signed can attract the backing of each party. This is an exciting opportunity; SDCT will be following progress and will send on more information as it becomes available.

Putting the community voice in Design Review: SDCT has long held that the community, through groups such as civic societies, should be able to proactively and positively engage with developers and their teams. We can all contribute to the planning process in a cost-effective, scalable and efficient way to facilitate community-led design.

So we are pleased to see that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government released on 1st October, a National Design Guide. Which can be found at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835212/National_Design_Guide.pdf

We welcome the arrival of this guide and will be reviewing it, particularly to see how developments such as Southgate Office Village fit in.



Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to see more updates on SDCT, plus the work of Civic Voice and our fellow civic societies. You do not need an account to see our posts.

Jane Maggs

SOUTHGATE OFFICE VILLAGE—THE LATEST NEWS

The *Southgate Office Village* planning application is still being considered by the Enfield Planning Team. They have yet to announce their recommendation on whether the Planning Committee should approve or reject this application.

So what does this mean? *If you have not sent in a comment*, it is **not too late** to make your views known. The planning application reference is: **19/01941/FUL**, see the last newsletter for more information.

Update: in July members of the SDCT Planning Group and Ian Harvey from Civic Voice met with the Enfield Planning Team to present to them the outcomes of our *SOV - Community View* events in June. This was a positive meeting with constructive discussions on the feedback from the community, ensuring that the views of Southgate residents are understood.



What next: it still remains likely that there will be a Public Meeting on the application later this year. However, both holding it and the timing will depend on the outcome of discussions on planning matters relating to the application. SDCT is continuing to monitor the situation, but our Planning Group is already gearing up to ensure an appropriate response is presented. We will keep you up to date with information via *SDCT: E-News mailings*.



The final decision on the application will be made at the Planning Committee meeting, but the date for this has not been decided. It is currently assumed it will be late this year or early next year. More information will be sent out when we hear.

SOUTHGATE OFFICE VILLAGE - THE WIDER VIEW



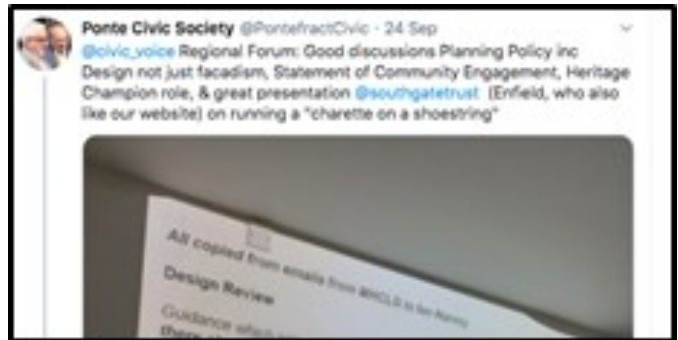
At the last *Civic Voice Regional Forum* on 24th September, I gave a presentation on the *Southgate Office Village – Community View* events held on Civic Day this June.

All the attendees were extremely interested in what we did in Southgate. Pontefract Civic Society dubbed our community event a "charette on a shoestring". Which seems to sum it up quite well!

The members were very supportive of our fight to stop this particular development and protect Southgate Circus conservation area. There was a debate about the issues raised, and the impact this type of development will have on other areas. There were lively discussions on different issues including the impact on families living in this type of accommodation, as well as post Grenfell concerns about such tall buildings. They recognised the issues and that sadly this is a situation faced by other areas, particularly in London.

As part of the wider implications of this development it is clear that if this application is approved, it will act as a precedent for many other sites.

Jane Maggs



SOUTHGATE DISTRICT CIVIC VOICE

At the end of our open meeting on Saturday 26 October 2019 we will launch our new name - Southgate District Civic Voice (SDCV).

Members agreed at the AGM in April 2018 to change our name. Replacing "Trust" by "Voice" indicates more clearly that we speak for the community. "Voice" also provides a link to Civic Voice, the national organisation to which we are affiliated. At our AGM in April this year we adopted a new constitution.

On 26 October we will discuss a new vision statement for SDCV. The committee will also report on the other changes that we have been preparing to reflect the change of name.

Graham Davis
Chair

LOCAL HISTORY MEETING SEPT. 2019

“Enfield Women of the 20th Century” by Joe Studman

Joe spoke to us about two local women who contributed to their community in different ways, one locally the other nationally.

Ruth Lipson was born in 1912. Her first job was at the London County Council, working in child care and social health. In the 1930s the family moved to Southgate and her father became rabbi/chaplain at Colney Hatch Lunatic Asylum. In 1938 she married Laurence Winston. During WW2 they had three children, one being Robert, who went on to become Professor and later Lord Winston. Ruth volunteered for the WVS and after the war she stood for the Council. In 1949 her husband died, but she continued her work, firstly for Herts County Council, before becoming a juvenile magistrate then Justice of the Peace.

In 1958 Ruth became Mayor of Southgate. Her selected charity was the welfare of old people. She bought 190 Green Lanes as an old people's centre. In 1972 this became Ruth Winston House. She continued to campaign for many years, for causes such as Jewish women's rights and died in 2007 at the age of 95.

Eileen Younghusband is less well known, but carried out important work during WW2. She was born Eileen de Crossette, of Huguenot descent, in 1921. The family lived in Winchmore Hill and she attended Winchmore School, (now Highfield) then Southgate School. She was a member of the Girl Guides at Winchmore Baptist Church before studying commerce and working for Scottish Provident in London. She moved to France to work as an Au Pair, returning to England just before WW2 and in 1940 joined the WAAF.

She became a filter plotter, then a filter officer in the filter room, a top-level British air defence hub which assessed radar reports in order to give air raid warnings. Later, while posted to Belgium, she was part of a team of mathematicians who alerted Allied forces to the location of V-2 rocket launch sites. Towards the end of WW2 she married Peter Younghusband and left the WAAF in 1946 and went on to run a hotel.

In 2007, at the age of 86 she studied at the Open University, was awarded a BA and became Student of the Year, in spite of being diagnosed with macular degeneration, a serious eye condition. She died in 2016, aged 95.

Colin Barratt

LAMAS LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE 2019

“In Sickness and in Health - The Wellbeing of Londoners through History”

This takes place in the Weston Theatre at the Museum of London on Saturday 16th November, 10.30am to 6.00pm

The talks will cover a range of topics, including the following:

- Belgian Refugees in Colney Hatch
- Cleveland Street Workhouse
- Spanish Flu in London in 1918
- The Nurses Registration Act 1919
- The People who sold Radium

Tickets are now available from their website www.lamas.org.uk at £12.50 (booked by 31st October) or £15 after this date.

“THE GREATEST COLLECTION OF ATHLETIC TALENT EVER ASSEMBLED IN THIS PART OF NORTH LONDON”

The Opening of the New Running Track in Broomfield Park in June 1950

Part 1

The opening of the new running track on 28 June 1950 was one of the events represented in the 2018/9 Museum of Enfield exhibition, *Hidden Treasures: Revealing Broomfield House and Park*, with the display of a copy of the souvenir programme for the Athletic Sports meeting held to celebrate the occasion, a medal and undated photographs of a runner and a javelin thrower in that location.



Medals made of bronze were awarded to each member of the teams competing in match events, the finalists in the Borough of Southgate Championship events and members of the winning, second and third teams in the local Grammar Schools relay race. From a distance the small brown metal disc looks rather insignificant but closer examination reveals the Southgate Borough coat of arms on the front to be well modelled and reflecting attractive golden glints. The other side has the wording Opening / Of / New Running Track /

Broomfield Park / 28th June / 1950. The medal is an interesting souvenir of a sporting occasion in Palmers Green which created a stir locally and gained wider coverage thanks to a live BBC broadcast, with a film made by Planet Film Society preserving the event for posterity.

The Sports Arena

If you stand at the top of the concrete terrace overlooking the playing field in its bowl on the east side of Broomfield Park, particularly after heatwave weather, you can see the outline of the running track which was grassed over in 1995. You could even, if fit enough and prepared to look eccentric emulate the many athletes who have competed there over the years and complete your own 440 yard-circuit (to my surprise I did actually see a runner going round on his own recently, a lonely throw-back to previous times).



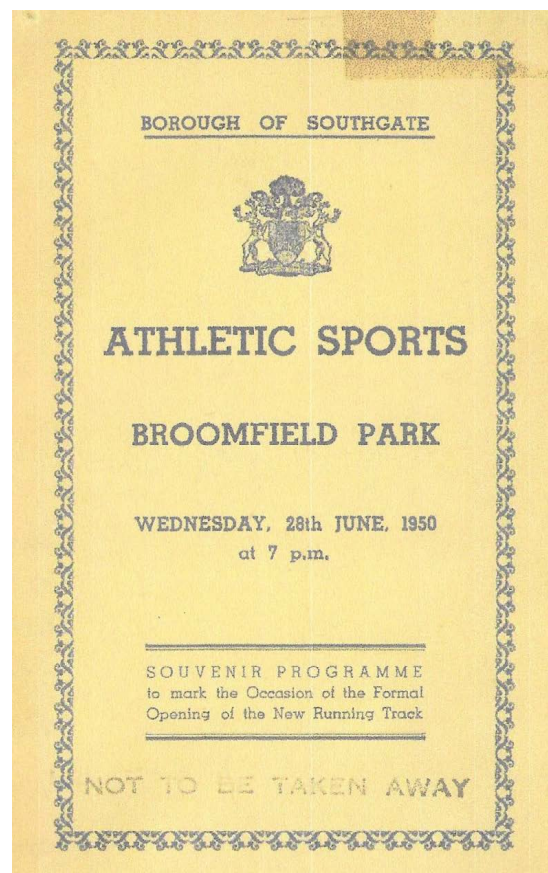
The running track provided the headquarters for Southgate Harriers Athletic Club until 1974, when they moved to White Hart Lane Community Sports Centre and adopted the title Haringey & Southgate AC, later shortened to Haringey AC. It was also used for inter-county matches and by local schools: Alan Dumayne recalls in *Once Upon a Time in Palmers Green* (1988) “the competitive and exciting inter-schools athletics meetings, that once were held there. Those not competing could stand on the banks and encourage their own schoolmates with vociferous support. They were great occasions and I do not recall one moment of rancour” (p136).

These happy events had been greatly assisted by the Council's post-war decision to repair and improve the existing running track with a view to turning it into a first class facility. The intention to do so was noted by the Parks Committee on 7 January 1947 and the announcement of the plan and its estimated cost of £4,000 in a period of austerity led to contrasting letters in the *Palmers Green and Southgate Gazette* of 15 July 1949, one praising the Committee as "go-ahead" and the other deploring the Council having caught the Westminster bug in a "disgraceful piece of Local Government spending ... Are not the ratepayers doing sufficient already? Free education, cheap food, milk, family allowances etc., etc. – Where is it to end?"

The same edition carried the comments of Norris McWhirter of Southgate Harriers and Oxford University Athletic Club (who lived in Winchmore Hill and later co-founded the *Guinness Book of Records* with his brother Ross), condemning "this era of profligate – one might say contemptuous – public expenditure" and many fit people "involuntarily paying away ill-spared pounds a year to partially finance a health scheme" while at the same time supporting the Council's spending on the reconstruction of the running track; if only municipal authorities would follow Southgate's "great example", "In a few Olympiads the National Anthem would become as monotonous as the Stars and Stripes".

Destructor Clinker

Construction of the new running track went ahead, with the souvenir programme for the opening event providing historical notes explaining that gravel pits on the site of "[w]hat is now known as 'The Arena'" were levelled out to become playing fields before WWI, during which it was ploughed up to grow potatoes. The original quarter mile running track, which opened on August Bank Holiday 1919, was 15 feet in width (18 feet in the 100 yards straight) with a "foundation of Destructor clinker 6 inches thick, finished with fine furnace ash"; the new track had a mixture of "40 per cent. fine grey ash ($\frac{1}{8}$ in. to dust), 20 per cent. of the fine black ash removed from the old track and 40 per cent. of screenings" from the Council's refuse destructor at Barrowell Green, laid over a 4 inch layer of hard furnace clinker. There were two 100 yards straights and two long jump run-ups and it was 27 feet in width, providing seven lanes, with a football pitch of maximum dimensions situated inside the track [leased in 1947 to Southgate Olympic FC for five years at £30 pa]. An independent water supply was provided from the artesian well by the bowling green and an electric cable for occasions when "Flood Lighting or Public Address Equipment may be needed".



Southgate Harriers and the local Boy Scouts had the chance to test out the new cinder running track before the formal opening, which was reported in three articles in the *Gazette* (30.6.50). In his *Pen Points* column 'Alderman' says that the cost of the new running track, with fencing, was £4,000 (against an estimated £175 for the old track in 1919) and refers to the interesting information contained in the souvenir programme, including the statement that the ground fell slightly from north to south, to which he adds "most readers will learn with surprise that the drop in arena levels between Aldermans Hill and Broomfield Lane is 10 feet: that there is a difference of four-feet-six-inches between the beginning and end of the hundred yards sprint". This might affect recognition of international though not County records, but to rectify the problem would involve "a major earth-moving operation and heavy expenditure" and putting the arena out of use for at least two years.

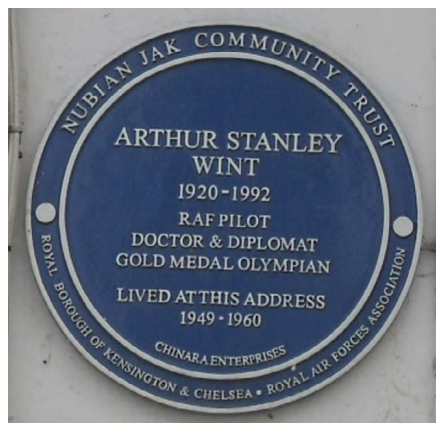
Under a separate heading, *Physical man*, the continuous breaking of the limits of “a man’s physical powers” was celebrated: “On our own Southgate track in Broomfield Park, times and distances that were established as records only a year or two ago in some cases, are being replaced by new and more startling achievements. And all this, mark you, on a food scale that still falls short, in variety, of what may be the ideal”.

Best Time Ever

A third article on the same page headed *Best Time Ever By British Athlete in 3,000 Metres Steeplechase* reported that “Watched by a crowd estimated at 10,000 and with television cameras recording the highlights, the greatest collection of athletic talent ever assembled in this part of North London took part on Wednesday evening in a special match to mark the official opening of the new track in Broomfield Park” and it is striking how many national and international athletes competed in the event.

The (men-only) contest, organised by Southgate Harriers, was between the AAA [Amateur Athletic Association] and a Middlesex and Herts team, the former winning by 77½ points to 52½. The heading referred to the record in the 3,000 metres steeplechase (listed as 2 miles in the programme but with both distances given in the Planet Film Society film of the occasion). This was set by J I (John) Disley (AAA) in 9 mins 18.4 secs, the “best performance of the evening ... the fastest time ever recorded over the distance by a British athlete and the same time as that recorded by the sixth man in the last Olympic Games”. Disley went on to win the bronze medal in the event at the 1952 Helsinki Olympics and co-founded the London Marathon. Rene Howell who came second had taken part in the 1948 Olympics.

Also competing were Olympic stars E McDonald Bailey, who was originally from Trinidad but represented Great Britain in 1948 and 1952 and Arthur Wint from Jamaica. Bailey had to drop back because of the risk of a pulled muscle when leading the 220 yards and Wint just lost out when overtaken near the line in his contest with his “great rival”, top English runner H J (John) Partlett in the 880 yards. Wint had won silver in the 800 metres in the 1948 London Olympics (with Partlett in eighth place) as well as gold in the 400 metres; Partlett was the 880 yards British Empire Games champion and went on to win the 800 metres gold medal at the European Championships in August 1950. At the time of the London Olympics in 2012 John Partlett reminisced in a BBC interview about his friend that spectators “used to gasp when they saw him running because people that were running behind him looked as if they were doing two strides to his one”. Arthur Wint was awarded the MBE in 1954 and on 19 October 2012 a blue plaque organised by the Nubian Jak Community Trust was unveiled in his honour as RAF pilot / Doctor & Diplomat / Gold Medal Olympian by his daughters Valerie and Alison at 22 Philbeach Gardens SW5.



The winner of the putting the weight (or shot) contest for Middlesex and Herts, Edmonton-born John Giles was shown in action in a *Gazette* photograph (7.7.50) and in close-up in the Planet film. Giles took up the discipline while in the army (as reported on 15.8.47, “16½ Stone Southgate Man Of 21 ... husky Grenadier Guardsman”), reached the 1948 Olympic final and became British record holder and AAA champion. H E A Moody who came second in the weight and also the discus was Dr Harold Moody, 1948 Olympian and silver medalist in the 1950 Empire Games. He emigrated to New Zealand in 1951, becoming Mayor of Glen Eden where there is a recreation ground named after him; his father, also Dr Harold Moody is commemorated by a neighbourhood park in Nunhead and as Campaigner for Racial Equality by an English Heritage blue plaque at 164 Queens Road SE15, with another placed by the Nubian Jak Community Trust at the YMCA Club in Great Russell Street WC1 in March 2019.

A competitor in the mile race was the reigning AAA mile champion, G W (Bill) Nankeville who was in the 1948 and 1952 Olympics and set a world record time of 16min 41sec with Don Seaman, Roger Bannister and Chris Chataway for the mile relay in August 1953, as well as a world record 15:27.2 for the 4 x 1500 metres in September that year with Ralph Dunkley, David Law and Gordon Pirie. Perhaps surprisingly Nankeville was (just) beaten on this occasion by R A Morley (Middlesex and Herts).

First and second in the 120 yards hurdles were friends and rivals F J (Jack) Parker (1952 Olympics, 1954 Empire and Commonwealth Games and 110 metres silver in the 1954 European Championships) and Peter Hildreth (1952, 1958 and 1960 Olympics, 1950 European Championships bronze and 110 metres hurdles joint British record holder). The winner in the javelin was Malcolm Dalrymple who competed in the 1948 Olympics, as had the third placed runner in the 220 yards Derek Pugh in the 400 metres, winning gold in this event and the 4 x 400 metres relay in the 1950 European Championships. The winner of the long jump, Harry Askew had appeared in the 1948 Olympic final.

The other match events in the competition were the 100 yards, in which Norris McWhirter came second for Middlesex to I A Grieve of the AAA, high jump, 440 yards and 2 miles, won by Valdu Lillakas, a 'displaced person' from Estonia who held the AAA 6 mile record in 1949 and moved on to Canada in September 1950. Mixed into the programme were the Middlesex County AAA Senior Relay (4 x 100) yards Championship for 1950 (two heats and the final) and the Middlesex Junior Pole vault championship, the Borough of Southgate Championship 100 yards under 14 and under 16 and the Local Grammar Schools invitation relay 400 yards (4 x 100) yards (two heats and the final).

Images: commemorative medal and Athletic Sports souvenir programme courtesy of Enfield Museum; aerial view of Broomfield Park courtesy of Enfield Local Studies and Archive; Arthur Wint plaque by R.P.

Part 2 in the January 2020 newsletter will discuss the Planet Film Society and BBC coverage, a sporting debate in Southgate and Roger Bannister's appearance at the running track in June 1951.

Richard Purver

UPDATE ON THE DEMOLITION OF A LOCAL LANDMARK

In the April 2019 edition of the newsletter I reported that National Grid intended to demolish the iconic gas holder in New Southgate, which has stood majestically since 1912 and is the last remnant of the gas works, which closed in 1972. The holder was decommissioned in 2001 and has been deteriorating ever since.



The plan is for contractors to come on site at the end of October and they will start by clearing the undergrowth and de-watering the tank which the holder sits in. Water will be pumped out at a slow rate, to allow filtering and cleaning, before being released into the waste water system. This will probably take three to four months.

When the water has been removed, there will be sludge left at the bottom, which will be bagged up and disposed of. During this process, any interesting items, such as old bottles etc, which are found, will be kept for us to see.

When the tank has been fully emptied, the structure will be dismantled, and anything of historical interest will also be saved to see, such as the maker's name and date plate. I am hoping to take some photos, as the demolition progresses. It will take a few months, probably being completed around June or July next year, and they will need to decide whether the hole is to be fully filled for building on, or left as a landscape feature (unlikely).



National Grid will keep in touch throughout the process. They promised to meet local people to discuss what they would like to do to record the gas holder. At other sites where this has been done there have been memorials such as plaques, information boards or installations of parts of the gas holder structure. I have some ideas for this, which I will discuss with them later on.



National Grid also run a Community Grant Programme, which can provide funding to support projects like this. Further information is available on <http://betl.nationalgrid.co.uk>

When the contractors have fully set up on site, probably early next year, they will have sufficient safety clothing to allow us, and any others interested, to have tours of the site before demolition starts. For those interested in industrial heritage, this should be a fascinating project to follow. Anyone who would like to tour the site, when this is offered by National Grid, please let me know.

Colin Barratt

STITCH - A NEW CRAFTING VENUE FOR PALMERS GREEN

Those of you who remember Grouts draper's shop in Palmers Green, on the corner of Devonshire Road, and Rodwins in Southgate, would have been sad when they both closed, after many years serving the community. The closure of Rodwins prompted three enthusiastic ladies to take over the former Grouts premises and set up a new crafting centre, which opened in May this year. In fact, the owner of Rodwins, Josie, came down to advise them. The flyer below shows what facilities they offer, both crafting supplies and craft classes. Hopefully, this new craft resource has been welcomed and supported by the local crafting community.

Mary Barratt

Stitch!

Crafts & Classes

Join us and make your day!

Who we are: Stitch! is a community enterprise aimed at satisfying the needs of crafty individuals of all ages and all levels of ability.

What we do: We run sewing and needlecraft classes and events plus all types of craft-based workshops. Our shop stocks a wide range of crafting products, including fabrics and haberdashery, at prices to suit all pockets and a delightful range of gifts made by local artists.

Where to find us: 397 Green Lanes,
Palmers Green, N13 4JG

Tel: 07903 614726



CLASSES & EVENTS

Quilting, Knitting, Crochet, Learn to Sew, Make & Mend Sewing, Drop-in Stitching Circle, Kids Soap-Making, Kids Crafts, Macrame, Jewellery making and more. Please go to www.stitch.org.uk to book!



www.stitch.org.uk

Email hello@stitch.org.uk Follow us on [@StitchN13](https://www.instagram.com/StitchN13) [Stitch_n13](https://www.facebook.com/Stitch_n13) [@N13crafts](https://www.facebook.com/N13crafts)

