

The Northgate Bar & Restaurant

113 Southgate Road | London N1 3JS | Tel: 020 7359 7392
Email: thenorthgaten1@hotmail.com



Opening hours

Monday to Thursday Bar 5–11pm

Restaurant 6.30pm–10.30 pm

Friday Bar 5pm–midnight

Restaurant 6.30pm–10.30pm

Saturday Bar 11am–midnight

Brunch 11.30am–3pm

Restaurant 6.30pm–10.30pm

Sunday Bar midday–10.30pm

Sunday Lunch midday–midnight

Dinner 6.30pm–9.30pm

Children and dogs welcome

Enjoy a free glass of wine with your meal if you present this newsletter at The Northgate. Valid until 30 April 2011

NEW OWNERS ABOARD AT THE NORTHGATE

He may be able to roll out of bed and walk across the road to work these days, but James Leong admits sleep has become a luxury since he and his wife Roz bought the Northgate pub in December.

With a background in television, working for LWT, ITV and Granada for 20 years, it was the thought of his local – he's lived in the area all his life – on Southgate Road being turned into a chain pub or sold off as flats, that propelled James to take action.

'My father was a restaurateur but we had no experience in this game whatsoever,' he insists. They clearly have a talent for it though. In February, just weeks after opening, the Northgate was awarded the Michelin recommendation – something it had lost for the previous two years. These days, it's packed once again with locals looking for a meal, a drink and a relaxed atmosphere.

This is partly down to the chef, Barrie. 'When we started, people were interested in who we were but they were more interested in whether we still had the same chef, which we do,' said Roz, who still works in TV but helps in the pub and does the paperwork on the side.

'The Northgate has always had a great reputation for its food and we're continuing that with the best quality and freshest ingredients, and with a menu that changes every week,' she says.

They have many more ideas on the boil though. The pub currently opens at 5pm on weekdays, but the plan for the near future is to open at lunchtime and serve light meals. Full WiFi is also imminent.

With the buzz around the place obvious, the reality of life as a pub landlord is finally starting to kick in for James. 'It's all-consuming,' he laughs. **BW**

Produced by the De Beauvoir Association
info@debeauvoir.org.uk

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Sponsored by The Northgate, 113 Southgate Road, N1 3JS

AREA CHANGING FAST

Work has begun on the area's biggest development site by far – Kingsland Wharves. The project, covering five sites along the Hertford Road side of the canal basin and one on the Kingsland Road side, will provide 207 apartments, a health centre and a large amount of commercial and retail floor space including a restaurant.

The scheme will change the face of the basin with apartment blocks of up to eight storeys.

The sites are owned by housing association London & Quadrant and the £28.5 million construction contract went to Durkan Ltd.

Some of the commercial space will be in restored Grade II listed buildings, including those around the former stable yard, also called Hertford Wharf, once home to the hundreds of horses that pulled London's trams.



Demolition of newer structures is under way and the shell of an apartment building in Hertford Road is already up.

Residents of canal boats on the basin are being allowed to stay but the boats have been shifted to permit construction work.

An illustration by Estates Gazette of the basin and nearby De Beauvoir Crescent, along the canal, shows



a total of 667 homes planned or completed in recent years. This will leave one of the two branches of the builder's merchant Travis Perkins in Kingsland Road as probably the only canal-side site in or near the basin area that isn't for residential use. An application for development of Travis Perkins' other site, the former Keyline premises, was submitted last year, though it was withdrawn.

All this gentrification has been hastened by the attractiveness of canalside living and the reopening in May 2010 of Haggerston and Dalston Junction stations nearby.

Paul Bolding

DBA

COMING SOON
DE BEAUVOIR MARKETPLACE
BUY. SELL. BARTER.
SEE PAGE SEVEN

AROUND THE TOWN

THE ROSEMARY BRANCH

Our award-winning local theatre
2 Shepperton Road, N1 3DT
www.rosemarybranch.co.uk
Tel: 020 7249 4896
24-hour box office. Tickets £8–£16

La Ronde

Until 3 April 2011 A brand new musical by Peter Scott-Presland and David Harrod, inspired by the classic Schnitzler play.

I Am A Camera

3–29 May 2011 It is 1930's Berlin; Chris and the infamous Sally Bowles struggle with poverty, drink, love and sex against a backdrop of the gathering clouds of Fascism.

SKYWAY COMMUNITY COACHING

Tel: 020 7729 6970 or email: info@skyway.uk.com
Girls' football training, Mon 5–6pm at Britannia Leisure Centre.

Blue Hut

49 Provost Street, Hackney, London N1 7NZ
Open session for table tennis, pool and computer games or to meet people and socialise.
Every Thursday, 4.30pm–9pm; Ages 8–24

DE BEAUVOIR GARDENERS

www.debeauvoirgardeners.org.uk
The De Beauvoir Gardeners Club meets in the crypt of St. Peter's on the first Tuesday of the month at 8pm.
Annual subscriptions: Single £20; Couple £30;
Concessions £15 and £20

5 April: Our Local Community Gardens

Speakers from local community gardens. Meeting chaired by Mike Jackson. Plant and seed swap.

3 May: Spring Garden Walkabout

Visiting gardens in the De Beauvoir area. Further details available nearer the time.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

119 Balls Pond Road, N1 4BL
Tel: 020 7275 7640
www.thedukeofwellingtonN1.com
email: info@the.dukeofwellingtonN1.com
CINEMA CLUB (1st and 3rd Sundays every month; films start at 8pm, free entry)

3 April, 8pm: In The Mirror of Maya Deren (2002)

103 mins

A fascinating portrait of a groundbreaking artist, this documentary exposes Deren's initiatives in experimental cinema with impressive detail and majesty.

DE BEAUVOIR ESTATE

After the April 2010 AGM, Hackney Homes imposed arbitration on the TRA but this has not met with any success. A new Estate community group is now forming as an alternative. If you are interested in activities such as a lunch club, dance, drama, sport, gardening, an after-school club, or anything else, then please leave your name and phone number with reception in the Neighbourhood Office.

It's your home, your environment ... you need to get involved! Everyone welcome.

'Artists in De Beauvoir'

A selling exhibition of work by artists living or working in the De Beauvoir area St Peter's Church, De Beauvoir Road 4–5 June 2011

As you've probably heard or seen by now, St Peter's Crypt is undergoing a major overhaul to transform it into a thriving centre for social interaction, healthy living, creativity, cultural expression and community support. As part of the local fundraising appeal launched in May 2010 to help pay for the work, St Peter's is holding a selling exhibition of work by many of the highly regarded artists who live and/or work in the De Beauvoir area.

For many years now the Crypt has hosted a variety of cultural and artistic activities, ranging from drumming workshops, to life drawing, quilt-making, drama rehearsals, stone-carving and music-making. St Peter's attaches great importance to creativity as a means of building confidence, combating isolation and celebrating diversity. We hope that the newly refurbished Crypt will enable us to expand the opportunities on offer so that one day everyone in the community will have the chance to get in touch with their creative side!

Put the date in your diary now and come and see the astonishing amount of artistic talent that surrounds us in De Beauvoir!

DBA EVENTS – PARTY PLANNING UNDER WAY

Christmas is over, spring has sprung and it is 2011. Have courage! The summer will come and with it the Party in the Park – that great event for the children of De Beauvoir.

Planning for this year's party started almost as soon as last year's was over. We have provisional permission from Hackney Council but there's lots of planning and organising still to do.

The 2011 party takes place on 9 July so make a note in your diary. Admission and all the children's activities are free. These include face painting, a bouncy castle, various crafts and a stall where we give each child a book and a toy – until we run out.

Much of this costs money and one way we raise it is from you on the day. The Raffle and Tombola make a significant contribution to this. Fortunately people seem to have an insatiable appetite for Tombola tickets. Every year so far we have run out of prizes before we have run out of time!

So please try to give to the Tombola. Do you have unwanted Christmas presents? Are there other things in your house which might make a prize? Anything is welcome, providing it is in really good condition and won't harm children. To offer Tombola or Raffle prizes, please ring Maggie on 020 7249 5342 or email maggie.whiteley@mac.com.

We're also looking for used books – adults' and children's – and toys. If you can help, please phone Nancy on 020 7241 1582 or email info@debeauvoir.org.uk.

And if you can help on the day by fetching and carrying, erecting gazebos and taking it all down and clearing up afterwards, please let us know.

Thank you.

Maggie Whiteley

DBA

DE BEAUVOIR MARKETPLACE

Buy. Sell. Barter.

Showcasing local businesses and business people, amateurs, and entrepreneurs

Would you like to earn some extra money? In these cash-strapped times, who wouldn't? If you're a local business person, entrepreneur or amateur with a knack of making things, contact us at info@debeauvoir.org.uk and be part of the first ever De Beauvoir Marketplace.

On the day you'll be able to bring along your publicity material, chat to your neighbours about what you do, enjoy a cup of tea and maybe go home with some extra cash in your pocket.

Or perhaps you don't have anything to sell but need a local professional to do some work for you. Come along and see if the person you're looking for is right on your doorstep.

Alternatively, why not consider bartering? You could walk someone's dog or give a singing lesson in return for their digging your garden or altering a dress. It'll be up to the two of you to agree your terms.

We already have over 20 professionals and amateurs who've said they'd like to take part.

If you'd like to join them, let us know as soon as possible. We won't be able to include sellers or barterers unless they've registered with us in advance.

And do, also, spread the word among your local friends and neighbours. The more people we have on the day, the more fun – and hopefully profitable – the De Beauvoir Marketplace will be for everyone.

Let's make the De Beauvoir Marketplace a real success. And let's make it the first of many.

Hilary Mandleberg

DBA

We are planning the event for a Sunday afternoon (2–5pm) in June in St Peter's Crypt. Please watch DBA emails for the date or email info@debeauvoir.org.uk to get on the list.

Admission free for visitors, £10 for commercial exhibitors and sellers, £5 for sole traders and free for deserving causes.

SOUTHGATE ROAD SHOPS – WATCH THIS SPACE

It is still not clear what is happening to two shops in Southgate Road – the former health-food shop Zelda's Pod and the Leoprim pharmacy. Edward Benyon of the Benyon Estate tells us work currently under way at the health-food shop will double its size and create some office units at the rear.

The shop's owners, Zelda and Nadine, have said they are not planning to reopen.

Edward has had a number of approaches from people wanting to open shops and restaurants in the premises but has not taken a decision because the building work will not be completed until June and because the future of the pharmacy premises is unclear.

The pharmacist moved to Essex Road because the doctors' surgery is due to be relocated at St

Leonards, which would have reduced Leoprim's trade. However, the pharmacist has retained the Southgate Road lease in the hope that current regulations that stop him operating pharmacies in both places will be eased. City and Hackney Primary Care Trust confirmed to us recently that the plan to relocate the surgery at St Leonards remains, but they did not give a date.

Edward is happy to discuss the plans and can be contacted on edward@thebenyonestate.com.

Also in Southgate Road, the Northgate has happily reopened after a few weeks' closure last year when its fate seemed uncertain.

Many thanks to the new owners who have sponsored this newsletter.

Paul Bolding

DBA

WARTIME CHAPEL BATTLE FOXES STUDENTS

Q: What long-demolished De Beauvoir building was the answer to a question in a recent University Challenge?

A: The Brotherhood Chapel in Southgate Road.

The question asked the name of the building where the philosopher Bertrand Russell was attacked at a pacifist gathering in 1917.

Russell describes in his autobiography how the meeting, held by a movement fighting conscription, caused local opposition. 'Patriotic newspapers distributed leaflets in all the neighbouring public houses (the district is a very poor one) saying that we were in communication with the Germans and signalled to their aeroplanes as to where to drop bombs. This made us somewhat unpopular in the neighbourhood, and a mob presently besieged the church ...'



Bertrand Russell in 1907

'The mob burst in led by a few officers; all except the officers were more or less drunk. The fiercest were viragos who used wooden boards full of rusty nails ... Two of the drunken viragos began to attack me with their boards full of nails.'

Police stood by and watched while the attack carried on. 'I owe my life to a young woman whom I did not know, who interposed herself between me and the viragos long enough for me to make my escape,' Russell wrote.

It was apparently the same gathering shown on a grainy black-and-white film held by the British Film Institute called 'Pacifists routed at Brotherhood Chapel in Southgate Road'. The chapel, which stood on the corner of Balmes Road opposite what is now Rosemary Gardens, closed in the 1930s and was later pulled down.

The brainy students on University Challenge didn't know the answer.

Paul Bolding

DBA

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPONSOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THIS NEWSLETTER?

It's delivered to more than 3,500 homes in the area. If you're interested, email info@debeauvoir.org.uk for the current costs.

PLANNING MATTERS – WIN SOME, LOSE SOME

Those concerned for the built environment in De Beauvoir won a victory late last year but also suffered a defeat. Hackney Homes, the council's housing department, backed down over attempts to install gates and fences around the Lockner Estate in the face of opposition from residents and others in the area. At the same time, the council refused to stop the partial demolition of the former home of the late William Lyttle (the Moleman) at the corner of Mortimer Road and Stamford Road.

Hackney Homes first tried to erect the gates around the Lockner Estate in 2008 without seeking planning permission until residents pointed out that the estate is in the De Beauvoir Conservation Area. Although the planning application that was lodged last year lacked a Design and Access Statement – in breach of the council's own procedures – the planning department was ready to recommend approval.

Residents said they had not been properly consulted and that the scheme was not right for the estate.

'What we'd prefer is that Hackney Homes takes some time to discuss current security issues with residents, and that we work together to come up with several realistic alternative proposals, rather than going down a single predetermined route with the only other option being nothing at all,' Francine Bennett, secretary of the Tenants' and Residents' Association, told Hackney Homes in a letter.

Some people complained that the erection of fences would go against attempts to enhance social cohesion in the area and would detract from the look of De Beauvoir Square, where most of the properties are Grade II listed.

The Hackney Society's planning sub-group did not oppose the railings in principle but called for them to be properly designed. 'It is offensive that the Lockner Estate should be dismissed as a group of buildings with no architectural worth, and so do not merit consideration in the design of the railings,' it said in a letter to the planning officer.

'The addition of railings to the Lockner Estate offers not only an opportunity to improve the security of the residents, but also an opportunity to enhance the environment, and it is the Hackney Society's opinion that the local authority should be obliged to consider enhancements where opportunities arise,' it said.

In the case of the Moleman's house, the roof and upper sections of walls were removed by agents representing the heirs to Lyttle, who died intestate in June 2010. Although in principle, planning permission would have been needed for such action in a conservation area, the council decided it had no legal grounds to act because the demolition was not 'substantial'. A planning application to demolish Lyttle's pair of semi-detached houses and build a block of eight flats on the site was refused in November.

This planning application came from Simnat Plc which 'specialises in redeveloping derelict properties in the London area'. On networking website LinkedIn, one of Simnat's directors says, 'We also currently let 50 of our properties'. The company is associated with Fraser & Fraser, the law firm that features in the BBC TV programme Heirhunters. This firm tracks down the heirs of people who die without leaving a will so any heirs can claim on the estate.

When William Lyttle (known as the Moleman because of the tunnels he dug which destabilised the house) died, a Hackney Council spokesman was quoted by the Evening Standard as saying: 'The intention is to have the Mortimer Road property restored to the standards required by the Kingsland Conservation Area where it stands.'

Another director of Simnat told us he represents the heirs and hoped to get planning permission in order to increase the value of the site, sell it and pay off debts, including around £700,000 to Hackney Council. He said he was in discussion with the council about the application.

The council won a court order in 2008 evicting Lyttle and ordering him to pay nearly £300,000 for the cost of shoring up the property.

It was never really clear why he dug the tunnels but Lyttle was sometimes quoted as talking of 'home improvements'. The Guardian quoted him in 2006 as saying: 'I first tried to dig a wine cellar, and then the cellar doubled, and so on. But the idea that I dug tunnels under other people's houses is rubbish. I just have a big basement ...'

The council's own Conservation Area appraisal for De Beauvoir of 2008 said: 'It is imperative that the building is refurbished, as it stands on an important apex or focal point in the De Beauvoir Conservation Area.'

Paul Bolding

DBA

BALLS POND ROAD – CELEBS BEHIND THE FACADE

There's nothing odd about the businesses on the De Beauvoir side of Balls Pond Road except their street numbers, but they certainly encompass a wide and surprising range of activities.

For Strategy Finance (no 173), it was the office's position and visibility on Balls Pond Road that led Alp Ceylan to relocate his mortgage and commercial loan business there in 2004. While the majority of his clients are Turkish and Greek, and business comes from all over the UK, his business base has definitely made it more appealing to London clients.

'They come from the north, the east and the City because it's easy to access,' says Alp, who hails from Turkey and has lived on Southgate Road for three years. 'It's become a much better area. Everything is improving.'



The busy road and passing trade also appeal to a range of other businesses. This includes Leyland (no 19–29), the specialist decorator merchants, the trendy Duke of Wellington pub (no 119), and even Polsmak Delicatessen (no 39), the Polish deli set up in 2003 to cater for the area's large Polish community.

But while much of the Polish community has since moved to the Tottenham and Edmonton areas, the deli, according to owner Inga Wojciechowska, is staying put. And that's because of its location.

'Although we specialise in Polish food, we now have more English and international clients. Buying coffee and fresh sandwiches, people might try a new meat and then often come back for more slices later. Dalston and Balls Pond Road are constantly

changing, and that's been good for our business.'

It's been good for the Minik Kardeş community nursery (no 53–55) too. When it was initially set up in 1986, the area was completely different and so was business. Back then, they only had capacity for 22 children. Today, following a refurbishment, and with more young people moving into the area, they look after 57.



While its speciality is its 20 bilingual staff (Turkish and English), the nursery is open to all children aged three months to five years. 'We look after children from all different backgrounds, including French, Spanish, English, Scottish, Irish, Romanian and Polish,' says Selda, who has worked there for nearly three years.

But, unbeknownst to the majority of people, many more high-profile businesses operate behind the scenes on Balls Pond Road. And that's just how they like it. A tiny sign for Living Cinema (no 169) would hardly catch your eye, yet it's certainly caught the attention of the TV and film world.

Set up by a number of creatives in 2007, including director Jes Benstock, this film production company has produced a number of award-winning short films and documentaries – including the music video of Orbital's 'The Box' with Tilda Swinton.

Montgomery House (no 159–161) is another centre for underground businesses – or over ground in the case of Pineapple Agency, based on the first floor. Former professional dancers Rebecca and David always wanted their own studio. When the opportunity arose in 1986 to buy the agency, previously part of Pineapple Dance Studios, they



pirouetted at the chance.

Relocating to Balls Pond Road in the late 80s, they're now constantly surrounded by celebrities from TV, theatre, music and film. The majority of these hire the two large spaces at the back of the building for rehearsals.

Recent clients include everything from Strictly Come Dancing, Britain's Got Talent and the Billy Elliot musical to singers Whitney Houston, JLS and Victoria Beckham, practicing the choreography for their tours. 'We've always tried to keep things private because the people who come here enjoy the security that offers,' explains Rebecca.

A number of other businesses also operate from their studio space. Private singing lessons are available from Welshman Ian Baar. The First Dance Company offers private classes in ballroom, salsa and tango. Meanwhile, Michael McGuinness has recently set up his massage therapy business, www.thewisehands.com.

Downstairs on the ground floor of Montgomery House, the Costume Studio

has a harder time staying low-profile. They are specialists in authentic historical costumes, and production and film companies travel from all over the world to use their creations, most of which are made locally.

Especially popular in Britain, their work has appeared in everything from Armstrong & Miller and Harry & Paul to Peep Show. And their base on Balls Pond Road with its easy-to-access forecourt parking for production vans from across London has helped, says former actor Paul Evans, manager there since 1993.

So, is it the improving area, burgeoning businesses, or influx of affluent people that has deterred the robbery attempts on the premises over the last

few years? Well, that and one other vital element. 'We moved our replica crown jewels from the front windows and, let's just say, the problems stopped there!'

Words and pictures
Barbara Walshe **DBA**

Pictures:

Alp Ceylan (opposite)
Selda of Minik Kardeş
(centre)

This page from top: David
and Rebecca of Pineapple
Dance Studios;
Jes Benstock; Paul Evans

