

**A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.**

## Fire devastates nine sheds at allotments



Burnt out: Ruined tools and possessions lie among the charred remains of sheds on the Fuel Lands allotments. Photo Mike Coles.

## Fears for youth theatre as costs come under scrutiny

By Janet Maitland

**It is 80 years since Finchley Youth Theatre first became a centre for young people to meet socially and put on drama, music and dance performances. But now the future of one of the area's few remaining youth services could be in the balance.**

Barnet Council has proposed two options for the Finchley Youth Theatre's (FYT) home on the High Road, N2, which it owns. One is to recover the costs of running the old church building through 'paid use by other organisations'. The other option, if this does not work, is to 'explore the use of other buildings to host youth activities'.

A council spokesperson told us: "We do not have a legal duty to provide this service, but we do so because we believe it adds value. However, we must ensure it is a cost-efficient service."

### Local dismay

Lisa Bark, chair of Friends of FYT (FoFYT), told us that the centre is already used and funded by a mix of council, private and partnerships lettings. "It is more or less self-funded now, but the Youth Service budget has been cut so if the centre cannot sustain itself it



Under review: Finchley Youth Theatre

is more at risk of the council wanting to change its use."

Councillor Arjun Mittra said it was appalling that the council would even consider closing the "much-loved" youth theatre. "There are no other facilities owned by the council that would support the FYT activities, so they would be lost," he said.

"It is essential that FYT stays a creative space for young people," said Carolyn Pickles,

Patron of FoFYT. "Local people are really worried about this, especially because of what happened to the library."

### Consultation ends soon

Councillor Reuben Thompstone, Chairman for the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee, offered this assurance: "We will not be closing the FYT. We are carrying out a consultation to test people's views on a range of very broad ideas. I would like to encourage as many people as possible to get involved."

The consultation questionnaire, deadline 27 March, can be completed online by going to [engage.barnet.gov.uk](http://engage.barnet.gov.uk) and searching for Early Help Services Consultation. For a paper copy, call 020 8359 2724. If you want to support the FYT, visit [www.facebook.com/FinchleyYouthTheatre](http://www.facebook.com/FinchleyYouthTheatre) or to [www.fofyt.co.uk](http://www.fofyt.co.uk).

By Ann Bronkhorst

**Four fire engines and 41 firefighters were called to a fire that had started on the boundary between the two adjacent allotment sites at the end of Chandos Road, N2, in the early hours of Thursday 22 February.**

On the Fuel Lands site about six sheds were completely destroyed and the flames spread to another three sheds on the East Finchley Allotments site. Luckily there were no deaths or injuries but the loss of tools, equipment and shelters is costly and upsetting for the plotters.

The cause of the fire is unclear but both sites have suffered deliberate arson incidents in the past. Rough sleepers in sheltering sheds can cause fires unintentionally, too.

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[www.the-archer.co.uk](http://www.the-archer.co.uk) Email: [the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net)

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Voicemail (messages only) 0800 612 0748 for editorial and general enquiries or 0800 612 4027 for Advertising enquiries only

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### Copy Editor

John Lawrence

### Production Editor

Alison Roberts

### Picture Editor

Mike Coles

### Editorial Team

Diana Cormack

Daphne Chamberlain

### Sub Editors

Ann Bronkhorst

Jeff Robson

### Finance & Advertising

John Dearing

### Distribution

Toni Morgan

Jane & David Marsh

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Comments to The Archer may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

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#### Barnet

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Council Tax 020 8359 2608

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Primary Care Trust 020 8201 4700

Benefits Agency 020 8258 6500

Employment Service 020 8258 3900

**Haringey Council** 020 8489 0000

#### Leisure

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East Finchley Library 020 8359 3815

Gt North Leisure Park 0870 240 6020

Muswell Hill Everyman 0871 9069060

Phoenix Cinema 020 8444 6789

Tourist Info Service 0870 128 8080

Warner Cinema Village 020 8446 9933

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London Transport 020 7222 1234

National Express 08705 808080

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RSPCA 0300 1234 999

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Royal Free 020 7794 0500

St Luke's 020 8219 1800

Whittington 020 7272 3070

### OAP's Advice

Age UK Barnet 020 8203 5040

Independent Age 0800 319 6789

Age UK (general advice line)

0800 169 2081



Open arms: North London Hospice staff and nurses with some welcome donations.

## Time for a spring clear-out

**North London Hospice is offering to help everyone to declutter those unwanted gifts or clothes they've not worn all winter. It is welcoming donations of good quality items to its shop in the High Road, East Finchley, and its 16 other shops across Barnet, Enfield and Haringey.**

And for that expert touch professional organiser Juliet Landau-Pope, author of the new book 'What is Your Excuse for not Clearing Your Clutter?' will be offering practical advice on

where to start at the hospice's Enfield Town shop on Saturday 24 March between 11.30am and 1pm.

North London Hospice's Chief Executive Pam McClint

on said: "Our 17 shops provide a vital income supply that comes directly to support the patients and families receiving care from your local Hospice. Our 'declutter' campaign is a gentle reminder to people to send us their donations."

### Feel good and do good

"Most of us own more than we will ever need: clothes, shoes, books, gadgets, toys, you name it," said Juliet Landau-Pope. "We constantly accumulate things but rather than enhance our lives, they contribute to stress and anxiety. People are starting to recognise the benefits of streamlining. And by giving to a cause such as North London Hospice, you'll feel good about your clear-out on several levels."

In 2016/2017 the hospice supported 2,274 patients with potentially life-limiting illnesses and their families. It costs £7.7million each year for North London Hospice to deliver its specialist end of life care services. Three quarters of this must be found through fundraising.

## OSTEOPATHY | ACUPUNCTURE

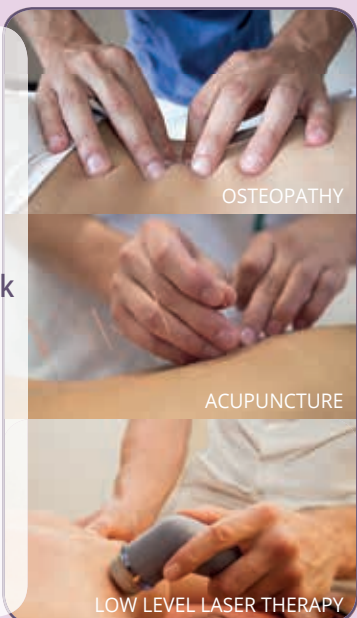
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## Planning Applications

### Barnet Council

#### 8 Abbots Gardens, N2

Part single, part two-storey side and rear extension with new terrace area. Roof extension involving rear dormer window and three front roof lights. New access steps and hardstanding to front.

#### 217 Creighton Avenue, N2

Two-storey side extension, following demolition of existing garage/side extension, incorporating side passageway. Single storey rear extension with patio. Roof extension including one rear dormer, one front roof light and one skylight. New front porch and changes to fenestration.

#### 263 Creighton Avenue, N2

Single-storey outbuilding to rear elevation.

#### 86A Durham Road, N2

Roof extension, involving rear dormer window and two front roof lights.

#### 9 Fairlawn Avenue, N2

Two-storey rear extension, following demolition of conservatory. Roof extension, involving rear dormer window and balcony. Changes to fenestration.

#### 2A Fortis Green, N2

Variation of condition pursuant to appeal. Amendments include alterations to ground floor width and height, alteration to first floor fenestration, glazed wall, alteration to glass screens, removal of windows on north wall.

#### 19 Greenhalgh Walk, N2

Replacement of existing leaded light windows with double glazed leaded light windows to side and rear.

#### 1 Hampstead Heights, N2

Change of windows with UPVC, and repainting existing cladding to a mid-grey.

#### 60 Hertford Road, N2

Retention of change in front roof slope, following loft conversion. (Retrospective Application).

#### 172A High Road, N2

Conversion of existing first and second-floor maisonette and rear part of existing ground-floor retail unit to provide two self-contained flats

#### 3 Howard Walk, N2

Single-storey side and rear extensions. Roof extension involving rear dormer window and one conservation roof light to side.

#### 62 Lankaster Gardens, N2

New window openings to south east side elevation. Replacement of south west front elevation external door with window.

#### 19 Sylvester Road, N2

Conversion into two self-contained flats with associated amenity space, refuse storage and cycle parking.

#### Crossways, 26 The Bishops Avenue, N2

Demolition of existing building, and construction of two-storey building with rooms in roof space and basement, to provide nine self-contained units.

### Haringey Council

#### 28 Aylmer Parade N2

Change of use from retail (Class A1) to mixed retail (Class A1) and dog day-care/grooming (Class Sui Generis).

#### 50 Lauradale Road, N2

Certificate of Lawfulness to enlarge rear dormer and two front roof lights.

#### 11 Southern Road, N2

Replacement of existing outbuilding with a single-storey timber outbuilding with bathroom and kitchen, for ancillary residential purposes.

## Welcome to Probus!

Convivial Probus Lunch Club with talks for semi- or fully-retired PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS men and women on third Wednesday each month at Stephens House East End Road N3. Next meeting 21 March: **Anne Robinson** talks about her life and experiences as a journalist and author and also about her many TV programmes, notably The Weakest Link which has been shown around the world. Details from Eric (8449 0566).





# Secretary of State rules on shisha smoking at the Oasis restaurant

By Janet Maitland

The Housing, Communities and Local Government secretary Sajid Javid has ruled that shisha smoking is not allowed at the Oasis restaurant on Church Lane, N2, after a three-year battle which has divided opinion. The restaurant's owner Kahlil Jelbaoui has until 16 May to comply with the ruling.

A Barnet Council spokesperson told us: "We will inspect at some point after this date, though we tend to prefer visits based on intelligence received. Failure to comply is an offence punishable by an unlimited fine."

## Restaurant stays, shisha goes

The Secretary of State was asked to rule when Mr Jelbaoui appealed against a notice from the council telling him to stop shisha smoking and demolish the canopy structure over the smoking area at the rear of the premises. The notice was sent last May, shortly after the council finally refused him planning permission to turn the former Alexandra pub into a restaurant with shisha facilities.

Mr Jelbaoui not only appealed against the notice, but submitted another application, this time for a restaurant without shisha use. He withdrew it because of the council's proposed restrictions on opening hours.

The ruling by Mr Javid means that the Oasis can legally operate as a restaurant but it must do so without shisha smoking. Furthermore, Mr Jelbaoui no longer has to demolish the canopy structure and is allowed to stay open until 1.30am on Fridays and Saturdays. There are however conditions about noise levels. We asked Mr Jelbaoui to comment, but were informed he is out of the country.

## Local reactions

Some people in the vicinity of the restaurant have objected to the shisha fumes drifting into their homes ever since the

Oasis opened in 2015. Objectors became infuriated that Barnet Council allowed the owner to operate for so long without permission, despite its own campaign against shisha smoking.

At the same time, others saw the new restaurant as a welcome neighbourhood asset, causing far fewer problems than the Alexandra pub it replaced.

Reacting to the news, one local resident said: "The council should have been able to come to this decision without the need for escalation to the Secretary of State." Another called on Barnet to establish a borough-wide framework on shisha smoking near to schools and residential homes.

## Spring quiz

Age UK Barnet is hosting its first Spring Quiz to help raise funds for the charity's work in the area.

Everyone is welcome to enter a team of eight or you can just come along and join one of the Age UK Barnet social teams of staff, volunteers and clients. It will take place at 7pm on Thursday 26 April at the Ann Owens Centre in Oak Lane, N2. Entry costs £10 per person, which includes a home-made lasagne. For more information call Wendy on 020 8432 1415 or email [community@ageuk-barnet.org.uk](mailto:community@ageuk-barnet.org.uk).



Reel fan: David Gritten in the projector room at the Phoenix Cinema

# Film aficionado wants to talk about the movies

The Phoenix Cinema is starting up its lively film discussion group again after a hiatus, this time with a well-known name at its helm. East Finchley resident David Gritten is a veteran British film journalist who has worked both in London and Hollywood.

He spent 10 years in Los Angeles as an entertainment writer and editor for various newspapers and magazines. On returning home, he spent two decades as London-based arts correspondent for the Los Angeles Times, and as a film critic, interviewer and profile writer for the Daily Telegraph. For two years he was chair of the London Film Critics' Circle. He also edited the last two annual editions of Halliwell's Film Guide.

"I've always loved the Phoenix and its film programming," he said. "I'd go out of my way to visit it even before I moved into the area. I'm delighted to be playing a small part in the range of events it offers."

All are welcome to join the group which will meet monthly and discuss that week's main

release over a glass of wine or cup of coffee in the Phoenix cafe bar.

The inaugural meeting will take place after the early evening screening of *Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story* on Thursday 15 March, which centres on the varied career of the Hollywood legend turned technological genius.

Kate McCarthy, the cinema's Executive Director, said: "We are delighted that David will be leading our film group and look forward to it becoming a regular fixture in the East Finchley film-lover's calendar once again."

To join the film group mailing list, email [info@phoenix-cinema.co.uk](mailto:info@phoenix-cinema.co.uk).

# Festival plans are moving fast

By Hilary Townley

Less than four months to go until East Finchley's summer festival in Cherry Tree Wood on Sunday 24 June and things are beginning to move fast.

We've been thrilled by the response to our call for help for the Festival. However we need more! There is still time to get involved with the planning and we do need more volunteers on the day. The more we have, the less you'll have to do. It's great fun and you will be contributing to a fantastic community event. If you want to get involved please get in touch with us at [eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com](mailto:eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com).

We are delighted by our new website, do check it out at [www.eastfinchleyfestival.org](http://www.eastfinchleyfestival.org) and we will be unveiling new

merchandise ideas this year. There are two main ways that we fund the festival to keep it free: the famous brochure, which reaches 10,000 households and businesses, and generous sponsorship. If you would like to take out an ad in the Festival brochure or offer sponsorship to the Festival, please get in touch at [eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com](mailto:eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com)

The next meeting of the organising group is on Monday 19 March at 7.30pm at Martin Primary School, Plane Tree Walk, N2. Everyone is welcome.

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Jan Lovell, of the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team, updates us on the latest crime news. Jan and the team can be contacted by email at: [EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk](mailto:EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk), or by phone on 020 7161 9014. Follow the team on Twitter @MPSEastFinchley.

### Introducing OWL

I'd like to tell you about OWL, which stands for Online Watch Link (not Ordinary Wizarding Level, shame). It's a new Met communication tool which will complement the SNT newsletters and emails we send out and give you access to much more specific information. Do go to [www.owl.co.uk/met](http://www.owl.co.uk/met) and have a look. Messages such as crime alerts with timely crime prevention advice are sent out, often within half an hour of a crime occurring.

I'll carry on with the newsletters but I suggest that you register with OWL and keep your SNT newsletter for a couple of months to see which you prefer. You are welcome to have both. If you don't already get the newsletters, and would like to, contact me at [EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk](mailto:EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk).

### Survey

Thanks to everyone who completed our recent survey.

We read all responses carefully and take action where we can. People were most concerned about the area around the station, Brompton Grove, around Cherry Tree Wood, the High Road and the Market Place green space. We'll be spending a good section of all our patrols at these places and we'll also inspect them with regard to lighting, cleanliness and visibility, working with the council to get these improved if necessary and the vegetation cut back before the warmer weather is here.

### Theft from motor vehicles

It's been a quiet start to the year crime-wise, apart from increased thefts from motor vehicles. Some of these have been a forced entry and in some cases the vehicle may not have been locked. Do remove all items of value as thieves will enter even for a few pounds of parking coins, or the hope of a wallet in a coat.



Bend me, shape me: Sam Grove (blue sleeves) leads a circle of keep-fitters at the Green Man.

## Free fitness classes for all

By Daphne Chamberlain

**"Fitness for all" is the aim of a free exercise class started recently at the Green Man Centre by Samuel Grove. Sam, a qualified personal trainer with 15 years' experience as a fitness instructor, has lived in East Finchley all his life. Passionate about fitness, he emphasises that everyone is welcome at this class.**

He told *The Archer*: "I have plenty of experience providing simultaneously for the fit and less fit. So it wouldn't be a problem if someone wanted to exercise really hard, but this is a class for all abilities, and all are welcome to take part. There is particular attention on improving posture, flexibility and core strength, which is what we need to live an active, pain-free life."

### Wealth shapes health

Sam is particularly con-

cerned by statistics showing that people living in the poorest areas of England die an average of seven years earlier than those living in the richest areas, are more likely to be disabled through ill health as they get older, are more likely to suffer mental health problems and are twice as likely to die of cancer or heart disease than people on high incomes.

He commented: "At the same time, gyms and exercise classes are becoming increas-

ingly expensive. We all have a right, if not an obligation, to look after our health, but differences in resources, time capacity, and knowledge mean that those of us less well-off suffer disproportionately. This is why I have started a free exercise class at the Green Man Community Centre every Monday at 10am. See you there!"

The Green Man Centre, N2 9BA, is just off the High Road, at the entrance to Strawberry Vale



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## Man jailed for murder of student

**A man found guilty of murdering student Seyyed Rast Mir-Feyzi at the leisure park in North Finchley last summer has been jailed for life.**

Haaris Rana, 22, of West Drayton, was sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 19 years for murder. Yasir Ibrahim, 22, of Maddison Close, East Finchley, was sentenced to eight years in prison for attempting to cause grievous bodily harm. Both men were found guilty by a majority jury at the Old Bailey on Friday, 9 February.

### Car driven at victim

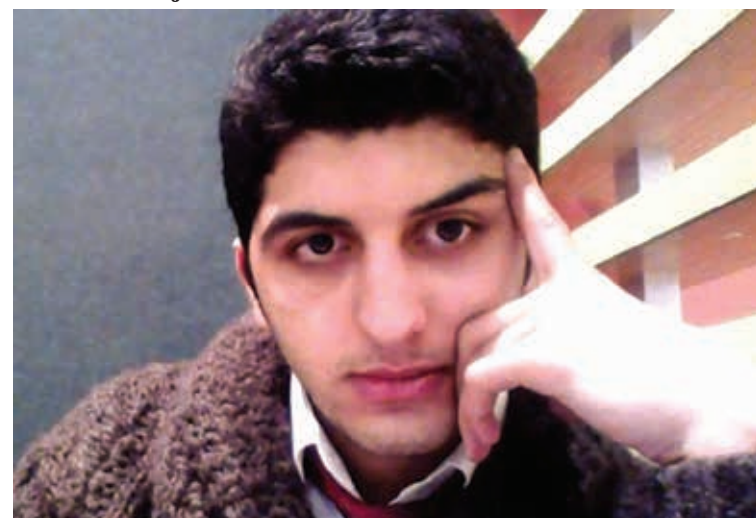
Police were called at 8.30pm on 31 May 2017 to reports of a car in collision with a pedestrian in the carpark of the Great North Leisure Park off High Road in North Finchley.

Mr Mir-Feyzi was assaulted during a fight involving a number of people in the car park and shortly afterwards the car was deliberately driven at him. He died from catastrophic head injuries.

The car, a white BMW, was abandoned at the location but Rana and Ibrahim fled the scene heading towards Finchley High Road.

### Tribute paid to son

Detective Chief Inspector



Murder victim: Seyyed Rast Mir-Feyzi

Gary Holmes, from the Met's Homicide and Major Crime Command, said: "This was a violent attack with tragic consequences which has had a devastating impact on Mr Mir-Feyzi's family."

Mr Mir-Feyzi, from North Finchley, had completed his Bachelor of Science degree in computer network security at Westminster University shortly before his death.

His father said they had donated his organs and four people had been given the gift

of life because of his death. He said: "We were informed that a man in his 30s received one kidney, a female in her 20s received the other, a man in his 30s received his liver and another man in his 40s received our son's heart."

"It is terrible that his life was cut short in such an unnecessary way. He had a future, he wanted to join the Royal Navy or the Police. He had plans; he had an amazing life; he was loved and I know he would have gone on to do great things."





# Freddie's powerful motivation to conquer the London Marathon

By John Lawrence

When the going gets tough for Freddie Rand in the London Marathon this April, the 24-year-old will have two very good reasons to keep running through the pain to the finishing line.

Freddie and his sister Lottie, 22, have lost both their parents to cancer. Their father Chris died from a brain tumour in 2006 when Freddie was just 12 and Lottie still at primary school. And a year ago they lost their mum Fiona to breast cancer.

Freddie, who lives in Bedford Road, N2, and works as production manager for an energy news

website in Muswell Hill, has set himself a fundraising target of £5,000 in support of Cancer Research UK.

## A family's story

"I want to do something big to raise as much money as possible in the hope that no other child or young person has to go through what my sister and I have," said Freddie.

Freddie was only nine when his mum was first diagnosed and underwent a mastectomy. While she was still in recovery, his dad's tumour was found. The family, who were living and working in Singapore at the time, flew back to the UK where his dad died. Five years later, his mum discovered she had secondary cancer and was given a year to live. In fact she lived for six, passing away just a couple of weeks into 2017. Later in the year, Lottie got married and it was Freddie who walked her down the aisle.

## "They'll carry me through"

Freddie said: "I'm pretty active but I don't think I'd be able to do the Marathon without mum and dad to think about. When I'm out there on the route and it's all getting a bit much I will have them in my mind and they will carry me through."

Last summer Freddie and a group of friends completed the daunting Three Peaks Challenge, climbing Ben Nevis,



Inspirations: Freddie's parents Chris and Fiona



Limbering up: Freddie Rand is ready for his 26-mile challenge.

Snowdon and Scafell Pike in 23 hours, again for Cancer Research. "That was hard, particularly because we drove ourselves between the mountains," he recalls. "By the final climb we could hardly see straight."

Freddie would welcome any donations to help him reach his Marathon fundraising target. You can donate by going to <https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org> and searching for 'Freddie Rand'.

# Strawberry Vale residents settle legal battle over gas supply

Fifty-seven residents of the Strawberry Vale estate in East Finchley who were left without a power supply for up to four months in 2016 have won a financial settlement.

After a two-year legal battle led by law firm Hodge Jones & Allen, estate manager the Peabody Trust has agreed to pay more than £30,000 as compensation.

## Gas supply not reconnected

In January 2016, the gas supply to an estimated 267 homes on the estate was cut off because National Grid deemed it unsafe due to a faulty meter. The defective meter was replaced, but the Peabody Trust did not reconnect the supply, leaving residents without gas for cooking and, in some cases, for heating and hot water.

By late May 2016, all residents were reconnected, but many had run up considerable debts due to large electricity bills.

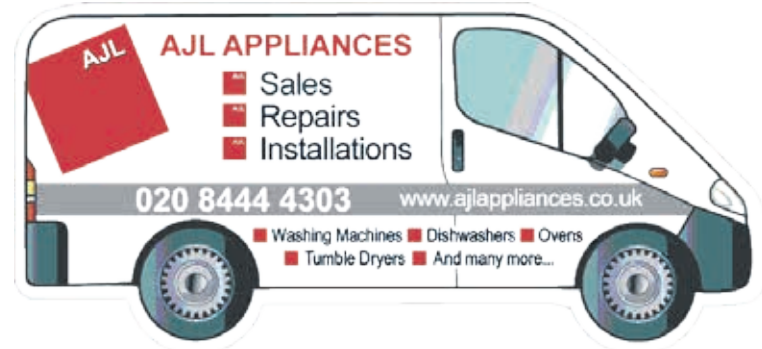
## 'David' wins dispute

Jayesh Kunwardia, partner and head of the social housing team at Hodge Jones & Allen, said: "Residents of the Strawberry Vale estate suffered major upset and upheaval as a result of Peabody's direct failure to reinstate the gas supply for so long. It was never right that residents should be out of pocket for Peabody's mistakes and I am grateful to them for entering into negotiations and avoiding a long and costly trial."

Shona Perkins, treasurer of the Strawberry Vale Residents Association, said: "Some families were also without heating and hot water and at one point the Red Cross came to the estate with hot meals for residents. This was all during the winter, affecting vulnerable people's

health and leaving many with considerable debts. I never thought I would experience such an episode in modern times.

"Our community came together to challenge Peabody's actions and after a long David and Goliath battle I am pleased that we have finally settled the case. Importantly, we also received an apology from Peabody. We now look forward to more positive times ahead and a better relationship with our landlord, Peabody."



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# Through a glass lightly

Glass work by Kate Pasvol, a local artist and member of the East Finchley Open Artists group, has been selected from over 1,500 entries to appear alongside paintings by some of Britain's leading artists at The Royal Society of British Artists Annual Exhibition this month.

Founded in 1823, the Royal Society of British Artists was originally set up to rival the Royal Academy. Today it prides itself on exhibiting an eclectic mix of sculpture and paintings in all media.

You can see Kate's work at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, SW1 from 10am to 5pm on 21 to 31 March. Admission is £4 with concessions £3, but the Society has kindly offered free entry for two for anyone mentioning *The Archer* at the Gallery desk or taking along a copy of this article.



Landscape portrait: Kate Pasvol's glass piece.

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Desert road: Ruth Anders with her Archer on the tropic line in South Africa.

## Tropical and topical

*Archer* contributor Ruth Anders has been taking the trip of a lifetime around Southern Africa and Australia, travelling through some inhospitable landscapes in the intense heat of the southern summer. Needless to say a well-read copy of *The Archer* has gone with her. Here's Ruth at the marker line for the Tropic of Capricorn, which passes through Limpopo Province in the northern part of South Africa.

## Tough new parking regime on Thomas More Estate

Changes are being made to parking on the Thomas More Estate, off East End Road, N2. As we were going to press, a public meeting was being held for residents to express their concerns.

Estate management company Optivo wrote to all residents proposing a permit system and the implementation of private parking management firm PCM to enforce it. Optivo said there were 117 parking spaces on the estate, which includes Juliana Close, Helen Close and Cecilia Close, among other roads, but these were often full and many vehicles were being parked outside designated spaces. This created congestion for residents and made it difficult for refuse collections and emergency services to move around the estate.

An Optivo spokesperson

said: "After investigating, we have concluded that the issue is the result of many households having more than one vehicle, and non-residents using spaces. We have considered all the options and we feel stricter parking controls are needed."

One resident of Juliana Close told us the changes would put too many restrictions on herself and her neighbours. "The scheme is 24 hours a day, seven days a week," she said. "We've heard there will not be any visitor permits. This means no servicemen for washing machines etc and no friends visiting."

### Effect on nearby streets

Optivo said PCM was currently issuing at least one free permit to each tenancy-agreement holder with a parking need. It was also creating a designated pick up/drop off area for visitors to disabled residents.

A resident of Helen Close told us those with more than one car and visiting car owners were being pointed to free-of-charge parking on surrounding streets. "I'm sure this won't please the residents of Hamilton Road, Brackenbury Road and Sedgemere Avenue, which are already packed with cars," he said.



Must-read: Diana and Che catch up on home news in Cuba.

## Fine example of a free press

You'd imagine Che Guevara, the figurehead of Cuba's revolution, would be all in favour of a free press, and what better example than the *The Archer*, shared with him here by our writer Diana Cormack on a recent holiday with husband Ian to Havana and other towns in Cuba?

## We need volunteer drivers

The *Archer* team is looking for volunteer drivers who could help distribute our papers once a month. We need people who could pick up a set of papers from Sedgemere Avenue, N2, and drop them at the homes of 8-10 deliverers living close to each other.

The paper is printed in the first week of each month. Pick-up and drop-offs usually take about an hour. Please email [the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net) or leave a message on our free phone line 0800 612 0748 or email

[the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net) if you would like to find out more.

We would appreciate any help we can get to make sure *The Archer* continues to reach all our readers in East Finchley. Thank you!

## Care can be different

Care and kindness are at the heart of all we do as we strive to support older people to live their lives to the full through our specialist residential, dementia and day care services.

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- **Dell Field Court:** Finchley, N3 2DY
- **Meadowside:** North Finchley, N12 7DY

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Get creative: Carol Field, right, with Oak Lodge students and staff in the East End Road shop.

## How the ker-ching of a shop till changed my life

By Carol Field

My first encounter with The Lodge school shop in East End Road, N2, was when I visited to buy some of their lovely cards. "Only £1?" I asked incredulously. "I'll take 10!" The shop was stocked with an eclectic mix of gifts and a cash register that actually ker-chinged, convincing me I'd stumbled onto a film set.

The lady curating explained the shop was part of the nearby Oak Lodge School for special needs and its primary function was as an extra classroom. Students with autism, Down's syndrome, and a wide range of learning difficulties, could come to make saleable products, learn the rudiments of running a business and buy gifts for their families.

I'd left my job as a product developer and retail manager and was ready for a change. The whole concept of this shop intrigued and inspired me, so I wrote to the head teacher offering my time as a volunteer at the school. To my astonishment

I was offered a placement as a volunteer Teaching Assistant and my journey into the special needs community commenced.

### Award-winning 'jewel'

It's an amazing organisation with dedicated, long-serving teachers and therapists and a management spearheaded by Lynda Walker. I was subsequently offered the opportunity of running this not-for-profit jewel of a shop, merchandising new and student-made products and hosting small workshop groups.

Two years on, with the support of key charities in Barnet and businesses keen to support vocational opportunities, The

Lodge, at 132 East End Road, has morphed into something rather special. On a weekly basis, students work here from both the Oak Lodge site and from Oak Bridge, which looks after over-19s and whose team leader Simon Clark was the inspiration behind the shop's concept.

The Lodge offers an opportunity for students to interact directly with the community and handle money transactions. Controlling that environment can be challenging but student presence totally enhances the surroundings and customers are extremely supportive. Students make cards and embellish boxes on site which we sell. The students proudly deliver items designed and made in school. We were delighted to win the Barnet Youth Enterprise Award last year with our shop model. Please contact me on 020 8444 5400 for further information.

## A life lived to the full in the great outdoors

We are sorry to report the death of Jack Takoushi, 93, the longest-standing plot holder at the East Finchley Allotments site off Plane Tree Walk, N2.

For 32 years in his retirement Jack spent most days at his beautifully tended allotment, producing vegetables through the seasons, many of which he gave to friends. His personal favourites were peas.

He would walk a mile each day to and from home and treat his cultivation like a full-time job, arriving before mid-morning and staying into the late afternoon before walking home again.

Filmmaker Zachary Denman interviewed Jack last year for a charming three-minute film about his love of the outdoors. You can watch it on YouTube at [youtu.be/AYb1Csr\\_MvQ](https://youtu.be/AYb1Csr_MvQ).



Jack Takoushi, pictured last year. Photo Mike Coles

## Why we scrapped our wedding list

Archer sub-editor Jeff Robson and his partner Sue Bayford have raised £1,500 for Macmillan Cancer Support through a sponsored walk – and an unusual approach to wedding presents.

They completed the 25km Thames Bridges Trek on 9 September and, just over a month later, they tied the knot after seven years together. "We were thinking about presents and realised that we didn't need much for the house or anything," Jeff said. "So we asked people to make donations to Macmillan instead."

"Everyone was phenomenally generous and that helped us raise a total of £1,580. When Dad was diagnosed with cancer

Macmillan were incredibly helpful and supportive for the whole family. We wanted to say a big 'thank you' to them. And it meant that we felt even more that Dad was part of the wedding day.

"We'd like to thank everyone who donated. Macmillan offer lots of practical advice on things like claiming benefits as well as emotional support for sufferers and their families. It was great to be able to raise so much for a worthy cause."



Tired toast: Jeff and Sue after their 25km walk.



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# YOUNG ARCHER



New trees, please: Pupils and staff at Highgate Primary plant the first of 100 trees.

## One hundred trees take root

Parents, children and staff along with Hornsey and Wood Green MP Catherine West and ex-Blue Peter gardener Chris Collins helped to plant 100 hawthorn, hazel and field maple trees to transform Highgate Primary School into a greener and healthier space

The school is one of over 1000 in the UK situated within 150m of a road travelled by 10,000 or more cars every day,

leading to an increased number of health risks.

The trees were donated by London-based green energy

supplier Octopus Energy and the planting materials by Buildbase, Highgate.



## First team of leaders

The Archer Academy has announced its first-ever head girl and boy team. Pictured left, head girl Zeina K, head boy Alex M-S, deputy head girl Rio J and deputy head boy Alex W will be assisted by three senior prefects Isabelle S, Sehr N and Maha K. This senior student leadership team will work on projects with different year groups in the school as well as charity and well-being projects in the wider community.

### Headscratcher

## Overlapping Words

By Oliver Skanberg-Tippen

For each of these clues, there is one word that can be placed in the gap to create two new words. For example WIDE \_\_\_\_ SAVER can be completed by the word SCREEN to create WIDE-SCREEN and SCREENSAVER. Answers on page 10.

1. SPELL \_\_\_\_ LESS
2. SWORD \_\_\_\_ THING
3. BLO \_\_\_\_ SALE

## More than enough to make you go green

My name is Cameron Cole and I am nine years old. I go to Highgate Primary School and I am a member of the school's very active Green Council.

The Green Council is a group of people including students, parents and teacher Oliver Parsons. Our green mission is to make our school healthier and to educate each other by having meetings, recycling or reusing, composting foods, planting around the school and our allotments, encouraging each other to not pollute and many other things.

Recently, Octopus Energy was kind enough to donate 100 trees! BuildBase also was very nice and gave us lots of supplies. With these items, the GC volunteers built planter boxes to grow the trees in around the school.

Our GC is also trying to change ALL the lights in the school to LED, but we need more funds or donations for the project. If you want to help, please email [highgategreencouncil@gmail.com](mailto:highgategreencouncil@gmail.com).

### Sustainability Week

Once a year we also have Sustainability Week when everyone is encouraged to walk, bike or take public transport to and from school. A sticker chart

is provided for each class. Any day we walk, bike or take public transport we get a sticker. I think a prize should be awarded to the children who walk the most.

Other important things that the Green Council does are composting and recycling. We are looking at getting our own sustainable energy source such as a wind turbine or solar panels and we can teach others about the impact of climate change and the importance of sustainability.

### Set an example

Nature is at risk as well as you. Animals will DIE and they have an important place in our world. Having many people around the area to help is helpful for everyone. Please help our environment. Be the example for your street across East Finchley!

Write to your local MP, tell them you want to have more plants, recycling bins, compost bins! Debate! And please volunteer! We can all make a difference and be the change we want to see. Always be green!

### PARENT & BABY/CHILD ACTIVITIES

- **Baby & U baby massage.** Contact Ruth at [babymassagewithruth@gmail.com](mailto:babymassagewithruth@gmail.com), [www.facebook.com/babyandubaby-massage](http://www.facebook.com/babyandubaby-massage)
- **EFNCT** meet Tuesdays 2.30pm at The Old White Lion. Contact [eastfinchleynct@haringeynct.org](mailto:eastfinchleynct@haringeynct.org)
- **Musical Tots:** 10.45 Tue at The Angel, N6, Weds The Old White Lion and Fridays The Five Bells N2. [Katemusicaltots.com](http://Katemusicaltots.com) on facebook.

- **Phoenix Cinema activities,** Bringing up baby screenings, Weds, 11am; Kids Club, Sat, 12pm; Toddler Time, Tues, 11am. Full details from box office on 020 8444 6789.
- **Stepping Stones/Teddy Bears' Music:** music and fun for 0-3s, East Finchley Baptist Church Tues and Thurs 10am. Liz 07836 284538.
- **Stay and Play** Thurs 9.30-11.15 Green Man Centre, Gary 8359 3640

### All Saints' Church, Durham Road, East Finchley Church of England

Sunday mass at 10.00 a.m.

Weekday masses at 10.00 a.m.

(11.00 a.m. on Wednesdays during term time)  
(Coffee served after mass on Sunday and Thursday)

### Holy Week Services:

25 March - Palm Sunday - 10.00 a.m.  
Solemn Mass with Blessing of Palms

29 March - Maundy Thursday - 8.00 p.m.  
Mass of the Lord's Supper

30 March - Good Friday - 3.00 p.m.  
Sung Celebration of the Lord's Passion

31 March - Holy Saturday - 8.00 p.m. The Easter Vigil

1 April - Easter Day - 10.00 a.m.  
Parish Mass of Easter Day

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Cross-Channel: Dementia Action Alliance staff host their French visitors at the Phoenix's dementia-friendly screening.

## Pioneering ways to deal with dementia in the community

By Diana Cormack

**In mid-February a delegation from France visited London to learn from innovative services for people living with dementia. One service was a Cinememories session at the Phoenix Cinema.**

These freedementia-friendly screenings for the over 60s and two guests of any age are well attended.

Patrick Gray, Dementia Friendly Communities Organiser for Haringey, Barnet and Merton invited Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) members to join them at the cinema to talk about work going on in the borough. Unfortunately on the day Patrick was ill and unable to attend, but was ably represented by service manager Monique Gardiner and new group coordinator Despina Pilavakis.

They were able to tell the visitors about the support services and activities available in Barnet, such as the dementia clubs and cafes and 'Singing for the Brain' groups,

along with the proposal for a system to support those with young onset dementia. Liz Kon, of The Reader Organisation, came along to explain how shared reading can bring people together and improve their well-being.

The French contingent of Anne-Berénice Simzac, Isabelle Donnio and Karine Chauvin put plenty of probing questions to them and seemed impressed with their answers. We would appear to be amongst the more advanced European countries in our dealings with dementia in the community.

### Inspiring projects

Anne-Berénice Simzac told *The Archer*: "Fondation Médéric Alzheimer and Fondation de France are joining forces to promote concrete initiatives in

order to make French society more supportive, inclusive and enabling for people living with cognitive disabilities. Therefore, they are looking for the most inspiring initiatives in other countries.

"In the UK, the French Foundations are especially interested in the activities run by Alzheimer Society and Barnet Dementia Action Alliance aimed at creating dementia friendly communities. We are grateful to Alzheimer Society and Barnet Dementia Action Alliance for helping with our visit and explaining these inspiring projects."

*The Archer* is a member of Barnet Dementia Action Alliance. For more information visit: [www.dementiaaction.org.uk](http://www.dementiaaction.org.uk)

## RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

### Welcome to the pandemic

**As you dodge the coughers in your place of work or notice the empty chairs of colleagues struck down by the so-called Aussie flu, consider what a good time it is to mark one of the weirdest centenaries so far.**

There's been a stack of flu pandemics down the years, normally one about every ten years, and they've all done their bit to spread panic and kill a serious number of people. The 1957 one killed around 2,000,000. But what arrived in 1918 was the big one.

It all began at an army camp in Kansas in March 1918 and didn't take long to spread as the GIs were shipped out to fight on the Western Front. It hit the soldiers at the army camps in France and by the time the war ended in November it had got control. By then they were calling it Spanish Flu. Which was a bit unfair on Spain seeing as it was an American import.

As each demobbed army came home it brought a little viral gift. And, boy, what a gift. This flu bug didn't kill the old, young and the infirm, this one targetted the young. If you were between 18 and 30 you were as much in the firing line as you had been during the war, with one difference: it went for men and women. And it killed them.

The stronger your immune system, the harder you fought the bug until your body went into overload and you either recovered or died. You could get it in the morning and be dead by dinner time. By the time it ran out of steam in 1920 it had killed around 50 million people across the world. Pretty good for a virus, at least from the virus' point of view.

So, as we fight off the latest flu fad just be grateful that it's not the big one, take aspirin, stay warm and you'll be fine. Oh, and by the way, man flu does not exist, just as woman flu does not exist. How can something that can be cured with a box set binge, hot chocolate or a pizza be flu? Flu is flu, and dangerous; anything else is just a day off work.

## Hermine Dauker, 1938-2018

**Hermi Dauker was the second of four children born and educated in Saarbruecken, Germany, where she qualified as a teacher in 1965. She went on to study psychology at the Universities of Marburg and Mainz.**

In 1967 she came to London as a supply teacher in the French and German languages before moving into foreign language books and then journalism where she collaborated on the research and writing of reports on industrial relations in Europe.

Her final 18 years of work were spent as a partner in an editorial services company responsible for a number of research journals in psychology, working first from home in East Finchley's county roads and then from a small office in Church Lane, N2.

When she retired in 1998 she became a familiar face as a volunteer in the North London Hospice shop in the High Road. She was a friendly, cheerful person, always ready to have a drink and a chat and always willing to help out with what-



Hospice shop volunteer: Hermi Dauker

ever needed doing.

Retirement also allowed her to indulge her keen interests in music, gardening and art. She took piano and painting lessons and travelled widely, visiting mountain gardens in Cuba and spice plantations in India, watching puppet shows in Vietnam and listening to a variety of instrumental and vocal music.

Hermi will be sorely missed by her family and friends. She is survived by two brothers, Herwig and Helmut Dauker, and their children and grandchildren and by her work-partner, travelling companion and friend Michele.

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## Corbyn book talk

**Alex Nunns will be talking about his book, *The Candidate: Jeremy Corbyn's Improbable Path to Power*, at The Black Gull bookshop, High Road, N2, on Thursday, 15 March, at 7.30pm. Entrance is free.**

## Holy Trinity Church Church Lane, East Finchley Church of England

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## Regular Events

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- **Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club**, Summers Lane N12. New and experienced bowlers welcome.
- **Muswell Hill Bowling Club**, Kings Ave, N10. New & experienced bowlers welcome. Tel: 8883 0433.
- **Outdoor Fit Camp** Lyttelton Playing Fields, N2, 6.30pm Wed and 9.30am Sat. Call Martin on 07809 593952.
- **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](http://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](mailto: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 beginners' course** at Yogalogy, High Road, N2. Contact 020 70187377 or [info@yogalogy.co.uk](mailto:info@yogalogy.co.uk)
- **Yoga**, pregnancy yoga, meditation classes. Call Sunnah 07941 321 772 [www.stretchingpeople.co.uk](http://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

- **The Archer Community Choir**, Tuesdays 7-9pm, The Archer Academy, Eagans Close, N2. Email: [archercommunitychoir@gmail.com](mailto:archercommunitychoir@gmail.com).
- **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](http://www.a-chord.uk)
- **Ballroom & Latin American Dance Classes** - beginners & improvers. Wed & Fri eve, Bishop Douglass Sch. 8207 2323.
- **'Calm & Sing' workshops**. Contact Angie on [missangiea@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:missangiea@yahoo.co.uk)
- **Creative writing classes** in informal, friendly atmosphere. Tel Sallie Rose 020 8444 7217.
- **Creative Writing** at Friern Barnet Community Library. Every Saturday, 12pm, 07488 230580.
- **Dance conditioning classes**. New body in 10 lessons. Diana: 07580 041270. [www.boldbodies.co.uk](http://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.
- **Rock 'n Roll dance lessons**, 8pm every Weds at the Constitutional Club, The Walks. Drop-in. Call Kav 07721 489489.
- **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](http://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.



Musical storytellers: The Solarek Piano Trio Marina Solarek, Miriam Lowbury and Diana Brekalo.

## Musical love triangle

A concert by the Solarek Piano Trio will tell the story of the intriguing musical love triangle between Robert Schumann, Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms. Performances of piano trios by these famous romantic composers will be interlaced with diary entries and readings from their letters to each other.

Two movements of Robert Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*, which he wrote two years after marrying his beloved Clara Wieck in 1840, will open the concert, followed by Clara Schumann's piano trio written in 1846, while she was pregnant with her fourth child.

Robert and Clara had a passionate courtship and subsequently a powerful friendship with the 20-year-old Johannes

Brahms before Robert was struck by a tragic illness. The second half of the concert will be the *C minor Trio* by Brahms, which he wrote while in Switzerland in 1883.

The concert takes place at Burgh House, New End Square, Hampstead, NW3, on Sunday 11 March at 2pm. Tickets costing £10 (£8 concessions) will be available at the door.

## Concert to raise the roof at All Saints

All Saints' Church is to stage a fundraising concert this month in support of its appeal to raise £400,000 for repairs to its roof and building. As reported in last month's Archer, parts of the Grade 2 listed building in Durham Road, N2, are over 125 years old.

The fundraising concert will be a performance of Rossini's *Messe Solennelle*, a tuneful and vivacious work, which the composer wrote at the end of his career. Four young soloists and the London Ripieno Singers under the direction of Geoffrey Hanson will take to the stage.

Tickets for the combined

concert and meal at £20 are obtainable at Black Gull Books in the High Road, but for catering purposes must be pre-booked no later than Tuesday 20 March. Tickets for just the concert cost £12. You can also book online at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/efinchleyarts](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/efinchleyarts) (10% surcharge).

## What's On...

E-mail your listings to: [the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net)

### Sunday 11 March

- **The Solarek Piano Trio** play works by Robert Schumann, Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms and tell the intriguing story of the musical love triangle between them; Burgh House, New End Square, Hampstead, London NW3 1LT at 2pm. Tickets £10 (£8 concessions) at the door.
- **Free concert at East Finchley Methodist Church**, High Road, N2, opposite Creighton Avenue, 7.30pm; Helen Cooper, cello, Junko Ishigaki, violin, Sue Rothstein, harp, and Caroline Soresby, piano, play works by Liszt, Handel-Halvorsen, Fauré, Eugene Goossens and Granados, and *Look at all the Pretty Lights*, premiere of work for piano by Sue Rothstein. Free; collection in aid of Revitalise! (holidays for disabled people and their carers). Fully accessible venue.
- Thursday 15 March**
- **Alex Nunns** will be talking about his

book, *The Candidate: Jeremy Corbyn's Improbable Path to Power*, at The Black Gull bookshop, High Road, N2, at 7.30 pm. Entrance free.

### Saturday 17 March

- **Finchley Choral Society** and the **Florian Chamber Orchestra** perform Rossini's *Stabat Mater* at All Hallow's Church, Gospel Oak, NW3 2JP at 7.30pm; tickets £15, £7 student and £1 for children under 16. Available at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/finchleychoralsociety](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/finchleychoralsociety) and on the door.
- Thursday 15 March**
- **Phoenix Cinema film discussion group** hosted by distinguished critic David Gritten after the early evening showing of the new film *Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story*. All welcome to discuss the film over a glass of wine or cup of coffee in the Phoenix café bar.
- Thursday 22 March**
- **All Saints' Church fundraising concert**

## Appeal against 'no enquiry' decision on library service

By Daphne Chamberlain

In December, Barnet Council was told that the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport was "minded not to order an enquiry into the borough's library provision". As we have reported previously, the enquiry was requested by Emily Burnham and Robert Strang, on behalf of Save Barnet Libraries (SBL).

The campaign group has replied, saying that the previous Secretary of State had not addressed their complaints about the service as it is now. They said that much had happened since their first request for investigation in December 2016.

### Plan changes not considered

They said that a second request was sent in October 2017 with personal impact statements from the public, plus email correspondence and Barnet's answers to public questions. SBL stated that previous fears were proving well founded, Barnet had not fulfilled their promises, and the Department had failed to obtain or consider evidence about the library service as it is now.

Instead, they say, the Department had looked at Barnet's original plan, and not at how

it had changed. For example, extended opening hours and volunteer assistants have not yet materialised. This correspondence was not mentioned in the Department's December letter.

### Concerns of local schools

SBL's concerns include unstaffed opening hours, technology problems, and restricted access, particularly affecting resources and facilities for children, young teenagers and vulnerable people.

Local schools, including Holy Trinity, Christ's College, the Archer Academy and Hollickwood Primary, have written to DCMS, setting out the worrying impact of this on their pupils.

SBL are stating that Barnet Council is failing in its duty to provide a comprehensive library service, and are appealing against the decision not to order an enquiry.

## Click with customers

The Clissold Arms again provided a warm and friendly location for the February meeting of the N2United Business Network, which serves all of the trades, shops and enterprises in East Finchley. The well attended meeting proved to be another highly successful evening with more new members joining.

The theme for the evening was 'How Businesses use Social Media'. Christopher Stavrou of KOKOS Shoes and Shahab Uddin of East Finchley Combat Academy talked about how they use social media to promote their businesses, raise their profile and generate new custom.

Both favour Instagram; KOKOS in particular using the visual potential to post beautiful and witty images. Interest-

ingly, Christopher explained, less polished images often engage followers more successfully. Shahab talked about the importance of consistency, posting at regular times, but also about embracing competition positively rather than competitively. This, he explained, gives an attractive character to the business.

### Looking ahead to the Festival

The meeting also touched on the East Finchley Festival and its brochure, which helps fund the festival and is an excellent way to raise the profile of local businesses. Those businesses interested in taking a stall at the festival this year were encouraged to contact the organisers at [eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com](mailto:eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com).

The next N2United business networking meeting will be on 8 March 2018. All East Finchley businesses are warmly invited. More details can be found at [www.n2united.co.uk](http://www.n2united.co.uk)

## Headscratcher

### Solution from page 8.

1. SPELL (BOUND) LESS
2. SWORD (PLAY) THING
3. BLO (WHOLE) SALE





# Why children are like tomatoes



Smart space: Inside Tomato Tutors on the High Road.

By Thalia Pellegrini  
**Tomato Tutors, a recent addition to our High Road, has been set up by Laura Alvarado and her business partner Beth Fordham, two mums with a passion for holistic education.**

Laura tutored maths for 14 years and had always been focussed on traditional one-on-one academic support. In recent years, however, she'd begun to question whether there was a better way to teach.

"We are seeing more and more mental health issues in children," she says. "There is such an achievement treadmill. It shouldn't be all about getting to the next stage."

Tired of being part of the process of "hot-housing" kids, she turned instead to the concept of holistic education and so Tomato Tutors was born. There is no learning by rote here, or sitting silently, pen in hand; this environment intends to foster a love of learning and inspiring children to be happy and confident. Laura is clear that a child is taught best when their emotional, physical and mental needs have been assessed and understood.

## Good gardening

Laura studied horticulture at college. When asked about the unusual name of the company, she gave the analogy of growing tomatoes: if you water them too much they burst; if you don't water them enough, they won't flourish. Children, she says, require a similar, careful balance of nurture and independence.

Laura, a single mum, is keen to stress that many families may benefit from support. Just as for some children, school can be a source of anxiety, parents want to do their best in guiding their children through school, but may need guidance themselves on how best to do so.

## Choices for all

A range of services is available for both children and parents, including baby sensory groups, GCSE revision classes, a free Stay and Play drop-in session on a Sunday, as well as Creative Writing, Coding and Free Expression Art classes during the week.

For the grown-ups, there is a New Mothers circle, book



Laura Alvarado

binding, candle making, as well as various workshops. If you'd like more information, Laura welcomes your enquiry: [hello@tomatotutors.com](mailto:hello@tomatotutors.com) or check out [www.tomatotutors.com](http://www.tomatotutors.com) for the latest schedules.

## Letters

### Bishops Avenue island

Dear Editor,  
It is good to see *The Archer* continuing to seek answers from Barnet Council about the changes proposed for the junction of The Bishops Avenue and the High Road. However, what was proposed by the council was not a pedestrian crossing as would ordinarily be understood by that phrase, for example a pelican or zebra crossing clearly demarcating a safe crossing place giving priority to pedestrians.

What was in fact proposed was simply a small island in the middle of the road where pedestrians could stop. In order to make space for this, the right turning lane would be done away with, causing traffic to use surrounding residential streets as an alternative rat run.

At our on-site meeting with council officials they conceded that alternatives such as traffic lights at the junction had not been considered, and as the decision to "obtain more information" shows, nor had all of the implications of the scheme. It is this lack of consideration and the failure to consult that has caused both local residents and Haringey Council to object to the plans.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Jon Benjamin,**  
**Bancroft Avenue, N2.**

### Prospect Ring assumptions

Dear Editor,

I note with wry amusement the letter from Ms Joan Merritt concerning the demolition of homes and the imposition of a 13-storey block of flats in Prospect Ring (*The Archer*, January 2018).

If, as she writes, "we need to be considering every available plot of land for building them", I assume that she will be making available her back garden to help?

May I also point out that Barnet Homes say that nothing is finalised yet and the matter has not yet been passed to the Planning Committee. Why then, have the residents of the maisonettes that are threatened with demolition been given Notices to Quit already? It suggests that a decision has already been made, as the residents always assumed, and that Barnet Homes are merely keeping up the pretence of "consulting with the residents".

A further additional point of concern is that consultants paid by Barnet taxpayers to conduct a 'traffic impact survey' have stated (totally in line with what Barnet Homes wanted) that there will be no noticeable increase in, or danger by traffic. This view is based on the incorrect assumption that Kitchener Road is a one-way street and that there will be only an additional 26 cars owned by the 50 families being housed.

Once again, Barnet Homes can be seen to be in contempt of the existing residents.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**D P Donnelly,**  
**Prospect Ring, N2.**

### Surgery closure motive

Regarding the closure of the Cherry Tree Medical Centre in East Finchley (*The Archer*, January 2018), I contacted the Care Quality Commission in June 2017 following a report in the Finchley Times, as it implied that the staff were at fault for the problems.

Finally one of the Inspectors corrected that impression but it took months before I was told that this was not the case. In the interim, having spoken to health professionals, it became clear that the CQC is against GPs working on their own in a practice.

My last letter to the CQC said: "It would have been more honest if this was made clear". I have not received any reply.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Ralph Eschwege**  
**Abbots Gardens, N2.**

### Commuter parking

Dear Editor,

This is a polite request to people in East Finchley asking them to consider if they really need to drive the short distance to park in the roads nearest to the tube station, for example Ingram Road, Baronsmere Road or Park Hall Road for their daily commute or trip into town. We have a number of elderly and frail residents living on these roads as well as parents with small children who can't park anywhere near to their homes now due to the high number of residents in other

### Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page"

**The Archer, PO Box 3699,  
London N2 2DE or e-mail  
[the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net).**

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

parts of the Controlled Parking Zone using these spaces. This means that they have to park many roads away and struggle with heavy shopping, small children and numerous trips to and from their cars to unload.

The same problem occurs on occasions when the council asks us to free up the roads for cleaning or repairs. We remove our cars and the spaces quickly fill up with commuters cars so consequently the work never gets done. Please ask yourselves (if this applies to you or someone you know) if it is necessary to save yourself an extra 5-10 minutes walking time to the tube station. Also, are you happy to contribute to the pollution problem caused by driving short distances with cold engines?

We believe there is an additional problem with commuters parking here from outside the area who are regularly buying visitor tickets from at least one resident who sells them on for a profit. This is being looked into at the moment and will be dealt with by the council and police when the evidence has been gathered.

I know that the people of East Finchley have a great community spirit and hope that anyone who drives to commute will consider the impact on the residents who are adversely affected. Thanking you in advance.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Wendy Gledhill,**  
**Ingram Road, N2.**

### Pavement parking

Dear Editor,

For years the west end of Brompton Grove, outside Park House, opposite the tube station, was blocked off for cars by concrete bollards erected by Barnet Council. When these were knocked down the council did not replace them, with the result that commuters park cars in this area obstructing the pavement and the emergency exit from Park House. There is a sign saying: 'Private car park, no public access, L.B. Barnet, no parking at any time'. Recently two more signs were erected by the council saying that the penalty for parking on this stretch is £30. Months have elapsed and no parking tickets have been issued. These fines would provide much needed income for the cash strapped council. A parking warden told me that they are unable to issue tickets for the illegally parked cars, even those on the pavement. So why has Barnet erected the notices if they are not prepared to discourage the nuisance and, at the same time, raise necessary income?

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Judith Filkin,**  
**Address supplied.**

Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column.

Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.



## A lost gem

**Dr Ruth Brown writes an open letter to Larry Lipman, managing director of Safeland, who have won permission to demolish Valona House and redevelop the former GLH site opposite East Finchley tube station.**

Dear Mr Lipman,

The Finchley Society has opposed demolition of Valona House, built in the 1820s. For decades the house was part of a small settlement around the Bishop's Tollgate on the Great North Road. Until the tollgate closed in 1862, most traffic on Britain's main road paused here. Stagecoaches changed horses at the Old White Lion opposite, there was a smithy, and drovers herded their cattle through the tollgate to London.

Valona House was built by East Finchley brickmaker Nevil Smart. He bought the land in 1800 from the Bishop of London when it was countryside, and set up a brickworks. So Valona House has a rare provenance: its bricks are made of clay from the field it was built on. The house has a clean, elegant Georgian style that is popular today, but done to a quality that's hard to replicate. The slightly arched windows are found on some other 1820s houses in London. The brickwork is excellent craftsmanship and looks like new after 200 years.

You boasted in September's *Archer* that you are bringing "high quality residential investment in the area". In fact your plans are to demolish a high-quality historic building and replace it with a design that residents have widely condemned as poor quality and ugly. Your plan will bring 21 flats: few, compared to the three much bigger old garage sites along our High Road. One of these big sites is still undeveloped.

You say, "It gives us a chance to bring improvements to the neighbourhood." Over 1,000 residents have said in a petition: this is NOT "improvements", this is harm. Your site will be overdeveloped with only two parking spaces, and delivery vehicles will have to reverse onto the High Road. Your plan is a danger to pedestrians and will spoil the historic look of East Finchley.

You claim to have removed "the blight of a mini-cab office." GLH is a long-standing and highly regarded business with strong links to East Finchley which looked after Valona House for 65 years.

Are you not concerned that your flats will be a blight? Please re-think your plan for two cramped blocks of flats. It would be welcomed if you reduced your plan to one apartment block (perhaps Georgian-style in yellow brick), and kept Valona House to serve you well as a characterful and historic office building made of East Finchley clay by local craftsmen, that's stood at the gateway to Finchley for 200 years.





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# The Archer

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He's been framed: Photographer Mike Coles gets in the picture.



Mix it up: Ceramicist and potter Hazel Mason in her workshop.

## Portraits of the artists happy in their medium

The portraits you see on this page are all part of the We Are East Finchley project started by photographer Asia Mscichowska. Everyone is welcome to contribute a portrait of their own to help create a permanent record of the people who make up the N2 community.

To encourage people to participate Asia has for the past couple of months been taking pictures of East Finchley Open Artists in their homes and studios.

She said: "Being part of this creative collective for three years I've got to know all the hard work involved in the creative process. The time, effort and many failures that constantly contribute

to mastering various techniques creating unique pieces."

East Finchley Open Artists create and show work in a wide range of media: painting, ceramics, jewellery, photography,

silk painting, sculpture, print-making, calligraphy, textiles, basketry, glass, felt-making and woodworking. To join in the

We Are East Finchley project please send Asia your images at: [contact@asiamsci.com](mailto:contact@asiamsci.com) or use #weareeastfinchley.

## The women who led the way

By Janet Maitland

**Women's London**, a book about the myriad women who have shaped London's history through the centuries, has just been published, exactly 100 years after some women finally won the right to vote. It was written by local resident and London historian Rachel Kolsky.

You may have heard of some of the women she features, such as Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, the first woman in Britain to qualify as a doctor, and Edith Cavell, the nurse who was executed by the Germans in the First World War.

### Treasure trove

But others may be less familiar. For instance, there's Phyllis Pearson, the creator of the A to Z guides that have blessed the pocket of most Londoners and tourists for decades; Elizabeth Cottrell, who opened a pioneering refuge for prostitutes at her home in 1881; Claudia Jones, founder of Britain's first black weekly newspaper, the West Indian Gazette; and Daphne Pearson of the Women's Auxillary Air Force, who was awarded the George Cross for saving the life of an airman in 1940.

There are many magnificent women striding through these pages. One section of the book covers self-guided walks down the streets where they lived and worked. But you could get happily lost in an armchair with this treasure trove full of archive images, new colour photographs and maps.



History explorer: Rachel Kolsky

"Women have excelled in so many areas despite not having the vote until 1918," said Rachel. "You can find special women in all fields of work and endeavour. This book celebrates the impact these women have had, and continue to have, on London's heritage and culture."

"I've always been absorbed by London. When I saw the Ealing Studios 1947 film *Hue and Cry* as a child, I was transfixed by the location sites. London was a war-torn giant playground for children of the post-war period. There was something about all that rubble and the re-birth of the city to come that stayed with me."

*Women's London* is available from all good bookshops including Black Gull in the High Road, N2, and also online at [www.golondontours.com](http://www.golondontours.com). Rachel's other books include *Secret Whitechapel* and *Jewish London*.

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