

**Your Residents' Association - working for the local community since 1948**



*Sgt Sam Hemstead (photo by Patricia Pearl)*

## Advice from your local police team

On 5th February, we welcomed our local Sergeant Sam Hemstead and Fortis Green PCSOs Ade Taylor and Trish Chang who gave an interesting talk on the work undertaken by our safer neighbourhood teams. Sgt Hemstead explained that in London neighbourhood policing is arranged on a ward basis and that he leads the Muswell Hill, Fortis Green and Alexandra Park safer neighbourhood teams (SNT). The SNTs are dedicated to serving the local community and work closely with the local authority, community leaders and residents to agree the policing priorities for the area.

The current local priorities included burglary, robbery and motor vehicle crime in Fortis Green, and theft (shoplifting), burglary and anti-social behaviour in Muswell Hill. Last autumn there was a spike in burglaries, this was addressed by undertaking special night time patrols and the burglaries have reduced. Shoplifting is taken seriously in Muswell Hill and the police regularly patrol the shopping area and talk to the shop owners, and run special plain clothes patrols. A number of arrests for shoplifting have been made recently.

PCSOs Ade Taylor and Trish Chang gave the audience an insight into "a typical day in the life of a PCSO"; starting early in the morning with a check of the overnight crimes; then a patrol around a crime hotspot followed by meeting the public at a Contact Point in a local café; and finally a visit to some local residents to provide re-assurance following a burglary in the road. PCSOs have reduced powers compared to their Police colleagues, but not many people know that a PCSO is able to detain a suspect for 30 minutes until a Police officer is able to attend.

Local Police meetings and events are detailed on the Met Police website, examples are Cuppa with a Copper held in local cafes, Drop-in Surgeries and Walk, Talk and Do in local roads – just head to the Met Police website and type in your postcode to find your ward SNT.

The talk was rounded off with by a question and answer session and topics covered included burglaries, mopeds in the Broadway, mobile phone snatches, local school police officers, the importance of reporting every crime and crime prevention tips.

*Brian Livingston*

*Patricia Pearl, who was in the audience, noted down **three top crime prevention tips** - see page 3*

## ***Come to our next members' event - Guided Walk around Muswell Hill***

**2.30 to 4pm on Saturday 22nd March**

Join Sally from North London Tours and learn about the history of Muswell Hill including dairy farms, a Victorian murder, nuns, suffragettes, a one-legged poet and much more!

Limited places - email [meetings@mhfga.org](mailto:meetings@mhfga.org) to sign up

## MHFGA meeting and events plan for 2025

We have a packed schedule of events for 2025 - full details with dates and times will be emailed to members in advance, published on our website and included in future newsletters.

- **Saturday 22nd March 2.30pm** - guided walk, free but must be booked in advance, see front page
- **Thursday 1st May 8pm** - Muswell Hill Methodist Church, North Bank - talk by **Maureen Paton** on her new historic crime novel and the research behind it
- **Thursday 15th May 8pm** - United Reformed Church, Queens Avenue - **AGM and members' social**
- June - Local guided walk
- September - Evening talk
- November - early Christmas Holiday Social Event

We will also be organising family volunteering opportunities such as local litter picking.

*Della Deme*

## Changes around the Broadway

See our **Facebook page** for the latest news:

- **Sae Woo Vietnam Street Food** is opening where The Real Greek used to be (*see photo right, by Zoe Norfolk*)
- Kitchen makers **Martin Moore** has closed its Muswell Hill branch
- The local branch of skin clinic chain **sk:n** seems to have closed



## MHFGA Committee members

### Chairman

*[vacancy]*

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### Planning

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### Treasurer

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### Administrator

*Laura Bugden*

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### Newsletter Editor

*Duncan Neill*

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### Tree Officer

*Jonathan Popper*

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Latest local stories on our Facebook page  
[facebook.com/MHFGA](https://facebook.com/MHFGA)



Local stories and links on our X (Twitter) feed  
[@theMHFGA](https://theMHFGA)



Great photos on our Instagram account  
[@mhfga](https://mhfga)

Visit our website [www.mhfga.org](https://www.mhfga.org) for lots of information about the local area including old photos and films of Muswell Hill, useful local links, MHFGA archives and John Hajdu's fascinating history of the Association.

## Crime prevention tips

### Tip 1: Protection from distraction thefts; and an invitation to dial 999

Distraction thefts happen when fake operatives come into your home – they distract you and steal car keys, cash or anything they see lying about the place, often in the hallway. Obviously, you will check their ID, but criminals are good at faking ID and can buy convincing fake uniforms on the internet.

Here are just two things to make you suspicious:

**Operatives turning up without an appointment.** They may have a story that explains that it is an emergency e.g. a gas or water leak in the street, but are they telling the truth? Be suspicious of anyone who does not have an appointment.

**Operatives turning up in pairs.** It is highly unusual for gas and water companies to send two people to an address. Distraction thieves usually operate in pairs – one of them stands in the hallway pocketing your valuables whilst you take the other one to another part of your house.

If you refuse entry to suspicious callers, then do not hesitate to go straight to the phone and call 999. The police response team will be delighted to dash along and if they find them in the street eyeing up other potential victims they will stop them and have a chat with them.



*Two of the Safer Neighbourhood team at the Farmers Market in Ally Pally in February, where they were chatting to shoppers and stall-holders, and security-marking bikes*



*PCSO Trish Chang, Sgt Sam Hemstead and PCSO Ade Taylor*

### Tip 2: Garden safety and a pruning job

Hard to believe it, but soon winter will be over and the shrubs in our front gardens will be growing again. Burglars don't like fiddling with locks and breaking down doors when passers-by can watch them in action. Make sure that there is a clear view of your front door and side entrance from the road by cutting back the shrubs before they grow and block the view of your locks. Shrubs should be below head height to prevent thieves from hiding behind them.

### Tip 3: Burglaries usually happen in empty homes

Burglaries almost invariably happen in empty homes, so make sure that your home looks as if it is occupied when you are away – lights which go on and off automatically are an obvious way to do this. If someone is popping in to feed the cat, ask them to open and close the curtains. Video doorbells are also a deterrent as the burglars often ring the bell first to check that a house is empty.

If you are at home and a burglar gets into your house, then you should never confront them. If you make your presence known, the burglar is likely to leave. Phone 999 as soon as it is safe to do so.

*Patricia Pearl*

## How to report a crime

- **Phone 999** if a crime is still taking place
- **Phone 101** (the non-emergency number) if you've witnessed or been a victim of a crime that isn't an emergency
- Report a non-emergency crime on the Metropolitan Police website at [met.police.uk](https://www.met.police.uk)



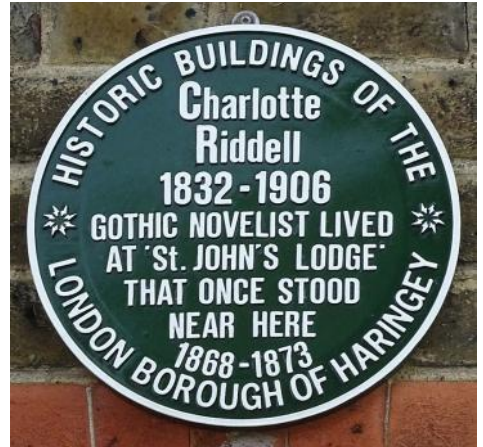
## ***The ninth in our series on local Green Plaques*** **- Charlotte Riddell: More than Gothic**

***The Green Plaques, originally an idea of the then Chair of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association, John Hajdu, were subsequently adopted for the whole of Haringey. This plaque was unveiled on 8th March 2010, International Women's Day, at St Ann's Hospital entrance in Hangar Lane (today's St Ann's Road) to honour her contribution to literature and commemorate her time in the borough.***

When Charlotte Riddell (1832-1906) came to Haringey, the area was still largely undeveloped, with open fields, farms, and a few scattered houses. Its peaceful countryside atmosphere gave her respite from London's business hustle, which featured in many of her works.

By then, she had already established herself as a significant figure in Victorian literary culture, both a prolific novelist and a pioneering female publisher. From 1868 to 1873, she lived in St. John's Lodge, a prominent 19th-century residence in Haringey, where she played a crucial role in shaping mid-Victorian literature through her fictional depictions of business life, supernatural tales, and editorial work.

Though also labelled 'Gothic' and sensationalist' writer, Riddell was one of the few Victorian novelists to specialise in commercial and financial themes, a subject often overlooked in fiction. Her novels provided a realistic portrayal of the London business world, stock exchange, and financial struggles, reflecting the economic anxieties of the period. Works like *Above Suspicion* (1870) and *Austin Friars* (1871) explored the tensions between morality and commerce, demonstrating her deep understanding of business life. Her ability to integrate detailed financial dealings into compelling narratives set her apart from other Victorian writers.



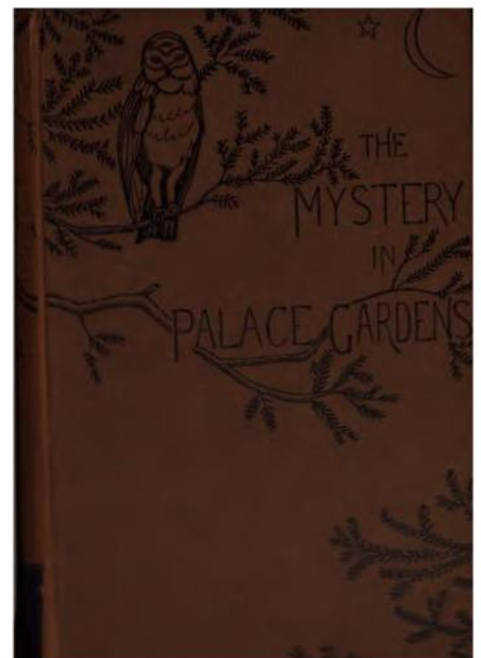
Her 1870 novel *A Struggle for Fame* is particularly significant as a semi-autobiographical account of a female writer navigating the literary marketplace. It highlights women's difficulties in gaining recognition and financial security in the publishing industry. Riddell's heroines, often navigating financial struggles and the male-dominated business world, challenged traditional domestic roles. Victorian critics sometimes viewed this as unfeminine, though her novels still reinforced Victorian values like duty, morality, and perseverance. Some readers appreciated her practical, hardworking women, while others preferred more sentimental, romanticized female portrayals. Despite mixed reactions, Riddell's progressive yet restrained feminism helped shape literary discussions on women's roles in Victorian business and society.

In 1868, Riddell became the sole proprietor and editor of *St. James's Magazine*, an unusual and bold move for a woman in the male-dominated Victorian publishing world. Under her leadership, the magazine published a mix of fiction, literary criticism, and essays, appealing to a middle-class audience. It also supported emerging

writers, helping to shape public taste, and reinforcing her influence on Victorian literary culture.

Despite financial difficulties, she sustained the magazine for five years, demonstrating remarkable resilience and business acumen. During this time, she continued to write and publish her fiction, using her magazine to engage readers with realist and supernatural themes, blending the Gothic with domestic realism, reflecting Victorian anxieties about the unknown.

Charlotte Riddell wrote over fifty books, which are now in the public domain and downloadable for free from several online platforms, such as Project Gutenberg ([gutenberg.org](http://gutenberg.org)), the Internet Archive ([archive.org](http://archive.org)), Google Books ([books.google.com](http://books.google.com)), and Wikisource ([en.wikisource.org](http://en.wikisource.org)).



## Would you like to see a Repair Café in Muswell Hill? Can you help make this happen?

Haringey Fixers currently run “community repair cafes” at four locations across the borough. The Repair Cafes are free and run by volunteers at local community centres. Each Repair Café takes place once a month over a Saturday lunchtime and during this time local residents bring in their broken items and volunteer “fixers” are on hand to help the local residents repair their broken items.

Haringey Fixers would like to see a Repair Café open in Muswell Hill and have asked if any of the Association’s members would be interested to help make this happen. Volunteers can help in a whole range of ways – helping to organising the event, setting up / taking down, running the desk on the day, shadowing repairers, becoming a repairer or just being a supportive spectator.

Learn more at [haringeyfixers.org/what-is-a-repair-cafe](http://haringeyfixers.org/what-is-a-repair-cafe)

If you are interested to help please email Brian Livingston at [environment@mhfga.org](mailto:environment@mhfga.org)



## Local transport news: 603 and mopeds

Camden Council has given its backing to the campaign for an extended 603 bus service between Muswell Hill and Swiss Cottage – mainly used by school pupils but arriving in Muswell Hill after the school day has already started. Green School Runs, the Hampstead charity founded by parents concerned about poor air quality caused by traffic congestion, also has a web page dedicated to the campaign – find out more at [greenschoolruns.org/603-bus-campaign](http://greenschoolruns.org/603-bus-campaign)

Members have frequently been in touch with the Association regarding delivery mopeds taking up excessive space and loitering on the Broadway. Haringey Council is paying particular attention to their safe use and reducing accident levels – and will be adding dedicated bays to use when parked between deliveries.

To suggest suitable locations off the Broadway, please email [transport@mhfga.org](mailto:transport@mhfga.org)

*Chris White*



## Thank you Haringey Parks Department!

Brian Livingston recently met with Chris Cavalier, the new Haringey Parks Manager, and carried out a walk around Muswell Hill to view the green spaces requiring attention. Soon afterwards, the Parks department weeded the two beds in Fortis Green Road and laid new bark to discourage new weed growth.





## Zoe Norfolk's photos of Muswell Hill

Spring photography from around Muswell Hill by our Social Media Officer, Zoe Norfolk. Her book of local photographs is available at [zoe-norfolk.sumupstore.com](http://zoe-norfolk.sumupstore.com) - use checkout code N10FREE for free delivery.



## Local organisations

Please send event details for our next newsletter by 15th April to [editor@mhfga.org](mailto:editor@mhfga.org)

### ALEXANDRA PALACE AND PARK

The Alexandra Park Visitor Centre near The Grove car park is open **every Sunday between 2 and 4pm**. Events and visitor information always available at [alexandrapalace.com](http://alexandrapalace.com)

### DEMENTIA FRIENDLY HARINGEY

Support group for relatives, friends and carers of loved ones who have dementia. Monthly, **every second Thursday 4.30 to 6pm** (no meeting in January) at Haynes Dementia Hub, 151 Park Road, Hornsey, N8 8JD. Email [dementiafriendly@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:dementiafriendly@haringey.gov.uk) for further info.

### FRIENDS OF COLDFAHLL WOOD AND MUSWELL HILL PLAYING FIELDS

Regular meetings on **first Tuesday of the month 7.30pm**. [coldfallwoods.co.uk](http://coldfallwoods.co.uk) for more information.

### FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD

Friends of Queen's Wood working parties on **last Sunday of the month from 10.30am**. Tools provided but bring suitable gloves. Spring Greens walk on **Sunday 13th April 10.30am** and Bird Walks on **Saturday 5th May 5am / 8am**. Visit [fqw.org.uk](http://fqw.org.uk) for more information.

### HARINGTON SCHEME

Providing unique opportunities for young adults with learning disabilities and/or difficulties. More details including upcoming Open Days at [harington.org.uk](http://harington.org.uk)

### HIGHGATE CHORAL SOCIETY

*A Season To Sing* concert on **Saturday 17th May 7pm** with works by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange, Russell Hepplewhite, Ronald Corp, Vaughan Williams, Elgar. Details at [hcschoir.com](http://hcschoir.com)

### HORNSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Lots of resources and interesting local history books to buy plus details of regular events at [hornseyhistorical.org.uk](http://hornseyhistorical.org.uk)

### HORNSEY PENSIONERS ACTION GROUP

Contact Ann Anderson via [hornseypensioners.ag@outlook.com](mailto:hornseypensioners.ag@outlook.com) or on 07757 634405 or visit [hornseypensionersactiongroup.org](http://hornseypensionersactiongroup.org)

### HORNSEY PETANQUE CLUB

Details at [hornseypetanque.club](http://hornseypetanque.club)

### LONDON EPILEPSY ACTION

Contact Barbara Penney on 020 8883 0010 or email [barbarapenney@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:barbarapenney@yahoo.co.uk)

### MUSWELL HILL & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Now in its 111th year, a great network for anyone interested in gardening. Full information at [bloomingn10.co.uk](http://bloomingn10.co.uk)  
Contact: Jenny Kruss on 020 8442 0031 or [bloomingn10@outlook.com](mailto:bloomingn10@outlook.com)

### MUSWELL HILL BOWLING CLUB

Kings Avenue N10 1PB (next to No. 36)  
Founded in 1901 and one of the oldest clubs in north London.  
Full information at [muswellhillbowlingclub.co.uk](http://muswellhillbowlingclub.co.uk) – or contact Richard Johnstone at [rje938@gmail.com](mailto:rje938@gmail.com)

### MUSWELL HILL CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

The Contact Centre, attached to the Methodist Church in Pages Lane, provides a friendly and supportive place where the children of separated parents can meet their non-resident parent in a neutral and safe space on Saturday mornings. Further information can be obtained from our website [mhmc-contactcentre.org.uk](http://mhmc-contactcentre.org.uk) or by email at [contact.centre@mhmc.org.uk](mailto:contact.centre@mhmc.org.uk)

### MUSWELL HILL METHODIST CHURCH

Details including groups at [mhmc.org.uk](http://mhmc.org.uk)

### MUSWELL HILL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Meet on **Wednesday evenings** at Friends Meeting House in Church Crescent, and warmly welcome new members. Information at [muswellhillphoto.org.uk](http://muswellhillphoto.org.uk) or email [contact@muswellhillphoto.org.uk](mailto:contact@muswellhillphoto.org.uk)

### MUSWELL HILL SUSTAINABILITY GROUP

A local action group helping residents live more sustainably - saving energy, cutting waste, growing food locally and travelling greener. We work with other local groups, businesses, Haringey Council and our community energy company en10ergy. All are welcome to our regular speaker meetings, advice events including Green Open Homes, and social activities. Energy Transition talk with author Jean-Baptiste Fressoz **Tuesday 18th March 7.30pm**. Textiles Untangled workshop **Saturday 29th March 2 to 5pm**. Both at Muswell Hill Methodist Church. Details at [mhsgroup.org](http://mhsgroup.org) or email [info@mhsgroup.org](mailto:info@mhsgroup.org)

### NORTH LONDON CHORUS

A friendly local choir - visit [northlondonchorus.org](http://northlondonchorus.org) for details. J S Bach *Mass in B minor* on **Saturday 29th March 7.30pm** at St James Church, Muswell Hill, N10 3DB. Murray Hipkin *conductor*, Eloise Irving *soprano*, Martha McLorinan *mezzo soprano*, James Robinson *tenor*, James Geidt *baritone*, Meridian Sinfonia  
Tickets £26/£22/£14 conc. £2 reduction from website or via St James Church bookshop.

### ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

Lunchtime concerts at the church on Alexandra Park Road organised by V&J on **Saturday 8th March 1pm** - Celebrating International Women's Day with Beach, Clarke, Paradis and more. Muswell Hill Violin Studio. Details at [alexandrapark.org](http://alexandrapark.org)

### ST. JAMES CHURCH

Details including groups and concerts at [st-james.org.uk](http://st-james.org.uk)

### WAVE HUB

Regular events including the Wave Café, art, dance classes and well-being at [wavehub.org.uk](http://wavehub.org.uk)

## Membership Secretary wanted!

Volunteering is often interesting and rewarding. We love to hear from members who are thinking about getting more involved in the local community.

In particular, we are looking for someone interested in the role of Membership Secretary, to manage our members' administration and join the Committee as we work to engage with and expand our membership.

Our Committee is a friendly bunch and there is flexibility in adapting roles to fit individuals.

To have an informal chat please contact any of the Committee members listed on page 2.

**We look forward to hearing from you!**



## Bill Jago - in memorium

Many of members of the Association will remember Bill Jago, who sadly died on Boxing Day. Bill and his wife, Win, moved into Birchwood Avenue, where I lived, in the early 1970s. They joined the Association soon afterwards and were members for over 50 years.

Bill and I comprised the Association's anti-graffiti and flyposting team or, as one Ham&High headline had it, "*OAPs in Graffiti Busting Swoop*". We used to clear graffiti and flyposting on Muswell Hill Broadway on behalf of the Association from 2003 until Covid - 19 arrived. We never resumed it after lockdown, but these nuisances have not returned to a serious extent, which pleased both of us. We were satisfied that our experience of the effects of our removal of graffiti supported the hypothesis that the less graffiti there is in an area, the less new graffiti it attracts. The same applies to flyposting.



Bill had an amazingly good memory, but particularly about cars. He knew every car whose driver lived in our road, and he knew their house number. It was very useful when we had to remove all the cars from the road for the Birchwood Avenue centenary street party in 2006.

At about that time I received a letter from the police saying that our car had been seen driving dangerously in Grand Avenue and giving the time and date at which this was alleged to have occurred. A form was enclosed which I had to complete and return. It so happened that on that day we had a visitor, and our car was parked in front of our house for the whole of the period in question.

I told Bill about this, saying it was lucky that we had an independent witness. He said that there was a car identical to ours with a similar number plate, which he thought must "live" close to our road. He remembered its number! I filled in the form, giving the information supplied by Bill, and that was the last I heard of it. He was a good friend.

*Jack Whitehead*



### VE Day 80 - A Swinging Celebration

23rd April, Alexandra Palace Theatre

Special BBC Radio 2 concert marking 80th anniversary of VE Day.

Details about this and many other shows and events at

[alexandrapalace.com/whats-on](http://alexandrapalace.com/whats-on)

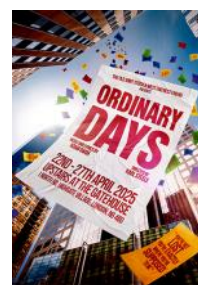
### Ordinary Days

22nd - 27th April, Upstairs at the Gatehouse

Musical about four New Yorkers in search of fulfilment, happiness, love and cabs.

Details about this and other shows including drama, magic and musicals at

[upstairsatthegatehouse.com](http://upstairsatthegatehouse.com)



## Membership

If you live, work, or just enjoy spending time in Muswell Hill, why not join over 700 other members of the Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association. For just £10 annual membership for households, or £25 for businesses and organisations, you can support our actions and campaigns; receive six bi-monthly newsletters with local news and events; receive email updates with community news and developments; attend members' meetings; and come to our annual guided local walk. Join at [mhfga.org/membership](http://mhfga.org/membership)

We encourage existing members not already set up on Direct Debit to do so at [membermojo.co.uk/mhfga/renew](http://membermojo.co.uk/mhfga/renew) where you can also renew using PayPal. For any membership queries, please get in touch via [membership@mhfga.org](mailto:membership@mhfga.org)

We are pleased to welcome all of our recent new members.

### Our business and organisation

members are key parts of our community. You can find links to their websites at [www.mhfga.org/directory](http://www.mhfga.org/directory)

Angela Rose  
Baby Sensory  
Broadway Beauty  
Broadway Pet Stores

Broadway Pharmacy  
Capital Gardens  
Children's Bookshop  
Clissold Arms  
Cloud 7 Brunch  
Cosi Homewares  
CPotential  
Dunn's Artisan Bakers  
East Finchley Open Artists  
Fornaro Pizza  
Gallalock  
Gibfit30  
Greens of Highgate  
Harmony Coffee House & Soft Play  
Hornsey Pensioners

House of Books (Fanshaw Books)  
Knights Gardens  
La Petite Colline  
Leigh Brown  
Lunablu Pizzeria  
Magma Books  
Meadow Motions  
Men @ 107  
Muswell Flyer  
Muswell Hill Bowling Club  
Muswell Hill Club  
Muswell Hill Creatives  
Muswell Hill Karate Academy  
Muswell Hill Methodist Church

Muswell Hill United Reformed Church  
Muswell Hill & District Horticultural Society  
Muswell Hillbilly Brewers  
New Wave Tattoo  
Norfolk House School  
North London Chorus  
North London Symphony Orchestra  
Panoptica - MH Optical Ltd  
Robert Linsky Optometrist  
Roni's Bagel Bakery  
Sally Bourne Interiors  
Snappy Snaps Muswell Hill  
Sounds & Shapes (V&J)

St Andrew's Church, Alexandra Park  
St James's Church, Muswell Hill  
Tatlers Estate Agents  
The Cut Barbershop  
The Good Rooms  
The Harington Scheme  
The People's Pantry  
The Robin Kiashek Osteopathic Clinics  
Total Boxer  
Walter Purkis & Sons  
WAVE Hub  
Woodland Tree Surgery  
Yogamatters