



Walk in the woods: The Big Fun walkers set off through Cherry Tree Wood. Photo Karen Plum

## Off we go through London's green spaces

The weather was kind to over 1,000 walkers who took part in this year's Big Fun Walk, trekking seven and a half miles across London in aid of North London Hospice. The walk is the hospice's biggest annual fundraiser, attracting participants young and old, and even a number of four-legged companions.

Walkers set off from East Finchley tube station at 9.30am on Sunday 22 March and made their way through many of London's Royal Parks before being welcomed to the finishing point at Storey's Gate in Westminster with a jazz band and much needed refreshments.

Janet Roth, who takes part in the Big Fun Walk every year, said: "I'm walking today with my good friends Lilian Cordell, Esther and Rochelle. It means a lot to us to support the hospice as we have all known family or friends that have been cared for there and know what wonderful care they provide."

Antoni Dworniak from Leyton said: "North London

Hospice is a cause very close to my heart. I have taken part in the Big Fun Walk since 2009. My sister's mother was cared for by the hospice, so I am walking in her memory."

North London Hospice director of fundraising Robin Langrishe thanked everyone who took part and the companies who donated food and drink for the walkers: Coca-Cola, Soho Sandwich Company, Reynolds Catering Supplies Ltd and Waitrose Barnet. All money raised will go towards providing specialist care and support to terminally ill patients and their families in the boroughs of Barnet, Enfield and Haringey.

## Take a walk with the WI

By Elizabeth Alcock, president of Finchley WI  
Isn't it great when the temperatures start, ever so slowly, to rise? It's such a good time to be wrapped up (never trust the English weather) and take the family for a walk. We are lucky people, here in North London, with a multitude of routes available for observing the budding trees and flowers.

At a quick dash, I can think of the glorious Fritillaries near Dardlands Nature Reserve Pond; any direction of The Capital Ring (through Cherry Tree Wood or towards Finchley/Hendon); up the Dollis Brook to Barnet (can lead as far as Borehamwood if you check your map); the route from High Barnet to Cockfosters; or joining the throngs on Hampstead Heath.

Of course, you may know another place to snatch a moment of reflection as we start a new growing year... but, while you do so, think of the gardeners and their forthcoming battle with the weeds!

### Gaining thinking time

Walking is a favourite activity for the Finchley Women's Institute, and we love to share our routes, and would like to hear yours. Walking helps to slow down our busy lives to a manageable pace, it gives us time for thinking and planning. It also forms a sound base for a shared experience, forms and bonds friendships and, just occasionally, gives us something concrete (or muddy) to moan about!

So put on your collective strong flat shoes and take to the paths. If you want to start small, why not take everyone to Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road and try to find a new route to the playground?

Finchley WI is open to all women over 18 years and meets at 8pm on the second Wednesday of each month (except August) in The Salon, Stephens House & Gardens, East End Road, N3.

## Next generation of volunteers

By Karen Finn

Do you ever wonder whether your pre-teens really 'get' all the charity fundraising stuff they do through school and other groups? I feel that mine don't and even though they're great kids, they need more perspective and less sense of entitlement. So I've decided to do something about it.

Through a project that I'm calling MyKids4Humanity, I'm aiming to do at least one 'hands on' volunteer activity each month as well as generally trying harder to encourage compassion on a daily basis.

Hopefully this will guide them towards being socially

face to face. In addition to helping people, MyKids4Humanity is about taking responsibility for the environment and the animals that live in it.

Since finding activities that the kids can do has been slow going, we've started out by searching for volunteer work



Big idea: Karen Finn with her children Toby and Jessica

responsible and thinking more about other people who aren't as fortunate as they are. Even if it's just helping an elderly person cross the road or picking some litter off the pavement.

### Hunt for activities

Unfortunately, it's really hard to find opportunities for kids under the age of 16 to get properly stuck in. This really annoys me. Young people are our future doctors, nurses, teachers, CEOs and leaders, yet they are almost completely overlooked when it comes to giving them real opportunities to learn about helping others

to do by ourselves rather than joining organised events. We've already helped out at a city farm twice and have just been given the go-ahead to help clean up after an upcoming local festival. We're also looking into working with elderly people and disabled children.

To follow MyKids4Humanity check out my blog at [www.mk4H.com](http://www.mk4H.com) or look for us on Facebook. The website also has a calendar of upcoming volunteering events that include younger kids, if any like-minded parents are interested in joining in.

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

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