



Sherwood Hall. Photo by John Dearing

## Sherwood Hall residents fight developers

**The freehold of Sherwood Hall, in East End Road, has been taken over by a property company who want to build flats in the unspoilt gardens, to the dismay of the residents, many of whom have lived there for more than 20 years.**

Last year, the leaseholders were given notice of the forthcoming sale of the freehold, and a group of them sought to buy it. Unfortunately, the necessary notice was not served correctly and the freehold went to auction.

Development company Magnolia Tree Ltd bought it for twice its estimated worth, and later offered to sell for five times this price. Subsequently, Magnolia applied for planning permission to build in the gardens.

The leaseholders' group sought the advice of East

Finchley ward councillor Colin Rogers, and a considerable number of objections were lodged. The application went to the council's planning sub-committee on 17 November, with a recommendation from the planning officer to approve, despite the existing leases giving access to the gardens as a right.

Some of the leaseholders spoke against the application and it was refused, on the grounds that the proposed development would be visually obtrusive, out of character with the area, and would

detract from the use of the gardens.

Magnolia has appealed on the grounds that it had followed the application process correctly. It has also lodged a new planning application, differing little from the original.

The leaseholder group has now begun the complex and lengthy process of enfranchisement, to try to buy the freehold. However, it will need to go to a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal to get a fair price, by which time planning permission may have been granted.

## FINCHLEY FORUM ROUND-UP

By Daphne Chamberlain

**The two current big issues of East Finchley were aired at last month's Finchley Forum at Avenue House.**

### Stanley Field

The Stanley Field steering group reported the huge amount of public support at the meeting in Holy Trinity School. They asked whether Barnet Council would consider an offer for the recreational value of the land equal to the commercial value, and said that the East Finchley Development Trust wanted to work together with the council, looking at all youth issues in the round. Green Party members condemned the demolition of the adjacent Herbert Wilmot Centre, denying that it was unsafe.

### Library

The East Finchley Library Users' Group asked for factual justification for the downgrading of the library, and protested about the complete lack of consultation from Barnet.

### Disabled parking bay retained

In response to an earlier petition, the disabled parking bay outside 4 Fairlawn Avenue, N2, has been retained.

### Cuts in youth service

A petition to restore the cuts in youth services was handed in. Barnet was described as the second-lowest spender in England in this area.

### Coppetts Wood

Barnet was accused of destroying Coppetts Wood, both by incorrect use of pesticides and by inadequate boundaries allowing riding and burning of motorbikes.

### Review of CPZs

Barnet is planning a borough-wide review, which would probably take three to five years. The intention is to contact each community indi-

vidually, but the review is still in the draft stage.

### Artsdepot

Building work going on at the moment has nothing to do with underpinning. It is routine, and being paid for by the developers. Following a fatal accident in the bus station, questions were asked about the safety of the present traffic procedures there. As a connected issue, the bus stop opposite Waitrose may be restored.

### Next Forum

The next Finchley Forum will be held at 6.30pm on Wednesday 5 April at the Green Man Centre, Strawberry Vale.

## What will the library cuts mean?

By Daphne Chamberlain

**East Finchley has been earmarked to take the brunt of Barnet's proposed cuts to the library service. Here we answer some key questions.**

**Q: Why is our library lined up for relegation to the status of a "community" branch – the lowest of the borough's three categories of library?**

A: Barnet Council says that the status of a library is decided by its use, but *THE ARCHER* has seen official statistics showing that East Finchley is better used than the comparable branch of East Barnet, which is retaining its "town centre" status. What's more, East Finchley's statistics of use are rising. *THE ARCHER* has not received any explanation from Barnet for their decision.

**Q: What will this decision mean?**

A: As well as the loss of two staff and the reduction of opening hours to just 33 a week, the library will no longer be run by a qualified manager, and outreach activities, including the regular coffee morning talks on many subjects, will probably be cut.

**Q: What is Barnet Council saying about the cuts?**

A: Councillor John Marshall, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, told this paper: "Once changes have come into effect, the

service provision will still be substantial. East Finchley is following in the footsteps of other Barnet libraries by closing at lunchtimes, and once the changes have come into effect, residents will recognise that the council is committed to their library."

**Q: Could the library become a true centre for the community?**

A: Councillor Marshall, who has admitted visiting East Finchley library only once, said that the under-utilised first floor could be used as a community facility. Asked to elaborate, he said he had nothing specific in mind, and that there were no plans either to move another community service permanently into the library or to install a lift. At last month's Area Forum, he speculated about the library and the neighbouring Martin Schools sharing a caretaker service to facilitate community activities.

**Q: When will a decision on East Finchley library be made?**

A: Barnet Council will vote on the proposed library service cuts on 7 March.

## Is this helping the aged?

By Diana Cormack

**An elderly lady's recent hospital experiences have caused some concern to her neighbours in Cherry Tree Road.**

Ninety-year-old Miss Frieda Schweitzer was taken to the Whittington Hospital by ambulance, having felt unwell at a lunchtime gathering. At 8pm that evening a neighbour spotted an ambulance bringing her home and, as Frieda lives alone, went to see if she needed any help. An asthmatic attack had been diagnosed but Frieda was happy to be left in her armchair with her medication at hand.

After 11pm, however, feeling afraid to go to bed in case she should be taken ill during the night, Miss Schweitzer phoned her neighbour for help. The neighbour wanted her to be seen by a doctor and called Barn Doc. A receptionist took the details, saying that a nurse would get in touch. About 20 minutes later a nurse rang to say that a doctor would get in touch. Nearly an hour later the neighbour, growing worried about Frieda's condition, spoke to the receptionist again and was assured that a doctor would phone. Eventually, after a brief

conversation, the doctor's advice was to call an ambulance.

### To and fro

At 1am the ambulance staff arrived to collect Frieda and told the neighbour to phone the Whittington Hospital in a couple of hours for information. In fact, trusting that a 90-year-old would be looked after in hospital overnight, her neighbour did not phone until the morning. She discovered that Frieda had been brought back home at 5am and had been left alone in her house once again.

A spokeswoman for Whittington Hospital said Mrs. (sic) Schweitzer had been brought home because doctors had indicated she was settled, felt safer and better and could go home when she wanted.

She said: "We would normally keep patients until the morning unless they had specifically requested to go home. If Mrs Schweitzer, indeed, had not wanted to go home we do apologise."

A friendly welcome awaits you

### EAST FINCHLEY METHODIST CHURCH

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

[www.eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk](http://www.eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk)

**Family service and Junior Church  
Every Sunday at 10.30 a.m.**

Worship Music  
tel: 020 8349 9340

Social events Wheelchair friendly  
e-mail: [info@eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk](mailto:info@eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk)

### ST. JOHNS CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST CHURCH

Tele: 079 444 989 30 ~ Web: [www.stjohnsfinchley.co.uk](http://www.stjohnsfinchley.co.uk)

#### Services

Sunday 6.30 p.m. Thursday 7.30 p.m.

Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month 6.30 p.m.

Healing every Tuesday between 1 p.m. & 3 p.m.

Weddings ~ Christenings ~ Funerals (at the church or cemetery)

by arrangement with the Minister

All are welcome

4 Woodberry Grove N12 (behind Homebase)