

# HARROW PEOPLE

February 2019 issue • [www.harrow.gov.uk](http://www.harrow.gov.uk)

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*Harrow* COUNCIL  
LONDON





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**Cllr Graham Henson**  
Leader of Harrow Council

My mission for 2019 is to get the word out more, about the great things Harrow has to offer. So in this magazine we're showcasing a few services we're really proud of, that you might not know about – like our amazing children's home and our hard-working food hygiene team.

Community always comes first for me, though. Rabbi Lew is on the cover of this edition – and in recent days we stood alongside our Jewish community once again to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, to denounce the horrors of persecution against all peoples and beliefs. It is 25 years now since the terrible genocide in Rwanda, which we particularly marked.

Hate and fear are our enemies, and they're raising their ugly heads again, in these days of austerity, uncertainty and division. It is only by sticking together, as a truly cohesive community, that we can all look forward to a bright future.



'It is a lifesaver for Phoebe and the family'

– Charlotte Mansell, mother of Phoebe, pictured in The Firs sensory room



# Ten years at the top

The Firs Children's Home has enjoyed an 'Outstanding' decade – given the highest rating by Ofsted for 10 years in a row; one of only a handful of such centres with this honour in the UK.

The Firs offers short breaks to children aged 5 to 18 with complex needs and learning disabilities. Overnight stays give families and carers a rest during term time. During half term time, a day care service is provided and longer stays are available during school summer time. This means children can go out on fun day trips and take part in activities. It means the children get a holiday as well as the families.

"Although we are a short-break service, the commitments we provide take the whole family into account," Firs manager Eithne Staunton says. "I never get tired

of working with the children and young people – I learn so much from their needs.

"It's so important that we go into the children's world – we need to learn how they communicate and then step into that zone.

"Nowadays, children are coming in with more and more complex needs, so we have to get the overall picture. I will keep pushing for a better outcome for them, because everything is about them.

"We don't shy away from challenges or difficulties, we are not risk averse and we include

everyone we need to. The staff here are really compassionate and they do a lot of preventative work with families to keep them together, for example, in cases of emergencies."

Eithne, who has worked at The Firs for 18 years, ensures her highly trained staff are updated with the latest education research, training and development.

This approach involves working closely with partners such as special needs schools, GPs, community nurses and hospital consultants, to keep on top of information and provide a holistic approach, which includes the

"It's so important that we go into the children's world – we need to learn how they communicate and then step into that zone'  
– Firs manager Eithne Staunton

## OUTSTANDING!

- The Firs is in the top 1% of Outstanding Children's Homes nationally
- Consistently rated as outstanding for 10 consecutive years
- Highly skilled, committed council staff work tirelessly around the clock
- Key to success is continuous training and positive development

children and their families. The Home provides the children and young people with life-changing experiences and relationships outside of their own home, helping them to become more independent, communicate, sleep and eat better, and learn new skills – such as riding a bike.

"It's all about having someone as an advocate to support these exceptional children, it's down to support and development," Eithne says.

"I've seen some incredibly positive experiences here and it's not easy at all, but it is really satisfying."





# WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH...?

## ... HARROW BUSINESS DEN

Applications are closed and now it's time to find out who will win a year's business support in our very own Dragons' Den-style competition.

Four entrepreneurs will vie for the title of Harrow Business Den

winner on 13 March at Harrow Civic Centre. Watch them pitch, network and find out more about business support available in Harrow, on the night. Register at [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk) – just search "Harrow Business Den".

## ... FOOD WASTE IN FLATS

Anyone living in a flat will have noticed red bins appear in their bin store over the new year.

January saw the launch of our food waste recycling rollout in all flats in Harrow. It's great for the environment, reduces general waste, and saves money in disposal costs.

For more information, check out [www.harrow.gov.uk/bin](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/bin).



## ... CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There's a new face at Harrow Council. Chief Executive Sean Harriss steps in following the departure of Tom Whiting. Sean brings a wealth of experience in local government leadership, serving as CEO at Lambeth and Bolton councils. "Sean is a 'people person'," said Harrow Council Leader Cllr Graham Henson. "His passion for improving the lives of our most vulnerable residents makes him a great fit for Harrow."



## ... HARROW-ON-THE-HILL



Plans to bring hundreds of new homes to the area around Harrow-on-the-Hill station are being brought forward by Transport for London and Redrow Homes. The improvements will also see better station access. You can see for yourself and tell developers what you think of the plans on Wednesday, 13 February, from 2pm to 8pm; and Saturday, 16 February, from 10am to 2pm, at Harrow Baptist Church on College Road. Email [harrowonthehill@fourcommunications.com](mailto:harrowonthehill@fourcommunications.com) or call 020 8626 8920 for more information.

## ... HARROW ARTS CENTRE

Put your paint brushes and dance shoes down for a minute – because there's fantastic news for Harrow Arts Centre!

The buildings that surround the historic Elliot Hall are being transformed, thanks to new investment from Harrow Council and the Mayor of London.

Architects are working on designs which will not only improve the complex of buildings on the site, but add extra space for everything from orchestras to yoga, from working to working out! That includes classrooms, affordable studios and an improved outdoor area.

The first new learning space will be available from autumn this year, with new artists' studios following in 2020.



## ... ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Improving air quality is a priority across the capital right now. So what is Harrow doing? As part of our push for electric vehicles, we have introduced 5 electric charge points in the town centre.

Most are available to the public but two, located in Greenhill Way car park, are reserved for an 'Electric Vehicle Fleet Trial' for town centre businesses.

The project will also help train local mechanics to maintain electric vehicles. Greenhill Go Ultra Low is one of 6 projects to be awarded funding by Transport for London and the Mayor of London, part of London-wide initiative Neighbourhoods of the Future. Email [travelplanning@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:travelplanning@harrow.gov.uk) for more information.

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## FAT MAN CHILLI

**S**omewhere in sleepy, suburban Kenton lurks Harrow's spiciest secret. “Everything that happens at Fat Man Chilli is my responsibility,” says Paul Davies. “I grow the chillis, invent the recipes, cook the sauces, bottle them up, do the branding and sell the product! I do seven sauces, all with different inspirations, different blends of chilli and very different flavours.”

Paul's been selling his chilli sauces in Harrow for more than a decade – and claims his sell-out products beat any commercial sauce for taste. “I like to be inventive with ingredients. And everything goes in fresh – you'll see me in the Asian supermarket up on Belmont Circle. I use all kinds of unusual things.”

Paul's garden shed serves as office, store room and distribution centre. The multi-coloured bottles offer a rainbow of flavours – from fruity to

earthy. And they're fiery, too... “So many producers focus on making the hottest thing they can. I say it's about flavour as well as heat.”

Outside, Paul's garden will soon bristle with thousands of green, yellow and red chillis. Whatever must his neighbours think!

“This was always a hobby. I worked for a print and design company at the Crystal Centre. I just wanted do something different. You won't get rich doing this but you're your own boss, you get to do what you love – and create something that makes people happy.”

Taste it for yourself – you can buy Paul's sauces online at [www.fatmanchilli.co.uk](http://www.fatmanchilli.co.uk)

**● Fat Man Chilli is regularly inspected by our food hygiene officers. See pages 10-11 to find out more about their work.**





# Food for thought

Harrow has thousands of food outlets and our Environmental Health Team want to know everything you

eat is safe and prepared in clean, well-run kitchens. Here's how we make sure you can trust what you eat...





# Are you looking after someone else's child?

That might make you a 'private foster carer'.

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## Rogues' gallery

### SLUMLORD MILLIONAIRE

Boxroom bedsit overlord Vispasp Sarkari faced paying £1.5million or spending nine years behind bars for building a slum empire across Harrow and Brent. While his tenants were crammed into substandard flats converted without planning permission, Sarkari raked in the cash from exorbitant rents. Sarkari, 56, of Hawthorne Avenue, ignored enforcement warnings from Harrow Council before being brought to justice with the record-breaking fine.

**We're always on the lookout for bad behaviour, ready to bring to justice anyone who makes Harrow less safe. Here are some of the rogues we caught up with recently...**

### CAUGHT ON CCTV

Even if you're aiding and abetting a fly-tipper, we'll still catch you. Karina Wallace learnt the hard way when she lent her car to two men who used it for a fly-tipping trip. The car was caught on CCTV and the owner fined £800. It's your responsibility to make



sure your waste is disposed of legally – and that your vehicle isn't being used to illegally carry waste!

### FILTHY FLY-TIPS

We've been hot on the heels of some filthy fly-tippers caught blighting your streets. These are just some of the fly-tips where we found the evidence, traced the dumpers and fined them. We made them pay the clear-up costs so you didn't have to. Check out this mess in Sancroft Road, Uxbridge Road, Glebe Lane and Ass House Lane.







# On the scent of fragrant fakers...

If you're thinking of buying your loved one perfume or cologne this Valentine's Day, you want to know you're getting the real thing. Harrow Trading Standards are sniffing out street hawkers who have been flogging fakes in the town centre. While the packaging looks genuine, these fake fragrances could contain bleach, anti-freeze and even urine.

Inspector Tanya Sprunks said: "We've recently seized more than 500 fake perfume bottles in St Ann's Shopping Centre and this figure just keeps on growing."

"If you're thinking of buying perfume cheaply on the streets, please think again – as you may be aiding criminals and spraying a possibly harmful substance on yourself or on others." Inspector Sprunks says these



pretend perfumers often spray would-be customers with the real thing, making them believe the traders are legitimate, then sell them a bogus product.

Simon Legg, from Brent and Harrow Trading Standards,

also warned people they could be buying stolen goods. "Illegal street traders are only interested in making as much money as they can by flogging knock-off gear," he said.

"This is totally unfair on shoppers, who are being conned, and shops trying to compete. If you're buying from unlicensed street traders, there is no way you can guarantee the quality or safety of the perfume. You won't smell as good and, worse, you risk getting skin irritations."

● If you have concerns about illegal trading, call Trading Standards via the Citizens Advice Bureau on 03454 04 05 06.



"We've recently seized more than 500 fake perfume bottles in Harrow and this figure just keeps on growing"  
– Inspector Tanya Sprunks

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**LANDSBY**  
STANMORE

## Sculpture Competition

Elysian Residences is seeking to commission a sculpture to be installed in the grounds of the Landsby, a luxury later living development in Stanmore, London.

The artwork is expected to respond to the design and location of the Landsby building. Entrants must be professional artists with experience of similar projects. Visit [landsbystanmore.com/sculpturecompetition](http://landsbystanmore.com/sculpturecompetition) for full details including how to enter, submission criteria and prize money.

Brought to you by Elysian Residences.

The closing date for entries is **15 March 2019**.  
Unveiling of the winning sculpture is planned for October 2019.



Home to movie stars and prime ministers, we spent an afternoon in Stanmore and found community spirit, great food and fun...



■ Raju took over the running of kosher deli and Stanmore institution Yosi's Boulangerie in 2000. Its bagels are famously good. "We make everything ourselves, fresh and on the premises."



■ Mendel Lew has been the Rabbi at Stanmore and Canons Park Synagogue for 13 years. "It's not just a place where we pray – we have wonderful volunteers whose work greatly benefits our community and wider society. Rabbi means teacher, but I'm also a counsellor. I'm there for people at the difficult times and the joyous ones too – I enjoy enriching lives and making people feel uplifted."



■ "We've everything you need for a party here!" Raj has run Balloon & Party on The Broadway since 1997, "We put a lot of emphasis on customer

service – everyone leaves with a smile! We do corporate events, bespoke centrepieces and personalised helium balloons are a speciality."



■ Millicent, who recently turned 101, joins the little ones for Rhyme Time in Stanmore Library. Though her memory's not what it was, Millicent knows all the songs. One of her carers, Mary, said, "She's like another person – she loves being with the kids!"



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**A**cross film, TV and advertising, Harrow's the star. Your local area has, in the last couple of years, cropped up more times than you might think on screens big and small, playing both itself and a remarkable range of other locations.

Harrow's list of credits include prestigious international productions, like Netflix's The Crown; Hollywood blockbusters starring Samuel L Jackson, Ryan Gosling, Gary Oldman and Rosamund Pike; sitcoms; light entertainment and adverts for everything from Barclays and Volkswagen.

So, what is it about Harrow that's so attractive? "It's because of its adaptability", said Darren Butterfield, Harrow Council's senior business and commercial officer. "Harrow's a diverse place. There's beautiful green spaces, ancient buildings, historic high streets, period suburbs and some really special places, like Harrow-on-the-Hill and Headstone Manor.

"Medieval, Victorian, Art Deco, wartime, late twentieth century – we've got the lot. Even the Civic Centre is in demand!"

Not the loveliest of buildings, you might think, but its period interiors recently starred

**Scenes from The Hitman's Bodyguard and 7 Days in Entebbe filmed at Harrow Civic Centre, and Rocketman in Pinner**

# Harrow to Hollywood



**Top, the Civic Centre during filming of 7 Days in Entebbe; above, Keith Lemon films Celebrity Juice at the recycling centre, and a Lotto advert is filmed in Harrow town centre**

in two Hollywood movies – standing in for the International Criminal Court in The Hitman's Bodyguard and as the centre of Israeli operations in 7 Days in Entebbe.

Two more major movies landing soon filmed extensively in Hatch End, West Harrow

and Pinner. Look out for Blinded By The Light – an eighties coming-of-age drama from the director of Bend it Like Beckham, and Rocketman, the Elton John story, starring Taron Egerton as the local superstar.

"He was born and grew up in Pinner", Darren said. "And in

many ways the area's barely changed. Introduce period vehicles and costume and you're transported back to the Harrow of Reginald Dwight's youth!"

● **Want to know more about filming in Harrow? Email [film.service@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:film.service@harrow.gov.uk).**



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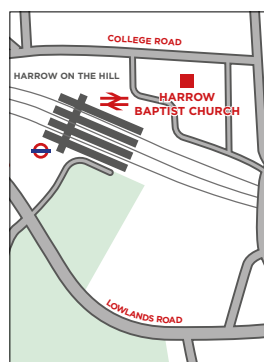
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HARROW  
STAR  
Melissa  
Western

## Home sketch

There's a charming world of colour and character behind the door of Melissa Western's Harrow Weald home.

A trained illustrator, it was only after recently being made redundant that Melissa started regularly sketching and painting again, "I needed a creative outlet and wanted to do something for myself. I first sold my work at Headstone Village Show last year – it's all taken off pretty quickly!"

An unexpected hit was her pen and ink rendering of Harrow highlights, which in tea towel form can already be found in kitchens across the borough. "I wanted to celebrate all the interesting things here...and there's something about tea towels – it's an easy way to buy some art."

Melissa's love of nature leaps from the page, in work that's free and spontaneous, but also neatly contained. Her studies of British wildlife and flowers are direct and vivid, and there's some whimsy too – super foods wearing capes, burgers handing out hugs, lucky pants and musical mice.

"I tend just to go for it, not sketch out in pencil. The first attempt usually ends up as the final work – the smaller pieces I can do in under an hour." Many end up starring on beautiful greetings cards – a little bit of loveliness for whoever receives them.

● See them for yourself and Melissa's other work on Instagram @westernsketch and under the same name on etsy.com

"An idea will pop into my head and when I next have a moment, like when my youngest is napping, I'll get to work"  
– Melissa Western





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\*Data from 2017 Residents Survey

**Harrow COUNCIL** LONDON

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# WHAT'S ON

## HARROW ARTS CENTRE

[www.harrowarts.com](http://www.harrowarts.com)

### LOL (Ladies of Laughter)

8 February | 8pm-10.40pm | £18  
■ Noreen Khan is back with a night of non-stop laughter after last year's sold out event. (Ages 16+)

### Pinocchio

18-19 February | £10  
■ Immersion Theatre present a new, larger-than-life musical adaptation of the classic.

### Legend: The Music of Bob Marley

30 March | 7.30pm-9.50pm | £20  
■ An unforgettable evening celebrating Bob Marley and his timeless hits.

## HEADSTONE MANOR & MUSEUM

[www.harrowmuseum.org.uk](http://www.harrowmuseum.org.uk)

### Stained Glass Lanterns

17 February | 11am - 3pm | Free  
■ Be inspired by Whitefriars stained

glass and create your own design on a jam jar! Suitable for ages 5+ and their grown-ups!

### Tuesday Talk – Tales from the Teacup – Women and Tea

5 February | 2pm-2.30pm | £4  
■ An entertaining lecture which showcases some of the dynamic women – from different social classes – who helped create our tradition of English Afternoon Tea. From Catherine of Braganza to Clarice Cliff, we will celebrate the role tea has played in their lives, as well as our own.

### Gnome Hunt

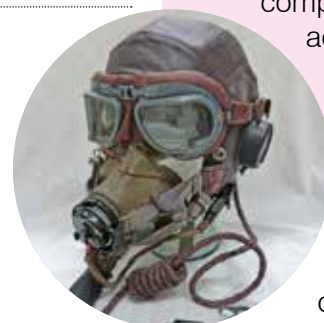
6 April-21 April | 10am-4pm | Free  
■ Can you find all of the naughty gnomes and solve their puzzle?

## BENTLEY PRIORY MUSEUM

[www.bentleypriorymuseum.org.uk](http://www.bentleypriorymuseum.org.uk)

### RAF Sweethearts

16-23 February | 11am - 3pm | Museum admission price  
■ Be inspired by RAF Sweethearts to decorate your own biscuits.



### 'Flying Helmets: A Century of RAF Innovation'

15 March | 11am-12pm | Museum admission price  
■ Learn about how headwear has changed over a century of powered flight in this talk by Vernon Creek.

## HARROW LEISURE CENTRE

[www.everyoneactive.com](http://www.everyoneactive.com)

### Sk8 Friday

16 February | 1-3pm, 4-7pm, 9pm-2am\*  
20 – 21 February | 4-7pm, 8-11pm  
22 February 6- 9pm, 9.30pm- 2am\*

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### CREATIVE COLLAGE FOR KIDS

19 February | 10.30am-12pm | West House Gallery, Pinner, HA5 1AE | £7  
■ Come along and let your child get creative with our great fun collage workshop. The children will experiment with colour and pattern combinations to create their own mini masterpiece. Please do wear old clothes as we might get messy! Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult.  
[heathrobinsonmuseum.org](http://heathrobinsonmuseum.org)

### CREATE AND GROW

22 February | 10am-4pm | Squire's Garden Centres, HA7 3JF  
■ Keep the little ones busy this half term painting a woodland creature money box to take home for £4.75, followed by a free butterfly trail competition. Children must be accompanied by an adult.  
[www.squiresgardencentres.co.uk](http://www.squiresgardencentres.co.uk)

1st, 8th, 15th, 29th  
| 6-9pm | 9.30-2am\* | From £7  
■ Roller-skating disco fun for the whole family. Includes

fully licensed bar and refreshments. \*Late entry starting at 9.30pm is for adults only. Email [Sk8citylondon@gmail.com](mailto:Sk8citylondon@gmail.com)

### Swimathon 2019

30-31 March | Harrow Leisure Centre  
■ The 2019 Swimathon challenge is back! Participants can choose



[squiresgardencentres.co.uk](http://squiresgardencentres.co.uk)

### QUIZ NIGHT

7 March | 8.30pm-10.30pm | Trinity Bar, 378-380 Station Road, HA1 2DE  
■ Trinity Bar is hosting a quiz night for Pub Aid, raising funds for Prostate Cancer UK. Email [trinitybarharrow@gmail.com](mailto:trinitybarharrow@gmail.com) to find out more.

### VERDI REQUIEM: THREE CHOIRS CONCERT

30 March | 7.30pm | £21 | Watford Colosseum  
■ Harrow's first three classical choirs, Harrow Choral Society, Harrow Philharmonic and Stanmore Choral Society unite for what promises to be a very special show.  
[www.harrowchoral.org.uk](http://www.harrowchoral.org.uk)

their distance or complete the team challenge, with proceeds going to Cancer Research UK and Marie Curie. Register at [www.swimathon.org](http://www.swimathon.org)

### Group Cycle class

■ New 6.30am Group Cycle classes have been added to the exercise programmes at Harrow Leisure Centre. For more information, contact the centre on 020 8901 5980.

## HARROW LIBRARIES

[www.harrow.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/libraries)

### Adult Winter Reading Competition

On now until 29 March  
■ Winter is the perfect time to curl up with a book. Collect an entry form for Harrow Libraries reading

competition from your local library. Borrow a book and submit your reviews and you will enter a prize draw to win tickets to a show, gym passes and a café voucher.

### Agatha Christie: Queen of Crime

11 February | 11am-12.15pm | Stanmore Library | Free  
■ Discover the secrets behind Agatha Christie, the "Queen of Crime", in this illustrated talk by Nick Dobson. The talk will look at her life and most famous creations.

### K'NEX

16 February | 2pm-4pm | Kenton Library  
19 February | 2pm-4pm | Roxeth Library  
■ The K'Nex modelling session brings all the family together to see who can build the craziest things from cars to windmills! K'Nex helps children develop valuable spatial and building skills. Free, no booking required. All ages.

### Digital storytelling workshop

23 February | 11am-1pm | Pinner Library | Free  
■ Looking for a fun and cool activity for your kids? Let them try their hand at digital storytelling. Create a trailer for your favourite book using stop-frame animation software, plus code your own story sounds. For more details, go to [www.ioi.london](http://www.ioi.london). For ages 6-11.

Do you have an event to promote in Harrow? Email us at [communications@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:communications@harrow.gov.uk)



### HARROW BUSINESS DEN 2019: THE FINAL

13 March | 5.30pm – 9pm | Harrow Civic Centre | Free  
■ Four entrepreneurs will go head to head in the fight to win a year's business support at our very own 'Dragon's Den' style competition, Harrow Business Den. This years event will feature special guest Shalini Patel, founder of Red Dot Jewels which specialise in handcrafted Indian-inspired fine jewellery. Watch the show, network and find out what business support is available from Harrow Council. Register at [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk) – just search "Harrow Business Den".

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- ☎ Neil 07879 271 726
- ☎ Sylvia 07790 964 408 or
- ✉ [info@justfriendsclub.org.uk](mailto:info@justfriendsclub.org.uk)

## Art and Craft Activity Club

**St. Luke's Pinner Parish Hall**  
Pinner (Term-time and holidays)

Tue	Wed	Thurs
1.45pm – 2.45pm 3.45pm – 4.45pm	11.30am – 12.30pm 1.45pm – 2.45pm 3.45pm – 4.45pm	11.30am – 12.30pm 1.45pm – 2.45pm 3.45pm – 4.45pm

**Northwood Methodist Church**  
Northwood (Term-time and holidays)

Fri	Sat
10.30am – 11.30am 1.45pm – 2.45pm 3.45pm – 4.45pm	10am – 11am

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Harrow's biggest networking event

# Harrow BUSINESS DEN 2019

## Watch the final

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5.30pm to 9pm  
Harrow Civic Centre

Register at [eventbrite.co.uk](https://eventbrite.co.uk)  
Search for 'Harrow Business Den'



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**‘Y**ou can call us to talk about anything that's getting you down. Bereavement, unemployment, loneliness, abuse, financial problems, self-harm – something that you can't cope with, or feel you can't share.”

Manju Anand is director of Harrow Samaritans – an organisation that's grown beyond its central mission, to reduce the number of people taking their own lives.

“Mental health issues are on the rise, and a lot of people are dealing with things alone. That's what we're here for. So nobody needs to be alone. What we do – is we listen. We don't judge, we don't lecture, we don't advise and we don't claim to have all the answers.”

Before becoming a Harrow Samaritan, all volunteers receive months of training and mentoring – which Manju says is rigorous but rewarding.

“We're trained to help people explore the things they're struggling with, share their

**‘We're trained to help people explore the things they're struggling with’**  
– Manju Anand

thoughts and emotions, and reach their own decision about what's best for them.”

Manju and her fellow volunteers are doing more outreach now, visiting schools to promote emotional awareness and letting young people know the Samaritans are there for them.

“Our national phone lines are open 24/7 and at Harrow Samaritans we work our fair share of twilight and night shifts. There's 65 of us – and nobody does a shift alone. That means a lot of stepping up to the plate – and our volunteers do it, every time. They want to, because they believe so deeply in what we do.”

So Manju is on the lookout for more volunteers – and, as



a Harrow charity, she's also seeking local funds and corporate sponsors.

“The money we raise all goes on our branch and shop running costs – electricity, heat, the phones. We want to go beyond that, and with just a little more, we could do a lot.”

● **Call the Samaritans 116 123 email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)**  
**Their fully accessible offices are open every day of the year at 44 Station Road, Harrow HA1 2SQ. You can drop in from 10am to 9pm Sunday to Friday, or 10am to 6pm on Saturdays.**



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# On a track to the top

**U**p-and-coming Harrow sprinter Omar Grant is knocking on the door of Team GB. We caught up with him and trainer, Rohan Samuel, at Bannister Sports Centre to talk explosive pace and handling that big race pressure.

"Omar's good enough to be in the top 12 in the country", Rohan said. "He can run 100 metres in 10.39 seconds, but producing that in competition is something else."

Rohan knows what he's talking about – he's part of specialist sprint training group, Motivated by Speed, which works to take talent to the next level. He's also a former world champion over 60 metres.

"Entering competition can be like throwing an athlete into a pit of fire. As a coach you've got to understand what's going to be good for them and what's going to harm them – I knew that Omar could mix it.

"70% of what we do is psychological – can you produce your best when standing on



## BACK A CHAMP

Now is your chance to support a future track star on his way to the top. If you're interested in sponsorship, Omar and Rohan would love to hear from you. Please email [communications@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:communications@harrow.gov.uk) and we'll put you in touch.

the line against seven guys that wanna kick your butt?"

"I was scared at the beginning", Omar said, "Some of the guys I was up against looked like beasts! I'm running, and can see them out the corner of my eye and I'm like, 'Why aren't they catching me?'."

Omar came third in his semi final at last year's British Indoor Athletics Championships, missing out on GB selection by the narrowest of margins. "The only people who beat me run for GB, and I had them with 30 metres to go!

"The aim last year was to be better than the year before – the aim this year is to make finals and win medals."

His next big chance comes this month at the National Indoor Championships when GB selection and European competition will again be at stake.

Omar is currently looking for a sponsorship deal that will support him to this next level. "We've got to pay to enter competitions, for travel and accommodation," Rohan says.

"It's hard. I run coaching for kids. A lot of them are just bored, and sometimes it comes down to money. It's £4 to run on the track, but it can be enough of a barrier to put them off."





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