



Causeway CCTV to be extended by six months

By Janet Maitland

The security camera on The Causeway, due to be decommissioned at the end of March, has been given a reprieve for six months while Barnet Council undertakes a review of all CCTV units.

The camera was installed on this busy alleyway behind the tube station last September following a campaign by Causeway residents, supported by local councillors and triggered by two major incidents on the footpath.



Monitored: The Causeway

In October 2020, a schoolgirl was seriously sexually assaulted there and just five months later a man indecently exposed himself after following a young girl along The Causeway. During his arrest he attacked and injured a male and female police officer.

Extension welcomed

Councillor Arjun Mittra said he and his fellow East Finchley councillors were pleased that a six-month extension had been agreed for now. They had arranged visits to The Causeway by the Chief

Executive of the council and council officers.

Explaining why the council was considering removing the camera in the first place, Matt Len, from the council's Community Safety Assurance Group, had told the councillors: "There was no anti-social behaviour or crime incidents reported in the 12 months prior to the incident in October 2020 and no further incidents since CCTV was installed in September 2021."

Camera presence deters crime

However, it is also the case that in the 12 months before the camera was installed there were the two known criminal offences. The deterrent factor that cameras can provide is cited in the government's Violence Against Women and Girls strategy, which states that public spaces can be made safer for women and girls by "increasing CCTV coverage so people think twice before committing a crime".

The impact of violence on the ability of women and girls to go about their lives without fear of attack may not normally be considered evidence of a need for CCTV as fear is hard to quantify. However, in this case, an extensive Met Police survey undertaken at the end of last year revealed that The Causeway was the place where local women and girls feel the least safe.



High-kicking: One of the Celtic Hearts Irish Dance group appears to float in mid-air in front of a fascinated crowd at the Cherry Tree Café on St Patrick's Day. Photo Mike Coles

Dancing on St Patrick's Day

Anyone passing through Cherry Tree Wood on Thursday 17 March was able to enjoy some dynamic jigs and reels by the Celtic Hearts Irish Dance group in celebration of St Patrick's Day. And to give the event even more of a flavour of the Emerald Isle, the team at the Cherry Tree Café were serving Irish coffees, glasses of Guinness and bowls of Irish stew with soda bread.



Lifesaving help: Food bank volunteers bagging goods in a photo taken last summer...

Bus route changes

As we went to press, Transport for London announced the changes to East Finchley bus services that will be made in early 2023, following a consultation with passengers. The 234 route will be extended from Highgate Wood to Archway via Archway Road, and the 263 will run via Highgate Village instead of Archway Road. The 143 route will not change, and there will be a new N271 night bus from Moorgate to North Finchley, via East Finchley. More details in next month's edition.

Demand up but donations down

By John Lawrence

Organisers of Finchley Foodbank have renewed their call for regular donations after seeing the rising cost of living forcing more families to take up their services.

In one week in March, the food bank helped 474 people from its base in the hall behind St Mary's Church on the High Road, N2. At the same time, donations of food and household items have decreased noticeably this year.

The team thanked everyone who was still dropping off goods on their Friday collection day between 12pm and 3pm. All non-perishable food and toiletries are welcome and the in-demand list varies from week to week, for instance coffee, toothpaste, peanut butter and tinned pulses.



... but weekly donations are dwindling.



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The team is also looking for new collection points in schools, places of worship, workplaces and supermarkets. Contact them at finchleyfoodbank@gmail.com if you can help.

Further information can be found and cash donations can also be given to buy other essential items via the website: www.finchleyfoodbank.org.uk/give-support