



Buses at the crossroads?

By Daphne Chamberlain
Just as East Finchley Bus Watch gathers influential allies and support across the board for another service along the High Road, Transport for London has announced a severe cut in its transport budget.

Bus Watch Secretary Hazel Burnett spoke to *THE ARCHER* about this crisis in a long, hard campaign. She told us: "We are getting support from the Green Party, including London GLA member Jenny Jones, Labour and LibDem Finchley Parliamentary candidates Alison Moore (Barnet's Labour Leader) and Laura Edge, Barnet Conservatives' Cabinet member for Environment and Transport Andrew Harper, and Mayor Brian Coleman. With the London Mayor's cuts to the transport budget, though, we face a very hard battle.

"TfL now recognise us as a consultative group, but still deny the finding of their own Travelwatch that the High Road bus service is inadequate. I have lived in this area for 25 years, and have never found the High Road service satisfactory. I was always hearing complaints at bus stops, but nobody did anything about it."

Six-year campaign

Joining Agenda 21's traffic section gave Hazel the push to call for a public meeting at the library in 2003. It was so well attended, and people had so many ideas, that East Finchley Bus Watch grew from it. Quite soon, it linked with West Haringey Bus Watch, who have had great success in helping improve the 102 and 234.

Hazel added: "We are fighting for everyone who uses the service. Non-drivers, commuters, people with no other form of transport, shoppers, hospital visitors, people with disabilities, people returning from an evening out who live a long way

from the Underground.

"So, please, East Finchley people, let TfL know your own factual experiences of waiting for just one service along this busy main road. The more letters that arrive on TfL desks the more attention we will get."

Leader's support

One letter that may get attention has been written to

the Mayor of London by Cllr. Freer, Leader of Barnet Council at the request of Cllr. Harper, after the Bus Watch meeting. In his letter Cllr. Freer asks for TfL to look at improving public transport links in East and North Finchley

Contact Hazel on 020 8444 6824 if you want to help win the battle of the buses.



Miss Jamaica UK Jessica Ramsey-Thompson with her mum Noreen, left, and well-known Jamaican singer Marcia Griffiths. Photo by Allan Ramsey.

Jessica takes the crown

Fame came to Jessica Ramsey-Thompson very unexpectedly. She was shopping with a friend in central London when a talent scout stopped her and asked whether she'd considered entering the competition to find Miss Jamaica UK.

Never scared of a challenge (she auditioned for The X Factor last year), Jessica, of Bancroft Avenue, thought she'd give it a go and ended up walking away with the crown. The 19-year-old graphic design student now has a busy year of foreign travel and promotional events ahead of her.

Miss Jamaica UK is a long-

established London-based competition open to young women with a Jamaican background. This year, 15 made it to the final line-up.

Jessica's dad Allan said: "She only got into the competition at the last minute to make up the numbers. She was very natural all the way through and I think that helped her win."



Photo by Simon Dewhurst - courtesy of Barnet Council.

Support for carers

Do you look after someone who is disabled or ill, whatever their age, or an older person, but you are not a paid care worker? Then you are a carer and Caring with Confidence is for you.

Part of the government's New Deal for Carers, this new programme in Barnet aims to help improve your health and wellbeing and that of the person you care for. It is designed to give support, advice and information and is a great opportunity to meet other carers and share experiences, whilst fitting around your life and caring responsibilities.

There are seven sessions to choose from. Each lasts three hours and covers different aspects of a carer's life. For

carers in Barnet aged 18 or over the programme is completely free, including lunch and, where needed, associated travel and respite costs. The sessions are in various venues with disabled access around the borough.

Find out more and book your place now. Call Adult Social Services on 020 8359 7863 or email caringwithconfidence@barnet.gov.uk. You can also visit www.caringwithconfidence.net to do your sessions from home instead.

Rogue trader warning

By Janet Maitland

Barnet Trading Standards and Neighbourhood Watch has issued an alert about rogue traders operating in the borough. The two men claim to be builders, but charge huge amounts of money for either shoddy job or no work at all. They call themselves Phillip and Michael Delaney and drive a white van, registration number NA53 BFV. Should you come across them, do not let them do any work and call the police on 0300 123 1212.

I'm a celebrity, get me back to East Finchley!

East Finchley was well represented in the most recent series of TV jungle show *I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here!* Model Sam Fox, who used to live in Lankaster Gardens, and actress Lucy Benjamin, who used to live in Fordington Road, were both among the contestants.

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