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# THE ARCHER



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*A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.*



## Cash crisis for lifeline service

By John Lawrence

A long-established community charity facing closure within weeks is making a last-ditch plea for financial support to keep its much-needed services running. East Finchley Advice Service (EFAS) will have to close on 30 September unless it can find sufficient funds to keep going.

The charity helps thousands of people each year with advice on entitlements, rights and legal processes. It offers outreach services, legal surgeries and a successful employment training programme.

EFAS is run largely by volunteers but needs about £3,000 per month to cover the salary of a projects manager and outreach worker, rent, insurance and office costs. It currently has less than three months' running costs in its coffers.

Projects manager Ruby

Joseph is appealing desperately for £10,000-£15,000 to keep the charity's doors open and to buy it some time to attract more funding. She said: "We have been actively working on fundraising for some time and we are thankful for the help that has been given so generously. Sadly, however, we do not have sufficient funds to keep going."

"We have given fantastic value in conducting up to 4,000 consultations per year advising the community as to their entitlements, rights and responsibilities. There is as much need and demand for our services as ever. Surely this is not the time to close down community services."

The cash crisis has come about after Barnet Council withdrew core funding for EFAS last December as part of general budget cuts. The charity has battled on but now faces closure at the end of this month.

Ruby and the charity's trustees, who are all volunteers, are grateful for any help but hope to find a substantial contribution from one funder to provide stability and encourage other financial support.

This is not the first time that EFAS has faced closure. Originally set up by the council in 1982, funding was cut in 1995. Volunteers stepped in then to form a management committee and received part-funding from the council to keep the service running.

*Can you help? Please contact Ruby on 020 8444 6265 or help@efas.org.uk. You can also drop in any weekday morning between 10am and 1pm to the charity's base at the Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, N2.*



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## Wicked Women

Sunny Ormonde and Sara Coward, star in a celebration of outrageous women, real and fictional, throughout the centuries at this month's East Finchley Arts Festival.

See the full Arts Festival programme on page 4

## Attempted child abduction

By Janet Maitland

There was an attempted abduction of an eight-year-old girl in Cherry Tree Wood on Sunday 14 August between 11am and 12 noon.

The mother of the girl became worried that her daughter had not come back from playing in the wooded area and alerted two passing Police Community Support Officers from the Safer Neighbourhood Team. Shortly afterwards the girl came back, saying that a man had grabbed her from behind, putting his hand over her mouth and dragging her away. She managed to escape by the tennis courts.

The man is described as white, aged in his late teens to early 30s. He was wearing a yellow hooded top with the hood up, black trousers and white Nike trainers with a blue tick symbol.

"This was a terrifying ordeal for a young girl," said DC Charlie Pulling, of Barnet CID. "This was a sinister event and we urgently need to trace this

man. The park was being used by families at the time of the incident and I would ask anyone who was in the park at the time to contact police, especially if you were taking photographs as you may have recorded an image of this man.

"Police are making strenuous efforts to find him. In the meantime, we will be increasing patrols to keep the public safe. I would ask the public, particularly parents, to be vigilant and to phone 999 if they see anyone acting suspiciously."

Anyone who has information should contact the police on 101 and ask for the CID at Colindale, or you can contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you want to remain anonymous. Please quote crime reference number 2419944/11.

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