

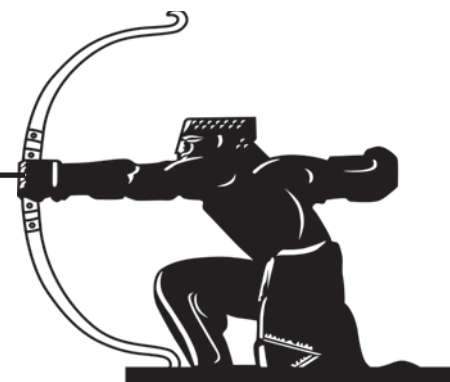


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The Archer

Local News is our Aim



August 2020 No. 316

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Best friends: Michelle and her two dogs. Photo Mike Coles

Michelle has her hands full

Stage and TV star Michelle Collins has been keeping busy with a fundraising project for her fellow actors... and the arrival of a new four-legged friend. Read the full story on page 7.

Fire risks and litter hazards in Coldfall Wood

By Ann Bronkhorst

Like most green spaces in London, Coldfall Wood and the playing fields beyond have been a blessing to hundreds of people during the lockdown. For some it's been a revelation to find a little nature reserve within easy reach. Families, joggers, dog-walkers, they've criss-crossed the wood off Creighton Avenue day and night... and unfortunately the heavier footfall has left its mark.

Four large bin bags of rubbish were collected in one hour in June by five volunteers. Dog-poo bags are still being tossed into trees, and picnic leftovers, usually non-decaying plastic and metal, often surround dens and campsites. Den-building is the fashion in north London woodlands so beetles and bugs must compete with humans for the dead wood needed for survival.

Smouldering fire

By late June Coldfall was very dry so several bright



Morning after: Litter and a smoking fire in Coldfall Wood.

Photo David Bellis

sparks chose to light fires there. One fire was photographed still smouldering at 7.30am; it had been lit the night before. The very angry photographer put it out using water from the stream. Every summer the Friends of Coldfall Wood worry about fire hazards and are grateful to the local 'eyes and ears' for reacting quickly to danger signs and sharing their concerns.

Can this small ancient wood recover from so much human activity or will it be seen, increasingly, as a handy garden

extension, playground or party venue rather than a nature reserve?

Anti-social behaviour in Cherry Tree Wood

At the same time, residents living near Cherry Tree Wood are being kept awake by noise from barbecues and meet-ups with friends. Several local people have found the litter left behind so unsightly and annoying that they have cleared it up themselves. Read the full story on page 4.

Phoenix on hold

Trustees and staff at the Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley say they are working hard to ensure it can reopen as soon as possible. A Phoenix statement said it wanted to make sure it was fully prepared to open safely for the sake of staff and customers before setting a date to open its doors again. Cinemas were officially allowed to reopen from 4 July provided they could abide by hygiene regulations.

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

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Benefits 0800 882200

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OAPs' Advice

Age UK Barnet 020 8203 5040

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Age UK 0800 169 2081

School opens its playing fields to all

By Sandy Barker, from Grange Big Local

One of the many beautiful green spaces in East Finchley, which have been lying empty during the pandemic, are the playing fields at Bishop Douglass School. With support from Grange Big Local and their volunteers, the school made the fields available for local residents to use for play and relaxation.

It was a pilot scheme to see how it worked for everyone, especially the school, and to assess the demand. We had up to 80 people, mainly families with young children, on the field with bikes, scooters, footballs, and one day even kites.

The fields were open for two hours each afternoon for eight days last month, ending with the school holidays, but we hope that arrangements can be made for some further fun in August and September.



Play time: Families enjoy Bishop Douglass School field.

Mature trees under threat in Queen's Wood

By Ann Bronkhorst

In early July four mature, healthy oak trees in Queen's Wood were due to be felled. The reason? An insurance company would not meet the cost of underpinning a property nearby and was likely to sue Haringey Council, which owns the wood, unless they removed the trees.

Protest rapidly grew via local press, social media and a petition on Change, led by the Friends of Queen's Wood, who believe that, as a nature reserve and ancient wood, it should be protected in law from claims such as these. At the time of

writing protesters were on site daily and the trees had not yet been felled.

Supporting the petition, Professor Duckett of the Natural History Museum argued that preservation of ancient woodland is the top environmental

priority. Catherine West, MP for Haringey, and local councillors lent support, as did other amenity groups such as the Haringey Parks Forum and the Friends of Coldfall Wood as well as activists from Extinction Rebellion.

Now is a good time to advertise with us

By John Dearing

The Archer is East Finchley's community newspaper and is produced and distributed each month entirely by volunteers.

Despite the challenge presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, we continued to publish throughout and bring our unique focus on East Finchley events, issues and features to our readers.

Thanks to our brilliant team of volunteer deliverers, we have now



10,000 delivered each month.

restarted letterbox delivery to 10,000 homes and businesses in the N2 postal code area, starting on the first weekend of each month. As East Finchley comes back to life with the easing of lockdown, why not share in our success by advertising in The Archer?

Adverts in The Archer are interspersed with the articles and pictures throughout the paper, rather than being consigned to back pages that carry only adverts. Our rates are very competitive, starting from £20 for a small, single-column advert, with larger, multi-column adverts costing proportionally more, and with discounts for repeat orders.

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of adverts that we can offer. For more details go to our website at: www.the-archer.co.uk.

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Snap happy

Amateur photographers across the capital are invited to submit photos that showcase the best of the people and places in their local area with the chance to win photography equipment and to have their work displayed on the Museum of London website.

The free competition runs until 21 August. Find out more and enter at www.photocrowd.com/becauseimalondoner

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83 Durham Road, N2

Roof extension, including rear dormer with French doors and Juliet balcony, and three front roof lights.

27 Fairlawn Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Addition of skylights.

44 Fortis Green, N2

Roof extension involving hip to gable, rear dormer window and three front roof lights.

18 Hamilton Road, N2

Roof extension, including rear dormer window with Juliet balcony and two front roof lights.

78 Hertford Road, N2

Conversion of property from HMO to two self-contained flats. Associated amenity space, refuse/recycling area and cycle store.

339 High Road, N2

Single-storey side extension and two-storey rear extension. Roof extension, involving rear and side dormer windows and two front roof lights.

21 Huntingdon Road, N2

Roof extension, involving rais-

ing roof height and rear dormer window.

59A Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension, following demolition of existing conservatory.

86 Ossulton Way, N2

Conversion of garage into habitable space. Reinstating original garage door. Enlargement of side window.

34 Pulham Avenue, N2

Erection of two-storey dwelling. Associated parking, landscaping, cycle store, and refuse and recycling.



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Fast food outlet forced to remove huge metal vent

By David Melsome

The East Finchley branch of KFC has been operating since 1973 and is still hugely popular with fans of fast food... but not always with neighbours of its premises on the corner of Huntingdon Road.

People living nearby report that one benefit of the outlet being closed during lockdown was the absence of unwanted wrappers, cups and the other pavement detritus that accompanies its takeaways. Another benefit was not having to step over the flow of effluent, described by one resident as "the horrible stream of yuck", that can trail across the pavement from the shop's back gate to the Huntingdon Road gutter when the shop is operating at full strength.

New noise, new vent

However, when KFC started serving customers again towards the end of June, a new loud generator-type noise impacted the peace of many homes, accompanied by the strong fatty odour of the Colonel's Bargain Bucket. Residents were up in arms following the appearance of a huge horizontal metal extraction vent at the side of the building pointing straight up Huntingdon Road. The new and unwelcome



Short lived: This horizontal vent was removed from the side of the KFC restaurant in Huntingdon Road soon after being installed

noise had woken them at 6am.

Complaints were submitted to the environmental health department of Barnet Council and East Finchley councillor Arjun Mittra submitted his own urgent query. One resident told us: "To their credit the council acted

quickly. Within 48 hours the horizontal outlet had disappeared, although the remaining perpendicular chimney would look more at home on an industrial estate than in a residential street." KFC's press team has been contacted for comment but had not responded at the time of going to press.

Crime reported

In addition to the noise and pollution problems, shortly after KFC reopened one local homeowner reported preventing a robbery, when a young boy was being threatened by half a dozen others outside the shop. The Archer understands that police are aware of the corner as a crime hotspot. Many residents would like to see CCTV installed to help monitor the situation, but who would pay for it? Investigations are ongoing and The Archer awaits a reply from Barnet Council.

Car crashes on the Great North Road

A man was arrested on suspicion of drink-driving after colliding with another car on the Great North Road on Saturday 18 July. One of the cars turned over and a man was taken to hospital with an injured leg. The emergency services were called to the incident just by The Bishops Avenue at 10.40pm. Several people at the scene helped the occupants out of their cars.

Slow-down too slow?

Barnet Council has agreed to review the process for introducing 20mph speed limits in areas where residents are in favour. Some councillors claim that the process is too slow, while others argue that 20mph zones are not effective in improving road safety. A 20mph zone has been proposed for parts or all of East Finchley to calm traffic on busy roads like the High Road and East End Road, as well as residential roads and those close to schools.

Raised road raises noise

Residents living near the junction of Church Lane with the High Road have complained that they are being plagued by the frequent noise of heavy lorries and their loads thumping over a new raised section of road.

The raised surface was installed in June to slow down traffic on the approach to the pedestrian crossing outside Martin Primary School, where a young girl and her father were injured in an accident last year. However, residents say many lorry drivers do not realise it is there and continue at normal speed if the lights are green, violently shaking their chassis and their loads. Some have called for warning signs to be installed on the approach to give drivers a chance to slow down.



Spare tyres: Donated bikes at Bedford Road. Photo Mike Coles.

Generous donors drop off dozens of bikes

By John Lawrence

There was an amazing response when bike charity volunteer Adam Ognall put out a call for the people of East Finchley to donate any unwanted two-wheelers. Families and individuals handed over a total of 53 bicycles in the space of just two hours on the afternoon of Wednesday 1 July.

They brought children's and adult models, some old, some relatively new, to a small mews space at the High Road end of Bedford Road, N2, where The Bike Project chair of trustees Adam Ognall has his office.

His charity fixes and refurbishes any bikes it is given and passes them on to refugees, primarily in the London and Birmingham areas. In five years, it has given out 6,500 bicycles.

Bike benefits

Adam said: "For many people having a bike can transform their lives. As a refugee

in this country, you get £36 a week to live on after housing costs have been deducted. A bus pass alone is £21 so having a bike means you can save a large part of your income. "Cycling has huge mental and physical health benefits. It makes refugees more visible and more mobile and makes them feel part of the community."

Adam described the East Finchley collection as "a really special couple of hours" and



Special couple of hours: Adam Ognall from The Bike Project. Photo Mike Coles.

thanked everyone who had donated for their incredible generosity.

Refugees are often referred to The Bike Project by a local church or the Red Cross. They are also given a set of lights, a helmet and lock, and taught the rules of the road.

Climate change relay

Local climate change rebels, Barnet Extinction Rebellion, are organising a community relay race on Saturday 29 August, racing for time to save our planet. Everyone is invited, from grandparents to babies. Check @BarnetXR on Twitter or facebook.com/XRBarnet for details nearer the time, or email hazel1@btinternet.com.

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Anti-social noise and litter mar woods and parks

By Janet Maitland

Residents living near Cherry Tree Wood have been kept awake by noise from people using it at night for barbecues and meet-ups with friends. Several local people have found the litter left behind so unsightly and annoying that they have cleared it up themselves.

"Young people shouting and screaming and having fires till one in the morning keeps me awake," said one resident, who lives near the park. "This has always been an issue during the summer. The last time the gates were left unlocked, as they are now, this went on for the whole summer. "Some young people would still climb over locked gates, but it would be more difficult to bring in barbecues and alcohol. They would definitely deter older people, like an accordion player recently who was so noisy I called the police."

Jan Lovell from the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team said they had received one

complaint of people gathering at night in the picnic area by the Fordington Road entrance. Jan said: "It's a shame as people leave rubbish and disposable barbecues on the grass. It's a difficult one as none of the Barnet parks are being locked. It's not ideal, but we're only speaking of handfuls of people."

Police and councillors comment

Local councillors Arjun Mitra and Claire Farrier met with Barnet Council officers a few weeks ago to raise residents' concerns about anti-social behaviour in the woods.

"The council stopped locking the gates because of financial constraints and although they are seeking community volunteer support to help with issues like maintenance and locking up, this is very early days," said Cllr Mitra.

Patrolling to increase

A Barnet Council spokesperson told us: "We've suspended the locking of parks in consideration of Covid-19 and this is being reviewed on a regular basis. Our officers and police regularly patrol parks and will be stepping up patrols in this area."

Residents can report anti-social behaviour on the 101 police number or online at www.met.police.uk/ro/report. In case of emergency, always dial 999.



Open water: The Men's Pond on Hampstead Heath now needs to be booked and paid for in advance

Ponds swimmers kick out against new booking system

Archer reader Lucy Zanetti welcomes the return of swimming at Highgate Ponds on Hampstead Heath but laments the introduction of compulsory charges to enjoy the waters.

Like many locals, I'm a year-round swimmer at Highgate Ponds. The Ladies' and Men's Ponds are treasures, each an off-grid oasis where you can relax (phones hardly work there), admire the pond life, commune with nature, and meet friends or enjoy solitude.

Thousands visit the ponds through the summer and some hardy folk swim on into the winter, when you might be in the water for only three or four minutes but the life-affirming lift this provides is incomparable. We can turn up when we like, no planning ahead necessary, just slip in, swim about and head off. What a dream.

Our ponds have been closed during the Covid-19 crisis but are now reopening. Up to this

point, tranquillity has reigned, payment has not been compulsory, and so, like the zoo at Golders Hill Park, the playgrounds and the Heath in general, the public right of access has continued unabated.

So it is with heavy hearts that we learn the City of London Corporation (one of the wealthiest local authorities in the country), which manages the Heath, is intent on spoiling our respite from the frenetic world we now live in.

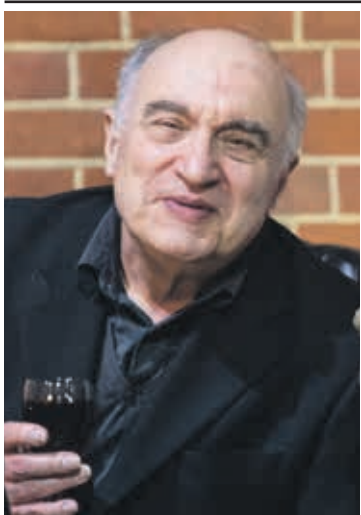
Payment: voluntary or compulsory?

Last month they introduced a system whereby swims must be booked via an online system, at a cost of £4 or £2.40 for just

one precious hour of access. We hope the booking requirement won't outlast the Covid-19 restrictions, but the idea of commercialising this historic enclave makes me weep.

If only the Corporation had listened to the voices of the swimmers, the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee and the locals who resolved to cooperate with a viable alternative option for encouraging more voluntary payments, then all could have remained equal and undivided.

For more about this debate, look at the Kenwood Ladies Pond Association website at www.klpa.uk and consider the implications for local democracy.



Music man: Geoffrey Hanson

Geoffrey Hanson

Daphne Chamberlain
The Archer team was very sad to hear of the death of East Finchley Arts Festival founder and director Geoffrey Hanson. He was found at his home last month by a friend when he failed to keep a virtual appointment. We understand that ambulance paramedics said he had died quickly and peacefully.

A church organist and prolific composer, Geoffrey was also the Director of Music at All Saints' Church in Durham Road for 30 years. He celebrated his 80th birthday with a special concert there last December. This year's Arts Festival had already been postponed indefinitely because of Covid-19. The Archer will bring you a full appreciation of Geoffrey Hanson next month.

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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, or by phone on 020 7161 9014. Follow the team on Twitter @MPSEastFinchley.

Roofing scam

This is a resident's account of a roofing scam that happened in East Finchley. They tell it very well in their own words. Please be on the alert and spread the word.

"I avoided paying the scammer any money (apart from £250 to a scaffolding company for scaffolding which I'm having removed). I'm still going to incur expense reinstating the roofing tiles that were unnecessarily removed but the cost should be hundreds rather than thousands of pounds.

"You may wish to warn local residents that aggressive and very professional sounding roofing repair scammers are operating in the area, offering an initial cheap repair service and then claiming major roofing repairs are needed costing thousands of pounds to remedy when the repairs are unnecessary.

"In my case they caused damage to the roof by ripping off tiles and throwing them to the ground pretending that the condition of the roof was dangerous when it wasn't."



'Temporary' cycle lane plan for the High Road

By John Lawrence

Barnet Council is proposing to install new cycle lanes running almost the entire length of the High Road in East Finchley to make travelling safer for the growing number of people who have taken to cycling in recent months.

The council has released plans showing details of almost continuous cycle lanes in both directions between the North Circular and the Great North Road, south of the tube station as far as the border with Haringey.

The cycle lanes scheme is being labelled as 'temporary' but, at the time of going to press, there were no details on how long they might be in place, nor when they might be installed.

Pros and cons

There will be a clear benefit for cyclists in having a designated and clearly marked space to travel up and down the busy High Road. However, it will come at the cost of the suspension of around 20 paid parking bays outside shops along the route, in order to create room for the new lanes. East Finchley councillor Arjun Mittra posted the plans on Facebook and asked for reaction from local people. He told *The Archer* he is still seeking details from the council on when they might be installed.

One respondent said: "The more pedestrian and cycle friendly an area is, the more room there is for people to shop and the more pleasant the experience. The more we can move away from cars and get them off the streets the better for people and the local shops." Another said: "Being cycle and pedestrian friendly transforms town centres for the better and is supportive of local businesses. Losing 20 parking bays on the High Road won't make it harder to park. The problem for most people is the cost of parking, not finding a bay." But others argued that the new lanes will create congestion and damage the viability of the retail shops as well as shift parking onto residential streets. They called for more creative solutions to slow the traffic through the High Road and improve safety for all cyclists and pedestrians.



Get on board: Sonia at the wheel of her big red bus



Sonia's driving passion for a double-decker

By John Lawrence

When Sonia Beldom drives up in her big red double-decker she always gets double takes from the other, mostly male, drivers on the bus-for-hire circuit. And when she's on the road some tourists even leap out in front of her vehicle to snap a quick photo.

Sonia loves the attention when she's behind the wheel. Most of her work is private hire for weddings, corporate outings and tourist trips around London's iconic landmarks. "My favourite," says Sonia, "because I get to drive where I like and the thrill of driving over Tower Bridge gets me every time."

Sonia lives locally so if you've ever seen an old Routemaster bus she's probably been at the wheel. Once, driving along the High Road in East Finchley on her way to the A1, she got diverted before she could turn into East End Road. Manoeuvring her double-decker down Kitchener Road and Market Place to get back on track was "a challenge".

On board with Ken Bruce

Sonia's day job is as a TV

producer and presentation coach. She has helped bring many travel series to the screen, including *An Idiot Abroad* with Karl Pilkington, *The Hairy Bikers' Great Mississippi Adventure* and *Victoria's Empire* with the late Victoria Wood.

She started her broadcasting career as a BBC Radio 2 producer where she discovered that Ken Bruce owned a heritage Routemaster bus hire company. Ken agreed she could drive it and, with a proper licence,



Front seat driver: Sonia gets ready to welcome passengers

could do occasional paid work for the company as they had no female drivers.

"I think I'm one of the youngest female drivers of these old buses and I always get surprised looks when I rock up with my blonde hair, red nails

and full-make-up," says Sonia. "As you can imagine, most of the drivers are retired London Transport bus drivers. It's very funny to see the reactions sometimes, which is another reason I love it."

Buses4Homeless

While the private hire buses have been off the road during the Covid-19 crisis, Sonia has spent her time writing a children's picture e-book called *Granny Franny's Big Red Bus*, a fun adventure partly based on her mum.

Sonia is donating 10% of sales to Buses4Homeless who recondition old buses into sleeping, eating, learning and wellbeing hubs for homeless people who enter a three-month programme to get them back into work and onto their feet.

And now the lockdown has loosened a little, she is back driving a modern open-top tourist bus for the same charity to distribute personal protective equipment and information to vulnerable and homeless people. Find out more about the book and download it at www.grannyfrannysbigredbus.com; it's also available on Amazon.

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What is the future of our libraries after lockdown?

By Daphne Chamberlain

"Librarians are just like search engines, except they smile and talk to me, and they don't give me paid-for advertising when they are trying to help." This tweet from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) illustrates the social and educational role of libraries in society.

The closure of our library buildings during lockdown struck hardest at people, particularly children, who benefit enormously from personal interaction, and at the many households without dependable internet access.

Online successes

For those who were able to use it, however, technology proved itself. E-book borrowing rocketed during lockdown, sometimes by up to 600%. Barnet offered e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, newspapers and comics, issuing over 123,500 electronic stock. The council also had about 18,000 views of 50 online events.

The School Libraries Resources Service has been supporting schools with digital resources throughout lockdown and resumed collection and delivery of learning materials on request to schools on 18 June.

In the first week of operation in June, a reported 531 customers made use of the Select and Collect service, requesting just over 2,200 items. (See below for details).

Going forward

Barnet Council says: "We will...gradually expand the opening of the core libraries and core plus libraries for wider use over the following months. We will continue with all our

online events." East Finchley is a Core library.

Safety requirements will obviously include marked-out social distancing, possibly reorganised shelving, quarantining all returned stock for 72 hours, hand sanitiser units, Perspex screens, and a limited number of customers at any time.

What next, though? The pandemic has left many Councils facing bankruptcy. CILIP fears a postcode lottery, with closure of large and busy libraries in areas where they are most needed. The government has pledged extra funding, but will that be enough?



New ways John Lowrie at the Baptist Church. Photo Mike Coles

How church-going has been changed for the better

By David Gritten

Churches across Britain have been dealt a blow by the social restrictions that coronavirus has made necessary. Most have closed their doors, at least for the time being, and East Finchley Baptist Church is among them.

But John Lowrie, pastor there for the last three years, believes that despite this year's setbacks, the church's future is bright. Many members of its congregation are connecting with its services and sermons online, and using Zoom has revolutionised the way they worship.

Friendly buzz

John reports that the experiment has had remarkable results: "We wondered how people would interact. Most of the folks, when you see them, they wave, say hello, and for the first five minutes we just chat, share news, whatever. "That's turned out to be a very friendly time, as opposed to being in church, where you come in, find a seat and wait quietly until the service starts. This way there's a buzz, a hubbub of noise. It's not just about the service, it's getting people to enjoy each other's company."

Before the pandemic, he recalls: "We'd get about 50-60 people on an average Sunday. With Zoom we get over 30 screens. Some might be a single person, but others a couple or a family of four. So our numbers have actually gone up, particularly midweek, because Zoom allows people to join us without having to travel after a long day at work."

John is convinced of one

thing: "We won't come back the same people, that's for sure. Folks have shared their lives and their problems more. There have been offers of help between them and some of them leaving parcels of food on people's doorsteps. They're finding new ways to look out for each other."

"People now socialise outside the church, where they wouldn't have done it before. They'd turn up on a Sunday, then not see each other for a week. But now they'll go to the park together, maybe go for a meal. They're enjoying each other's company. When all this is finally over it won't be 'the new normal'. I think it'll be better in many ways."

Shared harvest

Plot holders at East Finchley Allotments, off Plane Tree Walk, N2, have been donating surplus fruit and vegetables to be distributed to local charity kitchens and food banks.

The scheme has been operating on weekends and invites growers to leave produce in a shady spot on the site, which is then collected by two volunteers for onward distribution.

Barnet library services open online

By Emma Magnus

While East Finchley Library remains shut for the time being, here are the free library services you can still use by going online. You'll need to join the library in order to benefit from these services. You can either fill out a three-minute form at www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries or visit one of the reopened branches at Finchley Church End, Chipping Barnet, Edgware or Colindale.

Alternative means of borrowing books

The good news is it's still possible to borrow books, CDs and DVDs via the Select and Collect and Home Library services. The Home Library service is for members with limited mobility or living in sheltered or residential housing. Select and Collect is for everyone, with items chosen from a catalogue then available to collect at Chipping Barnet, Edgware, Finchley Church End or Colindale Libraries.

Browsing the shelves may not be possible, but there are still ways to discover new books:

Barnet Libraries can put together a selection of items for you based on your preferences. You can borrow up to 20 items on your library card.

Not just books

You can read ebooks, audiobooks, newspapers (including those with paywalls) and magazines for free online: there are thousands available in over 60 languages, accessible on a range of reading devices.

Online resources

Libraries offer free subscriptions for many handy resources. Oxford English Dictionary, Britannica, Oxford Reference Online,

Ancestry, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: all free to use. If you're learning to drive, Theory Test Pro is also available.

Book clubs

If you're a member of a book club that meets in Barnet, you can borrow sets of popular titles (up to 30 books) for eight weeks. One member just needs to register at a library to get a 'group reading ticket'.

Coding

Finally, your coding dreams can come true. You can borrow Micro:bits, tiny computers that allow you to create programs and save them onto your computer.

Editor's note:

Most Haringey libraries, including Muswell Hill and Highgate, have re-opened and you don't need to be a Haringey resident to join their libraries. Find out more about the many services on offer locally at www.haringey.gov.uk/covid-19/council-services-lib

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

We are now open again for public worship and you are welcome to join us for:

Sunday mass at 10.00 a.m. and Weekday masses as advertised on the website

or join our live-streamed services on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsef/>

The church is also open for private prayer as advertised on the website.

Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

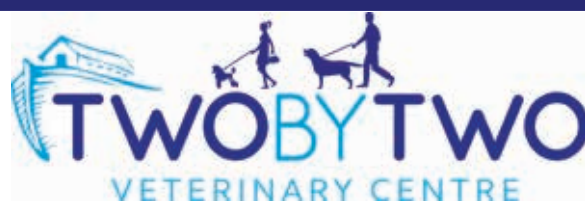
For more information, contact the Vicar, Fr Ian Chandler, on 020 8883 9315

Email: vicar.saintsabounding@gmail.com or check out our website:

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Dog days: Michelle Collins with Peggy, left, and Humphrey.

Michelle has her hands full

By Ruth Anders

Animal-loving actor Michelle Collins is a dynamo. Not only does she help promote our local charity All Dogs Matter, but she has also raised over £33,000 for the Actors Benevolent Fund.

I met Michelle and her two delightful canine friends in Cherry Tree Wood in late June. She had adopted Humphrey ten years ago and now Peggy is the latest addition to the family. She first fostered her from All Dogs Matter during the lockdown and soon decided to adopt her.

Actors and writers unite

Michelle's next challenge was to help her fellow thespians. *Archer* readers will be aware of the difficulties Covid-19 poses for performing artists. So with the help of a raft of highly respected mates, along with producers Debbie Gray and Sam Cornish of Genesis Pictures, Michelle assembled a series of monologues to raise funds for actors' union Equity members who are suffering hardship.

More than 50 famous names

took part, including Ian McKellen, Sheila Hancock and Derek Jacobi. The monologues, titled *For the Love of Arts*, can be viewed on the Equity Benevolent Fund's YouTube channel at <https://bit.ly/3cZMh6s>

Michelle told us: "The current crisis has had a devastating effect on my industry, affecting so many of us indiscriminately. I started ringing around friends in the industry; one thing led to another and I suddenly had a list of well-known film, TV and stage actors on board, all wanting to support the project. I also have a group of extremely talented writers who agreed to write monologues for whoever needed one."

Don't forget dogs

While actors continue to struggle, All Dogs Matter is concerned that, as new dog owners return to work after lockdown, many sadly will want to offload their new pets. General manager Ira Moss stresses that dogs like Peggy appear on their books rarely. Those for whom the charity seeks homes and foster carers are far more likely to be greyhounds or Staffies. For more information about the charity visit alldogsmatter.co.uk

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Buyer steps in to build on site opposite station

By Diana Cormack

In early July a notice from Deniz Investments, the same company that is developing the Viceroy Close car park in East Finchley, appeared on the hoardings around the former GLH minicab site opposite the tube station.

It announced proposals to construct 24 luxury flats and one commercial unit. The property was previously expected to be sold at auction at the end of March and was described thus: 'Lot 27: Planning consent granted for 25 flats (with no affordable housing requirement) and B1 Office on the ground and lower ground floor.' The guide price was £4,750,000 but the property was withdrawn prior to auction, presumably to be sold privately.

Reasons for objection

As often reported in *The Archer*, since planning permission was first granted three years ago, locals and the Finchley Society have vigorously opposed the development. Subsequent modifications have not changed their minds.

It is not only the number of flats, none of them affordable, that they object to, but also the lack of parking and road safety. The High Road site immediately opposite the entrance to the station car park will create traffic problems with access and exit for service



Under development: Hoardings currently surround the former GLH site

vehicles, they argue, threatening increased danger and disruption in an already extremely busy thoroughfare.

Further reading

Whether there will be another change of planning application is unknown at the time of writing. However, a visit to Barnet Council's Schedule of Site Proposals makes interesting reading for East Finchley residents who care to look.

There are four places listed as sites of current or potential

development: the former Bobath Centre in East End Road, the station car park itself, the disused London Underground electricity substation almost diagonally opposite The Bishops Avenue, and Park House, which stands next door to the GLH site. Interestingly, on the borough's proposals their map shows the Park House and GLH sites as one. *Find the proposals for yourself by visiting engage.barnet.gov.uk and searching for 'Draft Local Plan (Reg 18)'*

Abseiling a long way down to keep the air ambulance up

By Rebecca Wilks

The London Air Ambulance's red helicopter is likely to be a familiar sight in the sky to many Londoners. For those seriously injured, the charity provides rapid trauma response to hundreds of life-or-death accidents in the capital each year.

Despite the service's vital role, they rely primarily on donations and fundraising to keep running, and with the current Covid-19 crisis funds are tighter than ever.

I grew up in East Finchley and am going to be fundraising for this amazing cause by taking part in a sponsored abseil from their helipad on top of the 17-storey Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel.

I will be raising funds in honour of my mum Carol Jackson, who lived in East Finchley for over 20 years and was involved in the local community for many years. My mum was tragically killed in a car accident on the High Road in 2019 at the age of 64, and the London Air Ambulance were the first on the scene to provide support.

It is my hope that giving back can help as many other families as possible who may need the service in the future. Any donations would be much appreciated; to donate please visit www.justgiving.com/carol-jackson-2020.



Loving memory: Carol Jackson, who was killed in a collision on the High Road.



YOUNG ARCHER



Time to listen: The Academy's Mark Carter, left, with David Lammy MP during the online discussion.

Shared experience on BLM

By Kate Wiseman

The Archer Academy hosted its first virtual community event on Tuesday 7 July with a live panel discussion on Black Lives Matter attended by more than 400 people.

The event was focused on better understanding our individual and collective responsibilities in addressing racism and it also served as the official launch of the school's staff and student Diversity and Inclusion societies.

Speakers included David Lammy MP, social researcher

and academic Dr Carlene Firmin and author Ashley Hickson-Lovence. Students and staff shared their personal experiences of racism and what Black Lives Matter means to them.

Contributors said it means "building a society where... diversity is not just tolerated but actively sought after and

encouraged", and it means "acknowledging that we're human...it is a statement to make people realise that our lives and opinions matter...it is equality. It's not being followed by security when I walk into a shop or looked at differently because of the colour of my skin."

Pay care workers a decent living wage

Ellie Afek from Year 10 at the Archer Academy in East Finchley is playing a leading role in a campaign to demand that the government pays care workers a decent living wage. She was one of two hosts of a joint Jewish and Muslim blessing for care workers at the Kenwood Care Home in North Finchley.

Rabbi Rebecca Birk from Finchley Progressive Syna-

gogue and Abubakar Ali from the Somali Bravanese Welfare

Association thanked staff at the home for their hard work looking after some of the most vulnerable in society and called for all carers to be paid a real Living Wage in return for a hard day's work.

Ellie told the gathering, organised by Barnet Citizens: "For years, carers have been hidden heroes. This crisis has shown who our most essential workers really are. Thank you to carers over Barnet, and in the UK who have literally put their lives on the line during lockdown to care for those who need it most."



Fair wage: Ellie Afek, second left, back row, with visitors and carers at Kenwood Care Home

Bubbles in the bathroom and the garden

An East Finchley nursery reopened right at the start of June, welcoming children back with balloons and a special medal for being brave in returning after such a long break.



All clean: The children have got used to the new hygiene rules



Al fresco: Four of Monkey Puzzle's children enjoy a snack outside

Monkey Puzzle, opposite the tube station, had to run its days a little differently as parents and carers were not allowed into the building, and children had to remember to stay in their small groups.

Operations manager Jenny Eracleous said: "The children have done brilliantly at adjusting to the new normal and are now experts at hand washing and remembering to stay in their bubbles. We were really lucky at first with the weather meaning children could spend most of their time in our garden."



On the run: Marco Glaser trains in Cherry Tree Wood. Photo Mike Coles.

Why I'm pounding the streets in the run-up to my 13th birthday

By Marco Glaser

With more free time than usual in June due to lockdown, I decided to challenge myself by running 113 miles in 11 weeks, raising money for charity. I am running around 10 miles each week from Cherry Tree Road and my last run will be on my 13th birthday on 21 August.

My original aim was to raise £1,013. However, I managed to complete this goal within two weeks, so I adjusted my target to £2,013. I have raised £1,730 so far, but I am opti-

mistic I can raise a bit more to help my two nominated charities: Mind and Maccabi GB. Mind uses the power of sport and physical activity to raise awareness, tackle mental health stigmas and support people with mental health problems to become more active. They also offer a range of resources and engagement opportunities for sports organisations who wish to do more around mental health. Maccabi GB is close to my heart as my grandpa and uncle have both represented their country in the international Maccabi games. Maccabi GB is a leading health and wellbeing charity and has developed over 80 years, with a broad range of sporting, educational, social and health activities. The fact that my friends and family are sponsoring me and supporting these charities keeps me going when I'm running or feeling rather tired from running! If you would like to support me, please go to: uk.virginmoneygiving.com/MarcoGlaser

Archer's arrows

Fed up with screentime, or just fed up? Then join in with Grange Big Local's Scavenger Hunt. A free book, *Archer's Arrows*, aimed at eight to 18-year-olds and designed by artists John Costi and JC Adams, has local superhero, the Archer, leading you around the area and showing you things to do and try.

Grange Big Local has a limited number of copies to give away and will be giving some to Finchley Foodbank to distribute. Check their social media to find out where to get your copy, or download it directly from www.grangebiglocal.org

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Try this round route for a spot of summer cycling

By Greta Brambilla

Would you like an active morning or afternoon out with family and friends? Look no further than this 12km cycle route, which will take you past some lovely local sights and can be completed in an hour and a half.

From wherever you are in East Finchley, cycle along East End Road until you reach Cromwell Close, almost opposite the Five Bells pub, which leads to three leafy pathways ahead of each other crossing Brim Hill and Abbots Gardens all the way down to Lyttelton Road (give priority to pedestrians on these narrow paths).

At Lyttelton Road, go right, then cross it at the crossing opposite Gurney Drive. A little road ahead leads to a jungly path through the back of the playing field featuring a charming bridge and stream: the perfect photo opportunity.

When you reach Kingsley Way you can stop for a fresh roll or pastry from King's Bakery on your right or continue the route by turning left. At the end of Kingsley Way turn left at the little roundabout onto the green and stately Wildwood Road (where you may notice a few neighbourhood superheroes).

Once past the Heath extension, turn left at the end of Wildwood Road to go up Hampstead Way. You will soon reach Golders Hill Park where I recommend dismounting and taking time to wander around the vibrant gardens, majestic pergola and



Hidden track: Crossing a bridge off Lyttelton Road



Route map: The 12km circuit to Hampstead and back

cycle across the cut-through and cross over onto the Great North Road.

A little way on, turn right into Woodside Avenue, then left into Fordington Road and up the narrow, shrouded Indigo Walk. Admire the picturesque front gardens as you turn left onto Southern Road and right onto Western Road. Fortis Green is at the top and you can return home from there. Safe journey and happy cycling!



Up on the roof: Can you spot these superheroes in Wildwood Road?

duck ponds. The Refreshment House also does delicious coffees and ice creams here.

To leave the park, it is safest to follow the path to the pergola, keep going, then turn left into Heath Brow, up towards Jack Straw's Castle. Turn left at the roundabout there and cross over on to the cycle path alongside Spaniards Road, with lovely views of London over Hampstead Heath.

Continue past Spaniards Inn and Kenwood House, turning left onto the quaint and quiet Sheldon Avenue. At the East Finchley end of the road,

Steve Amos: much-loved father and friend

The sudden and unexpected death of Steve Amos has left the East Finchley community in mourning. Steve, 51, died peacefully in hospital at the end of June after suffering a devastating bleed to his brain.



Fondly remembered: Steve Amos

Steve, a lawyer and Director of Litigation with the Government Legal Department, had been an East Finchley resident for almost 20 years, living on the

county roads with his wife Nicola, and three children Jamie, Kate and Toby.

All three children attended Martin Primary School where Steve was a governor for a number of years. He was a key part of the school community for 17 years, and was known very fondly by staff and parents.

Steve loved East Finchley and Hampstead Heath where he liked to walk and swim, and had so many friends in the area who will all miss him terribly.

A small funeral followed by a walk on Hampstead Heath for close family and very close friends was held at the end of July. His family are encouraging people to have a walk on the Heath as a way of taking a few moments to remember Steve.

Nicola and her children have taken great comfort in the love and support shown by their friends, neighbours and the wider East Finchley community over recent weeks.

RICKY SAVAGE ... "The voice of social irresponsibility"

We're not all going on a summer holiday

By Ricky Savage

It's that time of year again when half the population heads off for two weeks of sunburn, hangovers and strange exotic diseases. You know the way it goes: cram yourself into a metal tube for the whole breakfast in London, lunch in Madrid and luggage in Helsinki experience.

Except that is so last year. This year the skies are the quietest they have been since 2010 when one of Iceland's more incontinent volcanoes belched so much dust that half the world's aircraft had to have a lie down.

So in this weird socially distant world if you can't go and despoil the beautiful countryside of some far-off land, why not despoil your own country? Act like you are abroad: drop litter, drink beer and complain about the funny foreign food.

And to make it a proper holiday don't stay at home upsetting the neighbours with a death-defying barbie. Take a road trip, go somewhere and annoy someone else's neighbours.

You could do what Cliff Richard did in the 1960s, borrow a double-decker bus, convert it into a motorhome and go singing and dancing up the A1, picking up girl hitchhikers, a runaway teen star pretending to be a boy and a bunch of blokes playing twangy guitar.

Or, for the less social, load up your car, complete with a four-year-old child, and drive 264 miles to Durham to get your eyes tested.

As you travel across this green and pleasant land looking for a beach or beauty spot you'll be able to rediscover Britain in all its glory. You can admire all those 'Tourists, go away' signs that villagers have put up to welcome you. Yes, time to enjoy that uniquely British xenophobia that is as central to all charming country villages as the smell of manure.

And it will probably be raining, making you wish you had gone to Specsavers instead. By the time you get home, you will need a proper holiday, this time somewhere hot and abroad, especially if the idiot next door got out his barbie and burned down your shed. You'll be fine. All that will be missing is your luggage, which will be in Helsinki. On a pub crawl.

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Sundays: Holy Communion @ 9.30 am

Wednesdays: time for private prayer 5.00 - 7.00 pm.

We continue to meet online for prayer and mutual support:

Morning Prayer: Monday to Friday, at 9.00 am

Bible Readings and Prayers: Sunday at 11.00 am

If you would like to join in prayer or send us prayer requests, please contact us via our website: www.holytrinityeastfinchley.org.uk

For more information please contact us at:

Email: marius.mirt@htef.org.uk

Tel: 202 3565 4430

Bounce Back 2020

Anyone in East Finchley between eight and 18 years old is welcome to join in Bounce Back 2020, an hour of dance, drama and multi-sports every day, followed by pizza.

There will be three one-week courses between 3 and 21 August and three age groups 8-12, 12-15 and 15-18. The courses, hosted by Grange Big Local and SOTO CIC, are free and so is the pizza. To sign up email info@sotocic.org



How three lads from Surrey saved me from the 1970s

By John Lawrence

For comedian Ian Stone, life as a 14-year-old in 1977 was pretty bad: bad clothes, his parents' marriage going bad and a bad case of teenage boredom.

Then he fell in love. Not with a girl but with a band. He followed The Jam around faithfully and obsessively for five years until they split up in 1982, something he says he is just about getting over. Now he has written a book about those heady days when Paul Weller, Bruce Foxton and Rick Buckler showed him the power of being an angry young man and gave him some of the most memorable experiences of his life.

Big brother Paul

Ian, who lives in Brighton Road, N2, calls *To Be Someone* part-social history and part-love letter to The Jam and their music. Two years in the writing, its publication has come at a good time for the star of BBC TV's *Mock the Week* while his regular gigs on the stand-up comedy circuit have been put on temporary hold.

Ian told *The Archer*: "I wanted it to be funny, dark and poignant. It takes an honest



Faithful fan: Ian Stone has written about his teenage years following *The Jam*

look at what my life was like in those years and how Paul Weller

taught me to be someone. He guided me like a big brother through my teenage years."

Ian followed the Surrey trio everywhere, at one point trying to sneak into the Hammersmith Odeon and ending up on the roof, and at another almost being thrown out of a Brighton hotel until Paul Weller himself stepped in and invited him for a drink at the bar.

When his book was about to come out, Ian sent a copy to his hero. Weller liked it so much that he gave a quote for the cover and the two of them met up over dinner. Ian said: "Paul told me he'd forgotten how s**t it was in the seventies."



Cut out and keep: Elizabeth Joseph with her bespoke jewellery

Artist in search of a workshop

A graphic design artist is looking for a space in East Finchley where she can set up her new business giving people the skills to make their own jewellery.

Elizabeth Joseph has been running jewellery-making workshops at private members' clubs such as Soho House and The Curtain Hotel in London for more than five years and also has a home studio where she runs crafts workshops.

Now she hopes to find a 'maker space' in the area that could be used by individuals and small crafts businesses to fashion their own acrylic laser-cut jewellery. Elizabeth explains: "There would

be a membership system, payable monthly, to use the facilities. The maker space would have a laser cutter and also possibly a 3D printer."

Elizabeth would like to hear from anyone interested in joining and also from anyone with a small space to rent, or to let for free in return for laser-cutting work. Find out more at www.colourfunction.com and contact Elizabeth directly at elizabethjoseph919@yahoo.com



Star endorsement: Ian's book has a cover quote from Paul Weller himself

To Be Someone

Ian has published his book through the crowdfunding site Unbound.com and it's there that you can find out more and buy copies by searching 'Ian Stone' or '*To Be Someone*'.

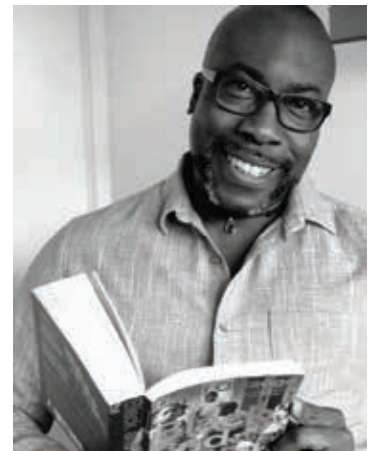
Moving poem goes more than skin deep

By Diana Cormack

Pat Leacock is known to many in the area for regularly hosting the East Finchley Community Festival as well as for his involvement in the music scene. Now he has added another string to his bow with his skill as a poet.

Pat says that his latest poem "seems to have absolutely the zeitgeist of the issues related to Black Lives Matter. Most importantly, it has changed the way so many people feel about the importance of unity, democratic debates promoting equality and an understanding/acceptance of differences".

Views of Pat reading *The Skin I'm In* have hit the thousands on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and led to requests for radio interviews and online educational discussions. Pat is setting up a website at PDLpoet.com.



Pat Leacock: To see him read, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPQQv-RDH50&t=2s

The Skin I'm In

Look at me...

Really!

LOOK AT ME!

Now look beyond the skin...

The skin I'm in.

Can you look deeper?

Beyond the false claims that

cheaper

Who I am?

Your stare I seek...

A glance you don't want me to catch.

Like segregation's door

years before,
Built firm with a cast iron latch,
to block my kind... from entering.

A man with a similar mind...

Same dreams of Martin

Luther...

The King!

Wanting the same thing...

Words such as interposition
and nullification...

Meant nothing to me
when I was nappy haired and three,
Now mean everything to an
older, wiser me!

I am greeted not with the firm
steady handshake of the light
man,
But the high five "all the same-
ness" of the dark as night man.

Everything's changed...
yet nothing's changed.

No!

Not the chip on my shoulder...
as I get older...
I've just got bolder...
at saying what I see.

Smart enough to see it works
both ways...

Dark as night man set in his
ways.

Prejudging too...

Not me, mind you.

Just some who I thought knew
better...

Some I hoped knew better!

From the 6ft hole they dig for
you

Or

The ashes that they scatter.

All that hatred, fear and loathing...

Did it matter...

Did it?

Don't be naive and let the
actions of a few DEFINE us all...

However, let the devastating
loss of life of the few REMIND
us all.

True power isn't about spread-
ing lies, untruths and hate.
REAL power comes through
conversation, wanting to
understand... and democratic
debates.

Don't delete the enemy
to defeat the enemy.
The internet is more than that!

Don't regurgitate opinions!
Dig DEEPER and eat up just the
FACTS

Before our inevitable decision
of fate,
and the six foot hole is dug
making it all too late...
look beyond the skin,

The skin WE are in!



Ravenous rats driven into the open

By Janet Maitland

It's not quite a plague but East Finchley residents have reported seeing a growing number of rats in their gardens over the last few weeks. "I've never seen a rat in my garden before," said one horrified homeowner. "It was huge."

British Pest Control Association has seen a 51% rise in rat call-outs since March and Rentokil has noted an 80% increase in visits to its website compared to this time last year.



With restaurant waste bins standing empty for months and less takeaway food discarded on the streets, the rats that live around us are foraging in our gardens for alternative food sources. They're also digging holes to make nests.

Cannibalism

Rats are normally nocturnal animals that we rarely see, but they're now so hungry they're out in daylight. Some pest controllers in the UK have reported householders unable to cook on their barbecues as hungry rats are swarming round their ankles. There are also reports of rats getting indoors; in one case, a rat was eventually found hiding under a cot pillow.

Starvation has even driven some to cannibalism. Steve Belmain, professor of ecology at the Natural Resources Institute in Kent and a leading expert on rats, said we should not be surprised by this as cannibalism is common among starving

mammals. He is also confident that as soon as restaurants are opened, the rats will return to their old habitats. "They'll get back to normal, probably, before we do," he said.

Advice to householders

In the meantime, don't leave your back door open unless you are in the room. Clear up spilled food from the ground by barbecues and under bird tables and feeders. A compost heap scattered with discarded vegetable material is like a salad bar to a starving rat, so keep it enclosed.

A Barnet Council spokesperson told us that if you see rats in your own garden you should arrange pest control treatment. If rats are in another private property you can contact Environmental Health on 020 8259 7997.

Reassuringly, they added that they received seven rodent reports from East Finchley during June, which is "normal for the time of year".

The anti-plastic fight goes on

Ann Inglis updates us on the latest news from the No2PlasticsN2 campaign group.

The threat of a ban of plastic straws and plastic stirrers in April (Covid-19 now delaying the ban until October) meant that in March none could be found at any café on the High Road in East Finchley. Congratulations to all eight establishments!

Most of the world's land surface is in countries where single-use plastic bags are banned; why can't we join them? The time to act is now, particularly with the Environment Bill going through Parliament as I write.

Our message to Parliament

No2PlasticsN2 submitted evidence to the Parliamentary committee. We quoted shop managers and owners telling us they want single-use plastic bags banned so that trading conditions will be the same for all shops, and parents telling us they want schools banned

from selling water in single-use plastic bottles.

We believe that every school child must have a reusable water bottle as basic school equipment. Most schools have any number of fountains and more and more shops are becoming part of the London-wide REFILL scheme.

Way forward

In this time of Covid-19 everyone feels anxious and fearful for their security and future. It's difficult to see any way forward but as a campaign group we will be keeping our wheels turning. We've achieved so much in our first year that it would be tragic if our efforts to give N2 residents the opportunity to live plastic-free lives were to go to waste. Virus or no virus, old plastic never dies; it just keeps building up and up. We will just have to clean up more of it, and stop exporting our problem!

Another beautiful cat

Dear Editor,

Picking up on your article on the Savannah cat spotted in East Finchley in your July edition, I was in my back garden when out of the corner of my right eye I detected movement. On turning, I saw this cat, pictured, coming in from the front garden.

At first I thought it was that same Savannah cat. However, on looking closer, the spots were more like a leopard. It looked at me, wasn't fazed by me at all and carried on looking for something in the shrubbery. Then a young fox came into the garden. The cat saw the fox and went into what I can only describe as hunting mode. The fox took off as fast as it could and the cat streaked after it. I didn't see either again.

The cat was about one and a half times to twice the size of a normal cat. Pretty sure it is a Bengal Cat, bred from an Asiatic Leopard Cat and a domestic cat.

Richard Baldwin
High Road, N2.

Bunker next door

Dear Editor,

I see that Roz Davy has a question about whether there are bunkers in the area ('There's a bunker in my garden... or is there?' *The Archer*, July 2020). In our neighbours' garden in Howard Walk, N2, behind our rear fence, is a concrete bomb shelter so there are other bomb shelters in the area.

Mike Ruttenberg
Heath View, N2

Open libraries

Dear Editor,

One of the most important things that Barnet Council can do is to reopen libraries, not for borrowing but for computer use, which is so important these days. Church End, which is large and spacious so that safe distancing could be observed and numbers kept to a minimum, would be ideal for this and its renewed use would be most welcome.

John McPartlin
Creighton Avenue, N2.

Social media help

Could you be the one to help us maintain our social media presence (our wonderful Jess is off to university)? We will be keeping up the lobbying (after the Commons, on to the Lords) and building the website. For offers of help with our social media or for gripes about plastic, contact us at no2plastics@gmail.com or via No2PlasticsN2 on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Letters



Thanks to our pharmacies

Dear Editor,

Regarding the letter from Paresh Shah thanking us his customers (*The Archer*, June 2020), it should have been us thanking him and all his staff for looking after us and dispensing prescriptions and offering advice in their usual caring and efficient way. Once the lockdown comes to an end I for one will purchase toiletries, tissues, toothpaste etc from CW Andrews rather than in supermarkets. It is essential we keep pharmacies in our high streets. Thank you, Paresh and staff, from one grateful East Finchley resident.

Pauline Delius
Abbots Gardens, N2.

Rubbish behaviour

Dear Editor,

As lockdown peters out, the amount of litter appears to be increasing. It's not only the discarded gloves and disposable face masks left in the streets but our local park is suffering too.

How can someone eat and drink in Cherry Tree Wood and think it acceptable to leave cans and wrappers underneath the bench they have been sitting on, with a litter bin only a short distance away? Why do some people sit drinking under a tree in the wood, then leave all the containers along with the plastic carrier bags they came in scattered around?

Probably even worse is the increase in dog poo both in the grass and on the paths. There are bins to put this in, if dog owners/walkers bother to bring a suitable bag for it.

This sort of behaviour is unacceptable, particularly at a time when we are being encouraged to be kind to one another. There are those kind locals who do go round picking up other people's litter. What a pity there is a need, but thanks to all who do this.

L C Ward
(Address supplied).

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page"
The Archer, PO Box 3699,
London N2 2DE or e-mail
news@the-archer.co.uk

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.

Isolation inspiration

Dear Editor,

I live in sheltered accommodation in Wilmot Close and am currently self-isolating. I am aged 81 and to keep myself busy I decided to write a poem about our situation. I have never written a poem before and, as a first attempt, I didn't know when to stop! It's rather long but I thought it might bring a smile to people's faces.

Lockdown in springtime

The sun is shining, spring's on its way,
Oh what a beautiful, glorious day.
Flowers in bloom show their face to the sun,
It's all so uplifting for everyone

But hey, just a minute, we're not allowed out,
Coronavirus is lurking about.
It's deadly and serious and unknown to man
So we've all got to do as much as we can.

We've just got to stop it from spreading so fast
But what can we do, how long will it last?

No trips to the country, no walks in the park,
No hugging and kissing, keep metres apart
But we must obey rules to keep ourselves safe
So 'Just stay at home', perhaps bake a cake,
Read a good book or just watch the telly,
Have lots of chocolate, ice cream and jelly.
Try to keep smiling, healthy and fit
Because none of us wants to go down with this.

Thank God for the doctors and nurses, I say,
Who battle and fight for us by night and by day.
If they're all doing so much for us
We've got to help them to stop this virus.

Thank goodness too for the phone and the wifi,
Without which we'd never get by,
To talk to our families, neighbours and friends
To keep us all close until it all ends.

So when it's all over, we must celebrate.
We're in this together, so don't hesitate.
Just let your hair down and let's have a ball
And shout a 'BIG THANK YOU' to one and to all.

Wendy Hughes
Wilmot Close, N2.

East Finchley Baptist Church

Due to the Covid-19 virus our face to face services and meetings have been suspended until further notice but please go to our website for details of online services and meetings.

For more information please contact the Church Office
Email: office@eastfinchleybc.org.uk
www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk

Your news

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Three of the young hedgehogs tuck into a tray of food



Prickly customer: This cute baby is just a ball of spines

Tiny hedgehogs make themselves at home

By John Lawrence

Hedgehogs are known to be shy and retiring creatures who come out mostly in the hours of darkness and prefer to spend their lives

away from human view. So Natalie Rogers and her family were more than surprised when a mother hedgehog and five tiny

hoglets popped out of the undergrowth and set up home in the back garden of their house in Kitchener Road, N2.

Natalie said: "The hoglets were not worried about us watching them at all. They explored through all the leaves before going back in after about 40 minutes. We have seen them in the day several times. They tend to stick to the shade and pick up insects under the dry leaves."

Natalie and her daughter Mia, who attends the Archer Academy, also gave them some apple, banana and hedgehog food, allowing them to get

close enough to capture these excellent photos.

Natalie suggests hedgehogs are increasingly adapting to life in suburban gardens and urges

everyone to be very careful using grass trimmers and to always check before burning piles of sticks or vegetation in case wildlife has moved in.



Berry tasty: One hoglet has healthy eating licked

Dismay at over-75s having to pay for TV licences

By Daphne Chamberlain

In spite of public protests and petitions, TV licences will no longer be free for people over 75 who are not on Pension Credit. At the time of writing that decision still stands, and comes into effect this month.

However, Covid-19 is still with us. Regional spikes or a second major wave of infection could occur at any time. If and when that happens, television will be more than ever a mainstay for the isolated among us.

Age UK comment

"We need to make as much noise as possible and call on the government and the BBC to urgently find a solution that allows the free licence to continue." That was the reaction of Age UK at the news. They continued: "Many older people on low incomes have told us that if they have to find £150 plus a year to pay for a licence then they will have to forego some other essential, or try to survive without TV at all. We genuinely worry about the mental health of older people living on their own in this situation."

Making the situation even worse is the fact that as many as two in five of pensioners on the

lowest incomes do not receive Pension Credit, even though they are entitled to it.

Beware scams

The BBC says it will contact all current recipients by post to agree a payment plan if they want to continue to be covered by the licence fee. It adds that no one will be expected to pay for a new licence until they have

been contacted, and that letters will start being sent in August.

The advice is to wait for the official letter, and only use official channels if you are making a payment. Some people have already been the victims of scams.

To find out more about Pension Credit or for other support contact the Age UK Barnet helpline on 020 8203 5040 or Citizens Advice Barnet on 0300 456 8365.



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