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CARS & COURIERS

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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Peter Barnett at A Scott the fishmonger with his model from the V & A's 'Tower of Babel' with, left, Paul Jones. Photo Mike Coles

Fishmonger lands his own shop... in miniature

By Janet Maitland
Did you know there's been a fishmonger's at A Scott and Son on the High Road for nearly 90 years and, more recently, that a model of the shop was viewed by thousands of people at an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum?

Lucky bid

The exhibition, called The Tower of Babel, consisted of 3,000 miniature buildings each depicting a real London shop. It was made by artist Barnaby Barford who cycled round London for a year taking thousands of photos of shops in every postcode. He then created ceramic transfers which he fired onto bone china to make tiny models which he stacked into a tower.

Continued on page 6.

Budgens car park could be built on

By Lawrence Robinson

THE ARCHER has learned of an upcoming planning application to redevelop the car park behind Budgens and Viceroy Close. Under the plans, about two-thirds of the car park will be covered by a three-storey block of flats.

Loss of amenities

At this stage there is no confirmation of who the developer is, or of when the application might be made. Some Viceroy Close residents have heard it is coming, however, and fear that the development will significantly reduce their quality of life by the loss of view, light, privacy and access.

There are also concerns that the redevelopment will be lengthy and therefore residents, along with the businesses below their homes, will have to live and work around a building site for upwards of a year.

Implications for whole area

The impact on the shops of Viceroy Parade is potentially serious. With reduced turning and parking space to their rear entrances, delivery vehicles for Budgens, Iceland and Amy's could have to move to the front of the shops, resorting to double-

parking on the High Road or blocking the east-bound lane of East End Road and risking major traffic congestion.

One resident claimed that, without a practical means of receiving deliveries, it was doubtful if the large supermarkets of Budgens and Iceland could have a long-term future in their current locations. The knock-on effect of them moving or leaving could be significant for the whole of East Finchley.

Previous applications refused

This potential planning application is the latest in a series of attempts to develop the car park site going back to 2000, the last being in 2009, which was refused by Barnet Council's planners.

THE ARCHER is keeping a close eye on the council's planning applications list and will report further if an application is lodged in this case.

Murder investigation after High Road stabbing

By Janet Maitland

Murder detectives are investigating the death of a 55-year-old man who was stabbed outside KFC on the High Road at 3pm on 30 December and died of his injuries in hospital on 13 January. Although formal identification has not taken place, officers have named the victim as Derek McAllister, who lived in East Finchley.

Police cordoned off Leicester Road for a search at about 4pm on the day. A few hours later, a 32-year-old man from Hill Road, Muswell Hill, was arrested and taken into custody. He appeared at Hendon Magistrates Court on 2 January where he was charged with GBH with intent. He remains in custody.

The police are appealing for witnesses or anyone with information to contact them on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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If you have a story for us, please contact us at the above address.
Comments to THE ARCHER may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

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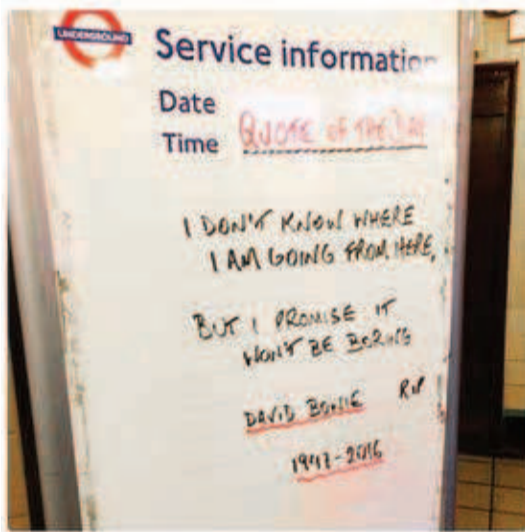
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Heathrow Airport	Drinkline	Age UK (general advice line)	0800 169 2081
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Station to station

On the day David Bowie died in January, the staff at East Finchley tube station paid their respects by giving their Quote of the Day board over to a famous line once said by the rock star. Its poignancy was lost on no one and very soon a photo of the board had gone viral on social media.



Rest in Peace David Bowie.



Actor and presenter James Corden was among those who saw it on Twitter and re-posted it to his six million followers around the world.

We couldn't have done it without you

By Hilary Townley
We were not only blown away by the weather but by the generous support our local businesses gave to the Christmas Festival at the start of December.

Despite the windy conditions everyone – traders, local businesses, visitors and most importantly the community of East Finchley – has been singing the praises of the event.

The festival organisers thank them all, and especially: *Amazing Grates, Amici Delicatessen, Amy's, THE ARCHER Newspaper, the artsdepot, the Bald Faced Stag, Bangkok Lounge, Bike & Run, Broadway Pet Stores, Budgens, Carolyn Pickles, the Cheese Shop, the Cherry Tree Gift Shop, Cootes Pharmacy, Costa Coffee, East Finchley Electrical, Es Vida, Everything Electrical, The Exchange, Fetch 22, Finchley Youth Theatre, Gertie Brown's, GLH, Godfrey Cree & Wood Solicitors, Gus Hair Stylist, Haven Estate Agents, Jeremy Leaf Estate Agents, Kokos, La Dinette, Oakdale Pharmacy, MighteeFit Health & Fitness Studio, Mulberry Estate Agents, Nahling, Nail Studio Designs, Passobello Carpets, Pat 'Have Mercy' Leacock, the Phoenix Cinema, Prickett & Ellis Estate Agents, Pristine Dry Cleaners, Ryker, Securebase, Sophie Thompson, Stewart Duncan, Syko Ltd, Tony's Continental and UOE.*

Even more special thanks go to Lek Rayner of Nahling who came to the rescue of our homeless Christmas tree and then allowed us to use I-Sha on the day (thank heavens!) for our pop-up East Finchley Festival Shop and indeed for Father Christmas, whose grotto took off in the high winds and headed straight back to the North Pole.

And for 2016? We have some even more exciting ideas up our sleeves, which don't include high winds!

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

- 8 Brackenbury Road, N2** Single-storey rear extension.
- 83 Brackenbury Road, N2** Single-storey rear infill extension.
- 96 Brim Hill, N2** Single-storey side extension to facilitate conversion of garage into habitable space. Rear and side dormers to facilitate loft conversion.
- 7 and 9 Elmfield Road, N2** Ground floor rear extensions, following demolition of single-storey lean-to, at both houses.
- Highways verge adjacent to Five Bells, East End Road, N2** Equipment changes within existing Vodafone cabinets, with ancillary works.
- 105 High Road, N2** Single-storey rear extension. Conversion of rear ground floor into self-contained one person studio flat, following removal of external staircase. Replacement of rear door at first floor level with new window.
- 5 Ingram Road, N2** Lawful Development Certificate for rear roof extension and rear dormer with Juliette balcony, to facilitate loft conversion.
- Land at rear of 1 King Street, N2** Planning permission variations, including rear extension depth.
- 9 Summerlee Avenue, N2** Lawful Development Certificate for roof extension, involving hip to gable, rear dormer with Juliette balcony, and four front roof lights to facilitate loft conversion. Roof extension to single-storey rear extension, involving rear dormer with three roof lights to facilitate

loft conversion.
32 Summerlee Avenue, N2 Lawful Development Certificate for single-storey rear extension and rear dormer with two roof lights to facilitate loft conversion.

Haringey Council

- 23 Aylmer Road, N2** Two storey side and part two-storey rear extension. Front and rear dormers. Formation of basement.
- 28 Beech Drive, N2** Dormers to front and rear roof slopes.
- 2 Coleraine Cottages, Fortis Green, N2** Rear ground and first floor extension. General refurbishment works.
- 109 Fortis Green, N2** Demolition of existing structures and redevelopment of site, to provide five flats, four mews houses, 200 square metres for flexible retail/office unit. Includes basement car parking and other associated works.
- 26 Fordington Road, N6** Replacement of two garden sheds with studio for recreational use, including private gym, sauna and spa.
- 38 Lynmouth Road, N2** Single-storey rear extension.
- 18 Southern Road, N2** Demolition of garage and ground floor WC to create rear ground and first floor extension. Rear dormer window in main roof.
- 18 Springcroft Avenue, N2** Rear ground floor glazed infill extension over courtyard. First floor extension over existing kitchen.

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Parking madness! Motorist gets ticket for obeying the law

By Diana Cormack

Anyone living in a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) knows they must provide visitors with a voucher to enable them to park legally. They don't always know when their friends or family will arrive, but in most cases the visiting driver will need to collect a parking voucher from them.

However, when Eva Frost was doing just that in Park Hall Road, N2, a bizarre situation occurred. She was at the top of the outside staircase to her sister's first-floor flat waiting to be given a voucher, when a Civil Enforcement Officer approached her car. Even though the sisters shouted to him that she was bringing down the voucher, Eva was still issued with a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN). The observation time for this was listed as 15.27 to 15.27.

Doing the impossible

Believing that people should not just give in, Eva challenged the penalty, which led to six months of form filling, letters and emails. According to Barnet Parking Services (based in Sheffield!) no grace is given. They state: "This is an instant contravention and no minimum observation is required before a PCN can be issued. The onus is on the motorist to display their parking permit in the vehicle before leaving the vehicle unattended."

Not surprisingly, Eva failed to see how the system could

work if you are not allowed time to collect the visitor voucher, and continued with her challenge.

Adjudicator sees sense

This Catch 22 situation caught her on 20 June 2015. Barnet Council finally rejected her appeal on 30 October. But Eva did not give up. On 22 December a hearing at London Tribunals (Environment and Traffic Adjudicators) came to a different conclusion. The adjudicator allowed the appeal on the grounds that a contravention did not occur, concluding: "A motorist on parking is allowed time in which to obtain and display a visitor parking permit."

A Barnet Council spokesperson said: "There is no statutory minimum grace period for parking in a resident parking bay within a CPZ area without a clearly displayed visitor voucher, therefore this PCN was issued correctly. However, we understand that the adjudicator has given dispensation in this case. We have reviewed the adjudicator's decision and on this occasion we have decided to accept the outcome."

Man arrested after station collision

By Janet Maitland

Police are still appealing for witnesses after a man was injured in a collision outside East Finchley tube station on 17 December.

The victim was taken to hospital with serious head injuries at about 11.50pm. The 28-year-old driver of a white VW Golf stopped and was subsequently arrested on suspicion of causing

serious injury by dangerous driving. He has been bailed to return to a police station in early March.

Detectives from the Serious Collision Investigation Unit are appealing for anyone who witnessed the collision or has any information to contact them on 020 8991 9555 or contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if they want to remain anonymous.

Small gestures of kindness lead to bigger things

By Diana Cormack

Last December a notice on the local social network www.streetlife.com caught the attention of some readers: an appeal for gifts for homeless women at Christmas.

A comprehensive list was provided suggesting specific items suitable for donation and listing some which were not. Presents for children were also included as many of the women would have left home due to an abusive situation, taking their children with them. The idea was to pack the gifts in a rucksack or bag which would be an additional useful donation.

Lucy Williams, who created Bags of Kindness and organised the collection in north London, told THE ARCHER she was blown away by the response. Participants took over 30 bags to her home near Highgate tube station.

In total the project collected 55 bags along with three sacks



Kat Hill with some bags of kindness. Photo by Lucy Williams

Big Fun Walk

The Big Fun Walk in aid of the North London Hospice takes place this year on Sunday 20 March. It's one of the most enjoyable fundraising events in the calendar, taking walkers on a delightful seven-mile trek through north and central London's best parkland.

The walk sets off from East Finchley tube station, passing through Cherry Tree Wood, Highgate Woods, Hampstead Heath, Primrose Hill, Regents Park, Hyde Park and St James's Park, finishing at Westminster.

New this year will be massages available at the finishing line. You decide how much you want to pay and your donation will add to the fundraising total.

Every penny from the walk is used to support the work of the hospice in Woodside Park, which provides end-of-life care for patients from Barnet, Enfield and Haringey. Walkers agree to raise a minimum of £35. Children under five and dogs can register for free.

Sign up to take part at www.bigfunwalk.co.uk, email bigfunwalk@northlondonhospice.co.uk or phone 020 8446 2288.

of baby clothes, toys, coats and jumpers. She was impressed by the thoughtfulness which had gone into their contents, some of these being newly purchased in bulk. An East London drop-in centre for women which is only open at Christmas benefitted from the collection.

The Kindness Project

A Facebook posting by www.rucksackproject.org gave Lucy, Yolande De Vries and Kat Hill, who are members of The Kindness Project UK, the idea for

the collection. Its success has inspired Lucy to think about projects for the coming year and any she comes up with will be announced in THE ARCHER.

It was reading about a boy who had vowed to do a kind act every day which prompted Lucy to decide to do a kindness whenever the opportunity arose. To know more about random acts of kindness please contact her on hello@myheartskipped.co.uk. Visit www.facebook.com/groups/bagsofkindness.

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Neighbours: Holy Trinity School, left, and the Archer Academy, right, in Eagans Close.

Parents' emotions run high at Academy public meeting

By Neil McNaughton

When Archer Academy governors and trust called a consultation meeting in January over the proposed changes to its admissions policy, they no doubt expected strong opinions would be expressed, and so it proved. At times, Martin Bright, a parent governor of the academy who chaired the event, struggled to control the meeting which was attended by nearly 300 people, but in the end he succeeded and a measured debate followed.

The key issue and main point of contention was the trustees' proposal to reserve 55 out of its 150 annual places for five schools from N2, N3 and NW11 from September 2017 but to exclude its neighbouring primary school Holy Trinity as a nominated feeder school.

The trustees explained that the academy had been set up on a strictly non-denominational basis and so to nominate a Church of England school like Holy Trinity would be contrary to these founding principles. This view was strongly opposed by the parents of several Holy Trinity children on the grounds that the academy was simply replacing one kind of discrimination for another.

Community and proximity

It was also pointed out by angry East Finchley residents that local children could be excluded. Their argument was that Archer Academy was set up as a free, community-based school and that this principle was now being eroded.

The academy said a quarter of all places each year would still be offered on the basis of proximity. This figure was in addition to places offered to siblings living close to the school, it said, and meant N2 would continue to be fairly represented.

Concerns for other feeder schools

Parents from Brookland and Garden Suburb Junior schools attended in numbers and stressed that NW11 was one of the communities that the founders of the academy had identified as being in need of secondary places. Parents from the two nominated feeder schools in N3, Manorside Primary and Tudor Primary, expressed fears that their children still might not secure places.

Suggestions that the academy should expand and so solve the problem which had created the need for a new admissions policy were rejected by trustees on the grounds that the current site simply could not provide room for a bigger school.

Martin Bright closed the meeting by reminding everyone that no final decision had been reached and that the consultation process would continue until the

end of January. The meeting did, however, end on a note of unity: a general agreement that Barnet Council had for many years been negligent in not providing enough secondary school places in the borough.

The academy's final decision, the reasons behind it and the determined admissions arrangements will be published on the school's website by the end of March.

Letters special

Unsurprisingly, the proposals for new admissions criteria at the Archer Academy have generated a huge amount of correspondence. Here we are printing a Letters Special and we have edited some contributions in order to give as wide a cross-section of your views as possible.

Remember the original aims

Dear Editor,

After attending the public meeting and listening carefully to the arguments, many of which seem to have been put by parents at The Holy Trinity school, we would respond as follows.

First, if they are local parents who walk their children to school, as they say they are, their children will get a place at Archer Academy anyway, regardless of which primary school their children go to, as a number of places will be reserved for geographical catchment, irrespective of any other factors.

Second, having looked at the data for the last three years, Holy Trinity School parents have not supported the school in terms of choosing it for their children. In the second year's intake of the Archer Academy, for example, only six children from Holy Trinity school went to the academy. This compares with 31 from Garden Suburb School.

Third, an argument that was voiced several times was that the academy is discriminating against faith schools by not naming them as a feeder school. This is simply not the case. It is natural for schools of a similar ethos to reach out to each other. Would we really expect a Catholic or Jewish secondary school to name a non-denominational primary school as its feeder school?

The Archer Academy has been a victim of its own success and its catchment has shrunk dramatically. This year, just 13 Garden Suburb

children got a place, compared with 31 the year before. Intake data for 2013-2015 shows that Garden Suburb is likely to have just 1 or 2 pupils getting in in future years.

To fulfil its original aim, it is not only appropriate but necessary for The Archer Academy to give due priority to the originally identified primary schools where secondary school options are limited and which share their non-denominational and non-selective ethos.

Yours faithfully,
Chair of Governing Body and Chair of PTA at Garden Suburb Infant and Junior Schools.

N2 children will be bussed out

Dear Editor,

As a parent from Martin School I would like my son to be able to go to a non-faith, mixed school he can walk to so we were very grateful when the Archer Academy was set up. We were even more delighted when the school was sited just a six-minute walk from where we live. Feelings are running high from N2 parents. It became clear at the meeting that on the governors' estimate only 37.5 children who live the closest to the school will get a place plus the 15 Martin School places which have been allocated. And it is just an estimate; there are no guarantees.

We cannot now campaign for another free school. They have used N2 land and yet N2 people are going to be less likely to benefit.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.

Desperate need for places

Dear Editor,

The academy does not and will not fill the gap in the massive need for decent secondary schools in the area. The location of the school came secondary to the initial set up of the school. Premises in this area are scarce, it is only a coincidence that Holy Trinity is so close in proximity.

I don't think that the proposed new admissions process is exclusive and discriminatory, I feel that it is trying to be inclusive for the families in the area. The downside is that it highlights the desperate need for more local secondary schools. Recent statistics show that by 2020 there will be a shortfall of 540 places. This should not divide the community, but unite us to try to help our children.

Yours faithfully,
Zoe Spero,
Brookland Hill, NW11.

We don't want to move out

Dear Editor,

We are writing to give our support alongside a great many Brookland parents to the proposed changes to the Archer Academy admission policy. We went to the highly charged consultation meeting and were shocked by the behaviour of some of the very vocal parents who opposed the proposal.

The founders of the Archer Academy have created a fantastic school and, given the severe short-

age of secondary school places in the borough, it is inevitable that they cannot fulfil the demand.

So to remain true to their original vision of a school for the children in N2, N3 & NW11 they are proposing 55 of their 150 places be allocated to local feeder schools who share their non-selective, non-denominational, co-ed ethos. As Brookland parents we are in full support of these allocated places. We are extremely concerned that if we don't get them, we along with so many others will have very little chance of a secondary school which offers a similar ethos and standard for our children, and may have to consider moving out of the area.

Yours faithfully,
Fiona West and Debbie Myers-Anderson, Address supplied.

Love thy neighbour

Dear Editor,

Why should pupils who live in East Finchley have to travel by bus or underground to another secondary school when they could just walk to the Archer Academy? Their only 'sin' is that they attended Holy Trinity School. That is pathetic. Grow up.

Yours faithfully,
S.M. Ertughrul, Address supplied.

Still likely to get a place

Dear Editor,

The original objective of the Archer Academy was to plug the "black hole" in secondary provision in N2, NW11 and N3, with the drive to make this happen coming from families across all three postcodes. Its eventual N2 location means that any family living locally has a very good chance of obtaining a place for their child if they apply and make it their first choice.

Rather than causing division, the Archer Academy has brought the East Finchley community together and will continue to do so, providing an excellent local school for local children as originally intended.

The issue with Holy Trinity having feeder school status is that a child could get a feeder place at the Archer Academy based on the church attendance record of their parents at primary level. Many may feel that wouldn't be fair or be in line with the ethos of the Academy.

The Archer Academy Trust has worked hard to provide the community across N2, NW11 and N3 with additional high-quality comprehensive school places. With the estimated shortfall of secondary places in Barnet standing, I understand, at around 600, perhaps other solutions need to be found to meet this demand.

Yours sincerely
Helen Drake,
Former member of the Archer Academy campaign group.

My daughter's only hope

Dear Editor,

I feel very worried for my daughter's future in view of the secondary school situation in Barnet. The Archer Academy was set up to serve children in N2, N3 and NW11 but seems the catchment area is shrinking and I realise following the recent public meeting that my daughter will be unlikely to be offered a place with the current admissions policy.

I wholeheartedly support the new proposal of feeder schools as I think it will be her only chance of securing a place. I dread to think where she will end up otherwise.

Yours faithfully,
A very concerned N3 resident.

Academy is not the problem

Dear Editor

The Archer Academy was founded with the specific intention to serve three postcodes: N2, N3 and NW11. There is clearly not an abundance of development land in any of those locations. As it happens, the chosen site was in N2. However, this did not change the aim of the founders of the academy: to serve all three postcodes.

Without the proposed change to the admissions policy the academy will end up solely serving N2. This is not satisfactory. If, for example, a site had been found on the Heath Extension it would not have been right to allow the academy to become the preserve of NW11.

That said, under the new proposals, proximity will remain the largest factor for admissions. Therefore, N2 will remain very well served by the academy as feeder schools will only provide a minority of the intake.

Holy Trinity's admissions policy discriminates against children whose parents are not "involved in the work of and worship of the Parish of Holy Trinity or any other Church of England Church". As such, it would not make sense, given the academy's ethos, for Holy Trinity to be one of its feeder schools.

Faith schools and their discriminatory policies are part of the problem of schooling in our community. This has exacerbated a lack of secondary places for children who are not eligible on religious grounds. The Archer Academy does not discriminate; it is open to all. It is discrimination by faith schools that is the enemy here, not the academy.

Comments about "tearing apart communities" do not help advance the discussion and simply ignore the underlying problems. We need to turn our collective fire towards those actually responsible for the lack of quality secondary school places in our community.

Yours faithfully,
Nadim Meer,
Brookland Close, NW11.

Barnet Council needs to act

Dear Editor,

After attending the Archer Academy public meeting for its admission change consultation, one thing became very clear. There is a SERIOUS, devastating lack of good secondary schools in our area and borough as a whole.

Barnet Council has have known about this deficit for many years with its population projections and census information.

Tax-paying parents of children of a certain age are scared and worried that they will not have quality secondary education for an entire generation of children. To assume that there is another driven, energetic, talented group of parents out there willing to put their lives on hold for nearly a whole electoral cycle is madness.

It is not our job to do the work of our elected officials and those who work within the Department of Education; those who have the skills, resources and time to see these types of projects through to completion need to act now. The Archer Academy, while a fantastic school, is not a panacea. Barnet parents need help, desperately, and they need it now.

Yours faithfully,
Laura Pincus
Maurice Walk, NW11.



Safety fears over darkness on the North Circular

Safety concerns have been raised after it was reported that street lighting on a section of the North Circular Road has been out of action for around six months.

The area concerned is the stretch between the flyover at Strawberry Vale eastward to Coppetts Close, N12. This part of the road has a nature reserve on its north side and the St Pancras & Islington Cemetery on its south side.

Iayn Clark, of Sylvester Road, N2, has raised the issue with the Department of Transport and Barnet Council. He was told that responsibility for street lighting here had been outsourced to a contractor, who in turn said they had no record of a fault. It was finally confirmed to him that Transport for London are the responsible body. He is awaiting a response from them.

Hazardous northern pavement

Mr Clark said: "It seems a lot of people who should

know are ignorant of the true situation. This appears very peculiar. I look forward to the issue being resolved and wonder why nobody from council staff and police (who drive down this road at night) has done anything about it before.

"There are pavements on either side of this road but it is mainly the north side that gets used by people walking or cycling to Tesco etc. In the area not lit by the lamps the pavement is in total darkness unless a car's lights light it up.

"It can be a hazardous pavement as branches can fall across it and not be clearly seen by a cyclist. If a cyclist hits a large branch they could easily be thrown into the road and killed as cars and trucks travel at 50 mph on this stretch."

Farewell to Raglan?

One of Muswell Hill's best-known hotels could be closed and turned into flats. Owners of the Raglan Hotel on Queen's Avenue want to convert it into 18 luxury apartments.

Plans to build eight one-bedroom, eight two-bedroom and two three-bedroom flats are with Haringey Council. The façade of the building will remain unchanged.

Larry Lipman, managing

director of property company Safeland who bought the three-star hotel 18 months ago, told the Ham & High newspaper last month that the 50-bed Raglan had been unviable for many years and was falling into a state of disrepair.



New look? Plans are afoot to turn the Raglan Hotel into flats

The way Bernie sees it...

It's often an eye-opening experience seeing life through someone else's eyes, but what if that someone else was your dog? When Rachel Stoplar wanted to contribute to the hand-drawn map series on the excellent Londonist.com website, she enlisted the help of her elderly chocolate labrador Bernie.

The map Bernie and Rachel came up with is a fascinating dog's-eye view of some of the most familiar spots in East Finchley, the Phoenix Cinema, Cherry Tree Wood and the High Road among them.

As Londonist put it: "See this village-y corner of north London in a way you've never seen it before: a combination of places to wee on, things to sniff, the best spots for rolling in and a selection of furry and non-furry friends along the way."

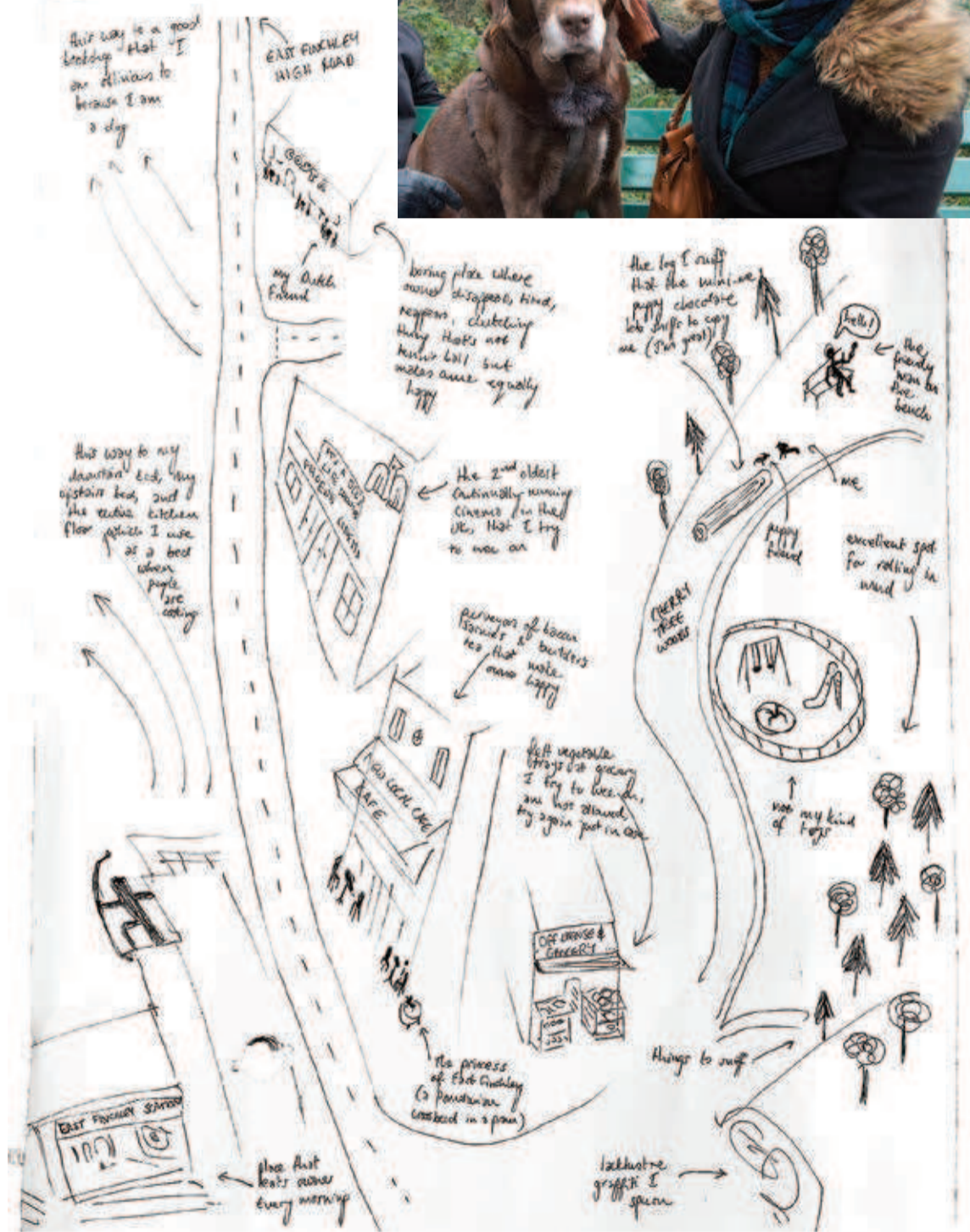
Highlights for Bernie include Cherry Tree Wood, which features an "excellent

spot for rolling in mud", "the friendly man on the bench" and "the log I sniff that the miniature puppy chocolate lab sniffs to copy me (I'm great!)".

The New Local Cafe is the "purveyor of bacon sarnies and builder's tea that make owner happy" while the Phoenix is "the 2nd oldest continuously

working cinema in the UK that I try to wee on". Rather poignantly, Bernie sees the tube station as the "place that eats owner every morning".

What would your dog (or cat) draw if they could map out their neighbourhood? Send us your pet's maps and we'll print the best ones. Email the-archer@lineone.net.



Bernie's map and (inset) Bernie with Rachel. Photo by Mike Coles

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A close-up of the Tower of Babel, above, and the exhibit at the V&A, top right

Fishmonger lands his own shop

Continued from page 1

A Scott and Son owner Peter Barnett had no idea his shop had been immortalised until he heard about it from local resident and London historian Rachel Kolsky. She'd spotted the fishmonger's on the V & A website where all the models were for sale after the exhibition finished. Mr Barnett just managed to buy his shop, bidding against another buyer until late that night.

Fresh Fi always

"It's really good to have been picked, but then the shop is very characterful," he said. "As luck would have it, our blind had ripped so it says Fresh Fi rather than Fresh Fish. It was only like that for a few hours but that's exactly when the picture was taken."

"A few days after I took over the shop in December 2010, a



very old man came in and told me it was started by two sisters in 1928. MacFisheries took it over in the late 50s or early 60s and ran it until the early 70s when Vernon Whitehead took it over and ran it with his dad till the early 80s. Albert Scott and his son worked for him and then a guy called Clive. Then for the ten years before me it was run by Mark and Kevin. But it's always been a fishmonger's."

Happy with your home care?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Are you receiving care at home, or are you a carer? If so, Healthwatch Barnet and Advocacy in Barnet want some feedback from you now. What do you think about the quality of service you receive, the frequency and timing of visits, and whether the help offered is what you really need? Are you consulted enough?

"You talk. We listen. Life changes." That's the motto of Healthwatch Barnet, part of a nationwide statutory organi-

sation. Advocacy in Barnet, recently given the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, speak up for people who feel their voices are not being heard. Together they hope to use your information and suggestions to improve the borough's Home-care services.

Advocacy's Development Manager, Heena Cornwell, says: "We are seeking feedback via an online survey and individual discussions from Barnet residents. We can give a talk at your day centre, or meet with individuals who receive home care and help them complete the survey. We are also happy to help people complete the questions over the phone. Any queries can be directed to 020 8201 3415/3148."

The survey is on www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MPFDQKQ. The closing date is 16 February.

Who knows more about Doctor Who?

By Diana Cormack

If you want to know anything about Doctor Who, just pop into Budgens and ask to speak to Ian Collett. He has been an avid follower of the series since its first episode on 23 November 1963 (the day after the assassination of President Kennedy) and what he doesn't know about the programme isn't worth knowing!

Ian has a large collection of memorabilia, including books, comics, models, toys and games, and is always on the look-out for something new.

In pursuit of this Ian went to the BBC's Doctor Who Festival at London Excel centre last November before it moved to Sydney, Australia. As well as

seeing costumes, props, staged stunts and demonstrations, he met various monsters and characters along with the people who created them, including some of the writers.

But best of all for Ian was meeting his hero Peter Capaldi,



Ian Collett with his hero.

who plays the current version of the travelling Time Lord. Ironically he almost bumped into the actor later in Muswell Hill! I must admit to finding some things a bit difficult to follow since Capaldi took on the role, so maybe I should try consulting Ian.

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Legal challenge to library cuts

By Daphne Chamberlain

As we reported last month, Save Barnet Libraries (SBL) are making a legal challenge to the Council's proposals for the service. A Letter Before Action they sent to Barnet Council on 29 December claims the plans are unlawful because the council has not properly consulted the views of people likely to be most affected and has not given enough information.

Impacts on library users

Libraries unstaffed for most of their hours would exclude many users during that time. SBL point out that the pilot scheme running at Edgware is unfair because a security guard is present. Security guards are not part of the proposals.

The letter also says that there appear to be no contingency plans if a 'community' library is unable to produce volunteers, and that Barnet doesn't seem to be pursuing plans to co-locate other council services in library buildings, as had been proposed. The full letter is online at www.savebarnetlibraries.org. If you want to actively support legal action, email savebarnetlibraries@hotmail.com.

If you will be particularly affected by Barnet's proposals, SBL would like to talk to you. For example, when libraries are unstaffed, there will be no access to toilets. This would affect pregnant women and other adults with physical conditions, as well as parents with young or disabled children. Age-restricted access would affect children of

11-15 who rely on the library as a place to study, or who regularly use the library after school. Older people or people with disabilities might find technology-enabled opening systems difficult to use. If you feel you could be affected, please e-mail pollynapper@btinternet.com.

Speak Up For Libraries

On Tuesday 9 February, SBL are joining in a lobby of Parliament against sweeping reductions in library provision and numbers of staff. The lobby is being organised by Speak Up For Libraries.

Our local campaigners invite supporters to join them in the Aldersgate Room, Central Hall, Westminster, from 10am for registration.

From 1pm, delegates will cross the road to the House of Commons to meet with their MPs. There will be no march. Booking is advised, preferably through: <http://suffl.eventbrite.com>. For more information, call Elizabeth on 020 8651 9552 or 07968 491355, email speakup4libraries@gmail.com or visit www.speakupforlibraries.org

Estate agents awards

By Diana Cormack

If you pass by Martyn Gerrard at 66/68 High Road, you may have to shield your eyes from the glint of gold and silver! Look through the window and, displayed on the desks, you will see a number of cups which the estate agents won towards the end of 2015.

Last November they won three national awards from 'The Negotiator', a long established monthly magazine for estate and letting agents: Gold Award as Medium Lettings Agency of the Year, Silver Award for Marketing Campaign of the Year and Silver Award for Medium Estate Agency of the Year.

Established in 1964, the London based company has its own annual awards for its 11 offices. In these the East Finchley branch was judged to be the best sales office and the best letting office. It also had the best combined month of the year (for sales and lettings) and was the best sales and lettings office of the year.

In the wee small hours of the morning

By Ann Bronkhorst

With his white beard and genial smile Keith Wallace might remind you of Santa Claus rather than of the wartime leader, but when he resisted his doctor's efforts to make him stop work in order to have a knee operation Keith was told: "You're as stubborn as Churchill."

Keith did accept, finally, that he had to retire from the milk round he's done for over 30 years, from the bitter winter of 1984 until December 2015. For 17 years he'd been a chef at the BBC (where he met his wife Rosemary) but he took to the outdoor life of a milkie. Even the unsocial hours and the Saturday work didn't dismay him.



Early start: Keith in the 1980s

"He never complained," says Rosemary.

In the wee small hours

Various dairy companies employed him, operating from the North Finchley depot. Then in 1991 Keith took on a franchise with Dairycrest, entailing 500 deliveries of milk, eggs and other foodstuffs. He was a bottled milk buyer, a 'BMB', out of the depot in the early morning to start his round when most people were fast asleep.

Some were not asleep, however. Keith saw strange things in the small hours, from the



Retiring East Finchley milkman Keith Wallace (left) with new milkman Mick Fuller. Photo Mike Coles

amusing to the appalling. The drunk girl collapsed on her doorstep; the fox cubs at play; the expensive cars with keys left in the locks; the yobs who snatch bottles: he has some vivid stories. One grim experience was finding a murdered woman inside her open front door on Durham Road.

Changes

After the next knee op another big life change awaits, as the Wallaces (with dog) are moving to a tiny village in Devon. Both are Londoners born and bred so it will be quite an adjustment. For his customers, currently over 300 of them, there's been

Changes

a seamless transition from Keith to Mick Fuller, his holiday relief milkman for the last 15 years. There'll be the same reliable service but gentle giant Keith will be missed by his long-term

customers, one of whom once nominated him for a Civic Award.

On 15 January many of those customers gathered at the Clis-sold Arms for a party to welcome Mick and to say a fond farewell to Keith, who gave an open invitation to drop in if we were nearby. There were laughs, hugs, a few tears and a witty poem written for the occasion by party organiser Peter Cox: a warm send-off for our East Finchley milkie.

Bright ideas

Business start-ups and entrepreneurial students are being given the chance to showcase their ideas to win up to £1,000 prize money in a new competition. All entries will be judged by a panel of business experts.

The Entrepreneurial Barnet Competition, organised by Middlesex University, Barnet Council and Barnet and Southgate College, has four prizes of £500 each with a further £500 for the overall champion. For entry details visit www.barnet.gov.uk/business-competition. Closing date is Friday 19 February.

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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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Michelle's bakery dream comes true

By Nick Allan

Michelle Eshkeri is opening a new bakery on the East End Road parade of shops, believed to be the first in this part of East Finchley for 30 years. Michelle is an accomplished baker, having run the Lavender Bakery, an online cake business, for over eight years from her home on Brackenbury Road, but she had always wanted her own bakery.

Through a chance conversation with her hairdresser, Jo Sutherland at 119 East End Road, she discovered premises were available nearby. She decided the shop was the perfect location to realise her ambitions and within 24 hours had submitted a proposal to take it on.

Michelle, who has two sons aged three and five, told *THE ARCHER*: "The time just felt right to open my own bakery. I've been dreaming about it for years. Now, with my boys growing up, I am opening the kind of bakery I'd like to find round the corner from home, filled with amazing hand-baked bread."

The shop, previously a post office, newsagents and most recently a convenience store, will open this month as Margot Bakery serving a range of mostly sourdough breads, vegetarian savouries, sweet pastries, biscuits and cakes including challah, bagels, a range of tinned loaves, croissants and babka, all vegetarian. The shop is predominately a bakery, but will feature a table for customers who want



Opening soon: Michelle's sons Phineas and Rafael at the new bakery

to eat inside.

Feedback for Margot

Margot will open every day except Monday and will be open early with a range of breakfast and lunch foods, including salads and sandwiches. Michelle will serve Climpson & Sons coffee and is keen to develop a range of unusual recipes tailored to local customer favourites.

Michelle says: "I'm really

keen to get local people's feedback on the kinds of breads and pastries they want to see at the shop." She is also looking to employ local people to work in the bakery on a full or part-time basis. For more information, pictures or comments contact her at michelle@margotbakery.co.uk.

Police appeal after tube assault

Officers from British Transport Police are appealing for information after a woman was assaulted on a Northern line train between Edgware and Brent Cross. The incident happened on Friday 8 January between 11.05am and 11.20am.

Investigating officer DC David Bishop said: "I am extremely keen to speak to two people who I believe helped the victim when this incident happened. Two men came to the woman's aid when she shouted for help. Were you on that train? Were you the ones who helped the young woman? If so,

I appeal to you to come forward. Please get in touch with BTP on 0800 40 50 40 or text 61016 quoting crime reference number T-SUB/B4 of 14/01/16."

A 20-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of common assault. He was bailed until Thursday 4 February.

Hospice shop needs helping hands

By Diana Cormack

The North London Hospice shop has been established at 123 High Road for over 20 years. It is one of 18 such shops raising necessary funding towards the upkeep of the North London Hospice which provides specialist care for the terminally ill.

This care is free of charge to whoever needs it, whatever their income. It also offers advice and help to their family and friends. People are looked after at home and in the hospice's in-patient unit.

Volunteers are needed to help in the East Finchley shop which is a popular haunt for bargain hunters of all ages

looking for something specific or just browsing. People from many parts of the world come in, and that includes the team working there.

As well as being a great place for meeting others and making new friends, serving in the shop is another way of practising language skills. Gap year students or those wishing to widen their experience in a working environment could enhance their CVs considerably by undertaking voluntary work there. It is also a way of building confidence before returning to the world of paid work.

If you are aged 16 or over and feel you could contribute to this worthy cause by helping in the shop, call manageress Eugenia von Piccardio on 020 8883 6493 or pop into the shop for a chat. Eugenia would like to thank all those who make donations to the charity shop as well as those who buy them.

Banned books

As part of this year's annual Barnet Libraries Festival, library manager Sim Branaghan will be presenting a talk at East Finchley Library about the history of British literary censorship.

Nowadays we take literary freedom for granted but as recently as 1976 it was still theoretically possible to be sent to jail simply for writing truthfully about the facts of life.

The story of obscene libel is an intriguing one, spanning three dramatic centuries of trials, from the prosecution of Soho bookseller Edmund Curll in 1727 for publishing *Venus in the Cloister* through to a similar attempt in 1976 to imprison Heinrich Hanau for printing *Inside Linda Lovelace*.

An often-overlooked key year is 1954, when five of our leading publishers were separately dragged into court for novels they had published. Entitled "The Man in Control - Undesirable Books, Obscene Libel and the Great Purge of 1954", Sim's talk will take place at East Finchley Library on Friday 12 February at 2pm.

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Heroes

There is an age for heroes and it's not now, well at least not for me. To have real rock'n'roll heroes you need to be young and impressionable and that means somewhere between 14 and 16. You know, the time of first gigs, the first time you got drunk because you meant to and the first time you fell in love with someone you shouldn't have.

Heroes have to be almost a secret, but one you can share with your friends and yet keep part for yourself. What matters is that you are young, confused and searching for something that made you feel less alone. Because the hero you find then is yours for life.

It's why there are 30-somethings who believe Kurt Cobain is all you ever needed in a rock star, why some people will forgive Morrissey anything and why people still leave joints on Jim Morrison's grave. For me it was David Bowie.

Annie Nightingale played a couple of tracks from *Hunky Dory*, I saw him on *The Old Grey Whistle Test* and was enraptured by *Queen Bitch*. He looked like a boy/girl fantasy and made me think that he was as weird as my strangest dreams. So I did the only thing a confused teenager could do and bought the record. By the time he cuddled up to Mick Ronson on *Top of the Pops* in a way that shocked the net curtain twitchers he was already mine. Mine enough for me to buy the next album and to be there when he killed off Ziggy in July 1973.

Back then I didn't realise he was part-chameleon, part-caricature and would say almost anything for fame and fashion. It wasn't until he collided with 1976 and his flirtations with fascist ideas made me realise that if he was an outsider he wasn't my kind of outsider. But I'd grown up by then, seen the Clash, discovered Talking Heads and formed my own band.

It was ironic that he died about 10 days after Lemmy, because if Bowie was all about artifice and invention, Lemmy was the real deal, someone you could share the appropriate recreational narcotics with. Unlike Bowie, I don't think he wanted to be a hero, so that's why I'll raise a glass in his honour when all I can do is listen to Bowie's records.

But Bowie was, for a brief teenage moment my hero, and I will miss him. After all, that's what heroes, no matter how flawed, are for.

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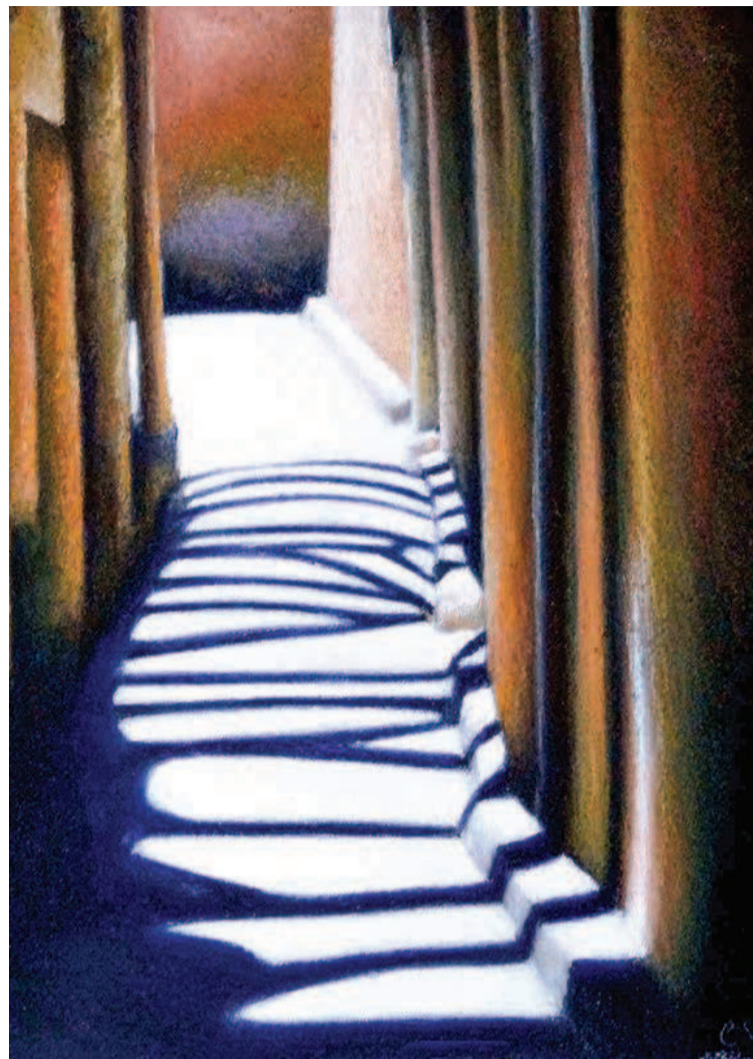
- **Finchley & Hornsey Ramblers Group**
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- **Keep fit for the Retired** on Wednesdays, Christ Church N12. Call Bridie 8883 5269
- **Ladies Keep Fit Class** for over 50s. Tues 10.30-11.30am at Tetherdown Hall. Sheila 8444 0084.
- **Muswell Hill Bowling Club**, Kings Ave, N10. New & experienced bowlers welcome. Tel: 8883 0433.
- **Pilates** in East Finchley, qualified teacher. Contact Dee on 8883 7029
- **Pilates class** Weds 3.30 & 7pm at Ann Owens Ctr, N2. Call Penny 8444 2882.
- **Pilates Classes** Tue 9.30, Fri 9.15 & Sun 11am. www.pilatesineastfinchley.co.uk. Michelle 07767 804 564
- **Tai Chi & Qigong** in N2, Weds 1pm. James 8883 3308/07836 710281 or james@taiji.co.uk
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- **Yoga, breathing & relaxation**. Weekly drop-in classes - N3, N6, N10. Phone Judy on 07956 375607.
- **Yoga**, pregnancy yoga, meditation classes. Call Sunnah 07941 321 772 www.stretchingpeople.co.uk.
- **Women's kick boxing**, Thursdays 9.30am, East Finchley Combat Academy, Church Lane, N2. Contact 07956 340540.

Music, Dance & Creative Arts

- **Art Classes**. Call Henry on 8888 5133.
- **A-Chord**, friendly choir, all genres, open to all. Thursdays 8pm at NNLS, East End Rd. Laura 07732 120464. www.a-chord.uk
- **Ballroom & Latin American Dance Classes** - beginners & improvers. Wed & Fri eve, Bishop Douglass Sch. 8207 2323.
- **Creative writing classes** in informal, friendly atmosphere. Tel Sallie Rose 020 8444 7217.
- **Dance conditioning classes**. New body in 10 lessons. Diana: 07580 041270. www.boldbodies.co.uk.
- **East Finchley Writers Group**, Weds at the Old White Lion. Contact Ralph 8444 5903.
- **East Finchley Poetry Writing Workshops**. Monthly on Saturdays. Contact Dennis Evans 8346 9528.
- **Memory Lane Singing Club** - friendly singing club meets every Friday in Finchley. Call Valerie 8458 4508.
- **Over 50s Tea Dance** at Christ Church, North Finchley. Every Weds, 1pm. 020 8444 0280.
- **Learn to sing** at Finchley Methodist Church, Ballards La. Call 8888 4412.
- **Muswell Hill after school ukulele club**, Wednesdays 4.15-5.15pm, ages 6-10. Contact Margie 07909 439513.
- **Traditional tunes @ TOC Highgate Hill**, join in playing by ear - 1st & 3rd Tues monthly from 8.30pm. Free. 07958 282898.

Clubs & Social

- **Bingo evening**, 8pm Sundays, at the Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2.
- **Bingo Club** Mondays 7-9 pm, Green Man Centre, Contact: Jan 8815 5452
- **French conversation** in small friendly group with native speaker. 8444 9395.
- **Friends of Cherry Tree Wood** www.cherrytreewood.co.uk or 8883 7544.
- **Haringey Recorded Music Society** informal meetings locally. Call David Moldon on 8361 1696.
- **Muslim Ladies Lunch Club** 1st & 3rd Weds, Ann Owen Ctr., Oak La. Call 8432 1415 to book.
- **Bridge Club**, every Saturday 1.30-4pm, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2 8LT. Contact Ray Tiano 07944 562180.
- **Jewish Friendship Club** for over 60s, Tues 1-3 pm at Muswell Hill Synagogue, Tetherdown. Anita 8886 6140.



Fez Shadows, by Christine Watson

Pick of the pastels

Fez Shadows, painted by East Finchley artist Christine Watson, has been selected from over 700 entries to appear alongside works by some of Britain's leading pastel artists. The Pastel Society's annual exhibition will be on display at Mall Galleries in The Mall, near Trafalgar Square, between 23 February and 5 March. More information at www.mallgalleries.org.uk

Re-train your body

A pilates teacher in East Finchley is urging people to fight back against the effects of modern life.

Michelle Imber says most of us spend many hours bent over a desk, sitting at a computer or driving a car, essentially training our bodies into postures that cramp our muscles, strain our back, weaken our pelvic floor and inhibit our breathing.

She says pilates can teach you to counteract these negative effects by helping you to re-train your body and improve your overall physical fitness

and well-being.

Because the pilates method consists of low-impact movements it is suitable for everyone, even those who shy away from exercise because of pain or injury. One of its most appealing aspects is that anyone can do it, and everyone can achieve results.

Find out more about Michelle's classes by visiting www.pilatesineastfinchley.co.uk

Grab your dancing shoes

By Marthemilie Mpanzu
The monthly tea dances at Bishop Douglass School in Hamilton Road are in full swing on the first Wednesday of each school month.

With the team of dedicated sixth formers who take time out of their schedule to help bake the wonderful cakes and scones and prepare the sandwiches, we are able to bring senior citizens from the local

community together, with a delightful cup of tea of course!

Come and join us for a great and rewarding time. Tea dances are on 3 February, 2 March and the 13 April and entry is £3.

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Come to the cabaret

Garden Suburb Theatre is bringing *Cabaret* to the Lund Theatre at University College School in Hampstead. The classic musical is set in the Kit Kat Klub, a seedy establishment in the heart of 1930s Berlin, where the master of ceremonies oversees the action and that flower of England, Sally Bowles, performs her cabaret act.

Cabaret will be performed at the Lund Theatre, UCS, Frognal, Hampstead on 16-20 February at 7.30pm with a matinee on Saturday 20 February. Tickets cost £12 (£10 concessions). To book, visit www.ticketsource.co.uk/gardensuburbtheatre or call 020 7723 6609.



Show time: The cast of Cabaret

When commuters stopped to listen

By Marian Bunzl

First there was St Pancras station's vast modern glass and girder-domed concourse with elegant shops and cafes, then there was East Finchley station's small art deco-styled exit hall, with tiling and potted palms. At both venues, 30 North London Chorus singers performed an hour's worth of traditional Christmas carols.

In St. Pancras, we stood at the junction of various aisles, accompanied by two men dressed in daffodil yellow outfits, with matching buckets, collecting for Marie Curie's Hospice. As we sang, travellers rushing by from all directions stopped to listen; their stressed expressions relaxed into smiles, mobiles and iPads flashed and, by the final carol, we had gathered quite a crowd. A round of applause, the rattle of coins, and the daffodil men

staggered under the weight of their buckets.

At East Finchley we lined up by the potted palms facing a long empty corridor from the platforms to the exit turnstiles; collectors and buckets in red for the Noah's Ark Children's Hospice. Every few minutes a train disgorged tired commuters trudging along, eyes fixed on exit and home and each time the carols worked their magic: people stayed to listen, applaud, and fill the buckets.

What's On... E-mail your listings to: the-archer@lineone.net

Sunday 7 February

• **Charles Dickens in Barnet and Finchley:** guided walk with City of London guide Paul Baker. Special walk to celebrate Dickens's birthday. Meet at High Barnet tube station at 11am. More details from Paul on 07506 761294 or visit www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net

Friday 12 February

• Talk on the history of British literary censorship entitled *'The Man in Control: Undesirable Books, Obscene Libel and the Great Purge of 1954'*; by Sim Branaghan, East Finchley Library, 2pm.

Sunday 14 February

• **Free concert at East Finchley Methodist Church**, High Road, N2, opposite Creighton Avenue, 7.30pm; the Hermitage Ensemble plays a programme including Mozart's Clarinet Quintet and Mendelssohn's String Quartet Opus 44 No2 in E minor. Free admission; collection in aid of Sistema Scotland, supporting underprivileged children through music. Venue fully accessible.

Monday 15 February

• **David Bowie night** at the Boogaloo Bar, 312 Archway Road, N6, with DJ Joe Strong and very rare vinyl auction. A fundraising event for East Finchley's Monday Youth Club. 8.30-11.30pm. More details from 020 8340 2928.

Tuesday 16 to Saturday 20 February

• **Garden Suburb Theatre** presents the musical *Cabaret*, Lund Theatre, UCS, Frognal, Hampstead, at 7.30pm with a Saturday matinee. Tickets £12 (£10 concessions). Book at www.ticketsource.co.uk/gardensuburbtheatre or call 020 7723 6609.

Saturday 20 February

• **Forest School Walk** in Coldfall Wood with Ewan Marshall of Coldfall Primary School. Discover how woodland activities can transform education. Meet 10.0 am; booking and arrangements at www.coldfallwoods.co.uk

Saturday 27 February

• **Battle of Barnet: guided walk** with City of London guide Paul Baker. Step back in time to 1471 and the Wars of the Roses. Meet at junction of Great North Road and Hadley Green Road, 2.30pm. More details from Paul on 07506 761294 or www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net

Wednesday 2 March

• Tea dance for everyone in the community at Bishop Douglass School, Hamilton Road, N2. Entry £3. For times, contact school on 020 8444 5211.

Wednesdays from 2 March

• **Baby&U baby massage course**, Wednesdays 10.30-11.30 throughout March in N2. See www.facebook.com/babyandubabymassage for details or email babymassagewithruth@gmail.com.



Letters to the editor

Ok the way we are
Dear Editor,

I read with interest on a couple of occasions about the rumoured new Sainsbury's that might be bidding to come onto the High Road in East Finchley at the current corner bike store and restaurant.

May I add my voice to the NO group? Keep Sainsbury's out of East Finchley. I shudder to think what would happen to Budgens, Iceland and, more important, the smaller independent shops. We don't want the big brands in East Finchley: Sainsbury's, Waitrose, Tesco etc. We're ok the way we are and love the village type of environment we've enjoyed for decades.

Yours faithfully
Patricia Chinyoka
Address supplied.

Don't drum them out of town

Dear Editor,

As residents of Church Lane, we were delighted when the Oasis restaurant opened. Having felt the need to cross the road when walking past the Alexandra pub that used to be there, it was a relief to see this well designed decorative restaurant in its place.

We have eaten at Oasis several times and love it and it surprises and saddens us to see it so empty of customers. The Moroccan food is freshly cooked and delicious, the family who own and run Oasis hospitable and professional, the interior is immaculate, exotic and comfortable, and it is alcohol free; a far cry from the sleazy old Alexandra with its noisy regulars loitering in a haze of alcohol and smoke on the pavement and out the back at all hours.

So when we read about the objections raised by neighbouring residents in Leopold Road and parents of Martin School children we were completely astounded. Will someone please explain to us how smoking shisha under cover several metres from the nearest neighbour and a street away from a primary school can be worse than the general public smoking in the street or indeed pollution created from the heavy traffic outside the school?

Smoking shisha after a meal is as much a part of the dining experience in Moroccan/Lebanese culture as an after-dinner liqueur is

to Britons. As non-smokers we do not favour any kind of smoking but it is a legal activity, and we are confident that the proprietor of Oasis is doing everything he can to create a lovely restaurant in Church Lane.

This local businessman is making every effort to appease and fit in; he and his family want to be part of our multicultural local community. Please at least extend him the courtesy he deserves by visiting his restaurant before you drum him out of town.

Since when did N2 residents become such a reactionary intolerant bunch towards new cultures in their neighbourhood?

Yours faithfully,
Caroline and David Broome,
Church Lane, N2.

Budgens pricing

Dear Editor,

I am a regular shopper at Budgens, shopping there almost every day. Recently I had a bill that seemed to be exceedingly high so decided to check through all the items on the bill. I found three items that had been overcharged!

Since then I have been checking my receipt from Budgens every time I shop there. I have been shocked to find almost every receipt from Budgens I've had in the past week has an item that has been overcharged.

The ones that seem to be particularly susceptible are the special offers such as '3 for £1' or 'two for £2.50'. Although I noticed that one item was charged at £3.68 on my bill, which I thought excessive, so I checked the shelf and found it was labelled as £2.21. I recommend that other readers start to check their receipts carefully and demand refunds. Hopefully a stream of customers demanding refunds should soon put a stop to this outrageous practice.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.
We contacted Budgens manager Mr Janakan for his response. He told us: "We run price checks on our items every week and we do bear in mind our legal responsibilities for getting prices right."

"Sometimes when we have a lot of price changes or new deals and we have to make a great number of ticket changes all at once there can be a difference between the displayed price and

the till, but this is very rare and will only be for a very short time.

"I would encourage any customers who have questions about their bill to talk to me directly. I am always happy to try to help them."

Dog show

disappointment

Dear Editor,

Much as I enjoyed the East Finchley Christmas festivities on 5 December, I was most perturbed by the dog contest. The winner was a large dog draped with about 20 lit fairy lights and wiring round his neck.

Aside from the discomfort for the dog, I think it presents a poor role model for appropriate pet care. I am baffled how it was considered acceptable by the contest organisers.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.

Dementia friendly

Dementia-friendly screenings of popular films continue at the Phoenix Cinema, free for anyone over 60, with brighter light, quieter sound and an interval for a sing-a-long. Films in March are West Side Story on the 1st and Guys and Dolls on the 15th.

Is Barnet a safe place?

Barnet Council is inviting people to take part in a consultation on crime and anti-social behaviour. The consultation, which runs until 29 February, will help to shape action plans for the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership, made up of the police, fire and probation services and Victim Support.

To take part, visit engage.barnet.gov.uk. You can also request a printed copy of the survey by calling the Community Safety team on 020 8359 6071.

Paperwork can be easy

By Diana Cormack

East Finchley resident Margaret Crockett recently had her first book published. Writing it took her the best part of two and a half years whilst at the same time carrying on with her occupation. Margaret has been a qualified records manager and archivist for 30 years and a consultant for over 15. She is one of two partners in The Archive-Skills Consultancy Ltd.

Margaret's knowledge and experience is reflected in *The No-Nonsense Guide to Archives and Record-keeping* which has been described as "a nice reference tool for the seasoned archivist, a text book for university students and a comprehensive guide for new archivists".

The book, published by Facet, was launched on 22 January at the British Library. Professionals responsible for archives and records will not be the only ones interested in it: Margaret has already had enquiries from people sorting out problems at home. If you are feeling totally overwhelmed by your paperwork and computer hard drive levels, Margaret can help you.

With a client list which includes large multi-national organisations, high-profile charities, local authorities and businesses she has plenty to draw



Margaret with her freshly printed book.

Photo Xenia Crockett

on for this practical how-to-do-it guide. As well as working for various countries abroad, Margaret has also been involved in supporting researchers for television productions such as *Mr Selfridge* and has worked at Alnwick Castle, the setting for the Harry Potter films. For further details visit www.margaretcrockett.co.uk

Computer know-how

Helpers are sought for EFAB's Computers and a Cuppa learning sessions in East Finchley. If you have experience with using computers and the internet and want to share that knowledge with others, give them a call.

You don't have to be an expert, just patient and friendly and happy to explore devices with learners. EFAB currently need extra support on Tuesdays from 2pm to 4pm at a venue in

Homefield Gardens, off East End Road, and on Thursdays from 10am to 12 midday at Season's Café, opposite East Finchley Library. Call Lisa on 07909 998453 or email us@efab.org.uk



Poo chalker panic

Residents fed up with finding dog mess on our pavements are increasingly chalk-marking the spots in an attempt to shame the offending owners. But, as Richard Osley who took this photo points out, this chalker must have had a slight last-minute panic when it came to spelling faeces. It could happen to the best of us!

All of which reminds us of the joke, best said out loud: what's the difference between 'falsified' and 'doctored'? The answer is when something is falsified it is altered or faked in order to mislead, whereas when something is doctored it should be picked up in a small plastic bag.



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Portrait of the High Road

When photographer Asia Mscichowska arrived from Poland and settled in East Finchley she was given a warm welcome and rapidly fell in love with the area.



Koko's window by Caitlin Smal

Contact Asia at asia.msci.photo@gmail.com and find out more about East Finchley Open at www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk



As a way of saying thank you she suggested to the East Finchley Open artists' group the idea of a new street photography project that tries to capture the essence of the High Road community.

They said an enthusiastic yes and the project is under way. Some of the fascinating early photos taken for it are printed here.

Asia told us: "What's special about the High Road may not appear obvious to residents who have lived here for decades but when I look at it through the eyes of a newcomer I see a nice blend of a multicultural environment, friendly shopkeepers and a warm small-town spirit."

Ten photographers are currently taking part and Asia wants to open the project to everyone, encouraging enthusiasts of all levels to send in portraits and street photography in all styles.



Above: Christmas at Tony's Continental. Photo Mike Coles
Opposite left: High Road header by Mike Coles



High Road reflections. Photo by Asia Mscichowska

Safeguard your valuables and deter burglars

By Jan Lovell, Police Community Support Officer, Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Many of you will have received lovely new things over the Christmas period, and burglars will know this.

Registering and marking property

Your possessions can be registered at www.immobilise.com. It takes a few minutes to create an account and add new and older items. You can register mobile phones, laptops, tablets, jewellery and tools, including pedal cycles.

To get your mobile phone's ID number, just type *#06# into your phone and it will give you an ID (IMEI) number, which you can then register.

If an item is lost or stolen,

we might have some chance of getting it back to you if the ID number is registered. Some second hand shops and mobile phone resellers also use the database when they receive goods.

Another way to safeguard your valuables is to use a marking system with a unique code, such as Smartwater or Selecta DNA. Both products are easy to use and come with window stickers to indicate to a potential burglar that your property is marked and traceable. They are also proven to drive down burglary figures.

Police action

We are often asked what the police are doing in regard to

local crime. Operation Maxilla was launched in the borough of Barnet last November; officers undertook a number of initiatives including plain clothes and high-visibility patrols, utilising ANPR (Automated Number Plate Recognition) cameras and providing crime prevention advice.

In the first five weeks of the operation there was a significant reduction in all burglary offences compared with the previous five weeks and, with regard to residential offences, there has been an 18% reduction, or 60 fewer crimes. Officers have made 57 arrests including seven wanted burglars.

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