



# Community Souls are there to help young people

By Diana Cormack

**Community Souls works with disadvantaged young people, helping them to improve their lives and communities through positive activities and employment opportunities. It was founded in 2011 by Rickardo Stewart, a young man who was born and brought up on the Grange Estate.**

He attended Holy Trinity and Fortismere schools and admits to having had a shaky start and needing help himself. His involvement in local gangs and that way of life was changed by a tragic event which led to him doing what he does today.

## A special track record

For the last eight years Rickardo has worked with some of London's most vulnerable young people, with his background providing a unique ability to relate to them and to advise others involved in such work. A trained youth worker and a well-being life coach, Rickardo has extensive experience which includes setting up youth clubs, working with children through Barnet Play Association, designing open access programmes and delivering mentoring programmes in HMP Belmont Prison with the Art Against Knives scheme.

But it all started in East Finchley with Rickardo helping at the Monday Youth Club, then run by Maureen Clemetson and Maureen Antoinette. It still needs a site for its meetings. Rickardo feels there is a lack of youth provision and funding in the borough which is failing youngsters from disadvantaged areas like the Grange and Strawberry Vale.

## Business with a difference

He is greatly involved in supporting them, identifying their individual needs and creating positive solutions that will benefit their future and the locality. To this end he set up the Community Souls Cleaning Company, offering young men and women on low income or benefits the opportunity for paid work and the chance to build their self-esteem and confidence, along with one-to-one mentoring. All profit generated is reinvested into the business to support the Community Souls' youth projects.

With this already working in other areas, Rickardo is appealing to local businesses and traders. Visit [www.communitysouls.co.uk](http://www.communitysouls.co.uk) or call 07581 070 717 to see what East Finchley can do to help this worthwhile cause.

## Look to your own

**The forthcoming concert by North London Chorus at St. James's Church in Muswell Hill will be a very 'in-house' affair. First of all, it will feature the church's magnificently restored organ in Faure's *Requiem* and Kodaly's *Missa Breve*.**

The concert also features the world premiere of a work by the chorus's very own award-winning composer, David



East Finchley library manager Sim Branaghan gives a talk on the history of British film posters.  
Photo Mike Coles

## Treasures from a lost tradition

By Ann Bronkhorst

**Aged 13, Sim Branaghan spent his pocket money on a vintage film poster and was hooked for life. Today, his teenage purchases are collectors' items, beyond most pockets.**

Sim has become an expert on the history of British film posters, getting to know several of the great poster designers personally and publishing a generously-illustrated book. His talk on 2 February in East Finchley library, where he is the manager, traced the development of British cinema and the demands of the film business on the artists and

advertising agencies.

### Rise and fall of a popular art

Selecting key examples of British film posters from between the world wars, Sim paid tribute to the individual style of each artist. The artists' heyday came in the late 1930s with the growing success of the British film industry, but declined in the 1980s. One reason was the arrival of art and design software. Another was cost: real, painted artwork was more expensive than computer-generated designs.

### Stories behind the posters

Artists working for the expanding British film industry had to turn commissions round fast. If enough stills hadn't been supplied family and friends could be roped in: a famous *Dracula* poster shows not Christopher Lee behind the fangs but

the artist himself, Tom Chantrell. His wife posed for his painting of Princess Leia in the famous *Star Wars* poster.

Mike Coles's photograph shows Sim with another poster by Chantrell, for *Carry on Cleo*. Unsurprisingly it was withdrawn after a court case in 1965, as it parodied wickedly the official poster for Fox's *Cleopatra* with Burton and Taylor (an expensive flop).

About the last British film poster in this splendid tradition was painted by Brian Bysouth for a James Bond film, *The Living Daylights*, and like many of the posters shown it drew a murmur of pleased recognition from the library audience. Thanks to Sim Branaghan and the Barnet Library Festival for this fascinating talk. To appreciate the compositions, detail, draughtsmanship and vivid immediacy of all these posters, ask at the library for his book, *British Film Posters*, BFI Publishing.

Friends of The Phoenix can catch a repeat of Sim's talk at the cinema on Sunday, 12 April, 2-3pm.

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