



School closes shop project and launches new space for community

By Charlotte Charlesworth

East Finchley's Oak Lodge School has announced the closure of The Lodge shop, a project that has been at the heart of the school's community work experience offer since 2020.

The closure comes due to increasing rates, making it no longer viable to continue operating in the current retail parade location in East End Road, N2, just 400 metres from the school in Heath View.

The Lodge began as an aspirational idea to promote employability and provide real-life experiences for students helping them develop skills in social interaction, communication, maths, stock control, organisation, window dressing, and even product creation.

Its success has been a community effort. Support from Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer enabled the school to employ Carol Bellingham as a full-time manager who helped make it a supportive space for students and customers.

Funding from The Hadley Trust, Jesus Hospital Charity, The Finchley Charities, and a

parent who paid for the shopfit, also got the project off the ground. Hearts of Oak charity volunteers worked to ensure students had access to unique experiences and practical learning.

New venture

Oak Lodge School said that while the closure of The Lodge is a sad milestone it is excited to announce that Carol Bellingham will be returning to support the development of a new in-house community space.

This initiative will allow students to continue gaining valuable work experience and employability skills, within the school environment. More details are to be announced.

Oak Lodge School said it wanted to extend its heartfelt thanks to everyone who has supported The Lodge shop over the years.



Saved from landfill: North London Hospice's Emily Cronin with the textile recycling team in Jamestown, Ghana. Photo North London Hospice

Clothes kept out of landfill sites

By David Melsome

North London Hospice's 18 charity shops in Barnet, Enfield and Haringey have joined a project to support the circular fashion economy by working closely with UK and Ghanaian textile traders.

Fast fashion is creating a huge problem for the planet, says the hospice, citing international research showing the world produces 92 million tons of textile waste every year, with 87% of the materials used to make clothing ending up in landfill, the equivalent of one truckload every second. Just 1% of clothes are recycled into new garments.

North London Hospice says its shops already saved 734,000 items from going to landfill last year alone. Now through a partnership with Sait Recycling, clothes that are not suitable for sale but are still recyclable are being sent to Ghanaian traders, establishing full traceability of textiles from UK charity shops to markets across Africa.

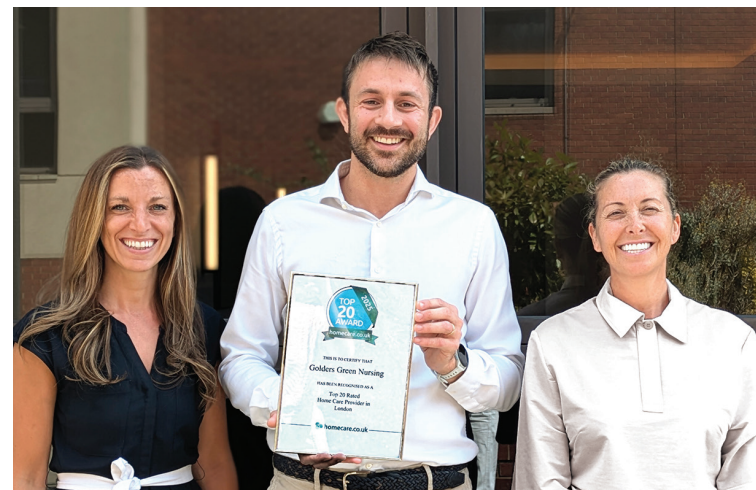
Retail transformation manager Emily Cronin said: "North London Hospice will be sending 195 tonnes of clothing and 28 tonnes of shoes to Sait Recycling every year." Through software tracking, the donated textiles will be tracked beyond the shop floor, building a more sustainable and circular supply chain.

Care agency named in top 20

A family-owned, home care agency based in Finchley, has been named among the top 20 providers out of more than 2,000 in London by the independent reviews platform homecare.co.uk.

Established over 30 years ago, Golders Green Nursing supports elderly and vulnerable adults across central and north London, including several in East Finchley. Director of Golders Green Nursing, Giles Moody, who lives in N2, said: "This award means a great deal to us because it's based entirely on feedback from the people who matter most - our clients and their families."

The agency says it builds strong local community connections, not just with health-care providers such as GPs and physiotherapists, but also with local hairdressers, gardeners and others that can provide a trusted service at home for their clients.



Recognition: Care agency director Giles Moody, centre, celebrates their Top 20 listing with colleagues

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