



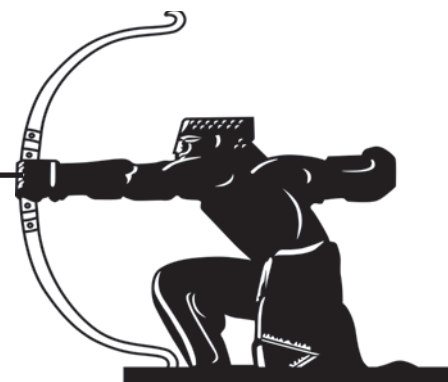
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The Archer

Local News is our Aim



September 2021 No. 329

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Essentials: Food supplies from Guy's Trust reach Cambodian villagers who have lost their source of income in the pandemic.

Food parcels saving lives in Cambodia

East Finchley-based charity Guy's Trust has battled against the obstacles thrown up by the worldwide pandemic to get life-saving food parcels to virus-hit villages in Cambodia and Nepal. Read the full story on page 7.



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Where does our waste go?

Every week, usually without fail, waste and recycling teams collect the piles of rubbish that we generate in our daily lives. Turn to page 3 to see where it all goes.

Rooms for hire

A tech start-up company headed by an East Finchley man is aiming to connect people with the local venues they can hire out for leisure activities and special events. Turn to page 6 for the full story.

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Second shop targeted by night raiders

By Janet Maitland

A second shop in East Finchley has been broken into and raided by burglars. The Ella Food Centre on the corner of the High Road and Creighton Avenue was targeted in the early hours of Monday 2 August.

The break-in came less than two weeks after the nearby King Street Food and Wine shop was burgled, despite its locked metal shutters, also around 4am in the morning. In both cases, cigarettes were the main items stolen.

"These are terrible people that do this," said Ella Food Centre owner Hasa. "They make a lot of problems for shops like us. We hope we will be okay but it makes it very hard for us."

The Ella burglars were caught on camera driving their black Audi straight onto the wide pavement in front of the shop at 4am. One of them kept watch while another kicked the front door in. Once inside they stole all the cigarettes, then fled. As we reported last month, the King Street burglary was also recorded on CCTV. The footage showed three white men turning up at 4am and smashing their way in and out in five minutes. The owners there had only just finished repairing flood damage from the torrential rain a week earlier.



Smashed: Glass from the front door lies on the ground after the break-in at Ella Food and Wine. Photo Mike Coles.

Keep burglars out of your business

Jan Lovell, from the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood team, is visiting all the businesses on the High Road in response to the increase in retail theft over the summer. She is inviting people to sign up to a business-watch email database to keep them up to date with security tips, such as fitting attack-resistant laminated glass, and local crime trends.

You can find current police security advice at www.met.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/keeping-business-safe-from-crime/keep-burglars-out-business/



The Archer

PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE

www.the-archer.co.uk Email: news@the-archer.co.uk

[f](#) [t](#) [@TheArcherN2](#)

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

Published by	Editorial Team	Finance & Advertising
East Finchley Newspapers	Diana Cormack	John Dearing
Copy Editor	Sub Editors	Distribution
John Lawrence	Ann Bronkhorst	Toni Morgan
Production Editor	Jeff Robson	Jane & David Marsh
Alison Roberts	Lucy Moorman	Printed By
Picture Editor		Sharman & Co Ltd
Mike Coles		

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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 – **October:** 10 September, **November:** 15 October, **December:** 12 November

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Councils	Help & Advice	Health Info Service
Barnet Council 020 8359 2000	Childline 0800 1111	MIND 020 8343 5700
Recycling & refuse 020 8359 4600	Citizens Advice Barnet 0300 4568365	National Blood Centre 0845 7711 7711
Benefits 0800 882200	Cruse Bereavement Care 0808 8081677	
Haringey Council 020 8489 0000	EF Advice Service 0300 4568365	Crime
Recycling & refuse 020 88857700	Lone Parent Centre 020 3828 4834	Emergency 999
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	National Debt Line 0808 156 7718	CrimeStoppers 0800 555111
	NSPCC 0808 8005000	Victim Support 0845 303 0900
Leisure	Rape Crisis helpline 0808 802 9999	
Alexandra Palace 020 8365 2121	Refuge Crisis Helpline 0808 2000 247	Hospitals
East Finchley Library 020 8359 3815	Relate Helpline 0300 100 1234	NHS 111
Everyman, Muswell Hill 0872 436 9060	RSPCA 0300 1234 999	Barnet General 08451 114000
Garden Suburb Library 020 8458 3301	Samaritans 116 123	Edgware General 020 8952 2381
Muswell Hill Library 020 8489 8773	SENDIASS Barnet 020 8359 7637	Finchley Memorial 020 8349 7500
Phoenix Cinema 020 8444 6789	SENDIASS Haringey 020 3667 5233	Oak Lane Clinic 020 8346 9343
Tarling Rd Community Ctr 02070186560		Royal Free 020 7794 0500
Vue, North Finchley 0345 3084620		Whittington 020 7272 3070
Transport	Health Advice	OAPs' Advice
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City Airport 020 7646 0088	Alcoholics Anonymous 0845 7697555	Independent Age 0800 319 6789
Heathrow Airport 0844 3351801	Barnet MENCAP 020 8203 6688	Age UK 0800 169 2081
National Express 0871 781 8181	Cancer Support 020 8202 2211	
TfL 0343 222 1234	Carers' Line 0808 808 7777	
Thameslink 0345 026 4700	Drinkline 0800 917 8282	
	Drugs Helpline 0800 776600	

Rain did not stop play at family support day

By Janet Maitland

Barnet Council's Family Services gallantly went ahead with an open-air event for local families and community organisations on Tarling Road, N2, despite torrential rain.

"After postponing several times because of Covid, this was our first community event since lockdown," said Kemi Ojuri, Partner Coordinator for the council's Early Help Hubs. "We had a turnout of over 30 people, which was good considering the weather. We wanted to raise awareness of the local services that support children, young people and families and to develop stronger partnerships with grassroots community organisations."

Information and fun

There were talks and tours throughout the day on Wednesday 28 July, including from the local Early Help Hub, Tarling Road Community Centre, the Ann Owens Centre, Barnwood, and the Albanian Support Organisation. A range of community organisations also set up information stalls.

The Mayor of Barnet, Cllr Alison Cornelius, joined the

Barnwood tour, the reclaimed woodland nurtured by volunteers, next to the community centre. A 'Boogie-mites' dance session was run by local children's centres.

Accessing Early Help

"All families face challenges and sometimes need support," said Kemi. "Early Help is about providing this support as soon as possible to tackle difficulties for children, young people and families before they become more serious."

To deliver Early Help across Barnet, the council has divided the borough into three areas, known as Hubs, so that support is closer to where families actually live. Each Hub works in partnership with many other community organisations to provide help and support to children, young people and their families from before birth up to 19 (or 25 if they have special education needs or a disability).



Family friendly: Barnet Mayor Councillor Alison Cornelius, left, with speaker Michaela Carlowe at the partnership day event. Photo Mike Coles.

East Finchley is in the East/Central Early Help Hub area. The main office for this hub is in the Newstead Children's Centre on Tarling Road, N2, on the corner with Fallows Close. For more information about Early Help, ring the office there on 020 8359 3460 or go to www.barnet.gov.uk/0-19

Man arrested for indecency

By Ann Bronkhorst

The following statement from Fortis Green Safer Neighbourhood Team was shared widely last month to local social media and amenity groups. A number of women had been worried about a man's disturbing behaviour towards women in Coldfall Wood and the adjoining playing fields and reported their concerns to police.

"The team can now confirm that a male has been arrested for outraging public decency and harassment and brought into custody on 17 August by officers from Fortis Green and Alexandra Ward.

"Hopefully this will now make Coldfall Wood a more pleasant and safer experience while walking your dog. Fortis Green SNT would like to thank members of the public for all the valuable information given to us from the door-to-door knocking that directed us to the exact location of the suspect's address."

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

Bishop's Corner, The Bishops Avenue, N2

Removal of condition 21 (carbon dioxide emission reduction) from planning permission dated 8/3/2019 for replacement of existing two-storey dwelling and garage with two-storey building including basement and rooms in roof space, to provide eight self-contained residential units.

20 Brendon Grove, N2

Conversion of garage into habitable room. New window to replace garage door. Relocation of main entrance and insertion of one side window.

16 Chamberlain Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

221 Creighton Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension and two-storey side extension. Roof extension involving partial hip to gable, rear dormer window, and three side and front facing rooflights. New side gable window. Glazed walk-on rooflight to front basement.

248 Creighton Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension, with one bay window at rear of first floor. First-floor side extension. Alterations to roof and dormer, including one front facing rooflight, two side facing rooflights, and one new flat rooflight on the top. Enlargement of rear patio. New front porch.

93 East End Road, N2

Submission of details of conditioned dated 02/05/2019.

213 East End Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Depth 5m, eaves height 3m, maximum height of 3.15 m.

145 Elmhurst Crescent, N2

Single-storey rear extension with patio area, plus rear outbuilding, following demolition of shed.

20 Greenhalgh Walk, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension. Roof extension involving rear and side dormer windows. Rebuilding of garage, following demolition of existing one for use as habitable space. Rear garden shed. Alterations to fenestrations and boundary. New front door

1 Hertford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

30A High Road, N2

Conversion of existing flat into

two self-contained flats.

25 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension, following demolition of conservatory.

41 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey side-infill extension. Depth 6m. eaves, 3.35m, maximum height 3.5m. maximum height of 3.50 metres, and eaves height of 3.35 metres.

5 Leicester Mews, N2

Change of use from Class B1 (Offices) to (Class C3) Residential 1 unit.

87 Leslie Road, N2

Rear bi-folding doors. Internal renovations. Removal of ground floor wall and chimney breast.

4 Manor Park Road, N2

Single-storey rear/side extension.

Depth 5.7 m, eaves height 2.82 m, maximum height 3m. Demolition of existing rear extension, and new rear extension; depth 4m, height 3m.

28 New Trinity Road, N2

Roof extension, involving rear dormer window and two front facing rooflights.

Pavement outside Old White Lion, 121 Great North Road, N2 Removal of existing BT payphone and installation of one new InLink structure (BT Street Hub).

15A Sedgemere Avenue, N2

Rear garden room.

21 Sylvester Road, N2

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



Where does our waste go?

Every week, usually without fail, waste and recycling teams collect the piles of rubbish that we generate in our daily lives. Ann Inglis, of No2PlasticsN2, explains where it all goes to.

What happens to our non-recyclable waste?

Waste from Barnet, Camden, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest is collected and taken to the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) EcoPark facilities in Edmonton where 66% gets incinerated to produce electricity (in the process giving off heat and carbon dioxide) and 5% is sent to landfill.

Where are those landfill sites? Bletchley in Buckinghamshire and South Ockendon in Essex.

Does any of our landfill get sent abroad? No.

How much of our waste is recycled/composted/reused? 28.4% across the north London area.

What happens to our kerbside recycling? It first goes to Biffa's Materials Recycling Facility in Edmonton, where the mixed, dry household recycling (metal, ie steel and aluminium; paper and card; plastics; glass) is separated. Metal, plastics and glass are sent to other facilities in the UK. Paper is sent to paper mills in Kent, Hertfordshire, Flintshire, Germany and France. Card (increases in online shopping means less paper but much more card) is sent to recycling facilities in Germany, Taiwan and Turkey. NLWA says that is because there is a limited market in the UK for recycled card.

Recycling plastics is not environmentally pain-free. 50% virgin plastic is always

added in the recycling process which increases the amount of plastics in the environment rather than reducing it. The NLWA states that none of our separated plastics is sent abroad. In Barnet it is better to put single use plastics into general waste to produce electricity, than into recycling.

What happens to our green waste? It gets composted in the South East and when fully composted, used on local farms and horticultural settings. Soil, large branches, food waste, nappies, plastics in any form, animal faeces/pet waste/litter, cooking oil, paper and cardboard must NOT be put into green bins.

What else can be recycled and where? Our closest recycling centre is at Summers Lane, North Finchley, London N12 0RF. Visits must be booked in advance. A full list of materials that can be recycled here is available at: www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste/

Fridge for everyone

A community fridge may soon be coming to East Finchley, allowing people to leave surplus ingredients for others and take whatever they want for themselves. The Grange Big Local project is hoping to set one up in conjunction with the Co-op and community action group Hubbub. Currently, the nearest community fridge is in Finsbury Park. To find out more or get involved, email info@grangebiglocal.org



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Circus skills: A youngster learns how to juggle with Ludo from Jackson's Lane Theatre at the first Market Place play day. Photo Monica Wells

Play days in the playground

More than 100 children and their families and carers enjoyed music, dancing, circus, face-painting, arts crafts and storytelling at the Market Place playground in East Finchley as part of an event to celebrate National Play Day on Wednesday 4 August.

The packed itinerary, organised by Friends of Market Place Playground and funded by Grange Big Local, kicked off a month of play days there to let youngsters have fun and learn different skills during the summer holiday.

Among the activities they could try were theatre games, Zumba, puppet-making and creating a bug hotel, as well as a chance to examine the finds that were excavated during the Market Place archaeological dig nearby in July. To volunteer for subsequent play days or to find out more about the work of Friends of Market Place Playground email: friendsofmarketplace@gmail.com



Construction skills: A young lad gets stuck into some serious brick building. Photo Monica Wells.

Bogus callers in garden scam

Police said last month that they had received reports of a pair of bogus gardeners in the Finchley area.

On Monday 2 August a vulnerable elderly gentleman with dementia agreed to have some gardening work done. The gardeners completed some very basic work and then charged the victim £600. The victim was taken to the bank

to withdraw the money.

The two men came back to his home the following day and asked him if he wanted any more work done, for even more money. The victim felt pressurised and set his alarm off, at which point the men left.

The East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood team advises everyone to be careful of anyone offering services at the door. They are unlikely to give a good service, value for money or a guarantee for their work.



Award for local science teacher

By Daphne Chamberlain

There will be a gift from the Queen at Amalia Michaels' 90th birthday party in her son's house next month. Deputy Lieutenant of Haringey Peter Baker will present her with the British Empire Medal for services to education.

Originally, it was to be presented at Westminster Abbey, but here eight-year-old grandson, her sole guest, would have had to sit alone in the audience. So, to general surprise and delight, the "very friendly" organiser made this arrangement.

An N2 Haringey resident, Amalia has lived in her Fortis Green home for 31 years, and before that in Creighton Avenue.

Science and much more

After graduating in science at Girton, where she was one of only four women specialising in physics, she taught in several London schools. Local ones were both Tollington schools (older readers will remember the Finchley one), and Hornsey School for Girls, where she was Head of Science.

Now Vice-Chair of learning organisation U3A in London (the Belsize Park branch), she is listed as Science Coordinator, newsletters and bulletins writer and, intriguingly, Timetabler. She laughs: "That occupies most of my time." U3A members generally meet in their homes but Amalia's branch meets in the old Hampstead Town Hall. "That means allocating 150 interest groups space and time in eight rooms."

Lockdown teamwork

When the pandemic locked down the old Town Hall, Amalia recalls, "A team of us quickly got together to make plans. We found we had a Zoom queen among us."



Honoured: Amalia Michaels

She tells *The Archer*: "We now have 100 Zoom groups. Most of our 2,000 members are over 65, but are also silver surfers, some living abroad. Less than 150 are without computers, tablets or smartphones, and we have 'phone buddies' and newsletters to keep in touch with them."

They are trying to work out a joint system for both actual and electronic meetings as life returns to normal. Amalia says: "We can now contact so many more people, and reconnect with people who have moved away. They say it feels as though they never left."

Recommendations for an honour for Amalia were started before the pandemic, and lockdowns only emphasise the value of her work. But she says that she is just a privileged part of a dedicated team.

Footnote: Three years ago, Amalia gave what has been described as a "terrific talk" to U3A about James Clerk Maxwell, the Scottish physicist on whose shoulders Einstein said he stood. He is one of her heroes. Do look him up.



Fitting tribute: The striking new stonework outside Finchley Memorial Hospital bears the names of the servicemen who died in the two world wars. Photo Mike Coles.

Forget me not: a memorial to the fallen of Finchley

By Paul Huggins

Until this year Finchley never had a public war memorial. Therefore, a large number of residents who had given their lives in the two world wars, had no grave, or memorial where families could pay their respects.

Many London districts erected public war memorials. Finchley built a memorial hospital instead. As a result, there were over 775 names from the Great War, and 554 names from the Second World War, which did not appear on a public war memorial anywhere. A 1925 memorial in Ballards Lane to those who died in the First World War has no names inscribed.

This year a stunning new memorial, with all the missing names engraved in gold leaf on dark grey polished granite, has been erected in the grounds of Finchley Memorial Hospital in

Granville Road, North Finchley.

The driving force behind the creation of the memorial since 2010 has been Catherine Love-day, whose father died in action at sea during the Second World War. She always wondered why her father's name, along with other Finchley war dead, did not appear on any local public war memorial, and determined that the situation should be remedied.

To research the missing names, Catherine turned initially to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, then visited churches, schools, memorial halls, residential homes, and anywhere in the area where memorial boards had been installed.

She spent many hours and

days searching parish records, published books of names, and both obituary and birth columns of the local press. It was then a case of establishing the actual residential status of the name involved, as not all were entitled to be recorded on a Finchley public war memorial. The First World War names were the most difficult for Catherine to find.

The memorial is due to be dedicated by the Bishop of London on Sunday 26 September and he will be assisted by representatives of other faiths.

Article reproduced by kind permission of The Mercury, the magazine for Middlesex Freemasons, whose organisation was one of the donors towards the £105,000 cost of the memorial.

Open evening at secondary

Secondary school Christ's College Finchley is hosting an open evening to give prospective students and their families a chance to look around and meet staff. The co-educational school, off East End Road, N2, will be open on Tuesday 21 September from 6pm to 8.30pm. For more details, visit www.ccfplus.com or call 020 8349 3581.

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Long-serving: Gary Wheeler, left, and staff member Rob say goodbye to Midhurst Butchers. Photo Mike Coles

Family-run butchers closes after more than 40 years

By Ruth Anders

It is always sad to see a high street shop close, but when it is one with the popularity and outstanding reputation of Midhurst Butchers, it is especially disheartening. The family-run business in Fortis Green pulled in its jaunty candy-striped awning for the last time last month after almost five decades serving customers from East Finchley, Muswell Hill and a wide area around.

Their message to customers reads: "Dave, Gary and staff at Midhurst Butchers Limited are sorry to be closing after so many years of trading and serving the local community and surrounding areas. We would like to thank all of our customers, past and present, especially those and their families which we have served for over 40 years."

Local resident Jenny Lumley, among others, admitted that she was in mourning. Jenny said: "I am sure many people will join me in expressing great sadness in learning of the closure... I have been a loyal customer for over 40 years and have rarely

bought supermarket meat. The quality of Midhurst's meats enhanced by the cheeriness of service made shopping there such a pleasurable experience."

Time to move on

Gary Wheeler, son of owner Dave Wheeler, told *The Archer*: "This has been coming for some time. There are a number of complex reasons, not least that the shop's lease is coming up for renewal and the outlay needed to invest in a revitalised business just isn't realistic for us."

Midhurst Butchers operated as a family business and Gary worked there for 30 years. He, like Rob and the rest of the Midhurst crew, is very forlorn about

the closure, but acknowledges that it is time to move on. "There are so many reasons behind this decision," added Gary, "not least the move by some towards a more vegetable-focused diet."

Local shops need our support

So a trot up the road for Midhurst's delicious homemade sausages, a lamb shoulder and a friendly chat are now a thing of the past. Covid restrictions and general changes in shopping habits have led to the demise of this friendly trader, reminding us of the importance of paying special attention to supporting our local high street shops. *Letters, page 11*

Open morning for North London U3A

Have you had enough of zooming? Do you enjoy the experiences of meeting new people, learning new things or developing existing passions?

Members of North London U3A are getting back to doing all these things in reality rather than virtually, with many of the wide variety of interest groups resuming meeting in person, having continued to meet online during the various lockdowns.

And they will be showcasing what's on offer at an Open Morning on Monday 13 September, where many of the 50-plus group coordinators will be setting up stalls and chatting to visitors.

The North London U3A groups usually meet in Finchley, Highgate, Muswell Hill and surrounding areas, weekly, fortnightly or monthly. New members are very welcome to join the existing interest groups – which range from discussion groups on art and politics, to practical classes including wine appreciation and textile art – or to start new groups of their own.

Groups organiser Henrietta Cohen said, "We really welcome anyone local who is retired or semi-retired, and who would like to keep learning and meeting people. And we're always keen to support people who would like to start a new group on a topic or activity that interests them, as that's how we keep things varied."

For your diary

The Open Morning is on 13 September from 10am to 11.30am at St Paul's Church Hall, Long Lane, London, N3 2PU. The venue can be reached by 143 or 382 bus or a 10-minute walk from Finchley Central, and there is free on-street parking.

To find out more, contact North London U3A's membership secretary at membership@nlu3a.org.uk, or go to www.nlu3a.org.uk for an up-to-date list of interest groups and other information



Hoisted aloft: The lorry crane lifts Fanny Petch's doors over her rooftop from the road.



Child hit by car

By Janet Maitland

A child was rushed to a major trauma centre after being hit by a car on Fortis Green on the afternoon of Wednesday 4 August.

The London Ambulance Service said it was called at 2.42pm to reports of a traffic collision involving a pedestrian. "We sent an ambulance crew, an advanced paramedic, a medic in a car and an incident response officer to the scene," said a spokesperson. "We treated a child for head and leg injuries and took them to a major trauma centre."

Major trauma centres care for patients with serious and often multiple injuries. The road was closed for several hours and buses diverted.

Doorway in the sky

County roads resident Fanny Petch got more than she bargained for recently when she decided to replace her patio doors. On arrival the new door frame would not fit through to the back of her house, and attempts to deliver via neighbours' houses also proved impossible.

In the end the only solution was to take the frame over the top of Fanny's house by crane, which generated a lot of excitement among her neighbours and blocked the road for a short time.

The frame sailed over her roof with ease, narrowly avoiding her TV aerial, and is now finally in situ. A fitting tribute to the crane driver's skill!

Black Gull Bookshop
Sunday 12th September

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Tech start-up for spaces going spare

By John Lawrence

A tech start-up company headed by an East Finchley man is aiming to connect people with the local venues they can hire out for leisure activities and special events.

Sharesy.com has been founded by Felix Atkin and has launched in Barnet, as well as starting to spread its network across the wider area of north London.

Church in Church Lane, N2, which hires out its gallery and reading room. Other spaces available to hire through Sharesy include football pitches, dining halls, classrooms and soft play rooms.

Investors approve

Felix, who lives off East End Road, N2, said it was a way of helping venues generate sustainable revenues from under-used spaces. By combining everything on the Sharesy website, they could save time and effort. He said: "We know how time consuming it can be to manage hire spaces, so we have designed Sharesy to be a 'self-service' solution combining listing, scheduling and payment in one secure place."



Founder: Felix Atkin

Essentially, it's an Airbnb for sports and community venues, which lets them control the listings for the space they hire out, including prices, availability and terms of use. Among more than 40 locations already signed up are Brookland Junior School in Hill Top, NW11, which rents its lower playground, and Holy Trinity

Felix calls his company a 'tech-for-good' start-up. It is investor-funded and has raised almost £1million to date from high-profile investors, including Philip Bier, the founder of Tiger stores. This funding has meant Felix and his team are able to work for free with their Barnet venues for the whole of 2021.

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
www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk



Do you, or someone you know need a new home?

The Finchley Charities have been providing quality sheltered housing in a supportive community environment, across three sites in East Finchley and Finchley Central.

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The tide is high: Water flows down Fortis Green and past the Everyman Cinema.



Water, water, everywhere

Thanks to Archer reader Lesley Hales for sending us these photos of the burst water main which sent a torrent of water flowing down Fortis Green Road in Muswell Hill on the afternoon of Tuesday 10 August. The burst occurred halfway along the road, causing some disruption for traffic and parking, until workmen arrived later in the evening to make repairs and stem the flood. Although not legible in Lesley's photo, how suitable that two of the films showing that day at the Everyman Cinema were *Stillwater* and *Jungle Cruise*.

Helping hand with technology

By Toni Koppel

The Five Bells Computer Club has been running since 2016, and is a fun, friendly and free way for everyone to get help with their computers, tablets or phones. We began in a sheltered housing complex, but soon grew too big for their common room, and moved to the Five Bells pub nearby in East End Road, N2. We now have over 260 members.

Luckily they don't all turn up at once! People tend to come for help with something they find tricky, and then we don't see them again until they encounter something else that they can't manage on their own. Or people come along for a chat and a cup of tea.

We have a core of around 12 volunteers with varied skillsets who are so kind and patient with everyone, taking the time to help and explain everything clearly.

New venue

We send out a newsletter every Tuesday morning with a



Screen time: Members of the Five Bells Computer Club in their temporary home in the transmitter hall at Alexandra Palace.

reminder that the club is happening in the afternoon. After our summer break we'll be starting up again on Tuesday 7 September at a new temporary location at Alexandra Palace. We decided to move to this location whilst there is still a threat of Covid, as the spaces are large and airy with plenty of room to stay socially distant, easy access, ample parking and a bus stop almost at the door.

We plan to run a Zoom session at the same time as our face-to-face sessions, so that our housebound members can continue to join in. Some of our members have offered lifts to others, so please get in touch via email ([fivebells.computer-](mailto:fivebells.computer-club@gmail.com)

club@gmail.com) if you'd like to join us and need a lift.

If you would like to join us, you can find our sign-up form on our newly created website: <https://five-bells-computer-club.mailchimpsites.com/>. Everyone will be welcome whether you need help with your smartphones, computers or tablets, or you just fancy joining us for a chat and a cup of tea.

FOLLOW US!



@THEARCHERN2



Guy's work goes on in villages hit by the virus

It's almost ten years ago since East Finchley residents Tony and Vicky Joseph set up Guy's Trust in memory of their son Guy who was tragically killed, aged 25, in a paragliding accident. Here, Vicky reports on how the charity has kept up its good work over the last 18 months. Guy's Trust focuses on projects that reflect Guy's life and since its inception has built three kindergartens and three libraries in Nepal, built five primary schools and a library in Cambodia and funded 30 marine conservation internships in Indonesia.



Balanced diet: A woman in Cambodia uses her bike to transport Guy's Trust flour and corn back to her village.

Sadly, the pandemic has meant that we have been unable to hold any live fundraising events or to visit their projects. It has also meant that for the past 18 months their kindergartens, schools and libraries have, apart from a few brief weeks, been closed. Despite this, the charity has kept working through local

partners and has provided much needed emergency support for the communities where their projects are situated.

Nepal

In Nepal, through a local organisation called the Child and Women's Empowerment Society (CWES), Guy's Trust



Southern Nepal: Many marginalised families are unable to access government support and are particularly desperate for the food aid and educational materials supplied by Guy's Trust.

has funded the design, printing and distribution of special homework books and crayons to the children missing out on school, and CWES have also helped to identify kindergarten families struggling to feed themselves so that the charity could provide much needed basic foodstuffs.

In impoverished southern Nepal, where Guy's Trust is currently funding the construction of a computer room in a new secondary school, many marginalised families are unable to access government support and were particularly desperate. To help them Guy's Trust joined forces with two other British Nepali charities and held a special appeal to provide emergency food packages for some 15,000 desperate people.

Cambodia

Cambodia has also been badly hit by Covid-19 with

continued with a project planned before the pandemic to fund the construction of clean drinking water systems to three of their schools. These schools were

If you would like to know more about Guy's Trust or to make a donation, please visit our website www.guystrust.org.



Cambodia: A family collects vital food supplies provided by the East Finchley-based charity.



Special appeal: Guy's Trust joined forces with two other British Nepali charities to provide emergency food packages for some 15,000 desperate people.

many families in the villages where Guy's Trust's schools are located unable to afford food. Here too the charity stepped in and through a local organisation was able to provide food parcels to families who had lost their source of income due to lockdown.

While emergency needs were being met, we also con-

open briefly at the beginning of the year and the children were able to benefit from the drinking water but are now closed again as virus rates are increasing.

Tony and I are longing to visit the charity's projects but we must pay attention to lockdowns and increasing transmission of Covid-19. Meanwhile, the work continues.

Invitation to book signing

Local author Christina McLellan is hosting a book signing for her novel *Almost Human*, published in January of this year under the pen name HC Denham (*The Archer*, May 2021). Book lovers are invited to turn up for a drink and a browse at the Black Gull bookshop in East Finchley from 6.30pm on Sunday 12 September.

Because *Almost Human* was released in the middle of lockdown, Christina has only now been able to meet readers of her novel. She says: "The book seems to interest a wide range of people, not just those who are science fiction fans, as the action is set in a future which is almost upon us and focuses on the psychological effects on humans of living with sophisticated AI."

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Hole in the ground: The architectural dig gets under way in Market Place in July. Photo Mike Coles

Never too old to get digging

By Jenny Lee

I always enjoy reading *The Archer*, but my eyes lit up when I spotted 'Market Place: what lies underneath?' in the June issue and discovered that an archaeological dig was coming to East Finchley on 17 and 18 July.

All my life I have wanted to join a dig, but the nearest I came to it was when my parents were having a new garage built in the late '50s. My mother and I descended into the pit clutching trowels, but despite Roman pottery having

been found in a neighbour's garden, all we unearthed was a small metal elephant I had lost as a child.

I felt a bit guilty that most of the hard digging had been done the day before, but I'm

there I was, beaver away with a borrowed trowel at the bottom of one of the two pits that had been excavated in the Market Place playground.

I met with the group again on the morning of 1 August in Avenue House, East End Road where they have a room, and we resumed the washing process. Eventually the items will be classified, dated, and written up. What fun – thank you, dear *Archer* – I wouldn't have known about it but for you!

found a floor") or helping to wash some of the many items discovered. My only difficulty was heaving myself out of the pit!

been found in a neighbour's garden, all we unearthed was a small metal elephant I had lost as a child. "Am I too old at 77?" I asked myself. "Not on your nelly," my inner voice responded. I promptly joined Hendon and District Archaeological Society (HADAS) who were conducting the dig, and

my daughter and I shot off to Mountain Warehouse to secure a pair of hard-toed boots (insurance companies insist on these).

I wasn't free for the first day, but on Sunday 18 July

not sure I would have been much use at that anyway. The HADAS people were delightful, very knowledgeable and helpful, and I loved every minute of it, whether digging ("Er... I think I have



Uncovered: A bottle is found in the earth

A lively evening at the Death Café

By Diana Cormack

Having attended the first East Finchley Death Café (*The Archer*, October 2018) I wondered how the second would compare, particularly since the coronavirus has condemned millions globally to an early grave.

Host Phillip Othen told the small group gathered in Madden's Bar in the High Road: "I'm so scared about death I think about dying every day." But this fear was not caused by Covid-19; it is something that has haunted him since his early teens when he began to wonder about existence itself.

Phillip has confronted these thoughts with counselling and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and now, 34 years later, they seem to be something to make use of in questioning our existence through meetings, broadcasts, writing and podcasts.

at what he was doing that evening in mid-August was beneficial to the participants, providing a relaxed atmosphere where everyone was given the opportunity to put their points. This group was younger than the previous one and came from other parts of London (only Phillip and I were from East Finchley) but inevitably the same questions as before were raised. Theories about heaven and hell; the soul; reincarnation; the afterlife; eternal life; etc. The list of course is endless, unlike our lives.



Deep discussion: Participants at the death café hosted by Phillip Othen, centre. Photo Diana Cormack.

Relaxed atmosphere

Hence the Death Café, where his evident enjoyment

Starting-point

The Death Café concept (see deathcafe.com) came into being in Hackney in 2011 when Jon Underwood and his mother developed the ideas of Swiss sociologist Bernard Crettaz. It has spread to 56 countries in Europe, North America and Australia with the objective "to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives".

Phillip says his plan for 2021 is "to make the subject of death and existence as fun and rewarding to talk about as possible." He's definitely getting there, as the pub's clientele would probably never have guessed our topic of conversation if they'd judged it by our gales of laughter.

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

The waters are rising

As the world goes to hell in a flaming handcart and starving polar bears invade Iceland to hunt for seals, everyone is saying that climate change is here to stay. No more British summers of gentle drizzle and warm sunshine; the future is summers of scorching heat mixed with torrential rain.

Rising sea levels will turn the Shard into a shipping hazard and St Paul's Cathedral into a fun place for scuba diving, while the Thames Clipper will be able to come all the way to Highgate. So what can we expect in East Finchley? People will flock to the flooded grass of Cherry Tree Wood, renamed the Boating Lake, for kayaking lessons, and our pubs will be packed every June for the annual community regatta. In nostalgic winter moments, huddled round a carbon-neutral fire, people will tell their grandchildren tales of how they used to deliver *The Archer* on foot, not by canoe. So, folks, what are we going to do about it? How are we going to ensure that the community festival is visited every third year by gentle showers, as it always has been, rather than being drenched under a never-ending downpour?

We've got to start somewhere so let's start with food. To cut emissions, we need to change our diet and go vegan. You can even do a Lewis Hamilton and let your dog join in. No more bones for Roscoe; his loyal pooch can go and bury bananas in the garden instead. Of course, dogs are loyal and do as they're told. Just don't try it with the cat; it will order steak on the internet just to spite you.

But there's so much else we can all do. We can get rid of the gas central heating, stop flying and driving, and cycle everywhere we can't walk. But even then I bet it won't be enough to make us truly carbon neutral. In the end someone will decide we're all pumping out too much carbon dioxide from our own bodies and the only solution will be for us to hold our breath on alternate days.

Indoor car boot sale

The monthly Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale will be held on Saturday 25 September at Hornsey Parish Church Hall, on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10 3AH, from 10am to 1pm. Admission is 50p with refreshments available, and everyone is welcome.

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Ready for take-off: John Dearing in front of the de Havilland Dragon Rapide and, right, his view of the London Eye during the flight.

High over London on the wings of a Dragon

By John Dearing

One Friday last month I flew from Duxford aerodrome in Cambridgeshire on a thrilling trip over Central London in a de Havilland Dragon Rapide, a biplane airliner built in 1946 and now operated by Classic Wings.

The Dragon Rapide was designed in the mid-1930s, and soon gained a reputation as a comfortable and reliable short-haul passenger plane. From the modern perspective, it is small and cramped, but once its eight passengers are seated, they are quite comfortable.

After the safety briefing, we embarked and within a few short minutes we had taken off. The plane is quite noisy, and moves around in the sky more than a modern jet airliner, but this is all part of the experience and is quite exciting, without being in any way threatening.

From Duxford we flew more or less due south. The first part of the trip was over open fields and country towns, then the London landmarks came thick and fast, viewed from not much higher than the top of the Shard.

Looping over London

We passed over the Olympic Park in East London, making a number of loops over central London and passing by the Thames Barrier, London City Airport, the Emirates Airline cable car, the Isle of Dogs, the Millennium Dome, Tower Bridge, the London Eye, County

Hall and the Houses of Parliament, before returning to Duxford. In all, the trip was about 75 minutes.

The rest of the day was spent viewing the numerous static aircraft exhibits in the many hangars. All together it was a very memorable day.

Noel Lynch, local shopkeeper and hard-working politician

Noel Lynch, much-loved shopkeeper, local politician and founder member of The Archer, died last month at the age of 74. Here his wife Diane Burstein Lynch and, below, fellow Archer founder and former editor, Kevin Finn pay tribute to a man of many talents.

My husband Noel Lynch made his mark wherever he went with his kindness, compassion and quiet intelligence. Born in Kilmallock, County Limerick, Noel was the son of a farmer but the agricultural life was not for him.

Trained as an auctioneer, he set out to make his mark in local politics in Ireland and then in London, the city which was his home since 1986 when he travelled to England to get a divorce, which was illegal in Ireland at the time.

An active member of the London Green Party, Noel rose through the ranks to take a seat in the London Assembly in 2003. As an Assembly member he sat on several committees including the Metropolitan Police Authority, the Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee and he was chair of the Standards Committee.

His many campaigns included such important issues as preservation of green spaces, increased provision of public toilets and the championing of small local shops, but the achievement he was most proud of was saving the Cricklewood Homeless Centre, a place that had provided a London refuge

for many of his countrymen.

On leaving the Assembly, Noel continued his dedicated involvement with Green politics by becoming the party's London Coordinator, spending most evenings travelling all over London to attend meetings of the local branches.

Away from politics, Noel worked as freelance auctioneer and ran the Green Room, a North London shop supporting Green causes. Latterly in North Finchley's Tally Ho Corner and Archway, the Green Room was situated for many years in East Finchley and during that time Noel, who lived above the shop, became involved in local matters and was one of the founder members of *The Archer*. Described in *Time Out* as "London's most unusual charity shop" the Green Room sold everything from phrenology heads to sharks teeth. In his spare time Noel was a voracious reader of factual books and he loved running general knowledge quizzes for various charities and, latterly, to entertain friends and family via Facebook Live during lockdown.

And what of his original reason for coming to England to get that divorce? After a long period of single life Noel

found love again in 2012 when we met and enjoyed nine very happy years together. He is survived by me, his daughter Michelle, granddaughter Tejah, son-in-law Telai and brothers Liam, Tim and Patrick and their families.

Kevin Finn writes:

Noel Lynch was a founder member of *The Archer* in 1993, alongside Paul Savill, Andrew Taylor and myself. Noel had an antiques and curiosity shop in East Finchley before moving to 'The Green Room' in Archway and then to the Arcade in Tally Ho. All proceeds from his shops went to charity and Noel's avid interest and activity with the Green Party was openly publicised and discussed.

My personal memories of Noel include his joy of showing and discussing the miscellaneous items he had on sale, his quick and dry wit and sense of humour and his enthusiasm to assist wherever he could.

Born in County Limerick in the Republic of Ireland, Noel came to England to get a divorce as this was illegal in his home country.



An active life: Noel Lynch

He held a seat for the Greens through the list system at City Hall for a year in 2003, stepping up when Victor Anderson resigned, and he was highly respected by his colleagues. In just one year he is said to have written four reports covering plastic bags, local shops, the decline of public toilets and the need for green spaces, a man ahead of his time for sure.

Once at an auction he was leading, he advised my wife and me that a particular lot, a cardboard box full of all sorts of things, would be worth watching

as it contained a few nice bits and pieces. We bid on it and bought it for about £5 only to find out that it didn't have much of any value whatsoever. Noel looked at us both with a gleam in his eye and a wry smile and said: "I told you to watch it, not buy it!" So typical of the man.

The last time we met Noel was in the Arcade in Tally Ho, about a year ago, where amongst the normal craziness of his stock, was the usual cheerful and chatty Noel that I will always remember and, of course, miss. Rest in peace, Noel.



Browse and buy: A wide range of arts and crafts will be on show during the Open Houses event.

Artworks on show again as open houses return

This year East Finchley Open Artists will be holding the popular Artists Open Houses in and around East Finchley over just one weekend, Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 September. A wide range of art and crafts, to view and buy, will be exhibited in gardens and garden studios.

Any partially inside venues will be well ventilated, social distancing will be encouraged and visitors will be invited to wear masks if they wish. At least a dozen houses and studios are opening. Look out for local publicity and visit the group's website for a map of locations along with the latest information: www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk/openhouse/

Café venue for three artists

By Diana Cormack

An exhibition of work by three East Finchley residents is on display at the Cup of Joy café in the High Road, N2.

Award-winning artist and mental health key worker Craig Johnson told *The Archer* he is showing his black and white photography of London landmarks, featuring the London Eye and Big Ben. Craig studied for a BA Honours in Photography at Middlesex University and a Masters degree in film and interactive media. He describes his artwork as varied, using a surrealist genre with nods to fantasy worlds, Tim Burton movies and conspiracy theories.

Alongside Craig's photos will be some by his mother Yvonne Johnson, also an NHS key worker, depicting the scary Spriggan statue, which peers out of an arch on the Parkland Walk in Highgate.

The Spriggan (in Cornish folklore a paranormal, child-stealing creature) was created by local artist Marilyn Collins, who was inspired by stories of a ghostly 'green-man' who haunted the walk in the 1970s and 1980s. Children playing there would 'dare' each other to walk from one bridge to another in the darkness. This fired the imagination of international best-selling author Stephen King in the creation of his spooky short story *Crouch End*.

Other photographs in the exhibition will show Cherry Tree Wood where photographer Dayvid Grant, a man with a



Inspiration: The Spriggan sculpture on the Parkland Walk

background in the music industry, often plays his guitar. Dayvid, who now works as a plasterer, is also a painter who uses Caran d'Ache and Indian ink.

More success

A photo of Dayvid playing his guitar during lockdown at East Finchley station (with plants taking over the platform) recently gained Craig the run-

ner-up prize for over 18s in the Anna Kennedy Online autism art competition. Both he and Dayvid have been shortlisted for this month's London Coffee Festival at the Truman Brewery.

Why not enjoy their artistic talents alongside a coffee and a bite to eat at the Cup of Joy, open Monday to Saturday 8am - 6pm and Sunday 9am - 6pm.

Free food service returns

East Finchley Neighbourhood Support's Food Project will be back from 14 September with their free meals service, giving away tasty chilled meals from the front of The Phoenix Cinema every Tuesday from 10.30am - 12.30 pm.

Meals are completely free if you need one, or you can take one in return for a donation to the project. Find out more at www.ILoveN2.co.uk/Food-Project or @N2FoodProject on socials.

Loop-the-loop cycle ride

By Greta Brambilla

Dust off your bikes, everyone, we have a brand new circuit for you. This loopy course to Hampstead Heath and back takes just over an hour and starts at the High Road in East Finchley. Please remember to give way to pedestrians and pay attention to any 'No cycling' signs.



Go green: The route takes you through the leafiest parts of our area

From the High Road, go down Kitchener Road, turn right and then left into Eagans Close to cut through the passageway between Holy Trinity School on your left and the Archer Academy on your right. Cross East End Road, then go left down Cromwell Close, following the Abbots Gardens passageway and turning left at

on the verge as it is bike-friendly and easier) and continue along this road into the Heath again. You will eventually arrive at Whitestone Pond and at the roundabout veer right onto Spaniards Road. Use the cycle path next to it (preferably via the crossing as vehicles here go pretty fast) and once you spot the flower stand at Span-

Brim Hill. Take the first right down Widecombe Way (spot the swing and a lovely view of Hampstead Heath!)

At the bottom, use the crossing to get over the A1, then follow Norrice Lea until the roundabout, turning right at the end onto stunning Winnington Road. It's a steep hill but keep calm and carry on: a downhill is coming your way! Turn right

after the golf course into Ingram Avenue and keep following it, then left at the bottom onto beautiful Wildwood Road (heading right at the fork on the edge of Sandy Heath), then left down Hampstead Way. Go left onto North End Way, then right over the crossing into Sandy Road (the first passageway you see). Follow this into the woods, with the humorously named 'Leg of Mutton' pond on your left and keep going - it's a bit gravelly here but still doable on your bike. Turn left at the end down West Heath Road (staying

iards End (just before the inn) follow the path on your left at the edge of the Heath back onto Wildwood Road.

Continue until Kingsley Way appears on your right. Make your way down here and onto Neville Drive, turn left onto Holne Chase, then veer right onto Rowan Walk. Go right again at the end, then left to get onto Norrice Lea. Finally, retrace your route to get back to the start (with the option of cutting through Prospect Ring for a little alternative). Hope you enjoyed this lovely loop!

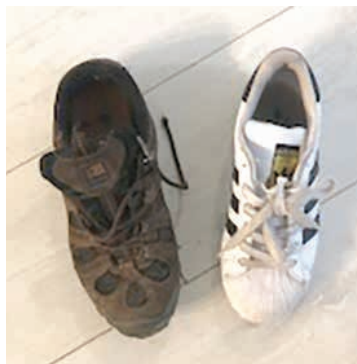


High point: This path emerges from Hampstead Heath near the pond at the top of the village.



Letters

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



Lost soles

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the letter from Mrs Magnusson in the August edition of *The Archer* ('Fox-walk collection', page 11). I also live on Long Lane and have experienced the activities of the foxes but sadly from a victim's position.

At the end of June one pink child's wellington, a pair of brown trainers and one white trainer all disappeared from my porch overnight. My son-in-law found the pink wellington outside the shop on the corner of New Oak Road and I found one of my brown trainers elsewhere on Long Lane. I am still missing one white trainer and one brown trainer, as shown in the photograph.

I no longer leave shoes outside overnight, but if Mrs Magnusson or anyone else finds these trainers, my granddaughter and I would be delighted. I wonder if I should erect a shelf outside my house for lost single soles! The local community could then leave found shoes and others would know where to look to find their missing footwear.

Yvonne Millar
Long Lane, N2.

Farewell to Midhurst
Dear Editor,

I am sure many people will join me in expressing great sadness in learning of the closure of Midhurst Butchers. I have been a loyal customer for over 40 years and have rarely bought supermarket meat. The quality of their meats enhanced by the cheeriness of service made shopping there a pleasurable experience. Regular customers even looked forward to the long queues for turkeys at Christmas!! Sadly, online shopping, Covid restrictions and general changes in shopping habits have led to the demise of the shop. It will be greatly missed.

Jenny Lumley,
Fortis Green Avenue, N2.

Sad loss to shoppers
Dear Editor

The closure of Midhurst Butchers is another sad loss of a small, local family business and they will be sorely missed. There are alternatives in the area but you will have to dig deep to shop there; otherwise, it's the supermarkets who win out once more.

Huge thanks to Gary Wheeler, his colleague Rob, and former proprietor, Gary's father, Dave Wheeler, who have always provided friendly, knowledgeable service at a reasonable price. I would like to wish them all the best for the future.

David Holt,
Leslie Road, N2.

Traffic scheme petition
Dear Editor,

You have published several letters in the last few months, including my own, relating to the disruption caused by the traffic scheme introduced by Barnet Council, which is not surprising as the road space for cars is cut in half. There was no pre-consultation. The local Nextdoor online group is full of comments. The Council has acknowledged the problems and said it would do something, but it has done nothing at all to alleviate the situation. There is a petition opposing the scheme at www.change.org/EndA1000TrafficScheme which readers may be interested in.

Barry H White,
Address supplied.

Dirty air
Dear Editor,

To suggest that occasional bonfires in allotments are the only source of air pollution is frankly preposterous. East Finchley is nowadays regularly congested with traffic, cars spewing tons of CO2 on a daily basis. Bike lanes have made this even worse. The A406 adds to this toxic cocktail. It is therefore seriously misleading that people with asthma and other lung conditions can breathe more comfortably whereas the days for bonfires have already been limited for ages. Yes, I have an allotment and I find it hard to deal with hypocrisy.

Mark Chapman,
Long Lane, N2.

Improvements to hospital transport on their way

Age UK are thanking everyone who supported their campaigns in 2018 and 2019 for better transport to hospitals. They say that the Government and the NHS didn't see this as a priority until Age UK started raising the public's concerns with them. This finally pushed NHS into a review of transport services.

Age UK say: "The NHS is going to improve the eligibility criteria for patient transport, and make sure people don't have to wait for hours to get to and from their appointments. They've

also promised to simplify the travel costs scheme as well so if you need to claim back the cost of your travel to hospital, it will be much easier." Let's hope that this happens soon.

Do not touch! Unwelcome visitor on our trees

Linda Dolata gives a timely warning on the appearance of a tree-dwelling caterpillar that can be dangerous to humans and pets.

The photo of a tree trunk almost opposite the Five Bells pub on East End Road, N2, taken in early August, shows the nest of a group of oak processionary moths in the pupal stage.

The moths themselves will emerge next spring, mate and lay eggs on more oak trees, and on other tree species too. A species alien to the UK, probably brought in on imported timber, they are now rife throughout greater London and beyond.



Avoid touching: This oak processionary moth nest was spotted on an oak tree in East End Road, N2. Photo Linda Dolata

Allergic reactions

The trees cope well enough unless there is a large infestation, when they can be stripped and damaged, but the caterpillars that emerge from these nests are covered in thousands of tiny hairs, which can cause a severe allergic reaction in humans and other mammals. It is important that they are never touched directly but these hairs can also blow some distance in the wind, affecting the respiratory system, skin, and eyes.

Oak processionary moths get their name from the way that the caterpillars



On the move: The moth caterpillars 'process' along a twig.

travel along tree branches in a long train, nose to tail, as it were, to reach the nutritious shoot tips. They return to the nest during the day and produce a sort of web.

Anyone walking under this, let alone coming into physical contact with it is likely to get some of the

tiny hairs on them, and suffer the consequences.

Call in professionals

The moth is a notifiable pest and the nest should only be destroyed by qualified experts. Check your oaks and other trees now but do not attempt to dispose of a nest yourself if you find one. I am informing Barnet Council of this particular example so that it can be removed safely.

Mike has been walking for 450 days

You may remember that *The Archer's* photo editor Mike Coles has been walking close to 10km every day without fail since the start of lockdown way back in March 2020, all of his treks being within reach of home in East Finchley.

But by plotting every step on a virtual map, Mike has crossed the Channel, walked the entire length of France and the southern Spanish coast, and is now working his way down the western side of the African continent.

He has hit the landmark of 450 consecutive days of walking and has reached Laayoune, the largest town in Western Sahara, a disputed territory administered by Morocco.

Mike said: "The irony here is that for the last couple of months I have been going through semi-arid desert on the edge of the Sahara and have reached a fairly basic town whilst only 67 miles out to sea is a sophisticated European outpost, the Canary Islands, where there are five-star hotels, British pubs, gourmet restaurants and Euro 2021 on TV." Mike plans to continue his daily walks and, on his virtual map, will be continuing down

the coast road to reach Nouakchott in Mauritania.

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Tragic story behind Trinity Road underpass

By Roger Chapman



Under the tracks: The walkway passes safely under what is now the Northern line. Photo Mike Coles.

On a Wednesday afternoon in August 1878, nine-year-old William Bowman had been with his father while he worked as a labourer at Park Farm on East End Road when he was sent home at about 4.30pm to get some tea. Home was 16 Manor Cottages, about half a mile away, across the Great North railway track.

The direct route back to his home went via the (now) Trinity Road crossing, which was then above the level of the surrounding fields. The nine-year-old was seen by William Young, a plate-layer, standing close to the rail, watching the approach of an 'up train'.

The moment that train passed him he began to cross, when the 4.30pm 'down train' from Kings Cross to High Barnet knocked him down. "On being picked up life was found to be extinct."

At the subsequent inquest, the engine driver and other witnesses showed that the level crossing was a dangerous one, as also was a nearby one at Manor Road. Nearly 70 trains a day passed that way at a speed of 30 miles an hour.

Evidence was heard that on the down line drivers were unable to see any one on or near the level crossing further off than 126 yards and that it would be impossible to pull up within that distance. Local inhabitants testified that a large number of children had to pass over this crossing on their way to school, and they had petitioned the railway company either to erect a bridge or make a subway.

Mr Blanchard Wontner, representing the company, said it had put up fences and made a new footpath going another way by 80 yards but the inhabitants pulled down the fence and still went over the line. The company had no legal power to

close this path but said it would listen to suggestions.

The jury returned a verdict that William had died of head injuries and considered that immediate steps should be taken by the railway company to provide a safer means to cross the line. The company then committed to construct a subway under the line at the point where William was killed. As a result of his tragic death, hundreds of people every day can now pass below the underground train line in safety.

This article was originally written for www.layersoflondon.org, where you can find fascinating local history, and upload photos and articles of your own.



Dangerous crossing: A 19th-century map of East Finchley showing the path across the fields between Church Lane and Long Lane and the spot where William Bowman was killed.

Underpass update

The underpass beneath the Northern line linking Trinity Road and Manor Park Road is heavily used by local residents and schoolchildren but is badly in need of improved lighting and security to make it safer.

It was four years ago that a £20,000 scheme was announced to install new lighting, new fencing and new security measures, using funding from the Grange Big Local project and Barnet Council.

That work stalled before it began but now Grange Big Local has appointed a new project manager to kick start it again by measuring and conducting drainage surveys over the next few months, ahead of the physical changes being made.

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