



## College Farm saved

By John Dearing

**Finchley's College Farm, under threat since 1972, has finally been bought by the College Farm Trust, a charity set up nine years ago to save the Grade II listed community farm in Fitzalan Road.**

The trust, chaired by Phil Green, plans to build a museum and educational facilities, restock the farm with animals and re-open it to the public within a couple of years as an example of a working farm.

College Farm was set up in the 1880s as a model dairy to promote cleanliness in milk production and to display all that was best in livestock and equipment. In 1971, it was bought by the Ministry of Transport to exchange with Barnet Council for land needed for a proposed flyover at Henly's Corner.

Chris and Jane Ower became the tenant farmers in 1976 and, with support from the Finchley Society set the farm up as a place the public could visit and see farming in an otherwise urban

area. In excess of 35,000 visitors a year came to College Farm until the doors closed at the start of the foot and mouth epidemic in February 2001.

As the flyover project never went ahead, it was eventually decided that the land should be sold. There were several campaigns to save the farm.

In June 2000, Rudi Vis MP gained agreement from the government to sell the land to a charitable trust for £500,000, considerably less than the market value, but as it turned out, still beyond the means of the trust.

The purchase of the site by the newly-formed College Farm Trust has finally come about using funds from the sale of two flats on the site of the farm.

## Arts centre opens

By Diana Cormack

**Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute's new Arts Centre has opened on the grounds of the former neurological hospital behind East Finchley tube station. It houses classrooms, studios, staffrooms and offices on its three floors.**

As well as provision for art and craft, sculpture, pottery and textiles, there are facilities for music, photography and cookery. The official opening will be in May, when it is hoped that a member of the Royal Family will be able to perform the opening ceremony.

However, there will still be some art classes held in Park House, opposite the station, which the Institute will continue to rent from Barnet Council. Principal Fay Naylor told *THE*

*ARCHER* that ideally the Institute would like to buy the building from Barnet, who do want to sell the property, but as yet nothing has been resolved.

Despite the worries of some locals, she does not anticipate any parking problems arising from the opening of the Arts Centre, where only 30 places have been provided for staff and a few disabled students. This was due to planning regulations, as the authorities are trying to discourage the use of cars.

## E-learning award for college

**Christ's College has won a national award for its computer technology work from the Specialist Schools and Academics Trust.**

The school, off East End Road, was praised for its online learning community that allows students to interact with their counterparts in schools in Holland, Australia and South Africa.

A large percentage of the school's curriculum is on the site where students can use special e-learning materials and discuss topics with others. It receives around 2,000 visits a day.

Christ's College has already implemented blogging for its pupils and has created podcasts for students to download and use as revision aids.

It is actively investigating further web-based initiatives to benefit learning including social bookmarking, where students can recommend useful websites, and wiki sites, which are essentially online encyclopaedias.



A motorist negotiates the flooded North Circular Road. Picture by Brian Marsh.

## Gutter clearers must turn over a new leaf

By Daphne Chamberlain

**Reader Brian Marsh sent us this photograph of the flooded North Circular slip road up to the A1000 at the top of East Finchley, which he said was caused by lack of leaf clearing. There were similar scenes at our end of The Bishops Avenue.**

Local residents have complained to Barnet for years about this all-too-familiar sight and *THE ARCHER* has repeatedly reported it.

On the High Road, outside St Pancras Court, local people are just as frustrated. A lake has appeared every year for at least 30 years, covering the road and the pavement by the southbound bus stop, and sometimes running down into the garages under St Pancras Court.

One resident told us: "This November a huge stretch of pavement was completely under water. It was like a river in flood. Something like this happens every year. I've rung the council, but nothing is ever done."

Brian Marsh said the serious water hazard was caused by uncleared leaf piles and gullies draining down to the lowest level. He said: "Can Barnet Council and Transport

for London be shamed into dealing with this matter?"

Barnet Council told us that they undertook cyclic gully cleaning along the flooded areas of the A1000 in January 2006, followed by further one-off cleaning of several gullies last August. Following a further site inspection in November, they had again cleared a number of blocked gullies. They said that heavy rainfall had made the situation worse, but there were proposals in place to upgrade gully gratings to increase the waterway area – a solution that has proved successful in other areas of the borough. The programme of works is due to be

completed in April 2007.

Confirming that the North Circular slip road is TfL's responsibility, Barnet said they have asked TfL to carry out necessary maintenance.

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