

Southgate District Civic Voice

Newsletter No. 274
January 2026

We cover Southgate, Winchmore Hill,
Palmers Green, New Southgate, Cockfosters
and Hadley Wood
(Registered as an amenity society with Civic Voice).



SPRING OPEN MEETING

Sat. 7th March 2.30pm
Walker Lower Hall, 7 The Green,
Southgate, N14

“The History of Chickenshed”

This talk will cover the history of
our local inclusive theatre, how it
started and how they got to where
they are now.

See page 3 for more details.



SEE ALSO INSIDE:

Southgate Celebrates!
Visit to Edmonton Eco Park
Planting at Southgate station - an update
Unlocking Broomfield
Southgate Masterplan Vision

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Contributions to the April newsletter should be sent by Friday 20th March 2026
to the Editor: Colin Barratt, 48 Maplin Close, Winchmore Hill, London, N21 1NB
Tel: 0208 360 3979. e-mail: newsletter@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

Note:- Copies will be emailed, hand delivered or posted during week commencing Monday 13th April 2026

www.southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/southgatevoice
Contact us: info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

Bluesky: @southgatevoice

SOUTHGATE CELEBRATES!

Southgate District Civic Voice (SDCV) has received a small grant from the Government via Enfield Council to host a series of free, community-focused activities between now and June 2026.

The goal is to *celebrate the best of Southgate* and bring more vibrancy to our town centre. We are planning activities that bring people together, basing ourselves in the 'pocket park' (the green space outside Nando's).

Our First Event - Christmas at the 'Choir Corner'

Ashmole Primary School Choir treated Southgate to some Christmas joy on Monday 15th December 2025 at the newly named 'Choir Corner' in the Pocket Park.



The choir performance included *Last Christmas*, *Rudolf the Red nosed Reindeer*, *Twelve Days of Christmas* and a special British Sign Language rendition of *We Wish you a Merry Christmas*.

It was a wonderful festive sound appreciated by passers-by, shoppers, travellers and college students. The event was well attended and launched Southgate Celebrates! as well as being the first use of 'Choir Corner'.

Our thanks to *Tamara Scott* who arranged this event with Ashmole School.

What Next?

We are planning a series of FREE events over the weekend of 16th and 17th May.. This 'mini festival' will include some arts and crafts, fitness, poetry workshop and live musical activities. Details are being finalised at the moment and more information will be sent out by E-News as soon as everything is in place.

There will also be more choirs using the space later. The next one will be Osidge School Choir at 11am on Monday 2nd March. Other arrangements are being made, so more to come, which will soon be added to the Southgate Celebrates! website page [here](#).

If you wish to be a part of the Southgate Celebrates project, or to use the Pocket Park, please e mail: southgate.celebrates@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

Finally – it would be helpful to have a few volunteers to help during the celebration weekend. Nothing arduous, just to show people where to go, help with any queries and handout information. If you can help, do please get in touch.

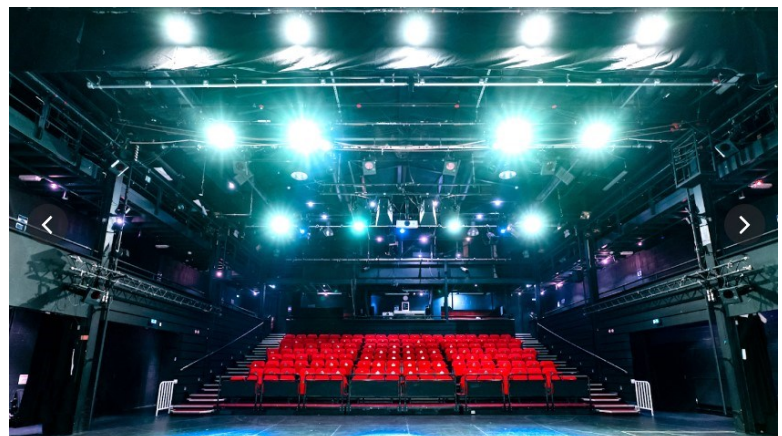
Jane Maggs
Photos: Mervyn Maggs

THE HISTORY OF CHICKENSHED

In this talk we will hear about how the theatre started in the mid 1970s, (actually in a disused chicken shed!), then becoming the world's first truly inclusive theatre company. It attracted Princess Diana as its patron and in 1994 succeeded in obtaining a site for a new purpose-built theatre in Southgate.



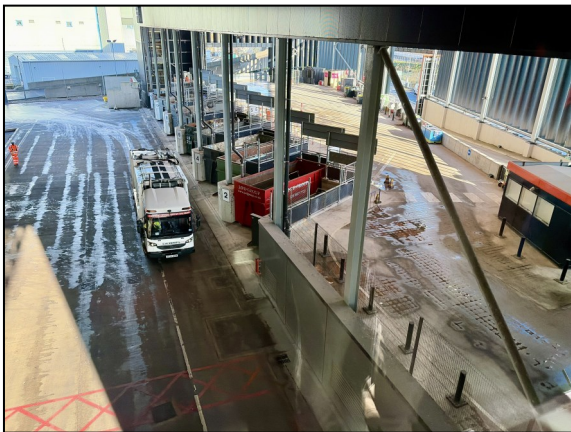
As well as being a fully inclusive theatre, it expanded into community projects and education, running degree courses in various BTEC and BA courses. Their profile has continued to grow, with appearances on television and royal celebrations. It has been supported by many well known actors and it continues to have a profound impact on both and artistic and social fronts.



VISIT TO EDMONTON ECOPARK, JANUARY 2026

A group of SDCV members visited the EcoPark for a presentation and guided tour. The EcoPark is situated in Lee Park Way, north of the North Circular Road and the River Lee Navigation.

North London Waste Authority manage the site. It serves 2 million people in seven North London boroughs, including Enfield.



On the site there is a facility for reuse, recycling and disposal of waste collected by the local authorities. The waste includes household, food and garden waste and waste from flytipping. NLWA has a contract with Biffa for recycling of waste. We saw mattresses being collected before onward transport to specialist facilities for recovery of the iron and fabric. We also saw Christmas trees being loaded into large containers for environmentally friendly disposal.



The EcoPark is open seven days a week to members of the public who do not need to book an appointment to deposit their waste. Waste for disposal is incinerated for energy recovery. Sufficient electricity is generated to supply 88,000 homes. The current incinerator is 55 years old and approaching the end of its life.

The incinerator will be replaced by a new Heat and Power Project which is under construction. The new facility will meet Environment Agency pollution controls.

The EcoPark contains a new education and visitors' centre. The EcoPark is also home to the Edmonton Sea Cadets, who have used the site since 1942.

Graham Davis



PLANTING AT SOUTHGATE STATION - LATEST NEWS

The new planting around Southgate Station is a collaboration between Local Volunteers, TfL, The Bee Friendly Trust, Enfield Council & Southgate District Civic Voice.

The planting of the station beds originally started in May with The Bee Friendly Trust and volunteers. The aim was to brighten the area with plants that attract pollinators including a range of wildflowers.

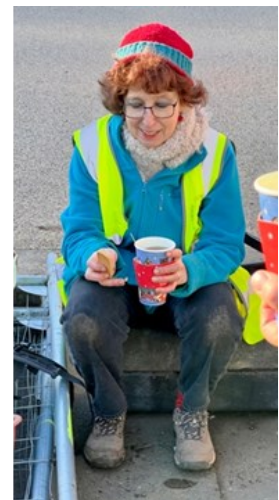
It soon became clear that the bed near the bus stops was not thriving. The reasons were partly due to people walking on the beds, but also because there was too much concrete and not enough soil.

Dan Maier in partnership with TfL has been working on a new plan. As it is not possible to remove the concrete, a resin bonded gravel layer has been laid instead. This will be followed by several containers, to be planted up with interesting plants to provide colour throughout the year.

The planters should have arrived before Christmas, but there has been a problem with their manufacture. So, the installation and planting has had to be delayed.

Earlier a group of volunteers removed some of the plants from the old planters so they could be stored ready for the arrival of their new space. New plants were bought and all was ready to go.

But the last-minute production delay meant a re-plan. So, on a cold day in November, some of the volunteers returned. The plants were temporarily replanted to make the area a bit brighter through the winter months until the final scheme is ready to go.



On site our volunteers: Dan Maier, Ralph Kley, Mervyn Maggs, Jane Maggs and Andrew Irvine, who also volunteers at the New Southgate Millennium Green. This co-operation between groups benefits us all by spreading knowledge and enthusiasm. When the new planters arrive in the spring, the volunteers will be back to complete Dan's scheme.

Want to volunteer?

Volunteering is organised via a WhatsApp group. If you are interested, please send your phone number to info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.org and you can be added to the merry band.



Jane Maggs

Photos: Mervyn Maggs, Jane Maggs, Dan Maier and Ralph Kley

VOLUNTEER FOR SOCIAL MEDIA NEEDED

As part of the Southgate Celebrates! festival, promotional material will be created including social media posts. As part of the project we will be employing a designer to help set up a new Instagram page for Southgate District Civic Voice. The set up will involve some training and help with how we can use our social media more effectively.

Would you like to take advantage of this training opportunity and then help us with future social media?

If so, please contact me via info@SouthgateDistrictCivicVoice.org.

Jane Maggs

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Your subscription for the year 2026/27 is due on
1st APRIL 2026
and remains unchanged at £15 for the year.

A renewal email will be sent to you at the beginning of March 2026

UNLOCKING BROOMFIELD

Following the grant of £532,490 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in December 2023 to support the development phase of the *Unlocking Broomfield Park for the Community* project, Enfield Council's Community Engagement Officer John Cole organised during 2025 a series of community steering group meetings and events in the park including health and



well-being workshops, guided walks, a dig led by Enfield Archaeological Society and public consultation there and online. The Matchbox Collective were commissioned to paint murals on the hoardings around the house with involvement from local people and pupils from Laurel Park School, and the Flying Geese arts and heritage consultancy were invited to engage with local schools, uniformed organisations and other community groups.

The steering group has included the two Palmers Green councillors, the Heritage team and other council colleagues, members of the Friends of Broomfield Park, John West on behalf of the Enfield Society, Colin Younger for the Broomfield House Trust and myself for Southgate District Civic Voice. Artelia UK were appointed to manage the project, with landscape architect Sally Prothero, Studio ONB and Thomas Ford Architects taking the lead in presenting detailed design proposals for what will remain of the house after its planned dismantling and for reconnecting the house and park through memorials, storytelling and landscaping. The work would include improvements to the water quality in the upper and middle lakes which form part of the historic Baroque water garden.

Following these discussions and consultations with the wider community a concept design with associated costings has been agreed and after further detailed work by the consultants an application to the Fund will be made in May for £3,672,231 to complete the project. If successful the projected completion date is set for October 2028.

More details about the project can be found on the Enfield Council and Friends of Broomfield Park websites, on boards along the fence outside the former bowling pavilion and in the waiting room at Palmers Green station, and at Palmers Green library.

One consequence of the proposed demolition of the house as part of the project was the announcement in October by chair Colin Younger that he and his fellow trustees had decided to close the Broomfield House Trust, which over a period of several years had campaigned for its restoration and also provided an informative website, which unfortunately they will not now be able to maintain.

Moorhen in a Tree

On a nature note, in my recent walks in the park I have noticed a cormorant at the top of a tree overlooking the middle lake with a flock of diminutive parakeets keeping it company, another parakeet glowing emerald in the sun, the heron which often takes up sentry duty on the island in the upper lake surrounded by a number of black-headed gulls standing about on thin ice (in white-headed winter plumage) and a moorhen walking along a branch half way up a tree nearby, perhaps looking for somewhere to roost.



My small digital camera was not able to do justice to these but I was more successful in capturing in a study in black and white coats and a tufted duck, two of the resident family of mute swans and if you look closely two Egyptian geese in my shot of the ruined mansion, in which you also get a glimpse of the Matchbox murals.

A reminder that our publications include Steven Brindle's *Broomfield: An Illustrated History of the House and Garden* and that Broomfield Park features in our DVDs *Southgate: A Glimpse of the Past*, *Southgate: A Half Century of Change* and *Southgate Celebrates the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II*.

Richard Purver

**A date for your diary:
Southgate District
Civic Voice AGM
Saturday 9th May 2026
at Walker Lower Hall,
Southgate 2.30pm**



CIVIC VOICE UPDATE

Civic Voice response to Government proposals on planning

There has been no shortage of proposal from the Government on planning and infrastructure matters, all of which have been considered by the Civic Voice Expert Panel. They have produced several papers for use by all Civic Voice members. Details of the members of the Expert Panel and their reports can be found on the Civic Voice website. They make fascinating and helpful reading.

The most recent paper is on the National Planning Policy Framework. You can find the details [here](#).

The future of Civic Voice – a new chapter

At the Civic Voice AGM in November 2025, the Board of Trustees give a frank analysis of the financial situation of the charity. Following the resignation in August 2025 of the Chief Executive, the situation has become clearer, particularly the inherent weakness in Civic Voice's funding model.

For many years, the income from membership subscriptions has not covered the cost of running Civic Voice with full-time staff. External funding has always been required to fulfil its objectives. Sadly, as funding opportunities become more difficult, this method of operation is no longer viable long term.

This left the Board in a difficult position regarding the future of the charity. So, at the AGM and a follow up meeting, members were presented with various options for the future, including closure. Over 80 representatives from more than 60 civic societies participated in these two meetings and showed clear support for Civic Voice to continue. It was agreed that for the immediate future Civic Voice will become a volunteer run body, while a review is undertaken to determine how to revitalise the organisation.

With this support, the Board now feel confident that Civic Voice is a going concern in terms of its financial position for the next year based on reduced costs.

The working group tasked with the review is being established and will make proposals for revitalisation with specific reference to objectives, governance reform, identifying reliable funding sources and appointing new trustees to assist with running the organisation. The group's recommendations will determine how we operate in the 2026/27 year.

The Board would welcome volunteers to be part of this review, as well as to help keep the charity operating for its members.

Next Stage

A hybrid meeting to be held on the afternoon of Saturday 24th January 2026 in London and online. This will be asked to confirm support for the actions taken, review progress made and confirm new trustee appointments. An EGM will be held in Spring 2026 when the working group report is complete.

There is more information about this on the Civic Voice website:

(www.civicvoice.org.uk). As Civic Voice moves into this new chapter, I will continue to update members with progress.

Jane Maggs
Civic Voice Trustee

SOUTHGATE MASTERPLAN VISION

Recently Enfield Council's *Journeys and Places* team announced a new masterplan for Southgate town centre, setting out how it could be transformed over the coming years.

The plan includes a series of significant proposed changes to Chase Side and other main shopping areas such as Ashfield Parade and Crown Lane. The key priorities highlighted were safer walking routes, a welcoming station environment, reduced congestion and improved public spaces. You can see the vision [here](#).



The Masterplan will help develop a plan for Southgate and secure funding for a phased delivery over time. However, there will be no immediate changes as it is a vision for the future.

SDCV welcomes this next stage of Southgate's regeneration and that the concept shown will be an ambitious redesign of the area, incorporating many of the elements we know have been highlighted by this community at the various consultations.

However, at this stage, the vision does not show much detail, making it difficult to comment fully. We also realise that some parts of this vision may be less welcome than others, so look forward to seeing more details, allowing us to really understand what is proposed.

SDCV was asked to comment on the plans by the Enfield Dispatch and you can see our views [here](#), along with those of our Ward Councillors.

Southgate District Civic Voice has always been clear, that people will come to Southgate if we give them good reasons, so we see this as part of that important regeneration process.

Jane Maggs

FRIENDS OF PARKS

We are incredibly fortunate to be in area with so many beautiful parks. Even more important is that the users of these parks regularly get together to work on projects that benefit the whole community.

So, a couple of events organised in the last few weeks.

Broomfield Community Orchard Wassailing

On a damp and grey day in January, residents got together to wake up the orchard. With the intention to ward off bad spirits and please the trees, there was singing and a banging of pans while parading round the orchard. The children hung toast from the trees to please the bees in the orchard bee hives.



A noisy and fun afternoon. See Friends of Broomfield Park website for more information [here](#).

Oakwood Park Wetland Maintenance

On a bright day in January, Thames21 arranged a long morning of wetland maintenance with the Friends, who were joined by members of Pymmes BrookERS.

The volunteers did a marvellous job of clearing the invasive bullrushes and cutting back the plants to improve the biodiversity in the wetlands. It was gratifying to see how much the wetland has developed and the variety of wildlife that is now part of these areas.



For more information see the Friends Facebook [page](#).

*Jane Maggs
Photos: Mervyn Maggs*

GRAHAM BEECH MEMORIAL AWARD

A number of years ago an annual award was created in the name of Graham Beech's our previous Chair. After his sad death, this is our way to remember him and his commitment to *Southgate District Civic Trust*, as we were then known.

As in previous years, SDCV intend to present this award to a member who has made an outstanding contribution to this society or to the wider community. Over the years the award has been presented to really committed and deserving recipients and remains a fitting legacy to Graham.

Any member of SDCV can make a nomination for the award, however, please note, nominees *cannot* be members of the Executive Committee.

Nominations should be sent to me by 31st March, either by post: Jane Maggs, 108 Chelmsford Road, Southgate, London N14 4JL or by e-mail: info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org.

The current Chair and members of the Committee will judge the nominations and the award will be presented at the 2026 SDCV AGM.

If you have any questions about this please contact a member of the Executive Committee.

Nomination Form Graham Beech Award

Your name:	
Contact details: (E-mail or tel. number)	
Date:	
Name of nominee:	
Reason for nomination: (Use extra pages if needed)	