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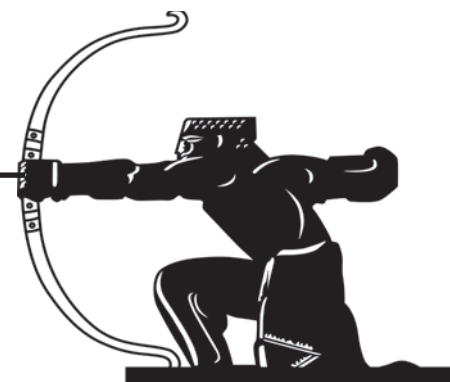
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# The Archer

Local News is our Aim



August 2021 No. 328

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



Refreshing: Sharon Harding and Sharon Hall get ready to re-open the Cherry Tree Wood café.

Photo Mike Coles

## Café in the park is back in business

Visitors to Cherry Tree Wood are rejoicing at the news that the park's café is about to open again after a long period with the shutters down. Turn to page 4 for full story.

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## Burglary at corner store

By Janet Maitland

**Thieves broke into the King Street Food and Wine shop on the corner of Church Lane and King Street, N2, in the early hours of Tuesday 20 July, managing to get in despite the locked metal shutters.**

CCTV footage shows three white men turning up at 4am and smashing their way in and out in five minutes, leaving with a lot of expensive stock.

The owners had only just finished repairing flood damage from the torrential rain a week earlier. They are determined to carry on regardless and new shutters were already in place a few hours later.

There have been no arrests and enquiries are ongoing. Anyone with any information should call police on 101 and quote CAD 1083/20July.

## Festival lives again as Late Summer Social

By John Lawrence

**East Finchley's long-running summer festival may have been cancelled for the second year running in June but organisers are determined not to let the summer pass without a chance for the community to get together.**

Step forward the Late Summer Social 2021, which will take place in Cherry Tree Wood on Sunday 5 September from 12 noon to 6pm. The idea is to have the same successful mix of live entertainment, arts and crafts, food and drink but with some elements removed to create more space and keep visitors safe.

New this year will be a cashless and contactless ordering system for hot food and the bar to avoid the need for queuing. The popular inflatable slides will be absent as they are impossible

to keep Covid-safe, but in their place will be children's games and possibly an assault course in the woods. The newly resurfaced sports courts will be put to good use with basketball games and training run by Kevin Lukau, alongside free tennis coaching from Stormont Tennis Club, based in nearby Lanchester Road.

### Stalls and stages, old and new

Demand for stalls and pitches has been high. There will be items to browse and buy on arts and crafts stalls,

where priority has been given to producers and artists who are local to N2. Community groups will also be taking stalls to showcase their activities and sign up new members.

The live music stage has been renamed in memory of the late Stan Spinks, key



organiser of the summer festival for 15 years, who passed away last year. It will host an exciting line-up of acts, including favourites Angie A and local MOBO award winning DJ, Pat 'Have Mercy' Leacock, and is expected to be headlined by high-energy 'urban country' band Rangoon.

The community stage has been replaced by a community performance area at the end of the park where groups and individuals will be putting on performances and demos.

**Continued on page 4.**





## The Archer

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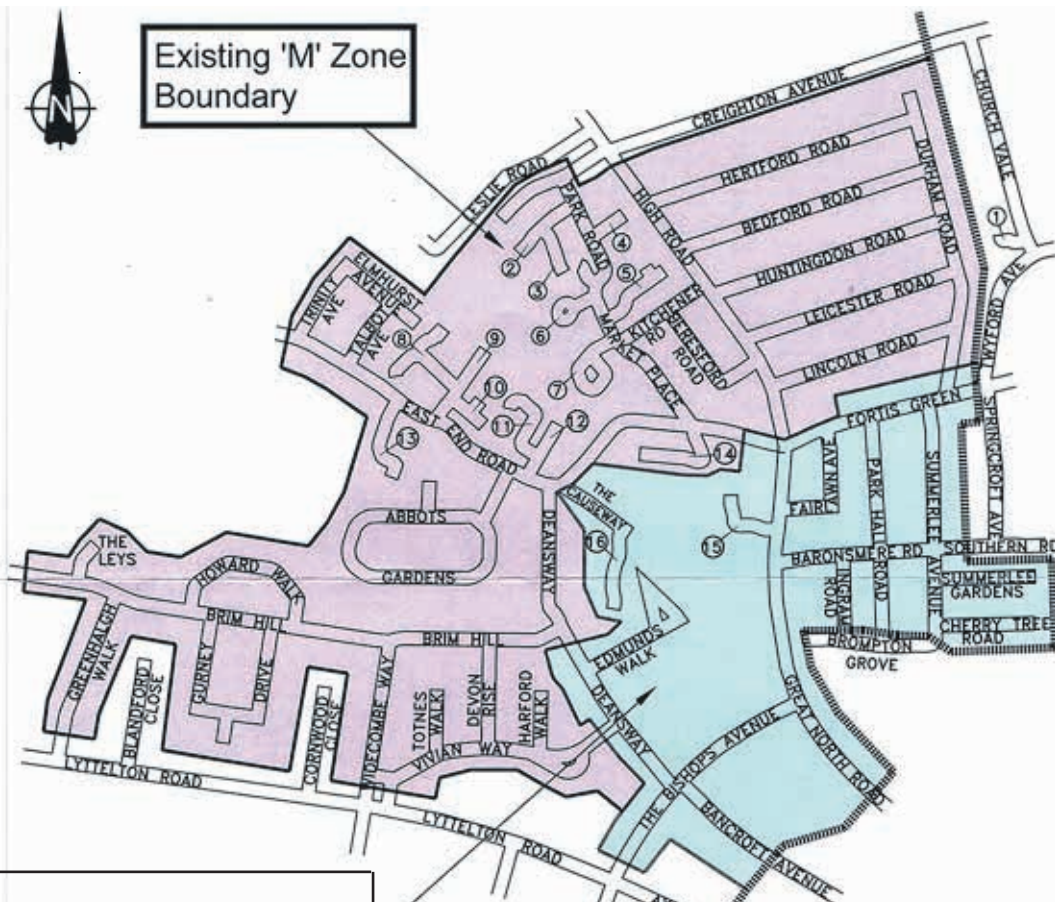
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If you have a story for us, please contact us at the above address. Comments to The Archer may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

Copy deadlines – **September: 13 August** **October: 10 September**  
**November: 15 October**



New zones: The new M1 parking area is marked in blue inside the existing M area in mauve.

# Grange homes project put back by three months

By Janet Maitland

**An application to build up to 100 new homes on The Grange estate and nearby streets has been delayed until the end of the year to allow time for more consultation.**

NewmanFrancis, the engagement consultants contracted by Barnet Homes, will continue knocking on doors throughout the summer to answer questions about the development. They will also be running consultation activities for young people and families.

## 700 petitioners

Residents are angry that the plan to build a five-storey block of flats on Brownsell Road green space is still on the table despite a petition signed by 700 people and presented to the Finchley and Golders Green Committee in mid-July.

Barnet Council noted the petition and asked Barnet Homes to respond. They had said a key aim of the project was to add more high-quality green space into the estate "which is currently heavily

dominated by concrete hard-standing". However, nearly all of the 64 homes planned so far will be built on green space currently covered with grass and trees.

## Residents' groups want meetings

Both residents associations, whose aim is to protect the green spaces, have yet to meet with Barnet Homes. "It took repeated requests from ward councillors to open a dialogue," said Morgan Saunders, chair of the Tarling Road and Sylvester Road (TRSR) association, who was still waiting for a date at the time of going to press. "We would still welcome a meeting," said Sachin Patel, secretary of the Brownsell, Grange and Tarling Road (GBTR) association.

Rebecca Weston, whose

home is one of three at risk of demolition, has recently been added to the Resident Interest Group (RIG), set up by NewmanFrancis to enable residents to influence the development plans. She has asked the project manager for a meeting with the three householders so they can ask direct questions about their futures. She told us that the "stress of all this is making my health conditions even worse".

## Third group joins the queue

Meanwhile, residents living on Elmfield Road, who will be affected by proposed upward extensions on nearby Grange blocks and the plan to build a four-storey block on Red Lion Hill, have not yet been consulted and are also waiting to meet with Barnet Homes to air their concerns.

# New 'inner' parking zone coming in soon

By David Melsome

**The new controlled parking zone (CPZ) designed to free up spaces for people living closest to East Finchley station is coming into force later this month. As we reported in November, the new M1 zone is being implemented to resolve the problem of commuters driving from just a few roads away inside the existing M zone so that they have a shorter walk to the station.**

People living in roads bordering Cherry Tree Wood and around The Causeway and Edmunds Walk have for years lost spots outside their homes all day to these car users.

The new inner M1 zone will operate Monday to Saturday between the hours of 10am to 6.30pm and is scheduled to come into force at the very end of August.

Permit holders within the new M1 zone are not required to update their permit as this will automatically be updated on the council's system. Existing Q permit holders can continue to

park in allocated bays in both the M and M1 zones.

Contractors are due to begin work on road markings and signage at the start of August. Once complete, there will be a short period when warning notices are issued to vehicles not displaying the correct permits before the CPZ becomes fully operational and parking enforcement begins, currently scheduled for Monday 13 September.

Existing Pay by Phone and shared use parking bays on and close to the High Road will continue to operate from 8am to 6.30pm on Monday to Saturday.

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

### Barnet Council

**62 Abbots Gardens, N2**  
Rear outbuilding.

**77 Abbots Gardens, N2**  
Single-storey rear extension: depth 6m, eaves height 2.7m, maximum height 3m. Alterations to existing rear extension roof from pitched to flat. Internal alterations at first floor.

**111 Abbots Gardens, N2**  
Roof extension involving rear dormer window with Juliet balcony, one front roof light and three roof lights over flat roof of dormer.

**14 Bedford Road, N2**  
Roof extension involving hip to gable.

**5 Deansway, N2**  
Single-storey rear extension.

Additional terrace. Conversion of garage into habitable space, including replacement of existing garage door.

**Carmelite Friars, 63 East End Road, N2**  
Details of condition 22 (Utilities) and 33 (Vehicular sight line), pursuant to planning permission.

**145 Elmshurst Crescent, N2**  
Single-storey rear extension with patio area, following demolition of shed. Rear outbuilding.

**Flat 1, Elmwood Court, 18 Elm Gardens, N2**  
Single-storey conservatory.

**18 Fairlawn Avenue, N2**  
Single-storey rear extension, following demolition of conservatory.

**41 Fortis Green, N2**  
Single-storey rear extension, with associated alterations to outdoor seating area, including new garden wall, new timber decking, and steps to garden.

**Osterley, King Street, N2**  
Single-storey rear extension. Roof extension involving rear dormer window with Juliet balcony and two front roof lights. New side bay window.

**426 Long Lane, N2**  
Details of condition 3 (Extraction/ventilation noise) pursuant to planning permission.

**32 Manor Park Road, N2**  
Lower ground and ground floor rear extension, following demolition of existing restroom outrigger.

**34 Pulham Avenue, N2**  
Single-storey rear extension.

**25A, Sedgemere Avenue, N2**  
Rear outbuilding, following demolition of shed.

**8 Stanley Road, N2**  
Two-storey side/rear extension.

**41A Wilmot Close, N2**  
Change of use from offices (Class B1A) to residential (Class C3) 1 unit for a charitable care home.

**Haringey Council**  
**9 Aylmer Road, N2**  
Open swimming pool in rear garden.

**10 Fordington Road, N6**  
Demolition of garages and shed, and erection of three-storey dwelling house plus excavation to form basement level. Rear

garden outbuilding; associated cycle and bin storage; hard and soft landscaping.

**Flat 2, 3 Fortis Green Avenue, N2**  
Extension to existing basement, and creation of front and rear light wells.

**14 Ringwood Avenue, N2**  
Single-storey rear extension and two-storey side extension.

**10 Springcroft Avenue, N2**  
Replacement of garden shed with new garden studio.

**37 Western Road, N2**  
Single-storey rear and side 'wrap-around' extension, replacing side garage; alterations to first floor rear outrigger projection (added parapet and revised windows).





# Four sites marked out for change over the next 15 years

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet's draft Local Plan, known as Reg 19, has reached its second stage. The Plan sets out Barnet's proposals for the borough for the next 15 years. Public consultation has been available from 28 June until 9 August, either at local libraries or online. Following this, it will be submitted for examination to a Government Planning Inspector.

The Plan covers all aspects of life in the borough, including proposed building development. Four sites in East Finchley are identified for this.

## East Finchley station car park

The council proposal is to use 70% of the ground area for residential development and 30% for commercial use, which would include station drop-off and public car parking. Access to residential development "could be" through Diploma Avenue. There is a reference here to provision of spaces for disabled parking, although this section of Diploma Avenue is at present a parking area for Stokes Court residents.

## East Finchley substation

This is the disused former electricity substation to the Northern line, on the High Road opposite The Bishops Avenue. Proposed here is 95% residential development, with 5% office use.

## Park House, 16 High Road, next to the former GLH site

The proposal is for 60% residential development (indicating 20 homes), and 40% community use. At present the building is used for childcare and education. The plan says: "The community facility must

be re-provided, and proposals must show how the community will benefit from the redevelopment."

Frontage with trees should be retained, and the site should be subject to an archaeological assessment.

## Bobath Centre, 250 East End Rd.

Proposed 25% residential floor space (indicating 25 homes), with 75% community floor space.

Community use is provided by a nursery, while there is a current application for residential development at the rear. Emphasised here is that the issue of restricted access for any car parking and service vehicles must be resolved. The site should also be subject to an archaeological assessment.

The full plan can be seen in libraries and at <https://engage.barnet.gov.uk/>, where representation forms for comments are available. Forms can be returned to forward.planning@barnet.gov.uk or by post to: Planning Policy Team at 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, London, NW9 4EW.

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Wet, wet, wet: The Bishops Avenue is one giant pond in the July flooding. Photo Natalia Kudimova

# Flash floods close roads and damage properties

By David Melsome

More than a month of rain fell in a matter of hours on Monday 12 July leaving many low-lying parts of East Finchley under water.

The Phoenix Cinema was forced to cancel screenings and close for 24 hours when its roof was inundated and rainwater started dripping into the auditorium. Luckily, none of the art deco fixtures and fittings was damaged.

There was substantial damage in the newly resurfaced Prospect Ring and its new playground when a water main burst after being inundated with the sudden volume of water. Over in Huntingdon Road and Bedford Road, some homeowners reported water damage to their basements. On the roads, flooding left several routes difficult or impossible to navigate, including Long Lane, where it passes under the North Circular, and the junction of The Bishops Avenue with the A1, which is often prone



Hole in the ground: A barrier covers the sink hole that opened in the new children's playground in Prospect Ring. Photo Mike Coles

to flooding but where this time the surface water stretched all the way past Deansway.

Several roads were closed resulting in traffic gridlock for some hours. The worst flooding

in this part of London was in Crouch End at the bottom of Muswell Hill, where the water reached up to two feet, stranding cars and inundating shops and businesses.

# Burning issue of allotment bonfires to reach a clean end

By Ann Bronkhorst

This summer the air quality in parts of East Finchley has improved. Windows can be kept open and smelly smoke isn't spoiling leisure time in gardens. Best of all, people with asthma or other lung or allergic conditions can breathe more comfortably. It's thanks to a successful local campaign for bonfire controls.

One large allotment site has reacted to complaints from their immediate neighbours, including Creighton Avenue residents and Martin School, as reported several times by *The Archer*, most recently in February this year. The East Finchley Allotment site committee, recognising health concerns as well as the importance both of limiting carbon dioxide released by burning and of returning organic matter to the soil, have planned

to end on-site bonfires.

## Thinking ahead

This year, summer bonfires have been allowed only after 5pm on the first Wednesday of the month. Autumn and winter bonfires days will be reduced gradually, leading to a complete ban on bonfires from May 2023. Plot holders are being encouraged to compost their green waste and to use shredders.

Some allotmenters may find it hard to accept that

bonfires are on the way out. This issue has to be faced, however, on all allotment sites as bonfires are likely to be prohibited across London before long. The recent death from asthma of a London child brought polluted urban air to public attention. One bonus of the Covid pandemic has been the increased appreciation of fresh air so the general public may be happy to say goodbye to waste-burning.



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Big plans: Manager Niall O'Connor wants Madden's to become an entertainment venue

## Legends and live music on High Road

By John Lawrence

**High Road bar Madden's is bouncing back from a year of lockdown and reduced trading by rebranding itself as a venue for sports and live music.**

Still operated by leaseholder brothers Enda and Ronan Murray and with a new manager, Niall O'Connor, the long-established pub is booking a full calendar of live entertainers around its showpiece sports events.

Every Thursday night the bar will play host to a traditional Irish music band and every Friday there will be a showcase of vocalists from the Camden Acoustic Club, with each singer on stage for around 30 minutes. Live bands from across north London and beyond are being booked to play on Saturday and Sunday evenings.

Niall hopes to make Mondays a special evening of the week with a mix of high-end tribute acts, including Luther Vandross, Rod Stewart and Neil Diamond, plus a Legends slot for special guests like former Spurs star Steve Perryman.

### All this plus pool

And on top of the live entertainment, Niall will be reviving the Madden's pool league, inviting teams and individuals to compete on the table in the upper room at the back of the pub.

"We are pushing the boat out to entertain the public and get them back," said Niall, who also runs a pub in Marlow, Buckinghamshire. "People are getting ready to go out and enjoy themselves again and we're excited about that."

The full calendar of entertainment and sports dates will be available in Madden's itself and tickets for live events can be bought there or by calling the bar on 020 8444 7444.

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## Café in the park is back in business

By John Lawrence

**Visitors to Cherry Tree Wood are rejoicing at the news that the park's café is about to open again after a long period with the shutters down.**

Business partners Sharon Hall and Sharon Harding are busy refurbishing the kiosk near the tennis courts and plan to open fully to customers on Sunday 29 August, just in time for East Finchley's Late Summer Social a week later.

"We have had so many people come up to us already while we're renovating the kiosk to ask if they can buy ice cream, water, coffee," said Sharon Harding. "We take that as a good sign! I think the



Kiosk leaseholders: Friends Sharon Harding and Sharon Hall

need for a café to open up again in the park is clear."

### Cherry Tree Café plan

The two friends have signed a five-year lease with Barnet Council to run it as The Cherry Tree Café and hope to turn it into a centre of activity for the park. They will be selling local produce and running events with local musicians and artists, as well as celebrating special dates like Christmas, Hanukkah and St Patrick's Day.

"We really want to give a bit of life back to the park and hope to use our social media channels to showcase what's happening in the local area," added Sharon. "The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have been so supportive and we are so looking forward to working closely with them."

### Menu-wise

The two Sharons say they want to start small and simple in order to get a feel for what people want. They will be selling Allpress coffee, Ariela gelato, Gustavo empanadas, pastries, sandwiches and a selection of vegan and non-vegan cakes, not forgetting a children's menu too.

They've had their eye on the vacant kiosk since last summer when they met at an exercise group. Sharon Harding has lived in East Finchley for 10 years and her twins go to primary school locally. Sharon Hall lives in Whetstone. With her children just finishing university, the pair said they were both ready to get stuck into a new project. Follow their progress on Instagram @cherrytreewoodscave

## Festival is back as Late Summer Social

Continued from page 1

A new feature will be a well-being area where local practitioners will provide free sessions, including yoga, over-50's keep fit, mindfulness and breathing workshops. "We'd like to encourage everyone to bring a picnic blanket and settle down on the grass to watch the live acts," said Alison Roberts, from the organising team. "We've got several small performance and activity areas so we hope we can avoid the crowds and allow everyone to enjoy the festival safely."

The Late Summer Social officially forms part of Barnet Council's season of events called 'Discover Barnet Presents...' but receives no outside funding and is being independently organised by a hard-working team of volunteers from the non-profit East Finchley Festival CIC. The team said, "We wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who donated to our crowdfunder last year. We rely heavily on sponsorship from local businesses and kind donations from the public. Without your generosity, this would not be possible."

### Follow the festival

For more details on the Late Summer Social, visit [eastfinchleyfestival.org](http://eastfinchleyfestival.org), where you can buy official merchandise to help fund the event. You can also keep in touch on Facebook and Instagram @eastfinchleyfestival and on Twitter @eastfinchfest.

## Man arrested after 'approaching' children

**Officers investigating reports of a man approaching children in East Finchley have made an arrest.**

On Monday 5 July, police received a number of calls from members of the public who were concerned about the behaviour of a man in the High Road and Prospect Ring, N2.

Officers conducted an investigation and on Friday 23 July a 46-year-old man was arrested at an address in East Finchley on suspicion of stalking, a public order offence, possession of class A and B drugs and possession of an offensive weapon. He has been bailed pending further enquiries.

PC Chris Lewis of the North West Predatory Offenders Unit said: "I would like to thank the members of the public who have supported this investigation. I know the initial incident was discussed extensively on social

media groups and caused concern among local residents. We take those concerns seriously and have acted in arresting a suspect.

"I would now ask that we are allowed to see this investigation through to its conclusion and that the public refrain from further speculation, particularly online, so as to avoid prejudicing any potential future legal proceedings."

Officers continue to appeal for anyone who witnessed any behaviour out of the ordinary in either the High Road or Prospect Ring on Monday 5 July to come forward. They can call 101, providing the reference 2243/06JUL or alternatively, they can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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# Market Place dig delves through the centuries

By John Lawrence

**Layers of history were uncovered when a team of archaeologists dug into the ground of Market Place on a spot that was once at the bustling centre of village life in East Finchley.**

Members of the Hendon and District Archaeological Society spent two days sinking pits on the grass area next to the children's playground, where in the 19<sup>th</sup> century stood a Post Office, shops and cottages.

Artefacts from that period were pulled from the ground, including crockery and medicine bottles, and towards the end of the dig the team reached the remains of an even older brick floor where they found pottery items dating as far back as the 1500s or 1600s.

"This is like a treasure trove for us," said the society's Janet Mortimer. "The amount of items we are finding suggests we are digging into the garden or kitchen area of the homes that used to stand here."

## Post-war dump with finds below

Careful measurements of the grass area and comparisons with old maps proved that the dig site had probably been used as a dump for rubble and sand when much of Market Place and Chapel Court was cleared for rebuilding following bomb damage in the Second World War.

This meant there were more layers of soil to get through before any items of interest could be discovered. One test

pit did not give much away but a second yielded a string of finds, including a fragment of a plate bearing the coat of arms of the City of London and a fully intact glass bottle for Kutnow's Powder, a 19<sup>th</sup> century remedy that claimed to treat headaches, indigestion, diabetes, liver problems and gout.



Me old china: A plate fragment pulled from the ground

Dozens of onlookers turned up throughout the weekend to watch the dig in progress. Easily seen in the 1m x 1m holes were different earth layers, with light-coloured sand on top giving way to a darker layer with more ash content, indicating a period of intense human habitation.

The archaeologists hope they will be given permission to return to the dig to see what more the older layers can reveal. In the meantime, they will be cleaning off the items they've already found, ready for fuller identification and cataloguing.



Going underground: The dig in full swing at the Market Place site. Photo Mike Coles

## When pig traders came from far afield

Market Place and its surrounding roads were once packed with cottages and shops, largely thanks to pigs, as this pocket history from the Barnet Council archives reveals. "The Market Place takes its name from a large pig market which started around the 1660s. By the end of the 18th century the [then East End, Finchley] pig market was the largest in Middlesex, with market days on Wednesday and Thursday. Pig drovers from as far away as Shropshire would sell the pigs to London butchers or to local farmers.

"Deals were done at houses with names like *The Sow and Pigs*. It was said that the pigs were fed on grain that had been used for distilling gin. After his arrest, the highwayman Jack Sheppard was held at *The George Inn* in Market Place, disguised as a butcher.

"By the 1840s the market had decreased in importance and was only held on Mondays. By the 1890s there were only auctions every few months. However the pig tradition continued and, in 1955, 25 pigs were kept around Prospect Place and at the Fuel Land Allotments [over on the High Road].

"Prospect Place was built during the 1820s and Chapel Street took its name from the Congregational chapel on the [High Road]. By the 1930s



Closely packed: Cottages and shops occupied the site in Victorian times

the area was considered in need, as many of the houses were small and not suitable for living in.

"On 15 November 1940 the area was heavily bombed during the Blitz. Many of the houses were destroyed. In

the early 1960s [the whole area was cleared and] three 11-storey flats were built [in the new Prospect Ring and Norfolk Close], the first being opened in April 1960 by Margaret Thatcher, then MP for Finchley.

## A cure-all... and a case of murder

**Thrown away possibly more than a century ago and uncovered by the Market Place dig was a rectangular glass medicine bottle that once contained a popular remedy called Kutnow's Powder.**

Sold throughout the late Victorian period and well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Kutnow's was an effervescent saline powder that claimed to be effective in treating headaches, indigestion, gout and a range of other ailments.

The neat pale blue bottle it came in measures around 11cm tall and would have once contained a glass or rubber stopper. The name of the product is emblazoned on the side in raised lettering.

## Sinister sample

Kutnow's also has a fascinating connection to a notorious murder case. In November 1898, Henry Barnett died after taking a dose from a sample tin of the powder that had arrived unsolicited to his address in New York.

The powder was later analysed and found to contain cyanide. It was strongly suspected, but never proved, that the product had been tampered



Glass find: Archaeologist Janet Mortimer with the Kutnow's bottle

with by Barnett's friend Roland Molineux, a chemist who also happened to be his rival for the affections of a beautiful woman called Blanche Cheseborough. Roland and Blanche went on to marry but their union ended just four years later in bitter divorce.

## Any bones yet?

One young dinosaur fan who turned up to watch the Market Place dig on its second day arrived in his *Jurassic Park* jacket with high expectations. He asked the excavation team plenty of questions and seemed very interested, even though there were no immediate signs of prehistoric fossils. "Children are often fascinated by what we do," said Janet Mortimer, from the Hendon and District Archaeological Society. "Fossils from the dinosaur period do turn up at certain sites if you are lucky. Around this part of East Finchley, we have to be honest, you would have to go down pretty deep to find anything from that era."

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Solopreneur: Fiona Agyemang is helping other women in business

## Business start-up coach shows women the way

By Diana Cormack

East Finchley Community Facebook page often carries some interesting or intriguing messages. Recently one contained an invitation for women to join a Facebook group partially named 'unemployable and proud'. It turned out to be from local resident Fiona Agyemang and, despite any impression given, she is a busy lady but one who is in complete control of what she does and when.

Fiona told *The Archer* that over the last 20 years she has worked for herself and feels happy now with the level of freedom and balance in her life. After university she was in PR but being made redundant as a young single mother pushed her to look at other options. These included involvement in the beauty training business and the property industry, which is ongoing.

However, the unrelenting workload eventually persuaded her to set out on her own. Now with several businesses, Fiona describes herself as "a successful solopreneur" who has

achieved what she wants by restructuring her life. She wants to help other women to re-evaluate their lives, become their own boss and ditch employment for good.

This does not mean replacing a job for a business where you work all hours! Fiona had to create something that enabled her to fulfil her role as a mother, allow herself time to do what she wanted to do and no longer be a part of the 9-to-5 rat-race.

So many friends asked her for advice about bringing changes to their own lives that it led to her qualifying as a life coach and neuro linguistic

programmer.

### Help in making a change

You may be a woman wanting to work for herself, perhaps being forced by Covid-19 consequences to make a change, but lack the experience or are struggling to know what to do or where to start. If so, visit [www.fionaagyemangcoaching.com](http://www.fionaagyemangcoaching.com) to find out more. Maybe you'll find your way to creating a business with the life balance and income you desire. Fiona's Facebook group can be found at [www.facebook.com/groups/unemployableandproud](https://www.facebook.com/groups/unemployableandproud)

## Tips to thrive not just survive in the brave new digital world

Building a digital presence for your business is becoming crucial and can be daunting if you're stepping into the unknown. Here Bradley Lebetkin, who runs a mobile and web development agency in East Finchley called Cybertoad Studios, gives a few friendly tips.

The first step towards building a digital presence is a website. To do this you don't need to know how to code as

great tools out there like Semrush that help you master SEO.

For business cards, invoices, proposals etc. you can use a tool called Canva. It's free and you can make great branded documents, just apply your colours and you're set!

### A couple of don'ts

Two pitfalls to avoid: first, don't drive yourself mad trying to get a .com address. No one types in website addresses anymore. Climbing the Google rankings is more important than a familiar URL extension. Secondly, don't delay your launch by spending too long with things that can be changed later, such as colours, logos and fonts. You can change as you grow.

This is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to technology. If you require digital assistance or would like to know more, please contact us at [hello@cybertoad.io](mailto:hello@cybertoad.io)



Tech tips: Bradley Lebetkin

there are plenty of great website builders such as Squarespace out there already.

Once you've got your website up, it's time to direct some traffic to it. One of the best ways of achieving this is through search engine optimisation, or SEO, which is something that helps search engines list your website.

This can be accomplished by using specific, unique keywords in your site content, creating a LinkedIn or Facebook page for your site, as well making it look nice on mobile. Even simple things such as grammar affect SEO. There are

## Something horrid could be lurking in the long grass

By Piers Reilly

The sweet scents of summer have been billowing throughout East Finchley, bringing forth the overwhelming desire to frolic wildly through our beautiful parks and greenspaces.



Active in summer: A tick

Don't you just want to throw on your shortest shorts and teeniest t-shirt to go rolling around the grassy fields? Can't you taste the sweetest strawberries ever eaten at the most picturesque picnic you've ever thrown? Wouldn't we all love to stroll around Coldfall Wood, arm in arm with our paramour?

Well, you can, but while you enjoy your summer days, you should keep aware of the tiny but terrible dangers that could be lurking in certain wild places.

I'm talking about ticks. While you were rolling around in the grass you might have picked up a passenger or two in the form of these black legged fiends. They're devilishly small and annoyingly active during the summer months, so keep an eye out for yourself, your loved ones and your dogs.

Ticks exist all over the UK and can carry Lyme disease, a particularly nasty brand of bacterial infection that can go undetected and cause all sorts of grief. Avoidance here is key: if possible stay away altogether from their favoured habitat of long grass or heavily wooded areas.

### Tick tactics

Otherwise, wear long, light-coloured clothing, tick repellent and do a tick check on yourself and your pets when you get back home. If you find a tick, remove



Danger sign: A bull's-eye rash caused by a tick bite

it carefully (special tools exist to help, make sure to remove the entire tick) and seek treatment if you develop a bull's-eye rash or flu-like symptoms.

Lyme disease is treated with antibiotics from a GP. The sooner you start treatment, the better your chances of a full recovery.

## Summer scheme for youngsters

Youngsters living in the Grange Big Local area of East Finchley are invited to a free two-week multi-activity camp this summer.

Aimed at children aged five to 11, the camp will include a mix of singing, dancing, sports, martial arts and arts & crafts, with all activities divided into three age groups.

It will run from 9am to 4pm each day either at the Tarling Road Community Centre, or at Age UK Barnet in Oak Lane, N2, from Monday 16 August to Tuesday 31 August. To register your child's interest, email [info@grangebiglocal.org](mailto:info@grangebiglocal.org)

### East Finchley Baptist Church

**We meet each Sunday for worship at 10.30 am. If you would like to join us please go to our website for further details. All welcome.**

**For more information please contact the Church Office  
Email: [office@eastfinchleybc.org.uk](mailto:office@eastfinchleybc.org.uk)  
[www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk](http://www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk)**





# Need never goes away for food bank families

By David Gritten

For eight years now, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church on East Finchley High Road has been a beacon for local residents without sufficient funds to buy enough food for themselves and their families.

Finchley Foodbank, run from and located within the grounds of the church, is a volunteer-led organisation, boosted by donations, that gives out food every week to people and families in need. On Saturday mornings they form a long queue outside and wait, sometimes for two hours, to collect their food bags.

This weekly operation was proceeding smoothly until the advent of Covid-19, which has created ups and downs for the food bank. Its vice-chair Anna Maughan recalls: "At the beginning of the pandemic, our donations were enormous, huge. And now things have changed: not so huge."

## Rise and fall of donations

Then, *The Archer* reported that individuals and dozens of local groups brought bags full of essential food and toiletries every week, with many local residents co-ordinating collections from neighbours all along their roads.

Anna recalls that the amounts being donated each week reached their peak in January and February this year. "We were helping 450 people a week. Now that's gone down, stabilising at around 330-340 people a week. We know our donors have busy lives again."

## Food and toiletries preferred to money

Anna concedes that this is worrying: "We're a volunteer-led organisation. None of us is paid. We rely on our volunteers who give their valuable time, energy and expertise for nothing – simply to help."

ing – simply to help.

"We're giving out donated food but without those donations we don't have enough to give. We have funds and a Just Giving page which gives us a running total. But we've had to withdraw a lot of that money. Because of that Just Giving page we've been able to buy items in. But it's a lot easier for us if food is donated rather than money."

## A helping hand

Before the pandemic, some of Finchley Foodbank's clients in need of food would also be served with hot drinks and cake, and receive sympathetic advice from volunteers: "We'd provide them with three days' worth of food and try to signpost them on to various organisations so they could move away from using food banks in the future. That's the whole plan."

Anna views the current situation optimistically: "We need to remember what we as a society have learned from the pandemic. In my estimation there are many more good people in the world than bad, otherwise a place like the Foodbank wouldn't exist. We wouldn't have the volunteers. But the requirement people here have for food support is still strong."

*Finchley Foodbank accepts donations from the public on Wednesdays from 10am to 1pm and on Fridays from 12 noon to 3pm in the parish centre behind St. Mary's RC church, 279 High Road, N2 8HG. For more information and the latest list of most-needed items, visit [www.finchleyfoodbank.org.uk/give-support](http://www.finchleyfoodbank.org.uk/give-support)*

# Finchley Foodbank: How it works week in, week out

By Lizzie Tomlin

*The dedicated team of volunteers at Finchley Foodbank run a smooth operation turning donations of food and toiletries from the community into vital packages to support people in need. Here are the seven steps donations make on their journey from drop-off to pick-up. Photos by Mike Coles.*

Deliveries are made to the food bank throughout the week. They go through a brief quarantine of no more than a few days before being sorted. On Wednesdays, fresh eggs are delivered, and food like fruit, vegetables, cheese and bread are delivered on Fridays.

On Wednesdays and Fridays donations from the public are sorted. The sorting team check every item's date to ensure out-of-date food is not accidentally given out. If the food is in-date, the team put it into a crate with others of its kind. There are crates of pasta, pulses, tinned tomatoes, baked beans, tinned fruit, tinned soups, tuna and sardines... basically anything with a long shelf-life. Toiletries and other miscellaneous items get the same treatment. The fresh stuff arrives only a day before the clients receive their food, so it gets sorted into bags immediately, ready for collection day on Saturday.

The sorting team also deals with any returned donations from the previous Saturday session. These have already been quarantined for a few days by Wednesday,



In: A supermarket delivery arrives

Saturday team to give out.

Saturday is when the clients collect their bags. While they are queuing, a member of the team asks each person what extras they would like that week, such as coffee, jam, honey, toothpaste, sanitary towels, and more. When a client first registers at the food bank, their dietary requirements and household size are



In: Volunteers sort donations into bags

so each item is checked again and re-sorted into its respective crate.

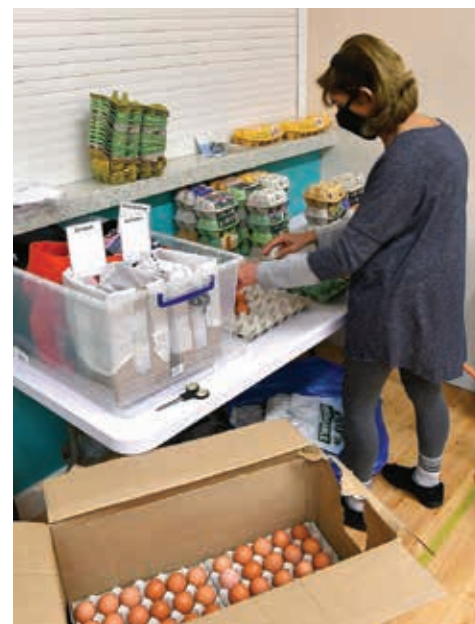
One of each of these crates is placed in the hall, on two rows of tables set up lengthways down the hall. This means the packing team can easily access each item as they pack. Extra crates wait in the pantry, ready to replace the ones in the hall.

Packing sessions take place on Tuesday and Thursday. The packing team estimates how many bags need to be packed depending on the number of clients from the previous week. Then, team members walk along the hall using food from the crates to pack bags. Not every bag is the same, however! The size of and amount



Out: Bags ready to be collected by clients

in a bag depends on household size and any dietary requirements, for example halal, non-halal meat, vegetarian and pescatarian, and households without cooking facilities. Each packed bag is placed in its designated section of the hall, ready for the



In: Eggs are divided into boxes

recorded on a card. So, when the client reaches the front desk, both this card and their extras list are passed to the team inside the hall.

Once these cards are passed on, the inside team get to work. One person collects the client's pre-packed bags, and another 'shops' for their extras. These bags, along with the pre-packed fresh food, are given to another team member who passes them on to the client when their name is called.



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## Anna in the maths elite

A student at Bishop Douglass School in East Finchley has won the title of International Maths Olympiad Elite. Anna Davletshina, in Year 9, qualified and whizzed through all the rounds of the Online International Maths Challenge, coming out with flying colours.



Mastermind: Anna Davletshina

Ann said: "The tasks were difficult and challenging but I managed to push myself harder and worked out the solution to most of the questions; thanks to my amazing maths teacher, Ms Akinrinlola for teaching me and helping me succeed in the challenge."



National champions: The Archer Academy dance team with their Peaky Blinders routine

## Dance triumph kicks off studio fundraising scheme

Dancers from the Archer Academy in East Finchley are national champions after their Peaky Blinders-inspired piece beat off competition from 57 other secondary schools across the UK in the Great Big Dance Off.

Their triumph comes as the school tries to raise funds to build a bespoke dance and drama studio and performance space on their lower school site in Eagans Close, N2. It will be kitted out with professional sound and lighting, and retract-

able tiered seating, and will be available to hire for the wider community outside of school hours.

The Archer Academy says it would welcome funding for its Raise the Roof campaign via major donors, corporate

sponsorship and arts grants. It asks anyone with contacts in the performing arts world, or who works for an organisation that might be able to support the school, to contact Angela Hay via [fundraising@thearcheracademy.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@thearcheracademy.org.uk)

## N2United: Worries aired and ideas shared

By Ruth Anders

Familiar and new faces were welcomed to the July meeting of local business and community group N2United, and what it is hoped will be their last online gathering for a while. As helpful as Zoom has been, everyone is looking forward to getting together face-to-face again.

N2United Chair Nick Allan greeted an enthusiastic group of local heroes including the team from the East Finchley Festival whose representative, Gail Coles, told the meeting of plans for their Late Summer Social in September. A special welcome was extended to the 224 North London Air Scouts Group leaders Andrew Myers-Nobbs and Derek Chambers, who have undertaken responsibility for advising on safety and traffic management at the event.

Gillian Jordan reminded the meeting of the extensive reach of Age UK Barnet and their need for more volunteers. N2United Committee and founder member Hilary Townley spoke passionately about the unsightly litter on the High Road and asked what can be done to foster a culture of litter awareness and responsibility within the community. The two scout

leaders stepped in to offer the Scouts Group's services, demonstrating the value of sharing issues and concerns at N2United meetings.

Daphne Chamberlain from *The Archer* described a possible vision for a new East Finchley Arts Festival, moving away from the previous classical music focus to embrace a wider set of arts genres. These could include art and the spoken word, such as a poetry evening in an N2 café. The suggestions were greeted with enthusiasm along with the notion that events could be staged across different local venues.

### In person meetings return

After a summer break, N2United will hold its next open general meeting in a local venue on Thursday 9 September. The meeting on Thursday 14 October will focus on how to refresh and rebuild local businesses once restrictions relating to the pandemic are relaxed.

## Phoenix Cinema back in the swing

By David Melsome

Staff at the Phoenix Cinema report that their first two months of screenings after lockdown was lifted in May have been very positive.

The releases of Oscar-winning *Nomadland* and *The Father* attracted large audiences, although the cinema was restricted to 30-40 per cent of its normal capacity. A new bar area and a new food and drink menu were also popular.

Operations manager Ewelina Sadłowska said some minor issues arose around social distancing measures but overall her team and audiences had been adaptable and enthusiastic. "I would like to take this opportunity to thank our customers for their understanding and support," she said.

### Recovery from rain damage

There was one serious blow during the torrential downpours of Monday 12 July when water gathered on the roof and started dripping into the auditorium below. There was no immediate danger to filmgoers but a full day of screenings had to be cancelled while a specialist flooding company was called in to dry the carpet and walls, and a roofing company came to repair the damage.

The cinema will carry on with its same Covid-safe measures, including staff wearing masks and an extended cleaning regime. Customers are recommended to wear masks and

keep socially distanced in the auditorium. The NHS Covid app

will be available for check-in if customers choose to use it.

## RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

### All packed up and nowhere to go

It's summer. The dog is panting in the shade, the cat is avoiding hot tin roofs and you are jabbed, tested, packed and ready to go. This is the new dawn of post-lockdown getaways; the chance to spend hours in a crowded air terminal before you and your luggage decide to follow the football and head for Rome.

Or not. Just like traffic lights that change from green to amber to red as you approach them, your holiday destination can do a quick flip even while you're in the air. Suddenly your two weeks on the beach soaking up the sun turns into ten days quarantined in a hotel, four days recovering and a flight back to self-isolation.

So where can you go? Australia and New Zealand are still green. You could hit the beaches, the bars and even the Opera House. Problem is that with racing Covid levels in the UK Australia has closed its borders to Brits, for all but exceptional circumstances.

Maybe Gibraltar is a better idea. Well, yes, as long as you don't mind being stuck on a rock. Or there are Malta and Bulgaria for a getaway with a good chance of sunshine. Problem is, as I write, they are probably only a PCR test away from going red.

So what's left? There's always the Falklands. It could be a unique chance to do your bit for Britain by flying to a windswept rocky outpost that no one goes to and where the sun usually can't be bothered to show itself either. Your luggage definitely won't like it.

So the only real option is to stay in the UK and go off to find some unspoilt corner of this green and pleasant land in the hope that it's not raining and the locals are friendly. You could even go all Cliff Richard and sing and dance your way there and back. Failing that, Barnard Castle is still accepting bookings for eye tests, I hear.

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# Tarling Road community hub is becoming... a hub

By Janet Maitland

**Bookings are at last picking up at the under-used community centre in Tarling Road, N2, following efforts to make the building more welcoming and a review of rental charges.**

A youth club now meets twice a week, for pre-teens on Friday evenings and older children on Thursdays, with football, dance, boxing, basketball and table tennis sessions run by volunteer coaches.

There's also a keep fit class for over-55s, a sports group for adults with autism, a church group, ballet classes, and a council mental health group. An engagement party and a baby shower are coming up.

Barnet Council has removed the tarpaulin that covered the fence for a long time, to make it clear that the garden is open to anyone, apart from a small area of playground space directly outside the Just Like Home nursery premises, which is included in their council lease. You don't need to attend anything in the building to be able to use the garden and the main gate should be open most of the time.

## Financial issues

It has been a long struggle to make the centre as affordable as possible. This is because the council is unable to pay for any running costs. London City YMCA, contracted by the council to manage the centre, introduced two different hire charges, one for businesses and



Booking now: Tarling Road Community Hub

a reduced one for community use, but this will change from September.

"We decided to simplify the scheme," said centre manager Jon Woolfson. "The differential wasn't particularly helpful." Everyone will now pay the same rate. For the hall, this is the same as the previous community rate, apart from evenings and weekends when it is a little cheaper than the old rate. While there will be a 'modest increase' to the previous community cost of hiring office space, the office costs for businesses will be about 25% less expensive.

## Hire cost

The main hall costs £35 an hour to rent from Monday to Friday between 9am and 4pm and £38 in the evening and weekends. Office rates are between £300 and £350 a month and a co-working desk space is £100 a month.

The centre can be contacted on 020 7018 6560 or [tarlingroad@ymcalcan.org](mailto:tarlingroad@ymcalcan.org). For online bookings go to <https://hallbookingonline.com/tarlingroad>. For general information go to [ymcalondoncan.org/our-services/youth-hubs/tarling-road](http://ymcalondoncan.org/our-services/youth-hubs/tarling-road)

# Songwriter seeks someone to sing

By Diana Cormack

**Anthony Abbey has written poems for a number of years. It was only after his music teachers saw them and put some to music that he began to consider himself as**

**a lyricist. Since his retirement he has continued with this writing and his music teacher, now based in Australia, still puts music to his words.**

Ten of their joint creations can be heard on YouTube and five on Spotify. Each has an instrumental backing accompanying a male or female singer. However, Anthony wants something more for his songs so he contacted *The Archer*, which he picks up on his regular visits to the Phoenix Cinema.

He told us he is looking for someone willing to play and perform them, preferably in some sort of community setting. If this of interest to you call him on 020 8201 7986 or email [tonysboneys@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tonysboneys@yahoo.co.uk)

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

You are welcome to join us for:

**Sunday mass at 10.00 a.m. and Weekday masses as advertised on the website.**  
Face masks must be worn for the time being.

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](mailto:vicar.saintsabounding@gmail.com) or check out our website:

<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>

## Bargain hunt

**The regular Muswell Hill Indoor Carboot Sale takes place this month on Saturday 28 August from 10am to 1pm at Hornsey Parish Church Hall, at the foot of Muswell Hill on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10 3AH. Admission is 50p and there are refreshments available. For information, contact: 020 8368 8180.**

# Spectacular sights from the saddle

*Greta Brambilla guides you on another local cycling tour, this time taking in the beautiful roads and special sites of Highgate and Muswell Hill. When cycling, please remember to give right of way to pedestrians and dismount where no cycling is allowed.*

Hello fellow cyclists, I hope you are well and ready for a new route. This one takes you round Queen's Wood and Ally Pally and can be completed in just under an hour. To start, head down the High Road towards East Finchley station, using the new cycling lanes (ooh la la) and then up the Great North Road.

At the top, cross over carefully at the zebra crossing to go through the little shortcut on the right to Sheldon Avenue. Enjoy a leisurely ride up this lovely avenue and turn left onto the beautiful Denewood Road. At the end, go left on Broadlands Road, straight down the passageway and onto The Park. Continue until you reach Southwood Lane where you should turn left.



Circuit: The route takes in Highgate and Ally Pally

South and down the passageway on your right for a nice little detour in Priory Park before exiting towards the left (through more tennis courts) onto Priory Road. Go right down here, then left onto Nightingale Lane. Continue until Alexandra Park pops into view, turn left down North View Road and then right for the passageway into the park.

Follow this to meet Alexandra Park Way where you turn right. When it looks like you are about to exit the park, take the left passageway and head straight to enjoy more of the lush green space, eventually leading to the boating lake, a great spot for rest and refreshment. To get home, continue past the lake (with the car park on your left) heading straight onto Dukes Avenue to exit. When you hit Muswell Hill's roundabout, go right



Swan lake: A tranquil pit stop at Ally Pally

Heading straight across Archway Road, veer right to go down Wood Lane and into

down Queens Avenue to reach Fortis Green and back to the High Road where you started.

the ancient oak-hornbeam paradise of Queen's Wood. Admire the greenery here, perhaps sunbathe a little and continue straight on. Turn right just after the award-winning Mona's Garden onto the Greenways path which takes you out of the park (after the tennis courts on your right).

At Park Road, cross straight over onto Park Avenue



Stone circle: Can you find this sculpture on the way?





King of the beasts: Leo the lion gets a makeover from East Finchley's Rosha Nutt on the Artists' Walk

## Palace dressed up with surprises

Art works await you in the strangest of places when you take a walk around Alexandra Palace and its grounds this summer. Paintings, sculptures and other 3D creations have found homes in natural settings and on the buildings as part of Artists Walk. Founded by East Finchley artist Rosha Nutt, the project features work by many local and London artists, including Muswell Hill's 'chewing gum man' Ben Wilson. Everything is free and available for you to follow or find by chance as you walk around the palace and its park.

## Quack cures and clockwork scarecrows under one roof

By Daphne Chamberlain

In June, Maurice Collins challenged East Finchley to guess the gadgets from his vast collection of what he calls "weird and bizarre" items. Unsurprisingly, he defeated us all, but reader Adrian Brodtkin's good attempt won him a signed copy of one of Maurice's books. Adrian told *The Archer* that he knows nothing about historical gadgets, but was so intrigued he had to have a go.

That parallels Maurice's own introduction to collecting. He told us: "It started off on a Victorian rubbish dump, being astonished at the variety of different closure patents holding gas into lemonade and spring water; the pointed bottom bottle, the Codd's bottle which contained a marble; all patented and used nationwide, and I had never heard of any of them."

He then started to look at other unusual patented products, including our old friend the apple peeler and corer, bread slicing machines, quack cure machines usually based on the production of electricity, and items using the power of the coiled spring. Clockwork created perfume distributors, singing birds, burglar alarms, and scare machines that replaced scarecrows by firing loud bangs.

Many hours visiting antique and ephemera fairs have brought Maurice 3,500 artefacts from the century between the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the Festival of Britain in 1951. He said: "They are 3D witnesses to the life of that time. Some of my friends and family think I'm a bit crazy, but my late wife's cynicism began to wane when museums across Europe asked to hire the collection."

It is now held by a learn-



Inspect a gadget: Adrian Brodtkin, right, receives his prize from collector Maurice Collins

ing disability charity which receives all the rental monies. Maurice has produced books on his other collections too. These feature posters, advertising ephemera, and unusual mechanical paper.

Feeling intrigued? Maurice has arranged with Faiza at Intellot, 93 High Road, N2 to give away copies of his new book to *Archer* readers. Just take in our photo of Adrian and his prize.

## First come, first aid

A first aid training course is being offered for people living in the Grange Big Local area of East Finchley, in partnership with the British Red Cross. The training will cover basic first aid and will allow participants to act as an appointed person in their workplace. Attendees will learn how to assess a casualty, monitor a casualty and how to deal with seizures. The free training on Saturday 7 August is for anyone over 16 but there are only about 15 places available. To register your interest, email [info@grangebiglocal.org](mailto:info@grangebiglocal.org).

## Elegy to my brother

Former East Finchley librarian Lizzie Barmak, who now works as a counsellor and wellbeing writer, explains the special place that poetry has in her life.

A year after my redundancy from Barnet Libraries, my brother Jon took his own life in alarming circumstances whilst on a quasi-spiritual quest in Nepal.

Although devastated, I wanted to be strong for my husband who has chronic ill-health issues and for my sister who, suffice to say, was struggling with life.

Writing has been my lifelong friend. Many moons ago my prize-winning play *Three* was performed at The Bull Theatre in Barnet and so in my grief, words instinctively became my nurturers threefold: talking therapy, reading and writing – especially poetry. To help me process and express my grief I wrote a collection of elegiac poems and vignettes, which became *The Boat Beyond Tears*.

This collection was long listed by the Cinnamon Press Pamphlet Prize and a traditional publisher showed interest; however, I didn't want to compromise on the content, which includes an introduction, eulogy and a few thoughtfully selected images, so I chose to



New poet: Lizzy Barmak

have just one booklet printed as a keepsake.

This year, in a burst of sentimentality, I decided to get ten copies printed to sell and put the proceeds towards The Joe Strummer Foundation, a charity set up in the name of the late punk icon to provide opportunities for musicians and support to projects around the world.

My brother Jon was a big fan of The Clash and socialist Joe, and he was passionate about art and music, so it seemed a fitting charity. This is one of my poems from the collection:

## You Follow Me

You are my insomnia,  
when I sleep you haunt my dreams,  
when I wake you breathe through me,  
sometimes in my longing I gasp for air.

You are my resistance  
as I trudge to the bathroom.  
In the mirror you gaze back at me  
with unblinking, yearning eyes.

I drink you in when I sip my tea,  
taste you in every morsel,  
with each painful swallow  
and stab of heartburn.

In the company of others  
you are my timorous handshake,  
cold-sweats and fatigue,  
my longing for solitude.

When I walk you course through my veins  
each footfall spells out your name.

You are the light  
reflected in the rainy streets.

They say time heals, but no;  
you will follow me, follow me  
in haunting echoes  
until I follow you.

To buy a copy of *The Boat Beyond Tears* (bank transfer £7, inc P&P) or find out more about her work, email Lizzy Barmak: [EB.BE1@outlook.com](mailto:EB.BE1@outlook.com) or search her directory listing at [www.lapidus.org.uk](http://www.lapidus.org.uk). Lapidus is a literary arts insight development organization promoting bibliotherapy/writing for wellbeing in a variety of settings.





## Letters



## Fox-walk collection

Dear Editor,

I kindly ask your readers living on Long Lane near New Oak Road to peruse this latest collection of items left overnight in my garden by the fox or foxes who patrol this area. Please contact *The Archer* and I will arrange for them to be reunited with their human owners.

On the matter of foxes, can someone tell me if using very long cut-down blackberry stems to fashion natural barbed wire would work as an effective deterrent in and around their path? Or any other suggestions would be welcome.

Loving our community,  
Mrs S Magnusson  
Long Lane, N2.

## Friends for older members of society

By Gillian Jordan, Age UK Trustee

Age UK Barnet staff and volunteers have been extremely busy this past year, adapting services since the first lockdown began. Older people in East Finchley and all over Barnet, many of whom were not able to leave their homes, were missing their usual support, activities and companionship.

Befrienders, used to visiting in person, changed to making regular telephone contact, prescriptions were collected, hot meals delivered, shopping done, as were many other tasks, ably supported by Age UK Barnet's willing band of volunteers. Even cookery classes carried on and Zoom proved indispensable.

Doorstep workouts were started, flowers delivered and letters written by local school-children were sent. A new publication called Pigeon Post was distributed both electronically and by hand to over 1,200 people each month. Importantly, new contacts with some of our most lonely and frail people were initiated and are set to continue.

"We couldn't have done all this without our volunteers," says Lisa Robbins, volunteer manager. "We were exceptionally lucky to be swamped by offers of help from local people, in particular young people who wanted to support our older population."

## New volunteers needed

But now, as many of our younger volunteers return to their work or studies or have moved on, Age UK Barnet really needs more volunteers to



Special delivery: Volunteer Darren drops off flowers at an Age UK client's home

keep reaching out to our older people.

"We are particularly looking for volunteers to befriending, by telephone support or visits and to help older people get to grips with their smart phones, laptops or computers," says Lisa. "We also need shopping volunteers, walking group leaders and walking buddies to help give older people the confidence to get out and about again."

There is a suitable slot for everyone. All volunteers are given relevant training and ongoing support. So, if you could spare a few hours a week to help, please get in touch. Contact Lisa on 020 8432 1422 or email [Lisa.Robbins@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:Lisa.Robbins@ageukbarnet.org.uk)

# There's neigh doubt that horses can help

By David Melsome

Ponies have been brought onto the school grounds at the Archer Academy in East Finchley to help students whose mental health may have taken a knock during the pandemic.

The sessions provided by Lotte Carlebach, a qualified equine therapist, have proved popular with pupils and teachers alike and the school is appealing for financial support to run more in the future.

Senior assistant headteacher Jo Mahoney is responsible for the pastoral care of the school's more than 800 students. She explains: "Covid-19 has been hard for everyone, but it's fair to say that some of our students have struggled more than others. We are determined to do everything we possibly can to help them settle back into school life, and overcome the trauma of the last 18 months, and equine therapy is a brilliant solution."

Lotte works with small groups of students who interact with the ponies in a mindful way, helping develop their self-awareness, communication skills and empathy and boosting their self-esteem.

Jo added: "It's wonderful to watch the students interacting with the ponies; it has a truly calming effect on them, which is just what they need after the upheaval of the last year or so. But it's more than that; Lotte is also teaching them about the ponies' herd dynamics, which supports them to navigate the group dynamics they encounter at school."



Connection: A therapy horse with a student at the Archer Academy

## Support

Now, with the original grant having covered the initial three sessions, Jo and her team are seeking donations from like-minded people or organisations to

allow the programme to continue. To find out more about the programme, or to offer financial support so that the school can continue to run it, email Angela Hay: [Ahay@Thearcheracademy.org.uk](mailto:Ahay@Thearcheracademy.org.uk).

## Hospice needs help out of hours

North London Hospice is urgently appealing for support for its out-of-hours service, which helps patients and families round the clock.

Demand for this rapid response overnight service has risen by more than 300% over the last 12 months but it costs £74 an hour each night and the hospice said it could run out of

the funds it needs by November. The out-of-hours team will travel to people's homes across Barnet, Haringey and Enfield to respond to calls for support, often from those who don't need

to call an ambulance and face a lengthy hospital admission process. To give donations to the service, visit <https://northlondonhospice.org/support-us/sos/>

## STEWART DUNCAN

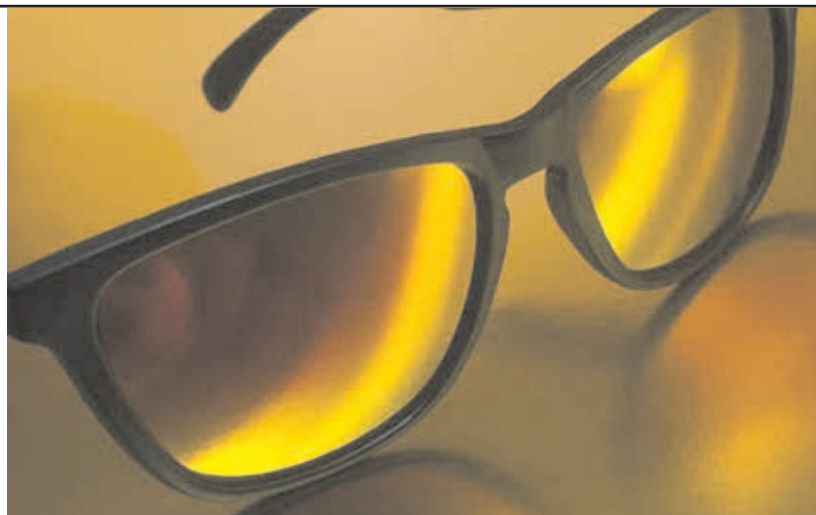
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## Tower block opens its doors to new residents



By Janet Maitland

**Two hundred people are by now expected to have moved into their brand new homes in East Finchley's newest tower block in Prospect Ring, which was completed at the end of June, exactly three years after it was given planning permission.**

Before the first residents moved in *The Archer* was invited to take a tour of Gracie House, named after Gracie Fields who lived on The Bishops Avenue.

Each of the 50 flats is light,

### Tenancies and rents

Barnet Homes said a few months ago that when tenancies were allocated, priority would be given to tenants already living on the estate who had an established housing need

because their current property was no longer suitable.

However, a spokesperson for OpenDoor, who own the building, said in June this was unlikely in practice because tenants moving to Gracie House would lose any protected tenancy they had and would have to pay an affordable, rather than a social, rent. This proved to be the case.

Some Prospect Ring residents have lifetime tenancies, but these are no longer offered. All Gracie House tenants have a shorthold tenancy, with a reassessment of their housing needs after six years.

Gracie House rent is £244 a week, which is classified as affordable as it is 65% of the market rent. The rent on a two-bedroom flat in the older blocks in Prospect Ring is just

Over the rooftops: This panorama of East Finchley from one side of Gracie House captures Norfolk Close on the far left, a direct view down Kitchener Road, the spire of St James's Church, Muswell Hill, on the skyline, with East End Road and East Finchley tube station to the right. Photo Mike Coles



Room with a view: Each of the 50 flats has a balcony

under £125 a week, including service charges. OpenDoor is a subsidiary of Barnet Homes and a registered housing provider.



Ready for residents: A typical kitchen in one of the Gracie House flats

spacious and airy, and each has a balcony. All have triple-glazed windows, innumerable power points, the latest appliances, state-of-the-art fire safety systems and energy-saving heating and ventilation.

The majority of the flats have two bedrooms and are intended for four people. Five flats are for wheelchair users. There is space for more than 100 bicycles in the ground floor bike store.

### Cars discouraged

Five of the flats are specially designed for wheelchair users, and each has its own disabled car parking space. However, other Gracie House tenants who own cars will not be able to apply for permits to park in the controlled parking zone (CPZ) in Prospect Ring. Instead they will have to use any available spaces in surrounding streets which do not have CPZ restrictions. Incentives for tenants not to use a car include the choice of a £150 Oyster card, £150 for a car club subscription or £150 in cycling vouchers.



Clean area: A Gracie House shower room

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