

Ed tests endurance with an

extreme castle challenge

By Nick Allan

Runner Ed Kerry has set himself an audacious challenge this summer. He plans to run between the castles in the UK and Ireland's capital cities, from the Tower of London to the castles of Edinburgh, Belfast, Dublin and Cardiff, aiming to return to London in 22 days.

Covering a route of more than 1,000 miles, that's an average of over 45 miles a day. The start at Tower Bridge will be at walking pace for the first mile to encourage everyone to send Ed off in style. Subsequent miles will see the pace increase as he sets out on his quest.

The Castle to Castle challenge is in honour of his sister Tracey whom the family lost to a brain tumour in 2003 and the money he raises will be donated to The Brain Tumour charity.

A special challenge

Ed, who lives in East Finchley and owns The Run Doctor, a business focused on helping all levels of runners improve their technique and avoid injuries, is accustomed to pushing himself to the limit.

He told The Archer: "I'm used to extreme conditions having been a fire-fighter with the Royal Air Force for over nine years, serving all over the world including Afghanistan and the Falkland Islands. I've even trekked through the Sahara desert and hold a Guinness world record, but this challenge is on another level.

"Tracey was an incredible woman with a loving husband and two fantastic children. Although feeling unwell, she didn't know she had a brain tumour and died suddenly at home aged 34. I'm the same age this year and decided that now's the time to really make a difference and hopefully prevent someone else from experiencing what my family did 14 years ago."

Getting involved

Ed, who has a baby daughter of his own, hopes that the people of East Finchley and those on the route can get behind his challenge in August, helping him raise awareness of the disease and achieve at least £50,000 in donations. He also wants others to get involved themselves, by joining him on his run or helping him raise funds. All abilities are welcome and even those who don't like running can help.

For more information visit: www.castletocastle.co.uk.



Ed Kerry training for his charity run. Photo Mike Coles

New restaurant for Silver Service scheme

A new restaurant has joined the East Finchley Altogether Better (EFAB) Silver Service scheme available in the area. Currently people aged over 60 and their guest can give themselves a treat on Tuesdays and enjoy a meal for £6 each at participating cafes and restaurants.

ShahiPakwaan'a is a new fine dining Indian restaurant recently opened at 25 Aylmer Parade, Aylmer Road, N2 and it will be running its tasty Silver Service deal on Tuesdays between 12noon and 3pm. Manager Khaleel Ahmed is offering a three-course

meal with draft beer or a soft drink. He joins the other Silver

Service venues in East Finchley, which are: New Local Café (11.30am - 9pm), Phoenix Cinema Café (12 – 3pm), Big Chef (11am – 6pm) and Seasons Pizza (11.30am – 9pm).

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Crucial questions about the future of our library

By Daphne Chamberlain

We reported last month that East Finchley Library will close for four months from Monday 3 April while the building space and the service are reduced and reorganised. With so many changes ahead, The Archer put some essential questions about the library service to **Barnet Council.**

The Archer: Why will the library be closed for so long from April to August, and has Barnet Council considered that it covers the exam period for schoolchildren and students?

Barnet Council: It is a Grade 2 listed building. Works include a lift, self-service opening technology and associated security, toilet and kitchen facilities, a ramp, and internal redecoration. The 12 weeks allowed is similar to a number of other libraries. Barnet is telling library users which other local branches are open, and has notified schools so they can ensure pupils are aware of school-based library and homework study opportunities.

Can you confirm that library books on loan during the library closure period will not be due back until the first full week of re-opening?

Yes. However, items can be returned to any other library that is open, or renewed online as usual.

Are there plans for visiting school classes and under-5s groups when the library reopens?

Visits and activities will continue during staffed hours. Schools that register to use the self-service opening hours will be able to accompany children then. Barnet will be working with schools to ensure that they are aware of this opportunity. Tuesdays and Thursdays will be unstaffed at East Finchlev Library. Have the three hours

voluntary help for these days been firmed up?

The library service already recruits volunteers. Details are available on the council's website. Anew campaign, recruiting volunteers for targeted support, will begin shortly.

Can you confirm that the library's toilets will be closed at all times when professional staff are not on duty?

Is there any news about the organisations that will be renting the parts of the building no longer in use as a library?

Information will be available once arrangements have been confirmed.

What about the organisations who are currently using the library; have any arrangements been made with them? They have been told about the temporary closure, and offered assistance in finding new venues.

Find out more details about library reorganisation across the borough by searching 'Library' at www.barnet.gov.uk.

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