



Light display is saved for another year

East Finchley has its Christmas light display in the High Road again this year - but only just.

At one point in November, it looked as if the main shopping area might go bare over the festive season because the local traders had failed to raise the £750 fee demanded by Barnet Council for storage and installation.

An anonymous donor was on the point of stepping forward to pay the fee when the council announced that all town centres in Barnet would get their lights, regardless of whether traders

had made a contribution.

Barnet Council said that any town centres that had paid money would be treated as a priority and enjoy an enhanced display.



Refuse collections and a greener Christmas

Barnet Council has announced some changes to its usual black box, green garden, kitchen waste and refuse collection days during the Christmas and New Year holiday period:

- On Saturday 23 December, there will be no green garden and kitchen waste collection.
- The Monday refuse collection for 25 December will be on Saturday 23 December. The Tuesday refuse collection for 26 December will be on Tuesday 2 January.
- Normal collections will take place on Wednesday 27, Thursday 28 and Friday 29 December.
- On Saturday 30 December, there will be no green garden and kitchen waste collection.
- The Monday refuse collection for 1 January will be on Saturday 30 December.

Recycle your Christmas waste

If your household has joined the green garden and kitchen waste service, you can recycle your Christmas tree by leaving it at the side of your green wheeled bin on your scheduled collection day. Otherwise, you can take your tree to the Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre in Summers Lane for composting.

Recycle your Christmas cards at your local participating WHSmith store, Tesco store, local library or the Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre between 2 January and 31 January 2007. For a full list of stores which accept cards see www.woodland-trust.org.uk/cards. Funds raised from the card recycling scheme will help save the UK's ancient woods and trees.

Pharmacy out-of-hours rota

Out-of-hours pharmacy cover during the festive season will be as follows. In each case the opening hours are planned to be 11am-12.30pm but you are advised to call before setting out.

- **Sunday 24 December:** MCRX Ltd, 800 High Road, N12, 020 8445 0085.
- **Monday 25 December and Tuesday 26 December:** C.W.Andrews, 32 High Road, N2, 020 8883 1559.
- **Monday 1 January:** Gateway Chemists, 334a Regents Park Road, N3, 020 8346 4530.

Thursday late opening for Christmas shoppers

Three shops in the High Road have decided to enter into the spirit of Christmas, planning to open until 8pm on Thursdays in December so people can do some Christmas shopping on the way home from work.

The shops involved will be The Cherry Tree, Lazooli and Fiori. Sue Tollerfield, of The Cherry Tree, said that they will be selling gifts for Christmas and have expanded all their ranges in response to suggestions from their customers about new products. They will also be selling cards and wrapping-paper and will continue their gift-wrapping service.

Picking up Christmas parcels

The East Finchley Delivery Office is extending its opening hours in December to allow people to collect parcels in the evening too.

Opening times at the office in Market Place in the run-up to Christmas are:

- Monday 11 December to Friday 15 December:** 8am-12.30pm and 6pm-8pm;
- Saturday 16 December:** 8am-12 noon;
- Monday 18 December to Friday 22 December:** 8am-12.30pm and 6pm-8pm;
- Saturday 23 December:** 8am-12 noon;
- Sunday 24 December:** Closed

A Polish Christmas

By Andrew Shirlaw

No country, it seems, celebrates the Christmas festivities more enthusiastically than Poland. That's the opinion of Martin Orzol and his cousin Basia who work at Budgens. Indeed many young Poles would prefer to be back home with their family and friends.

Martin, from Elblag, near Gdansk, describes the Polish tradition on Christmas Eve to share out a special type of biscuit called Oplatek, before sitting down to the family dinner of up to 12 different dishes, none of which can be meat.

It is also a custom to start the Christmas Eve meal when they see the first star in the sky. There is no drinking of alcohol on Christmas Eve, the Poles wait till Christmas day. After their family dinner, they give out presents and then they go to Church at midnight.

Martin said that he will miss being with his family. "I feel great when I spend time with my whole family. Christmas

is very important for us. It is a very good atmosphere in Poland, people are so nice and very friendly."

On Christmas Day they are allowed to eat meat and to start drinking alcohol, typically vodka (the most popular drink) beer, wine and champagne. Martin visits his friends on the 26th, gives them presents and an Oplatek and then they continue to celebrate with a few more drinks.

He added: "This year I will celebrate Christmas here in London with my cousin and some friends. I think we will go to the Polish Church in Caledonian Road."

An empty chair

Ania and Lila, who are respectively from Kruszwica and Krakow, both work in Finchley. Ania said it is the custom in Poland to stop eating sweets or meat for four weeks before Christmas and to keep a place free at their Christmas Eve dinner table, just in case someone turns up for a meal. They eat a type of fish, Karp (Carp) and Sledz (herring) and also a cabbage dish, Pierogi. At midnight they go to Pasterka, the midnight mass.

Lila said: "I will miss my family and the presents! I have been here for two years and I will celebrate Christmas with my flatmates. Sometimes we go to our church, but it's not the same. It doesn't feel like home."

Mansion makes top five

A home in The Bishops Avenue has been named as the fifth most expensive home on sale in the world.

Toprak mansion, which has its own swimming pool, Turkish bath, cinema, sauna and four kitchens, has been put on the market by its owner Halis Toprak for £50 million.

Forbes international business magazine ranked the home on the world market. It was placed second in Britain behind Updown Court in Surrey, which is on sale for £74 million.

Christmas services in East Finchley

St. John's Christian Spiritualist Church

Saturday 9 December, 7pm, Christmas Party.
Sunday 17 December, 6.30pm, Candlelight Carol Service.
Sunday 24 December, 6.30pm, Christmas Eve Service.

St Mary's Catholic Church

Sunday 10 December, 6.30pm, Advent Carol Service, with instrumentalists from The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School, followed by refreshments in the parish hall.
Thursday 21 December, 7.30pm, Advent Penitential Service for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Sunday 24 December, for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, Masses as usual, 8.30am, 10am and 12 noon; Children's Christmas Mass, 6.30pm; Midnight Mass, preceded by Carols at 11.15pm.

Monday 25 December, Masses, as usual, at 8.30am, 10am and 12noon.

Tuesday 26 December, Feast of St Stephen, Protomartyr. Mass at 10am, with Morning Prayer (all servers are urged to serve at this Mass).

Holy Trinity Church

Sunday 17 December, 6pm, Advent Carol Service by candlelight.
Sunday 24 December, 6pm, Nativity Play and Blessing of the Crib; 11.30pm, Midnight Mass.

Monday 25 December, 10am, Parish Communion.

East Finchley Methodist Church

Sunday 17 December, 10.30am, Gift service and young people's play; 6.30pm, Carols by candle light service.

Monday 25 December, 10.30am, Christmas Day family service.

East Finchley Baptist Church

Sunday 17 December, 11am-12.15pm: All Ages Together Carol Service (with presentation by the children and young people); 6pm-7.15pm: Carols by candlelight.
Sunday 24 December, 11am-12noon, Christmas Eve Service.

Monday 25 December, 10.30am-11.15am: Christmas Morning Family Service.

All Saints' Church

Sunday 17 December, 6.30pm, Christmas Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Sunday 24 December, 3pm-5pm, Children's Christingle Service with Carols; 11.30pm, Midnight Mass of Christmas with Procession of the Christ Child and Blessing of the Crib.

Monday 25 December, 8am, Mass of the Dawn; 10am, Mass of Christmas Day with Christmas Carols.

St. Johns Christian Spiritualist Church

4 Woodberry Grove - North Finchley

Just behind Homebase

phone 020 8446 3544

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EAST FINCHLEY METHODIST CHURCH

197 High Road, London N2 (opp. Creighton Ave.)

www.eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk

Carols by Candlelight
Sunday 17 December, 6.30 p.m.

Christmas Day Family Service - 10.30 a.m.

tel: 020 8349 9340

e-mail: info@eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk