

Holocaust survivors exhibition gets £59k in Lottery funding



A total of 23 boys who survived the Holocaust were evacuated to Holmehurst in Buckhurst Hill in 1945

AN EXHIBITION commemorating Holocaust survivors has secured £59,600 in National Lottery funding.

In its latest project, Epping Forest District Museum is telling the story of 23 boys evacuated from the Nazis' concentration camps to Hol-

mehurst, Buckhurst Hill, in 1945.

Objects featured in the exhibition include items from the Belsen, Auschwitz and Theresienstadt camps.

"The Holmehurst story is a little-known or forgotten piece of Ep-

ping Forest District History," said Cllr Nigel Bedford, cabinet member for community and partnerships at Epping Forest District Council. "Money raised by National Lottery players has made this exhibition possible."

Angela Cohen, chairman of the 45 Aid Society, said: "In this 75th year since their liberation, the '45 Aid Society charity is delighted to support Epping Forest District Museum in putting on this important exhibition."

Harlow teens to attend life lesson camp

TEENAGERS are signing up for a summer programme designed to challenge them in the next stage in their life by teaching them how to live independently.

Year 11 students at Burnt Mill Academy, in Harlow, will spend time away from home at The National Citizenship Service, which aims to enhance life skills and meet new people.

The National Citizenship Service is a voluntary personal and social development programme for 16 and 17-year-olds, mainly funded by the Government.

Pupils can take part in a two, three or four-week programme to develop their independence before starting college or work.

Youngsters have the opportunity to stay in accommodation with others in their age group, and take part in activities including canoeing, concerts and football.

Associate head teacher Francis Collins said: "This is a really huge opportunity for our students. It is a fantastic thing to have on their UCAS application when they are looking to go to university."

"They have to do a lot for themselves when they go to college, so this really helps to prepare them."

'Bus cuts have put more cars on road'

Transport policy contradicts climate change policy

By Piers Meyler

ESSEX County Council's climate change credentials have been questioned after new figures show more children are abandoning school buses.

Between 2013 and 2019 the number of mainstream children travelling on school buses contracted by the council each day went down from 16,274 to 9,630 – a drop of 40 per cent.

In the past year the number of children aged 11 to 16 transported by bus has gone down from 9,051 to 8,364 – even though the costs associated with this element have increased from £46,960 to £47,239 a day.

Although there is no empirical evidence that those children who used to take council-funded buses are now all being driven to school by car rather than privately funded buses, campaign group Essex Against School Transport Cuts estimates 600 extra cars are now on the roads.

In 2015 Essex County Council revised its school transport policy to become the first local education authority in the

UK to abolish the right of children to free school transport to their catchment secondary schools if they live more than three miles away. Instead pupils were offered free transport to their 'nearest' school, measured as the crow flies.

Liberal Democrat leader Cllr Mike Mackrory said the policy contradicts the council's climate change policy – a £5 million fund has been allocated to enable action on climate change and an independent commission to oversee the work.

Cllr Mackrory, who will be sitting on the council's climate change commission, said he worried about how much will be achieved given that "everything the council does is determined by the accountants".

He said: "For me by making people use their cars it flies in the face of what another part of the county council is trying to do.

"Some of us would have to question just how serious they are about this"

The council's figures showed the amount it has spent on bus contracts has reached at least a

six-year high of £138,000 a day, even though the total number of contracts has fallen to below 200 for the first time in six years.

Although the cost of transporting mainstream children aged 11 to 16 has gone up in the past year, the council says any increase in costs reflect the changing market and contract prices relative to demand.

"The council's statutory duty is to provide transport for eligible children under the law. Substantial reductions in spend on mainstream transport have been achieved over a number of years," a spokesperson said.

"There are a number of transport initiatives currently underway to address environmental concerns. It cannot be assumed a reduction in the number of students on contracted transport necessarily relates to an increase in car travel when many children may travel on the existing public transport network.

"The council is statutorily responsible for travel arrangements for eligible children – it has no similar responsibility for children who are not eligible for taxpayer funded transport."

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