

EC1 ECHO

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GET INVOLVED

EC1 Echo is a new community newspaper, written by and for local people. That means that we want to hear from you. Join us for our first editorial meeting on 24th September at 6pm at The Peel, Three Corners Centre, Northampton Road EC1R 0HU

SUPPORT US

Support the launch of Clerkenwell's new community newspaper by becoming a founding member or by advertising with us in our first full issue in November. To find out more go to: EC1Echo.co.uk


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Meat racked: Smithfield's ancient meat market is facing big changes and an imminent protest Credit Bruno Healy

Market faces new forces

BY OLIVER BENNETT

The grand edifice that is Smithfield Market – at the south of the borough, just within the City of London – is headed for a tumultuous autumn. From 7 October for a proposed two weeks, the environmental protest group Animal Rebellion plans to blockade the meat market for what it sees as the perpetuation of a failing system.

In a statement, the coordinator and spokesperson for Animal Rebellion (an offshoot of Extinction Rebellion) Dan Kidby, said: "Animal Rebellion wants to urgently end the industries of animal farming and

fishing, and transition to a plant-based food system in order to avert climate breakdown, mass extinction and ensure justice for farmed animals." Smithfield Market's bumarees or porters are tight-knit and it is expected that there will be a response. Animal Rebellion has noted that it "expects resistance" and is committed to 'nonviolent disobedience.' With traffic unable to access the market, the protest is likely to cause disruption.

The protest is not the only thing vexing the market, trading in stock for 800 years and centred around the central market, built by Sir Horace Jones – who also designed Tower Bridge – in 1868. It has now been mooted that the market

will be moved to Dagenham Dock, where it will join Billingsgate Fish Market and Spitalfields Fruit and Veg Market. The central parts and its listed buildings will meanwhile become a "mixed-use commercial, creative and cultural quarter" with Old Spitalfields Market a likely model. The City Corporation is currently recruiting two design teams with a proposed completion date of 2025. Food will be part of this, as James Tumbridge, Chairman of the City of London Corporation's Markets Committee has said: "We continue to work toward a vision for a food centre suitable for London's future, in terms of its scale and environmental impact. It's an honour

to help guide this key part of London's infrastructure to feed our great city." Not all are happy, including Alec Forshaw, a former conservation officer and historian who would prefer the meat market to remain at its current location and who believes it "will be a real tragedy for the character of central London if it moves".

At the market's western end, Smithfield's General Market, Fish Market, Red House and Poultry Market are to be transformed into a £332m new home for the Museum of London a year earlier, in 2024.

What do you think? Should the market move or stay? Get in touch with the EC1 Echo at: EC1Echo@peelinstitute.org.uk

Party on

Meet Scarlett Gregory – our host for the day at the Exmouth Market Street Party. Scarlett has lived in EC1 for eight years and it was her idea to hold a street party in Exmouth Market.

"I've always loved going to the other local street parties, particularly the Whitecross Street party, and when the opportunity was presented I thought it was a great chance to hold one for the Clerkenwell community," she says. "I wanted to bring everyone together in the community for the day to have fun and get to know their neighbours."

There had previously been an annual street party on Exmouth Market, adds Scarlett. "From talking to locals I learnt that it was a great day and was missed by many." Today is the result and the hope is that the event will become annual.

With funding from the Peel Centre, the point of the party is that everyone is welcome. "I wanted to celebrate the community and make the day accessible," says Scarlett. "We have really tried to make sure there is something for everyone." And the market is largely traffic-free, making it the perfect place for a party.

Let us know what you think, and have a great time.



Scarlett Gregory, the street party's founder

Welling up



Dig it: William Barratt for Finsbury Council in 1924 excavating the well
Credit Islington Museum/Mark Aston

Behind an unassuming glass frontage in Farringdon Lane sits a remarkable local treasure – the medieval Clerks' Well. Since the 1100s this Grade-I listed monument has witnessed nearly 900 years of change. Giving its name to the area, the Clerks' Well is a direct link to Clerkenwell's past – and it's hoped that it will become a bigger part of its future.

Records began in around 1140 when Jordan Briset, a Breton Knight, donated land beside the Clerks' Well (or 'Fons Clericorum') for the foundation of the Nunnery of St Mary, which occupied a site between today's Clerkenwell Green, Bowling Green Lane, Farringdon Lane and St James' Walk. Spring water flowed from the well into an enclosure for public use.

One of the richest convents in the country, it developed into a village and administrative parish, starting to give shape to the area we know today as Clerkenwell. An early reference to the well

itself appears in William Fitzstephen's biography (1174) of Thomas à Becket: "There are also about London, on the north side, excellent suburban springs, with sweet, wholesome and clear water that flows rippling over the bright stones; among which Holy Well, Clerkenwell and St Clements", are held to be of most note."

By 1673 the well was leased to a brewer who provided a fountain for public use. The historian John Strype, writing in 1720, referred to tasting this water, finding it "excellently clear, sweet, and well tasted." The water had clearly not

lost its sparkle since the days of William Fitzstephen and provided fresh drinking water for over 700 years until it closed in 1856.

In 1924 the rebuilding of 14-16 Farringdon Lane led to the re-discovery of the Clerks' Well and surrounding chamber. Finsbury Council, and later Islington Council, enabled the continued preservation of the well and provision for public access. The well may no longer spring forth with "wholesome and clear water" but it is a living link to the past.

The full potential of this important monument has yet to be realised. This could change, as there are plans to raise funds to recreate the chamber map and underwater lighting – even stage small-scale events. It's hoped that the Clerks' Well will spring to life anew.

The Clerks' Well is at 14-16 Farringdon Lane EC1R 3AU. With a small viewing platform, it's accessible by appointment with Islington Local History Centre:

Call 020 7527 7988
Email history@islington.gov.uk



The well today
Credit Islington Museum/Mark Aston

- **FOOD STALLS OR BRING YOUR OWN PICNIC**
- **YOGA (3:30PM) • HISTORY TRAIL WALKS (2PM & 3.30PM)**
- **KIDS KUNG FU (2PM) • FORAGING WALKS (12:30 & 3PM)**
- **FACE PAINTING • BOUNCY CASTLE •**
- CLERKENWELL TREASURE HUNT • DRAG QUEENS •**
- FINSBURY LIBRARY CHILDREN'S CORNER •**

SET LIST:

12 - 12:45PM MRS H AND THE SING-A-LONG BAND
Creating music that is truly for the whole family.

1 - 1:15PM PEEL CHOIR

Our very own choir singing rhythm and blues favourites

1:30 - 2:15PM DASS BRASS BAND

A 7 piece brass ensemble creating an up beat and lively sound that spreads smiles and dance moves across the party.

2:30 - 3:15PM SWING PATROL

Get your dancing shoes on and learn to swing!

3:15 - 3:25PM HUGH MYDDLETON CHOIR

3:30PM URDANG ACADEMY

Performance by talented students from local dance school.

3:45PM DASS BRASS BAND

Your second opportunity to see the unmissable 7 piece brass ensemble

4:30 - 5PM DJ AIDAN

EXMOUTH MARKET
Street Party

SUNDAY 8th SEPTEMBER
12pm - 5pm
FREE COMMUNITY EVENT

GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURS