



YOUNG ARCHER

Playing field gets a bluebell boost

By Ann Bronkhorst

Back in November, Haringey Council gave the Friends of Coldfall Wood and Muswell Hill Playing Field a large bag of bulbs to plant around the field. When they did the same in 2011 it was dwarf daffodils; this time we were thrilled to receive genuine native English bluebells, which are scented and have a strong colour.

Just before the end of term we roped in some eager Haringey primary schoolchildren with their teachers, helpers and tools. Planting sites were prepared in advance as the ground is harder than garden soil for young fingers.

Coldfall Primary School children braved some very claggy mud to plant dozens of

bulbs under the rough grass on the south-eastern side of the field. They loved the experience, asked lots of questions and wanted another session.

The London Centre for Children with Cerebral Palsy is near the other end of the field. A planting site, accessible to wheelchairs, was prepared near the gate onto the field. The

children were enabled to handle the soil and the bulbs, and see the tiny growing tips while their helpers did the planting.

With luck, the first leaves will push through by next month, followed by those much-loved blue flowers. And, with luck, the bluebells will naturalise and gradually spread.



Coldfall School planting bluebells. Photo by Clare Bunston

Students make screen time for seniors

By Montanna Japal

An Age UK London report in 2014 revealed that 661,000 people over the age of 55 in London had never used the internet. That represented 41% of over 55s in the capital.

Studies also show that a significant number of senior citizens in the 21st century are, or feel that they are, isolated from society.

Just a year before that report, in 2013, the sixth form at Bishop Douglass School teamed up with Age UK Barnet to deliver IT lessons and support to local senior citizens who wanted to develop their ICT skills.

Three years later we are still working together. A small team of sixth formers help older people on a Wednesday afternoon with any queries they have concerning technology, giving them support with laptops, an iPad, a mobile

phone whilst enjoying a cup of tea and biscuits.

The sixth form are very pleased to feel that they can contribute in their own way to serving the local community. The ladies and gentlemen who attend the sessions report back that they value the interaction with our young people and this is reciprocated by the students who enjoy their time interacting with our neighbours.

If you would like help with digital technology, contact Age UK Barnet on 020 8432 1415 or email joanne.patel@ageuk-barnet.org.uk

Pitch perfect

Just in time for the worst the winter can throw at it, students at Christ's College Finchley are enjoying the luxury of being able to play on their new £600,000 all-weather sports pitch.

Opened last term, the artificial turf will revolutionise the sports education and experience of youngsters from the school and from a number of its feeder primary schools.

Christ's College Finchley serves a diverse community of pupils, some of whom may have very little access to good sporting facilities. The school already has a tremendous sporting heritage stretching back three centuries.

Charles John Monro, a pupil from 1867 to 1869, introduced rugby to New Zealand and was instrumental in forming the All Blacks in 1893. W.P. Carpmael, a pupil from 1876 to 1883, founded the Barbarians rugby team. In 2015 Christ's College Finchley sports teams enjoyed considerable success. Its Year 7s are the five-a-side football champions of Barnet and basketball champions in the league and Cup. Year 8s are cricket and athletics champions, and the school's senior team won the Barnet Cup for Basketball.



Gripping: Archer Academy students are the first to try the new climbing wall

Fearless climbers hit the heights

By Honey Ellis, Elide Hughes and Sam Hobden

In mid-January the first people made it to the top of East Finchley's newest sporting facility – the climbing wall at the Archer Academy in Stanley Road – and we were three of them.

Thanks to the London Marathon Charitable Trust's funding, a wonderful all-abilities climbing wall has been built, forming part of the sports facilities for the school and the wider community.

Academy staff received the first part of their instructor training and this saw students and staff scaling the wall. The first student to the top was Sam Hobden from Year 9. Sam said of the experience: "It is amazing to have a climbing wall at school. I would regularly travel

to Stoke Newington but can now practise my favourite hobby nearer to home."

All the students learnt the basics of rock climbing by working in pairs and used a range of team games to familiarise themselves with the routines. Rock climbing has since become the most oversubscribed enrichment course in the history of the school.

The climbing wall is available for public bookings through Schools Plus at: www.schoolsplus.co.uk/archeracademy

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