



# Foul-smelling sewage lake blights homes

By Margaret Crockett

Residents of St Pancras Court in the High Road, N2, have been suffering from sewage leaking from the drains since early December. The worst effect is a stinking, expanding puddle in the communal garden to the rear of the block where children usually play.



No go zone: A child's ball floats in the liquid sewage overflowing onto the lawn outside St Pancras Court

The situation has been repeatedly reported to the housing co-operative's manager Camden Council yet at the time of writing the cause of the problem remains unclear, as do any plans to remedy matters.

"The foul odour and unhygienic conditions are affecting the well-being of those living in the area," said resident Agnieszka Gasiewska. "Residents deserve to live in a safe and healthy environment, and continued inaction is unacceptable."

Neighbour Anna Lowenstein lamented a lack of communication from Camden: "All they needed to do was put a notice through the door". It was only by raising a complaint that she was able to obtain any information about the block management's actions to identify the cause of the leak and rectify it.

## Catalogue of causes

A five-page letter, dated 24 March, from a caseworker in the council's Property Management Department reveals the issue was first brought to their attention in early December. It catalogues eight reports of blocked drains overflowing with sewage over four months.

Different contractors during 12 site visits variously plunged, jetted, manually pumped, cleaned, disinfected, examined, reported and recommended action. They attributed the cause to "wet wipes and possible tree roots", "faulty pump room equipment causing fuses in the main isolator to blow" and "a severe break 30cm downstream from the manhole, as well as a large tree root at 17 metres".

The letter suggests Camden

thinks the main cause is the malfunctioning pump chamber and blocked drainage system. However, deployment of the necessary tanker, pump engineer and confined space equipment has still not been scheduled despite their acknowledgement that the situation is urgent.

Regarding the tree root, the boundary line of the property is at 12 metres and therefore Thames Water's responsibility to fix. Camden Council "has made enquiries on how to address this matter".

Residents are concerned that when the warmer weather comes flies will breed and cause an additional health hazard. Meanwhile, where children used to play two once-bright balls lie stranded in the noxious puddle.



Gentle slope: Members of the East Finchley Running Community make their way up the High Road on one of their weekly outings

## A year under their belts

By Luke Brazier  
East Finchley Running Community began in April 2024 as an idea. And the growth we have seen in just a year is absolutely outstanding. Today we have more than 130 registered members, have completed more than 52 weekly runs and collec-

tively covered thousands of kilometres around the Finchley, Highgate and Muswell Hill areas... and made friends for life.

As founder I am so proud of what this community has become and it is so touching to see just how much good it has brought to our community. We continue to run every week and host our own long run events

and social events on weekends. With summer coming back we hope our numbers grow even more.

We meet every Monday at East Finchley Station, setting off at 7pm. We are open to all abilities and welcome seasoned and beginner runners alike. Join us for another amazing year. Find us on Instagram @efrun-community

## An evening of classical gems from Haydn and Stravinsky

Finchley Symphony Orchestra's next concert on Saturday 17 May will be an evening of classical and neo-classical gems from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Prokofiev wrote the *Overture on Hebrew Themes* in New York after fleeing Russia. Stravinsky's inspiration for the ballet *Pulcinella* was a collection of 18<sup>th</sup> century which he adapted to a more modern

style. Finally the *No 99 in E Flat* from Haydn's 12 'London' displays his characteristic cheerfulness and wit.

The concert takes place at Trinity Church, Nether Street, N12, on Saturday 17 May starting at 7.30pm. Tickets are priced £18, £15 for those under 26 and over 60, and £2 for those under 18 with a saving of £1 per ticket by booking online at [www.finchleysymphony.org](http://www.finchleysymphony.org)

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