

In brief

Strictly stars step in at ball to raise record amount for hospice

BOROUGH: Strictly Come Dancing stars wowed guests at a charity ball.

James and Ola Jordan performed four routines and answered questions at the Forget Me Not ball, in aid of Saint Francis Hospice, which cares for terminally ill patients including those from Brentwood.

The event at Orsett Hall raised a record £30,500 for patient care and other special guests included former EastEnders stars Cathy Murphy and Marc Bannerman, along with the Mayor of Havering Melvin Wallace.

Council preparing to set budget

BRENTWOOD: Bosses at the borough council have begun setting the authority's budget for 2012.

Council leader Louise McKinlay told the Gazette a cross-party budget session had been pencilled in for October 6. Last year, the authority was able to freeze council tax for residents in Brentwood.

Mrs McKinlay said: "Front-line services are the key priority for the administration. We are looking not only to protect them but to improve them too."

Several country acts to play gig

BRENTWOOD: The sound of country music is arriving in town for a live concert this weekend.

The event at Brentwood Theatre, Shenfield Road, from 7pm on Sunday, features Black Steel Trio, Dean Austin, and Merv and Maria.

■ Tickets cost £10 in advance or £11 on the door. Contact 01277 200305 for more information.

Open-evening talk for gardeners

DODDINGHURST: Gardeners can learn more about their village's horticultural society at an open evening.

The event at Priest House from 8pm on Friday will feature a talk by Maikey Windhorst about Growing Vegetables in a Changing Climate.

The Gazette launches campaign to save rickety Hopefield



IN A STATE: Dave Schliach and Lianne Angliss show reporter Iain Johnson the work to be done at Hopefield CMNW20110916A-284_C

Sanctuary in need of your donations

Iain Johnson

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AS THE seasons change and temperatures plummet, the countdown to raise £100,000 to replace the dilapidated animal housing at Hopefield Animal Sanctuary is under way.

Cash-strapped

Many of the horses, ponies and pigs face having to live in shabby and dangerous lodgings over winter, unless the cash-strapped animal centre, in Sawyers Hall Lane, can raise the funds quickly.

When the Gazette dropped in last week, it was clear the predicament facing Hopefield is that three wooden stable blocks, each rotting from decades of exposure to the elements, need to be pulled down, or the animals will have to spend January sleeping outside in freezing temperatures.

Not least because their accommodation is falling apart, but also because the roofs could collapse on the four-legged residents at any time.

Staff at Hopefield were given a huge boost earlier this month when chart-topper Leona Lewis, 26, launched the SOS (Save Our Sanctuary) campaign with the Gazette.

Donations have already begun to trickle in from kindhearted Leona fans and supporters of the sanctuary.

However, the £100,000 target, which will also be spent on the desperate need to replace paddock fencing, buy a tractor and animal feed, is looking a long way off.

The 26-year-old celebrity,

now a Hopefield patron, is urging residents and businesses to donate whatever they can afford to get Hopefield back on its feet.

Leona said: "Thank you so much to all those who have so kindly donated to Hopefield. However, we are still only at the start of the journey to save these animals and keep Hopefield alive and thriving, so please dig deep and continue to give anything you can spare to this fantastic cause."

Lianne Angliss, the assistant manager at the sanctuary, which looks after close to 200 rescued animals, said: "Living outside is bad for their health and safety, especially if it snows.

"Or they have to go back into their homes with the risk that the roof could cave in."

The sanctuary was thrown into panic in July, when Max, a one-tonne black and white bull, escaped through the feeble fencing, before wandering off down the Dodinghurst Road.

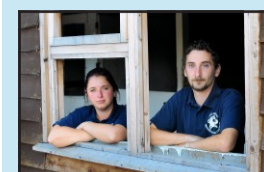
Such an incident has left sanctuary staff on tenterhooks as the prospect of other large animals breaching the perimeter and walking into public areas remains a reality.

Problems

Lianne has been forced to move the bull in with the horses, which also has potential to cause problems.

She said: "The bull is not able to live here in his area at the moment because it's dangerous for him."

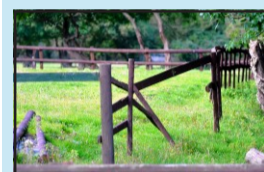
"At the moment he is in the field with the horses, but that is not ideal because he could hurt them."



■ These wooden stables are the residence of horses Solo, Moss, Rufus and Magnus. They must be knocked down and a replacement will cost £15,000



■ This wooden 8ft x 50ft x 14ft building will cost around £15,000 to replace. It was built before 1983, when Ernie and Paula Clark took over the site



■ The paddocks provide an essential exercise area for the animals. To replace all fencing will cost in the region of £15,000



■ For years Hopefield has needed a tractor. The vehicle, costing in the region of £8,000, will help with maintenance like fixing fences and clearing the muck heap



■ A replacement stable block - 8ft x 30ft x 20ft - wooden - £15,000. This accommodation is more than 30 years old. The roof has become a danger to the animals

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The SOS Appeal - Can you help save Hopefield?

To keep the deserving animals in their home over Christmas and beyond, your help is needed.

- **Monthly essentials** - £32k
- **How can you help?**
 - Are you a business or individual that can donate some spare cash to the cause?
 - Do you have some free time that you could devote to helping out at the sanctuary, whether on a one-off or regular basis?
 - Are you involved in a business that can donate timber, roofing, stable materials, business supplies, a tractor or fencing?
- **What needs to be done?**
 - Refurbish Barn - £15k
 - Three stable blocks - £15k
 - Refurbish remaining six blocks - £15k
 - New fences - £15k
 - Tractor - £8k
- **Is there some other way you can join Leona Lewis and the Gazette to help the Hopefield?** If so, call the sanctuary on 01277 201110 or to donate by text, send HAST11£ (amount) to 70070.

Baby & toddler of the year 2011

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Picture special inside the **BRENTWOOD Gazette**

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