

THE HIGHAMS PARK SOCIETY



THE PARK



Celebrating the Past—Enjoying the Present—Looking Forward to the Future

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FROM HOME AND COLONIAL TO THE CO-OP (VIA BONIMART, CORDON BLEU, COSTCUTTER, ALLDAYS, LONDIS AND NISA!)



Highams Park's branch of Home and Colonial closed in the mid 1960s. Home and Colonial was an upmarket grocery chain that was founded in 1885.

“The smell of cheese and freshly ground coffee, the bacon slicer sound that set your teeth on edge. Everything weighed, measured and wrapped meticulously.”

At the turn of the century, the shops either side of the level crossing served two different social communities within Highams Park: the Home and Colonial Stores served the residents of the Hale Park Estate and some of the people who lived on the Beech Hall Estate. For residents of the Wadham Farm Estate (west of the railway line and made up of more modest houses) there was the Co-operative Stores on Winchester Road: a grocers, greengrocer, dairy and butchers. The Co-op funeral director's is in what was the grocery shop until the early 1990s.

Home and Colonial on Hale End Road was actually one of the shops that stood where Nisa is now. When the site was redeveloped in the 1960s, a freezer shop—the very peak of 60s modernity—arrived in Highams Park: Bonimart. And then more changes, another freezer shop, Cordon Bleu in the 1980s; then a Costcutter, a very unsatisfactory store called Alldays; a Londis and then more recently Nisa.

Nisa, an acronym for Northern Independent Supermarkets Association, was a smaller mutual operation that was in fact taken over by The Co-op in 2018. The Co-op decided to keep the NISA brand though but have been selling Co-op products in each store including Nisa in Highams Park.

So in 2019 for the first time in many years, it is possible to shop at The Co-op in Highams Park. The residents of the Hale Park Estate would have been horrified that there was a Co-op grocers on their side of the railway lines but I think that today that most of us are rather pleased about it!

