



# What has the Big Local project been up to?

By Janet Maitland

Would you like to find out more about how £1 million of National Lottery could be spent in East Finchley? The Grange Big Local project is hosting a Community Festival this month to get everyone involved.

"Everyone is welcome," said a spokesperson from the Grange Big Local board. "There'll be plenty of activities for old and young and everyone in between, food and drink, community information, a bouncy castle and a variety of games.

"Importantly, there'll be a chance to have your say on how the £1 million should be spent. We'll be presenting a draft plan so you can give us feedback on what you think the priorities are. And you can find out how to get a grant to start a social enterprise in the area."

### Festival on home turf

The Grange Big Local has been awarded the lottery money

for local residents to decide how to spend over the next 10 years.

The area covered by the award runs between the North Circular to the north, the High Road to the East, East End Road to the west and Church Lane to the south. It includes the Grange, Font Hills and Thomas More estates.

The community festival takes place at Bishop Douglass School in Hamilton Road from 12 till 4pm on Sunday 27 September.

This is the third Grange Big Local Festival. Last year's was a youth event at Brownsell Road and was run collaboratively with Art Against Knives.



Last year's Big Local Festival. Photo Julia Hines



Street cat: Birgit Kaye with James Bowen and feline friend Bob.

## Stray cat strut

By Craig Johnson

Birgit Kaye is an amateur photographer and a cat lover. She can often be spotted stealthily posing with her digital camera around East Finchley and Muswell Hill, attempting to take shots of local felines, both strays and pets.

Birgit has literally hundreds of photos of cats on the prowl or lazily dozing in the summer sun. But they are not always easy subjects.

"Cats are never quite the same in terms of focus as subjects like flowers as they keep moving and often I'll need to

take them from a distance with a zoom lens," she says.

Birgit finds cats "beautiful and fascinating" and loves meeting the local characters. One cat used to climb on to the shoulders of whoever stood close enough to his garden wall. Others just seem to enjoy chatting.

Her photos were on display at this year's East Finchley Open artists' weekends back in July. Our photo shows Birgit with possibly London's most famous living cat, Bob, and his busker companion James Bowen, who wrote the best-selling book *A Street Cat Named Bob*.

## Help a homeless cat or kitten

Staff and volunteers at the RSPCA shop in the High Road have alerted us to a new drive by the charity to find homes for cats and kittens.

Hayley Plows, animal welfare officer for the Central and North East London branch of the RSPCA, said: "The more homes we can get the more cats we can help, and stop them living and breeding on the streets of London."

Anyone who offers to take on these cats receives a large release pen to keep them in for the first ten days to establish their home and feeding routine so they don't just run away. New homes are also given a starter pack of litter, a litter tray, a bed, toys and food. If you are interested in providing an area

for these cats please contact 020 8366 3313.

### Off to the country

There are thousands of feral cats in London who are now so used to fending for themselves that they are no longer suited to a domestic environment. Farmland can make a good alternative for these cats, providing the space they need to roam around and a safe environment away from busy traffic.

Feral cats taken in by the RSPCA are neutered, vaccinated, tested for disease, microchipped, de-fleed and wormed before being released.

### Homeless kittens

On Saturday 12 September, Goddards Kennels and Cattery is hosting a cat and kitten rehoming

day from 10am to 2pm. Just along the North Circular at 160 Chingford Mound Road, Chingford, E4 9BS, you'll be able to see cats looking for new homes. All will have been fully treated and microchipped. For more information contact Derrick Yapp on 07715 540279 or derrick.yapp@rspca.org.uk

## Vote check

Every home in Barnet will soon be receiving a form asking them to check whether their voting details are up to date ahead of elections for the Mayor of London and London Assembly members in May 2016. Anyone who is not currently registered can register online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).

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