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THE ARCHER




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CARS & COURIERS

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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Hello, East Finchley!

Host Pat 'Have Mercy' Leacock and local resident and actor Carolyn Pickles entertain the crowds at East Finchley's Christmas Festival. Turn to pages 6 & 7 for more photos from the day.



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Man stabbed in High Road

Police are appealing for witnesses after a man was stabbed on the High Road in East Finchley. The incident happened on Wednesday 30 December shortly after 3pm near to the junction with Huntingdon Road.

The man in his mid-50s was taken to hospital in a critical condition.

A 32-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder.

Anyone who was in the area or witnessed the assault is asked to contact police via 101 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Parents' anger at new rules for admission to Academy

By Neil McNaughton

East Finchley's newest secondary school The Archer Academy has provoked a storm of protest from parents after proposing fresh criteria for admissions that exclude Holy Trinity Primary School, situated right next door to its Stanley Field campus, from its list of feeder schools.

The academy's proposals would mean that 95 of the 150 places available would go to siblings of current pupils and to children who qualify on the basis of proximity to the school. This aspect of the criteria is not controversial. What is causing criticism concerns the remaining 55 places available to children from local schools.

Preferred feeder schools

For them, the governors have named five primary schools as 'preferred' sources of these further admissions. The chosen schools are Martin Primary, N2, Brookland Junior, NW11, Garden Suburb Junior, NW11, Manorside Primary, N3, and Tudor Primary, N3.

Opponents of the move argue that this new policy would be discriminatory to Holy Trinity children and divide the

community in N2. The academy says the feeder schools were chosen because they are within its priority postcodes, within 1.5 miles of the school and share the school's ethos of non-selective, non-denominational, co-educational schooling.

Parents' reactions

Alan Crockford, a parent with children at both the Archer Academy and Holy Trinity, commented: "The Archer Academy was supposed to be a good, local state school without entry criteria other than locality. Now they are seeking to change it to become a school where one criterion for entry is never to have been associated with a church school. It seems like a big step from a non-faith school to an anti-faith school."

Continued on page 2.

Contracts exchanged on Esso site

By Janet Maitland

We're one small step nearer to finding out what will be built on the site of the former Esso garage on the corner of Church Lane and the High Road.

Esso told *THE ARCHER* in December that it is selling the land and has got as far as exchanging contracts. "We expect to complete the sale in the first half of 2016," said a spokesperson.

However, they also said that it would not be appropriate for them to comment on the purchaser's plans for the site. All options are therefore still open and we'll be keeping an eye on the council's website.

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Parents' anger at Academy admissions

Continued from front page.

Former Holy Trinity parent and governor Rebecca Kellaway told *THE ARCHER* newspaper: "To exclude Holy Trinity, the neighbouring school, as a feeder school is both divisive and discriminatory to pupils there, many of whom want to attend the Archer Academy, their local school. We should celebrate ALL our local schools and I would encourage the academy to follow its original remit to provide a local school for local children."

Fair or unfair?

Explaining the new proposals, Sanjay Maraj, chair of the Archer Academy, said the secondary school had become heavily oversubscribed in its first three years and it was necessary to safeguard places for children across N2, NW11 and N3.

He said: "With only 150 places in each year group, we simply can't give a place to everyone who wants one; and if our admissions policy stays as it is, it's clear that children

living in NW11 and N3 will increasingly miss out. We clearly couldn't make every school within our priority postcodes a feeder school; so we felt the fairest thing was to select schools whose ethos was closest to our own.

"We do appreciate that families who are not at the proposed feeder schools may feel this is unfair; but to do nothing would be equally unfair to the families living further away who have supported us from the outset. Of course, families living near the school within N2 could still be allocated one of the 95 non-feeder places."

Consultation

Mr Maraj added that the proposals were not a done deal and the academy was asking the community for its views through a consultation on the school's website www.thearcheracademy.org.uk. There will also be a public meeting at the school on Monday 11 January at 7pm to discuss the proposals.

See letters, p.11



Died in hospital: Charli Brown

Woman dies after Thames incident

A woman who died after an incident on the River Thames in December has been named as Charlotte Sophie Brown, 24. Charlotte, who preferred to be known as Charli, lived in East Finchley and was originally from Welling.

At around 11.45pm on Tuesday 8 December, police responded to reports of shouting coming from the river at Plantation Wharf, Wandsworth Bridge. Charli and a 29-year-old man were recovered from the water and taken to hospital. A speedboat was later recovered from the water at the scene.

Charli died at hospital and the 29-year-old man was subsequently discharged from hospital. He has not been arrested and has assisted officers as a significant witness. The incident is not believed to be suspicious.

Planning Applications

Barnet Council

4 Bedford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with new rear patio. First floor rear infill extension with terrace. Roof extension, including rear dormer window, to facilitate loft conversion.

4 Chamberlain Road N2

Roof extension, involving rear dormer with Juliette balcony, and two front and one side roof lights, to facilitate loft conversion.

132 High Road, N2

Conversion of five self-contained flats into three self-contained flats over three floors, with associated refuse/recycling and bicycle storage.

348 High Road, N2

Single-storey rear/side extension to ground floor flat.

5 King's Mews, King Street, N2

Details of noise management condition for previous planning permission.

316 Long Lane, N2

Conversion of single family dwelling into two self-contained flats, with associated refuse and recycling arrangements. Alterations to fenestration.

374b, Long Lane, N2

Single-storey rear extension, following demolition of conservatory.

Old Barn Youth Club and Land adjacent to corner of Fallows Close and Tarling Road, N2

Demolition of single-storey community centre. Redevelopment of site to provide two-storey community centre (D1 non-residential), accommodating 980 sq.m. floor space, 16 car parking spaces, cycle parking, refuse/recycling store, associated landscaping, external amenity space, play facilities, and boundary treatment.

3 Stanley Road, N2

Single-storey rear/side extension.

5 Stanley Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with roof lantern, following demolition of conservatory. Changes in fenestration to side.

Haringey Council

25 Ringwood Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear infill extension. First floor side extension. Loft conversion, including hip-to-gable ends, rear dormer and front roof windows.

21 Shakespeare Gardens, N2

Demolition of garage. Construction of side extension at ground and first floor levels, with new pitched roof.

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Residents left fuming at 'shisha' restaurant plan

By Janet Maitland

Local residents are considering asking for a judicial review if Barnet Council approves an application to open the Oasis restaurant with shisha facilities at the eastern end of Church Lane.

"We can't understand why the council is not listening to the advice of its own planning officers and the Environmental Health Department," said Matt Rudge, of Leopold Road. "The idea that we need a late opening shisha bar or restaurant on this quiet street is incomprehensible," said a Church Lane resident.

Application deferred

Last November, planning officers recommended that the application be refused because the Environmental Health Department had detected smoke drift from shisha (hookah) pipes into properties in Leopold Road and the front entrance of nearby Martin Primary School, constituting a nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Nevertheless, the Planning Committee deferred the application to allow the owner, Mr El Khalil Jelbaoui, to come up with solutions to the smoke.

"I want to be part of the community and will do anything in my capability to fix this," said Mr Jelbaoui. "There's a ventilation system which converts smoke into clean air. It costs, but I will do it, to satisfy the community and the Environmental Health."

The council will consult with neighbours once Mr Jelbaoui has provided details. "This will give people the chance to comment before the application comes back to the committee in the new year,"

said a council spokesperson.

Objections

Thirty local residents have objected to the application, while seven support it. The governors of Martin School have objected, concerned not only by the smoke but by evidence that "promoting such premises so close to schools can normalise their activities".

"The smoking shelter is less than six metres from the end of our garden and opposite a primary school," said Michael and Rebecca Cooper, who live with their four-year-old twins in Leopold Road. "How Barnet Council, whose slogan is 'Putting the Community First' can be even considering this application is mind boggling."

Twenty five doctors from Imperial College have also informed the council that the shisha bar is a "substantial risk to public health, particularly children". MP Mike Freer has also objected to the application, as has local councillor Arjun Mittra.

Dance artist gets good vibes

Sauly B is a dance music maker who's going places while being quite happy to stay close to his roots.



Good vibes: Hip hop artist Sauly B

The musician has always lived in Muswell Hill or East Finchley. Now he's reached the point in his music career where he's released his first album, called Nu VibeZ.

Sauly B grew up playing dance and pop bands. He says his first was in 'Jonah's house on Huntingdon Road' when he was a young teenager, adding: "I played bass guitar because that was the only instrument left. We used to make loads of noise and mess about."

He used to work at the Lazy Sally Café kiosk in Cherry Tree Wood where Sally the owner encouraged him to pursue his musical talents. Now he works at Tony's Continental in the High Road. He says: "I have had good vibes working there. I meet loads of interesting people and Chris who works there has been really supportive of my tune making."

Sauly B has also DJ-ed at house parties and clubs all over London and Brighton. He's on the lookout for anyone who wants help with their own music or perhaps has some tunes they'd like him to produce.

Find his contact details and check out the ten tracks from his new album, Nu VibeZ, at: saulyb.bandcamp.com/album/nu-vibez

Electric hook-ups

Observant residents may have noticed that electric car charging points have recently been installed on the High Road.

This is part of a project by Barnet Council which is expected to be launched early this year. At present it is estimated that there will be seven

locations throughout the borough where electric cars will be able to be charged. More details when we hear more.



Cohousing homes launched

The ground-breaking cohousing project that we reported on in our November issue is reaching a key landmark in its development.

Building work is already underway on the old St Luke's Hospital site in Woodside Avenue, Muswell Hill, to create 30 flats and houses and a common house to be shared by residents, all in the over-55 age group.

This month the development comes on the market. From late January until July, cohousing members will have a window of opportunity to reserve self-

contained units together in a cluster they have planned around a shared garden.

Members meet regularly in Muswell Hill to get to know each other better and discuss how they will share a loosely community-based life. The scheme completes in December 2016 and there are still unreserved units. Find out more at www.cohousingwoodside.co.uk

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You say weeds, I say wildlife paradise

We have featured writings from Bug Woman in THE ARCHER before. Her excellent blog about the nature that is all around us in the big city continues at bugwomanlondon.com. Thanks to her for letting us print her observations on the community garden alongside East Finchley tube station.

We often underestimate the power of small spaces. Today, I decided to have a look at the car park beside East Finchley station. It's an unpromising area, with a steep embankment beside the tube lines, and then lots of small isolated areas of greenery.



As I walked towards the car park, I discovered that someone had been busy on the minute strip of steeply-sloping, partially-shaded ground by the station wall. There were two tiny vegetable gardens, one mostly empty, the other showing a good harvest of rainbow and swiss chard. There was a little sign saying 'No Litter', next to a discarded coffee cup, and another sign saying 'N2 Community Garden'.

I was delighted to see how insect-friendly this little plot of land was. There was borage, still in flower in November, white and red dead-nettle, hardy geraniums and ivy, and a Mahonia, already a mass of spiky sherbet-yellow flowers. Whatever time of year they emerge, queen bumblebees will find something to feed on here. What a good job this tiny garden is doing.

I marched on into the car park itself. What a barren place it looks! And yet, there are tiny islands of green, full of ribwort plantain and purple toadflax, dandelions and feverfew, nipplewort and thistles.

And, as I got close to the back of Diploma Court I could

see where the municipal planting of pyracantha, probably for security purposes, was pouring over the fence in a sea of red and orange and yellow. Tangled up amongst all the primary colours were the black berries of ivy. This is a feast for thrushes of all kinds, from blackbirds to fieldfares to redwings, and, if we're lucky, even waxwings if they pay us a visit this year.

By the pay machines, little hummocks of moss were turning the smallest pieces of detritus into soil in those spots where cars didn't crush everything. Tiny buddleia plants were emerging from every chink in the tarmac carpet. I had a sudden flash forward to a world when cars didn't exist, and the plants had taken over. Will this space one day be a honey-scented buddleia forest? It seemed the most likely immediate progression.

I head back to the High Street. I note that the N2 Community Garden folk have hung baskets full of flowering heather on the tree. I have the feeling that the power of life to survive in the most hostile of conditions is the lesson here.



Fine Voice: Young singers from Bishop Douglass entertain their party guests.

In party mood at Bishop Douglass

By Daphne Chamberlain

Bishop Douglass School held its annual Senior Citizens Christmas Party last month. The school said, "We value our community links, and are proud of our Year 10 pupils who raised an amazing £1,600 for the event, prepared the hall, and then served and entertained

Arsenal fan killed in strong winds

By Janet Maitland

A 90-year-old Arsenal fan died after he was blown against the side of a bus during strong winds on 5 December.

A gust of wind is thought to have swept Ernie Crouch off the pavement and into the side of a moving bus near Finchley Central station at about 12.30pm. An ambulance was called but Mr Crouch died at the scene a short time later.

According to fans on social media, he had supported Arsenal since 1934, and had been on his way to see them play Sunderland when the accident happened.

Pat Hale of Arsenal Supporters club told BBC Radio 5 Live: "Football was just his life. He travelled to every away game with us and always had his regular front seat."

our guests. Thank you to everyone who helped make this a truly special evening."

All the guests we spoke to were full of praise for the very courteous and attentive service from the pupils, and for the excellent dinner. One of the regulars said: "The meal is always good, but this year's was the best ever." Guests were offered sherry, wine, fruit juices, and a traditional Christmas dinner, with chunky vegetarian sausages for non-meat eaters.

There were carols led by the school choir, two relaxed bingo games, crackers and personal seating cards and programmes for each guest in the festively decorated hall. Before the guests left (many by organised transport) Father Christmas had a

parting gift for each one.

Acting headteacher Martin Tissot said that events such as the Senior Christmas party were an opportunity to meet and speak with the community, and guests agreed that all involved did the school proud.

Achievements

The school's website shows that this has been a year of achievement for Bishop Douglass, with a report from Ofsted placing them in the top 3% of schools in the country for value-added progress in GCSE results. They have a 99% A Level pass rate too.

Pupils and their families also raised over £1,100 last term for MacMillan Cancer Support, the North London Hospice and Save the Children.

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Heads up: How the advertising screen will look will look to westbound drivers on the North Circular, taken from the council's planning statement

'No say' on NCR advert screens

By Cathy Young
How do the residents of East Finchley feel about a planning application bringing "...a sense of modernity and commercial innovation which, in many ways, enhances the area...?"

Put like that, it could well be a popular proposal but, as things stand, Barnet Council will never know. A planning application to erect large digital display screens over the east and west carriageways of the North Circular Road has been made with a "No Public Consultation Applicable" status.

A local resident contacted THE ARCHER after spotting the application (ref 15/04829//ADV), concerned that this "horrendous advertising proposal" will be imposed on the area with no consultation.

Drivers face huge ads

The proposed site for the back-lit advertising boards is the bridge connecting East and North Finchley, straddling the A406 North Circular. The current railings will be replaced by stainless steel cladding spanning the whole length of the bridge at a height of three and a half metres.

The 3.5m x 1.4m screens will be placed to face drivers on the road, with images changing instantaneously every 10 seconds.

Local councillors have now been advised about these plans but our reader is concerned that in the absence of public consultation they will not address the issue, adding: "Locally, we have all worked hard to soften the environment of the A406 charging through our midst but this sort of development is akin to a totally industrialised neighbourhood."

So, environmental abuse or a positive contribution to the street scene with no harmful impact on local amenities? In this case, there will be no public consultation to help decide.

Dedication in a difficult field

East Finchley resident Leonor Stjepic, CEO at leading British medical research charity RAFT, won a silver award in the Female Executive of the Year category at the 12th annual Stevie Awards for Women in Business. The judges praised Leonor for her "dedication, professional and forward thinking attitude" and for "generating success in highly complex environments."

Leonor commented: "It's a great honour. This award is not only for me, but for everything that RAFT stands for, and I hope that this will bring further awareness for the life-changing research that RAFT is undertaking."

RAFT (Restoration of Appearance and Function Trust) carries out medical research that helps children and adults rebuild their lives and regain independence and dignity after

major trauma like cancer, serious injuries and lost limbs.

Among many achievements under Leonor's direction over the last eight years, RAFT has launched the Life After Breast Cancer campaign, which raises funds for vital research into breast reconstructive surgery for women post mastectomy. She has also spearheaded an enterprise scheme to take groundbreaking treatments from development to manufacture.



She means business: Leonor Stjepic. Photo Emily Sidoti



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New chapter in campaign to save the library

By Daphne Chamberlain

Funding for the first step in a legal challenge against Barnet Council's proposals for its library service has flooded in. The target of £24,000 was reached in under 12 hours and local campaigners (EFLUG) have posted "massive thanks" to all contributors.

This first step is a Letter Before Action to Barnet Council, demanding that they rethink their proposals which include making 40% of staff redundant, hugely reducing library size and study facilities, dependence on volunteers, and installing Open Library technology. Letters before Action require a formal response.

Open Library technology is designed for use when libraries are unstaffed, which actually would mean for most of the day. Access would be restricted by age, the libraries would be opened and closed by computer, there would be no toilet access, and the only security would be unmonitored CCTV. Campaigners claim this amounts to unlawful discrimination against protected groups.

Petition

In spite of the weather, 270 signatures were added to a petition against the library proposal during the East Finchley Festival alone. Over £214 were raised

for the campaign. To keep up with developments, see <https://www.facebook.com/groups/EFLUG>. You can sign the petition on <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/no-to-volunteer-and-unstaffed-libraries>.

Carols with attitude

EFLUG say "a big thank you" to everyone involved in the fund-raising carol service generously hosted by East Finchley Methodist Church. The sell-out concert raised nearly £1,000, to be shared with the Bobath Centre. Alternative lyrics to some favourite carols were aired during the evening, making clear what so many people think of the council's proposals.

YouTube

See cartoons from illustrator Tim Sanders, and hear East Finchley residents, including children, parents and grandparents on YouTube. It's a Save Barnet Libraries Animation from Film Yard.

Man arrested over 'shooting'

A man has been arrested after an alleged shooting in Simms Gardens, N2. Armed officers searched the area round this quiet cul-de-sac after residents reported hearing gunshots at about 4.30pm on 9 November (THE ARCHER, December 2015). They were unable to find a victim but a witness reported seeing a man with a shoulder injury.

The following day, police handed out leaflets and appealed for information. A few days later police arrested a 24-year-old man who has been bailed and will appear in court this month. The injured man has come forward.

The Trident and Area Crime Command is investigating and anyone with information is

asked to call 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you wish to remain anonymous.

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Blown away by our Christmas Festival!

By Diana Cormack

Strong winds kept visitors and organisers on their toes at the East Finchley Christmas Festival on 5 December but everyone pulled together to keep the show on the road and make it another outstanding success. It was all put together by volunteers who gave freely of their time, effort and inspiration over many months.

For the festival's fourth year, there were even more local traders running stalls outside their premises and they were kept very busy, as were most of the eateries and shops and the impressive variety of stalls up and down the High Road.

The strength of the wind forced the information tent and Santa's Grotto to seek shelter in iSHA on the corner of Lincoln Road. Some crockery was broken and other items blown off stalls. In mid-afternoon, the very popular giant snow globe on Bedford Road had to be taken down as it was becoming too dangerous for children to play in.

However, none of this deflated anyone's spirits. The morning dog show went ahead as planned and there was a full afternoon of live entertainment on the community stage. This fourth Christmas festival attracted huge numbers and its growing reputation is testament to the hard work of the



organisers and the enthusiasm of everyone who entertained or came along to enjoy the day.

Our photo editor Mike Coles

was on hand all day and we hope this small selection of his photos captures some of the fun of the festival.

The festival finale featuring the London Metropolitan Brass Band and Martin School Choir



Left: Holy Trinity Choir and above: The Fixation Kids



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The Archer Academy choir



Above: Bubbles, winner of the dog show and, left, the winner of the Bake-off

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Tel: 8883 1544 (Minister: Simon Dyke)

www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk

Visitors always welcome



Fabulous food at the festival: delicious Spanish food, (left), free snacks from the Bangkok Lounge (centre) and locally made chocolates (right).

Happy Chanukah

There was a first for East Finchley when members of the Jewish community lit a public menorah on the corner site outside Budgens. There was music, dancing, doughnuts, dreidels and plenty of Chanukah spirit at the event on Saturday 12 December.



The extraordinary snow globe at Bedford Road... before it almost blew away!

Appeal for unwanted goods

The new year is a good time to clear your clutter and maybe think about donating some of your unwanted possessions to local charity shops.

The RSPCA shop in the High Road is particularly keen to receive donations to keep its shelves stocked. All money raised at the shop helps to support the RSPCA clinic in Park Road, N2, and other animal welfare activities.

Managers Gabriella and Julie say donations of quality clothing, shoes, jewellery, DVDs and bric-a-brac are all welcome.

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YOUNG ARCHER



Away in a manger: Larry the donkey at the heart of the St Mary's nativity scene

Little donkey on a dusty road

Larry the donkey was one of the stars of a nativity scene when he accompanied Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels and wise men on a journey along East Finchley High Road to St Mary's RC Church for its Christmas fair.

The sure-footed visitor from Hackney City Farm came to rest in a stable scene set up outside the church, complete with bales of straw and a manger.

Church member Sandra Lipner said: "The children loved working with Larry and were fascinated to find that all

donkeys carry a cross on their backs as a reminder of the holy journey two millennia ago."

Find out more about regular community events at St Mary's at www.stmarys-eastfinchley.co.uk or on Facebook at StMarysN2.

Home-baked treats

By Libby Occleston

Shoppers were tempted with mouthwatering treats when the 4th East Finchley Guides held a cake sale in Budgens on the High Road on the last weekend of November.

Both the cakes and the day were a huge success, with the Guides providing a wide range of home-baked goodies including cupcakes, scones, brownies, and even real apple strudel. Local residents quickly got into the spirit of things and wholeheartedly supported the sale, which meant it raised £330.

The aim of the cake sale was

to contribute money towards a trip that the Guide leaders Toni and Kristy are making to Iceland. Toni and Kristy set up 4th East Finchley Guides in 2008 and they recently applied to join other leaders and Guides on a Middlesex East adventure to Iceland. Their application was successful, which means they will gain first-hand experience of guiding trips

overseas. This knowledge will be invaluable for them undertaking the international trips qualification in the future.

All of the 4th East Finchley Guides send a huge thank you to everyone who took part in the sale and contributed to raising money for such a deserving cause and they say thank you to Budgens for hosting the event.



Bake sale: The Guides set up stall in Budgens

Watch the birdies

By Nick Young

Winter is a particularly good time of the year to take up feeding birds, as food elsewhere can be in short supply. Do watch out for winter visitors like redwings and waxwings which have been spotted in ever-increasing numbers in towns and cities.

Seeds are popular with most garden birds and there are a number of seed mixes on sale. These usually contain millet, which attracts sparrows and finches, sunflower seeds, a favourite of blue tits, and barley grains, preferred by pigeons.

Tiny black nyjer seeds, which invariably attract goldfinches, tend to be sold separately. Some of the cheaper seed mixes contain split peas, lentils or even dog biscuits to bulk them up. The RSPB advises that these should be avoided as smaller birds cannot eat them.

Peanuts are popular with many birds, while crushed nuts attract ground-feeders like dunlocks and wrens. Salted and dry roasted nuts shouldn't be used, though. Kitchen scraps such as bacon rind and cheese are popular, while cereals and uncooked porridge oats are acceptable as bird food, albeit in small quantities.

The RSPB advises that while lard and suet on their own or as part of fat cakes are good, fat from cooking is not, as meat juices will have blended with the fat and this is not good for birds' feathers.

Any mouldy food should be removed from feeders. Although most moulds are harmless, they can be a breeding ground for bacteria which can cause food poisoning. Greenfinches are particularly vulnerable to this.

Join the Birdwatch

The RSPB's annual Big Garden Birdwatch is taking place over the weekend of 30-31 January. Last year, over half a million people took part in this annual survey of garden birds. Details about how to get involved can be found on the RSPB's website at www.rspb.org.uk

Sensory play lets kids get hands on

Barnet Libraries early years team is running weekly sensory rhyme and play sessions for non-walking babies at South Friern Library, N10. The hour-long sessions include a different story, songs and rhymes each week and are set in a stimulating sensory environment with a range of props that help bring the story to life in a fun and imaginative way.

The sessions are every Wednesday morning, term time only. Booking in advance is essential, and the cost is £4.95 per baby. Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis. For more information or to book a place, contact the Barnet Libraries team on 020 8359 7771 or bookstart@barnet.gov.uk.



Play time: Young ones at a sensory storytime session

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Vinyl fans browse and buy at Alan's Records. Photo by Mike Coles

Vinyl revival keeps Alan's Records buzzing

By Neil McNaughton

The recent surge in interest in vinyl versions of popular music has brought a new lease of life to Alan Dobrin's famous record shop at 218 High Road. Alan opened a shop next door 21 years ago and then, when the lease expired after 10 years, he moved to his current premises.

Since then his shop has become a magnet for collectors of second-hand records, not just on vinyl but also in CD and cassette form, for DJs, music buffs or anyone who just prefers the more authentic sound of recordings to the highly polished versions now available as downloads.

Why we're browsing

His customers are surprisingly varied. Fifteen-year-old Isabella, from Whetstone, said she preferred to have a possession that she could look at and handle, rather than just a file in her computer or iPod. DJ James from the *Vibe Circus* collective said he needed vinyl for his gigs, but added that he thought the sound quality was better and

that, besides, vinyl was "just cool these days".

Winston from independent record label and distributor *Studio 16*, one of Alan's biggest customers and sources, agreed that the sound quality was better but also suggested that many people like the artwork on the sleeves, which is of much higher quality than on CD or download versions.

Alan himself thinks much of it is down to sheer nostalgia. For him, like all traders in East Finchley, times are tough with rent and rates constantly rising. Until recently, he said, many record shops were closing down, but recent trends have meant that new stores are also beginning to open, not that he has much

competition locally.

Vynils in the loft?

Alan gets some of his records from DJ collections being liquidated or from record stores that are closing, but the majority still come from members of the public. Some of the rarer or more sought-after recordings can fetch excellent prices, so it may be worth searching your attics and cupboards for your old vinyls. Alan will always be happy to have a look at them and maybe make you an offer. At the same time you'd be supporting one of East Finchley's dwindling number of independent businesses.

New bus

Ultrabus is launching its inaugural non-stop return route from Muswell Hill Broadway to Canary Wharf on Monday 11 January.

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What would Cousin Edith say?

Once upon a time when men were men, women were ladies and no one took photos of cats playing the piano, mostly because cats, pianos and photography hadn't been invented, communication was simple. Back when Jane Austen's Fanny was at Mansfield Park, if you were beyond shouting distance you did what she did and wrote letters, usually on paper, using ink, preferably via a pen.

Just to add an element of malice to the annual round robin you sent explaining that three of your relatives had died from smallpox, the recipient paid the postage based on the number of pages. So getting a five-page missive from Cousin Edith was about as welcome as, well, smallpox.

By the time Charles Dickens published *A Christmas Carol* in 1843 the semi-modern world had arrived with the postage stamp. Now everyone could receive news, views, bad jokes and cards in the knowledge that someone else had paid the postage. Not even the typewriter, photocopier, postcard or ballpoint could change the amazing impact of ink on paper. Everyone could get out their address book and inflict their news on the world whether the world wanted it or not.

Then came the telephone. At first you had to call the operator and ask them politely to connect you to Aunt Gladys in Bournemouth, but soon enough, the accelerating technology let you do it yourself. And that's where the problems start.

Why write when you can insta-face-snap-bookchat instead? Why keep anything written down like addresses and numbers when it's all in the super smart phone in the My Whole Life app? I mean, why bother? Except that when my shabby phone decided to eat itself I discovered that I didn't know anyone or anything or any numbers or addresses or anything. So, if you are reading this on your watch, beware, because if it breaks you might have to go back to pen and paper and that would be dreadful. Or would it?

This article was written on paper using ink via a pen.

Beryl Wayne, 1924 - 2015

Neighbours of Beryl Wayne in Lauradale Road, N2, and those who knew her well would say she was a champion of the people. Reading Beryl's own biography notes reveals four main threads running through her life: health, education, duty and politics.

Her own health as a young child was not good and her schooling was interrupted by hospitalisation. However, Beryl won a place at Latymer School and later, in 1941, she was fit enough to join the WRNS. She gained a place on a technical training course to work on radar, served on several bases and, in 1944, helped in the planning of invasion forces Europe.

Whilst she initially voted Conservative, in May 1945 Beryl's political allegiance changed following her observation of pre-1940s deprivation, her wartime experiences and, immediately after the war, working as personal technical secretary at the Ministry of Works. These experiences, allied to the many serious discussions with her cohort during her post-war teacher training course, convinced Beryl that the status quo was unacceptable and she decided to join the Communist Party. As a teacher she worked her way up to become a deputy head, all the time attempting to correct the many social injustices she saw around her.

Part of the attempt to change things meant joining the National Union of Teachers, eventually becoming secretary of Friern Barnet branch and then



People's champion: Beryl Wayne

President of the North London NUT.

Beryl married the late Wolf Wayne in 1961. They were a devoted couple with great community spirit and became very active in campaigning on many social issues. This continued into their retirement.

They were founder members of Lauradale Road's Neighbourhood Watch, supporters of the North London Hospice Movement and were often invited to Tetherdown School to tell the pupils about their wartime experiences. Wolf had great stories of his volunteering under age and his PoW tunnelling exploits whilst Beryl took in various foods in wartime ration quantities.

"Lauradale Road will not be the same without Beryl and Wolf," said a neighbour. "She will be much missed."



Regular Events

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- **Finchley & Hornsey Ramblers Group** Call Vivien 8883 8190
- **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
- **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
- **Tennis club** with four clay courts off Southern Road. Call 8883 7723.
- **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.
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- **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.

Nick Hornby at the Phoenix

By Daphne Chamberlain
It was a full house at the Phoenix last month to meet Nick Hornby, author of *Fever Pitch* among many other novels and screenwriter of *Brooklyn*, following another showing of the film. Unlike many adaptations from novels, it is being seen by a lot of people who have read Colm Toibin's story of a 1950s Irish girl torn between her homeland and New York.

Nick called it a beautiful, quiet book with a watchful heroine, but it's not as inward-looking as he had expected. "A lot does happen. It is about what people do to her. There are no bad characters, but there is tension as we wait for her decision."

The script took a long time. He needed to write a lot of dialogue, as Colm had not put much in the book. Saoirse Ronan, who plays the heroine, was only 15 when he began, but fortunately she grew up to play the part.

A topical theme

There could be another reason for now to be the right time for it. A member of the audience wondered whether an important theme of the film was immigration. Nick Hornby said he hadn't thought of that at first, but it now seems relevant.

Cinema of the 1940s and 50s, and also some of the 1970s (like *Running on Empty*), made him want to work in film. He loves writing scripts, but acknowledges that a lot of time can be wasted on things that never see the light of day. That's very different from writing a novel, which can always be accessed. He is very happy to have his own novels adapted by others.

Returning to the theme of *Brooklyn*, he added, "Wherever you are, you are in the wrong place. America itself was built on this". The heroine's terrible boat journey from Ireland symbolised the labour pains of being reborn into another land. He very much wanted her to choose *Brooklyn*, finally:

"You can never go back to what you were."



Sell-out: The A-Chord choir at their fundraising concert

Sell-out singers weather the storm

The A-Chord choir held a sell-out fundraising concert at the end of November at Our Lady of Muswell Tennis Club to raise money for Young Minds, a mental health charity for young people.

More than 80 people filled the clubhouse on a wet and blustery night and were thoroughly entertained by a range of songs including a Beach Boys medley and numbers from *Oliver!* They had guest performances by Louise Katin, soprano and musical director of A-Chord, and Anne Sudan, alto and assistant musical

director of A-Chord, who sang *The Flower Duet* from *Lakmé*.

A smaller group from A-Chord also braved the windy conditions to sing on the community stage at the East Finchley Christmas Fair on 5 December.

A-Chord meets weekly on Thursday evenings from 8pm at The Manor House in Finchley

and is open to any adult who wants to sing in a choir. An ear for music would be an advantage but you don't have to be able to read music. Their new term starts on Thursday 7 January and everyone is welcome to go along for a free trial. Contact Laura Gerlis at laura@a-chord.uk or 07732 120464.

Treasure Island

Review by Daphne Chamberlain

What? Treasure Island without Long John Silver or Pieces of Eight? They must be somewhere, surely. But no, not even behind us.

Never mind though. In the Guild Players' panto we had Captain Flint, a pirate whose role model was definitely Jack Sparrow. We had young Jim Hawkins, who loves Mary, the Squire's daughter, and also had hopes of a little book with a map. The map, of course, would guide him to an island where treasure was hidden. But, oh dear, Captain Flint conned his mother into handing over the book. She just didn't know what he was bothered about.

But when a child in the audience shouted "A map! A map!" the show took off. In no time at all, the entire cast were transported to *Treasure Island*. Amid mayhem and audience participation, they were then terrorised or captured one by one by a huge gorilla.

The children definitely liked that, especially when he gave them a thumbs-up.

Traditional panto

This was a traditional panto, with a happy ending, a witty script, beautiful costumes and a splendid dame. There was some very nice acting, from new young members as well as the company's stalwarts. Interestingly, the cross-dressing went further than usual. Both Captain Flint and the Squire were played by women, which made me wonder whether new male actors would be particularly welcome. Why not try your luck?

The Guild Players generally have two major shows a year, with some other productions along the way. The group is part of Finchley Methodist Church at Ballards Lane, N3, but also has many members from the surrounding community and across the Borough of Barnet. For information or contacts, visit www.guildplayers.org.uk

Sing-along for singles

The next Sing-Along for Singles event run by Singing London is on Wednesday 27 January at the Clissold Arms, Fortis Green, N2, from 7.30pm. It's billed as a way to connect lovers of songs who are single and who'd like to sing with other like-minded singles, with the possibility of nurturing friendship and romance. Anyone aged 18 and over can join in.

Tickets are £12.50 and there is an optional pre-event dinner at 6.30pm where participants can have a 'social warm up' prior to the 'vocal warm up'. The cost of the dinner and the sing-along together is £25. Book at www.singlondon.com, email e-idit@singlondon.com or telephone 07874 629959.

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

Sunday 17 January

• **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, 11am. More details from Paul on 07506 761294 or www.barnetwalks.talktalk.net

Saturday 23 January

• **Winter Tree Walk**: led by Iain Loasby, local woodsman. Meet at 2.0 pm at east entrance to Coldfall Wood, Creighton Avenue, opp. Fortismere School. More details: info@coldfallwoods.co.uk

Wednesday 27 January

• **Sing-along for Singles** at Clissold Arms, Fortis Green, N2, 7.30pm, with option of

pre-event dinner at 6.30pm. Tickets £12.50, or £25 including dinner. Book at www.singlondon.com or by email: e-idit@singlondon.com

Be seen in What's On

Is your charity, church, school or society planning a public event? Tell all our readers about it with a free listing in our What's On column on page 10 of every issue.

Send brief details by email to the-archer@lineone.net or by post to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE. You can also reach us on Facebook and Twitter at TheArcherN2. Deadline for submissions is always the middle of the month ahead of the issue in which you'd like your event included. Full details of our deadlines are always at the top of page 2.



Letters to the editor

Sainsbury's shocker Dear Editor,

I was recently made aware and was horrified to hear that Sainsbury's had made a bid for the corner bike shop and the restaurant next door, both leases are now up for renewal. East Finchley is renowned for its village atmosphere. Do we need another supermarket? We have Budgens and Iceland and no doubt business will be taken away from our local grocers and their wonderful variety of products. After all, there is a Sainsbury's ten minutes away in Muswell Hill. What I would like to see is maybe a butcher's. A few years back we had Toms the butcher. Or maybe a health food shop or another shoe shop. More ideas please! If you have any objections to yet another supermarket and/or have other ideas for the enhancement of our high street, please write to *THE ARCHER* and make them known.

Yours faithfully,
Jeanine Johnson,
Address supplied.

Why exclude Holy Trinity?

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my concern at the Archer Academy's proposed changes to their admission policy which names several local primary schools as feeder schools, but not Holy Trinity Primary in Eagans Close, N2, a move which can only prove divisive in our wonderful local community. The initial meeting to investigate the possibility of a secondary school to serve local children was called many years ago by Sara Gibbins, then Chair of Governors at Brooklands. It was attended by governors from Hampstead Garden Suburb School, Martins AND Holy Trinity (represented by myself and Chris Hampson, who were parents and governors at the time). Although we succeeded in little more than getting Mick Quigley, then Deputy Director of Education, to listen to us, we were all signaling our JOINT desire to establish a local secondary school for LOCAL children. Although Martins parents later led the drive and succeeded in setting up the Archer Academy (a magnificent achievement), Holy Trinity parents were involved too. To exclude Holy Trinity, the neigh-

bouring school to the academy, as a feeder school is both divisive and discriminatory to pupils there, many of whom want to attend the Archer Academy, their local school.

I can only think that by excluding Holy Trinity as a feeder school they are making a judgement on parents' decision to send their children to a faith school, for whatever reason that may be. Sometimes it is simply because parents want a small one-form entry school. We should celebrate ALL our local schools and I would encourage the Archer Academy to follow its original remit, to provide a local school for local children. My teenage children are already at secondary school and so I seek no advantage for them; I seek equality of access for the pupils at Holy Trinity, who want to attend their local secondary school with their local friends.

Yours faithfully,
Rebecca Kellaway,
Leicester Road, N2.

Academy plan will divide the community

Dear Editor,

In 2013 the Archer Academy bid successfully to purchase land from Barnet Council to build its new N2 secondary school. This land was previously occupied by the Stanley Road playing fields and the Herbert Wilmot Youth Centre.

Wonderful news, land at the heart of the N2 community is to be used to build a much needed secondary school for the children of the community. The new school building lies alongside the Holy

Trinity School site, their boundary fences separated by a 2m-wide footpath.

The Archer Academy website states: "The Archer Academy aims to be an outstanding secondary school at the heart of our community, providing boys and girls from all backgrounds with the inspirational education they need to live successful and fulfilling adult lives."

However, the Academy is proposing to change its entry criteria for 2016/17, to establish feeder schools in order to limit the number of primary schools currently feeding the Academy and to make secondary transition simpler. Five local feeder schools have been identified in the proposal: two from NW11, two from N3, but just the Martin School from N2, leaving Holy Trinity School in N2 and on the Academy doorstep, excluded as a feeder school!

Could transition be simpler than from a school 2m away where most of the pupils live in N2 and walk to school?

Three local schools performed on the Lincoln Road stage at the recent East Finchley Christmas Festival: Martins School, Holy Trinity School and the Archer Academy, schools at the heart of the N2 community.

If these new proposals are accepted it will strike an arrow through the heart of the N2 community, dividing it by so much more than a 2m footpath.

Yours faithfully
Pauline Crilly,
Summerlee Avenue, N2.

Up to the minute

The clock that greets passengers using the Causeway entrance to East Finchley tube station hasn't worked for some time (or, to be more charitable, it's been accurate twice every 24 hours).

A reader asked us why, so a few days later we thought we'd check it out. Lo and behold, when we got to the station, the clock was in tick-tock shape again. So it's thanks to the station staff for fixing it and keeping us all bang on time.



Crumbling pavilion left in disarray

By Diana Cormack

A sign on the pavilion in Cherry Tree Wood announced that a coffee bar would open there in spring 2014. People who wanted to see the place preserved and put to good use were heartened by this, unlike those who would have liked to see it razed to the ground. Many more may be in the latter camp now, since the building looks worse than ever.

Local residents are concerned about the state of disrepair, with health and safety being an issue due to people sleeping in the building and the problem of vandalism. Freestanding wire fencing and haphazardly placed hardboard do not prevent anyone from entering.

Theft and red tape

Many of the objects stored inside have been removed and some work has been done on the interior. All this stopped in December 2014 after a reported £10,000 worth of building materials and power tools were stolen from the site overnight.

However, the theft may not be what is preventing further progress. The lessee claims he wants to go ahead with the work but has been waiting for months for a Barnet Council official to sign a particular document. Meanwhile the Friends of Cherry

Tree Wood have been in contact with Barnet Council and it seems there are other building control issues to be sorted out before the refurbishment can continue.

Council statement

The council told *THE ARCHER*: "The pavilion in Cherry Tree Wood was leased to the tenant in February 2014 for 20 years with an initial rent-free period to enable them to refurbish the pavilion. Work began on the site but it soon became apparent the repairs needed were greater than anticipated. The tenant approached the council for additional funding to help finance the extra work. We have agreed to finance some parts of the work and the details are being finalised including building control requirements. As soon as these are completed it is anticipated the works will be able to begin again in the New Year."

Restore and relax for better health

By Sunnah Rose

As we settle into January we have probably committed ourselves to a month of relentless exercise, dieting and detoxing to get ourselves back in shape after what hopefully was a fun and loving festive season.

Good news! For better well-being in mind and body the best remedy is to relax. Restorative yoga is a gentle form of yoga that uses props to encourage a deep state of relaxation. By supporting various parts of your body with bolsters, blocks or blankets, you can fully surrender to the pose and relax every part of your body.

This type of yoga can help relieve the effects of chronic stress and gently move the spine to promote greater well-being. This can also trigger the parasympathetic nervous system, which means it rebalances you and helps your body's natural healing processes.

Sanctuary

I run a class of this type and it's a very slow-paced class which is suitable for everyone, old to young, beginner to expe-

rienced yoga practitioner.

For many, the idea of coming along to a class and lying around in various positions being told to do absolutely nothing other than breathe and relax is too good to be true. Did you know, however, that we are actually able to stretch more when we relax and are more easily able to release tension?

This type of yoga offers a welcome sanctuary among all the madness of life. It is a mindful way to approach one's health and wellbeing, and helps prepare the mind and body for deep awareness and vitality for the new year.

Sunnah runs regular yoga and pregnancy yoga classes alongside monthly restorative yoga workshops, all in East Finchley. More details at www.stretchingpeople.co.uk.



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Home sweet home: School 'tribe' members in one of their dens in Coldfall Woods

School tribes twig how to make a den

There was a mini-invasion of Coldfall Wood by 90 pupils from Coldfall Primary School who brought along their parents, grandparents and carers for an afternoon of den building. The Year 1 children wore tribal face paints and worked as teams to create makeshift dwellings from natural and man-made materials.

Eleni Maylappas, head of Year 1, said: "We had been reading the story of the three little pigs in English lessons and learning about materials in science so we wanted to link the two."

Emily Walsh, aged six, said: "We brought in pegs and bamboo and tin foil from home. We made a special potion in the class to stop it raining and it didn't! It was really fun."

Be part of the Monday Club

By Diana Cormack

Last October the Monday Club celebrated its 10th birthday. During that decade Maureen Clemetson, who started the youth club at the High Road Methodist Church, has moved around with it to St Mary's RC church hall, Holy Trinity School, the Old Barn, the Ann Owens Centre and, for the longest time, at Martin School.

Now they are based at the Archer Academy where fellow organiser Joe Strong has great plans for what they hope to achieve there. These include attracting more young people. Currently 60 youngsters between eight and 21 attend but Joe hopes to add another evening, with the two nights targeting different age groups. He would like to create closer links with all the local schools from which the club members are mainly drawn.

Quite a few of their footballers live on Strawberry Vale and the Grange Estate. It is fitting that they should have use of the outdoor football facilities as their predecessors played an active part in the fight to keep the Stanley Field for East Finchley residents.

Community involvement

Joe told *THE ARCHER* that, since the Wilmott Youth Centre closed in 2003, the Monday Club

has provided a valuable service to many of the most vulnerable young people in East Finchley. Its overall aim is to break down barriers and forge links within the community. By offering this facility, they hope to help counteract disaffection and crime and to improve safety.

Older members are being trained to become mentors and coaches for younger ones, a skill which could be useful for future employment. The club is free of charge and the team of six staff all give their time voluntarily so donations or contributions of any kind from members of the community are always welcome. People are also welcome to share their skills and experiences at the club on an occasional basis.

"We'd like to call upon all the resources in our community," Joe said. "Come and help us if you can."

For further information call

And finally... decision time on future of the Old Barn

By Janet Maitland

The future of the Old Barn is about to be decided, after more than a year of often heated consultation between Barnet Council and local residents. In November, the council asked people living within 100 metres of the site to make their final comments. The planning committee will make its decision on 27 January.

The council is proposing to demolish the community centre on Tarling Road and replace it with a two-storey community 'hub', half of which will be leased to the Somali Bravanese Welfare Association (SBWA), in order to provide the facilities lost when their centre on Coppetts Road, N10, was destroyed in a racist arson attack in 2013. The new building will cost £2.65 million.

Ring-fenced money

If, for any reason, planning permission is not given for the new building and therefore

it is impossible to re-provide the facilities to the SBWA lost in the fire, what will happen to the Old Barn? There's currently £940,000 ring-fenced for refurbishing the Old Barn in the council's Capital Asset Management Fund. What would happen to this in these circumstances?

Barnet Council told us the Asset Management Fund is ring-fenced for refurbishing any asset in the council's portfolio across the borough. If the planning application is rejected, a new business case would need to be developed to identify and justify the best value for money option for each facility before any funds could be re-committed.

To split or not to split

THE ARCHER noted that the planning application doesn't mention the council's plans to

split the proposed new building vertically down the middle and to lease one side of it to the SBWA and the other half to other leaseholders. Has there been a change of plan?

A council spokesperson replied: "The building will not be formally split in two. The SBWA are interested in leasing around 50% of the available space. As many of their activities need to be adjacent to each other, it seemed logical to offer the SBWA the option to lease the space in one half of the building. We will try to accommodate the needs of other interested groups in exactly the same way. Negotiations will take place with all potential lessees, including the SBWA, in the coming months, including how the facilities can be shared when not in use."

Bright Sparks

The next monthly meeting of the Bright Sparks small business network is on Thursday 28 January from 9.30am to 11.30am at Zebra Café, 110 Alexandra Park Road, London N10 2AE.

Designed as a place where small businesses can share their experiences, the event costs £10 for non-members and £7.50 for members of the Small Business Network. For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/bright-sparks-event>

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New traffic cameras

Barnet Council is planning to install new traffic enforcement cameras early this year. They say that signs and lines will be clearly visible weeks before enforcement begins.

Areas targeted will be near schools and at selected junctions to deter drivers from parking dangerously, undertaking illegal manoeuvres or obstructing the flow of traffic. The council says the intention is to improve road safety near schools and to manage congestion by keeping traffic moving.

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