



A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Lower speed limit and one way system for troubled roads

Residents plagued by dangerous driving and traffic congestion have been giving their opinions on a plan to introduce a new one-way system and a 20mph speed limit outside their homes.

Barnet Council is proposing to introduce the traffic control measures on Leslie Road and Leopold Road, N2, and invited homeowners to take part in a consultation, which closed at the end of March.

No room to pass

Both roads are often difficult to navigate, particularly during the school run hours, because parked vehicles on either side mean there's only room for one direction of travel, leading to frequent stand-offs from motorists unwilling or unable to back up. Drivers entering Leopold Road from either end have fairly good visibility to see whether a car is already coming towards them but those entering Leslie Road can see only as far as the bend halfway down, by which time it's a long way to back up if they do meet another motorist.

Two years ago, residents were consulted about adding the two roads to East Finchley's controlled parking zones, which might have preserved some passing spaces, but Barnet Council officers concluded at the time that there was not a large enough majority in favour of the move.

On top of the traffic congestion, residents complain of too many drivers travelling too fast, possibly to get to the end of the road before another car approaches. Separately, some report high-powered cars roaring past particularly on weekend evenings.

Residents react to proposals

The council plans will impose a 20mph limit on both roads and make them both one

way, with traffic only allowed to enter from the High Road end. The current right turn from Church Lane into Leslie Road would be made a no entry. Some residents who expressed their views on Facebook welcomed the lower speed limit but doubted whether many drivers would stick to it. "Making the roads one way will just mean people feel they can go faster," said one. Some questioned the wisdom of forcing all motorists all the way down the 20mph one-way Church Lane to get back out onto the High Road. We understand that residents of Church Lane were not invited to take part in the consultation. One said: "The end of Church Lane is a difficult enough junction as it is." Another said: "I can't see how forcing people to drive round in circles will do anything except increase pollution."

Funding a factor

Barnet Council said it will make a decision on whether to go ahead with the changes after reading residents' responses to the formal consultation and after assessing whether sufficient funding is available.

In this issue

New 'village' magazine.....p3
Safer neighbourhoods..... p4
Hawthorn Denep6
Fishmonger's accolade..... p7
Phoenix Film club..... p9
Live music at The Stag..... p10
Proms at St Jude's..... p11
Comedy night at Academy.. p11



Cold-shouldered: Children and parents protest outside the library against access restrictions. Photo Mike Coles

"Let us into our library again"

It was one of the snowiest and coldest days of the winter but that didn't stop dozens of youngsters and parents dressing up as their favourite characters on World Book Day at the start of March and gathering to protest at the cuts and changes to the service at East Finchley Library. Many waved banners saying 'Children need libraries' and called for children to be able to use libraries independently.

Since last summer, children under 16 cannot enter the library during the 35 unstaffed hours per week unless accompanied by an adult who is a registered user.

All the festival favourites

Planning for the East Finchley Festival continues apace as we get closer to the big day, this year on Sunday 24 June in Cherry Tree Wood.

There will be plenty of live entertainment, music and dance from two stages, and fun for children with a line-up of inflatable slides.

The feathered visitors from Jams Owls are back, along with the storytelling tent and the usual mouth-watering range of food, catering for meat eaters, vegetarian and vegan.

If you would like to be part of the festival as a volunteer, by taking a stall, sponsoring an area or by performing, please email eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com.

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