



Bids are in for Stanley Road Playing Field

Eight bids have been submitted to Barnet Council to acquire Stanley Road Playing Field. The bid by Sport East Finchley (Sport EF), a local community-based group hoping to retain the field for sports purposes, is one of them. The others are as yet unknown.

People are being urged to sign a petition to support the Sport EF plan and show Barnet Council the strength of feeling behind the idea in East Finchley. Over 1,000 signatures have already been collected online and on paper. You can add your name to the online list at www.stanleyroadsports.org or sign the petition at Bike and Run on the High Road.

Whole site for sport

Fairview New Homes is expected to be among the eight bidders for the field, since the company approached Sport EF with the intention of doing a deal with them to build houses on half of the site and develop the rest of the site for sports facilities.

This approach was rejected by Sport EF as its professional business plan needs the whole

one-hectare site to work for sports use. Its funder, the London Marathon Trust, which is prepared to purchase the site for sports use and substantially contribute to providing sports facilities on site, will only do so if the whole site is retained in sports use.

The retention of the whole site for sports use is a position which the local community has supported solidly over many years.

Olympic legacy

Roger Chapman, Chair of Sport EF, said: "Crunch time for the future of one of East Finchley's open spaces is near. Our bid amounts to a £2 million investment in modern sports facilities at no cost to the council. Our bid is localism and the Big Society wrapped up in one and we want the Council to be

bold enough to support its local community in providing a fitting Olympic 2012 sports legacy for Barnet."

Barnet Council will consider the eight bids at one of its Cabinet Resources Committee meetings. Stanley Road Playing Field was scheduled for discussion at a November meeting but failed to make the final agenda. The December meeting, date unconfirmed, is a special one and the meeting after that will be on 12 January.

Sport EF will keep people up to date with posts on its website www.stanleyroadsports.org and Facebook page (search Stanley Road Playing Field East Finchley).



Arrest after car overturns

By Janet Maitland

A man was arrested after two cars collided on the High Road at about 1.30pm on 21 October, outside the gates of Islington cemetery. One of the vehicles was flipped onto its roof in the incident.

Lee Garcia was driving a BMW that was in collision with a black Vauxhall Corsa driven by a woman who is believed to be in her 30s. She was trapped in the car and had to be freed by emergency services before being taken by ambulance to Whittington Hospital. Her injuries are not thought to be serious.

Mr Garcia drove away from the accident, but his car was chased by a police officer on foot who managed to catch up with the BMW. "The damage done to the car caused it to stop," said a police spokesperson. "We were then able to arrest him. He was charged with 13 offences and kept in custody until he

appeared at Hendon Magistrates court on 24 October."

The charges included failing to stop at the accident, dangerous driving and possession of Class A drugs. The other charges, some of which were for previous alleged offences, were related to driving without insurance or not in accordance with his licence.

In court, Mr Garcia pleaded guilty to possession of cocaine and to two of the insurance and licence charges. He was remanded on unconditional bail. He will be sentenced at Brent Magistrates Court on 9 January. The court will also try him for the charges to which he has pleaded not guilty.



Early queues for the Safer Neighbourhood Team's cycle security event at East Finchley station. Photo by John Lawrence

Cyclists get in line for bike security

Bikes are always vulnerable to theft but there's plenty cyclists can do to protect their faithful steeds. Cyclists were queuing early to take advantage of a free cycle marking event held outside East Finchley station in the morning rush hour on 18 October.

The East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood team and the Met's Cycle Task Force applied unique serial numbers in indelible paint and registered bike frame numbers, to deter thieves and make stolen bikes easier to trace back to their owners.

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Coldfall cash

By Janet Maitland

In August we reported that thousands of pounds had been found hidden in Coldfall Wood. You've probably been wondering exactly how much was found, whether anyone claimed it and how it got there in the first place ... and possibly what you would have done if you'd stumbled upon it whilst walking your dog.

We can now report that no one claimed the money, about £5,000, so it was returned to the person who found it. "Any suggestion as to how the money ended up there would be pure speculation," said a police spokesperson. So now you know.

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