



Parking charges 'will break people and businesses'

By John Lawrence

A woman worried by the potential arrival of parking charges across East Finchley has carried out her own survey single-handedly to see how residents and shopowners are reacting.

As we reported last month, Barnet Council asked people to give their views on the possible introduction of controlled parking zones to ease parking problems and the possible introduction of controlled parking zones on a huge number of roads where parking is currently free.

Door to door research

Victoria Herman, who has lived on Long Lane, N2, for almost 20 years, went door to door to traders in the Church Lane, Long Lane and Lewis Gardens areas to hear their responses for herself and to collect signatures to send to the council and MP Mike Freer.

She said it was an upsetting experience, with some shop owners crying and saying their businesses are already struggling to recover from the pandemic and the rise in business rates. Parking restrictions would deter customers and bring more misery, they told her.

Businesses facing disaster

"We are talking about small business owners, barbers, chemists, florists, grocery stores, coffee houses," said Victoria. "They manage because they are not on the High Road where there are already parking restric-

tions, so customers can still stop and make a quick purchase.

"Behind each store front are families dependent on that business for their survival. These owners are desperate, really desperate and suffering and many told me that parking restrictions would mean the death of their business."

Most homeowners not in favour

Victoria told *The Archer* that she did not meet anyone who welcomed the council's suggestions. She said the feedback she got from homeowners most frequently was that parking wasn't an issue in their road. Most felt that with road taxes and the cost of running a car and the recent introduction of the ULEZ emissions zone they have more than paid for road maintenance and CPZs should not be expanded to residents who do not require this intervention.

Victoria added: "I do not have off-street parking and I have never had a problem parking outside my flat. I have never embarked on anything like this before, but felt we all need to draw a line somewhere. People are suffering and in financial crisis and something needs to be done."



The sound of music: Orchestra members from the DaCapo Music Foundation in rehearsal

A chance to play in an orchestra

A community music project is getting under way offering musicians of all ages the chance to play as part of a full orchestra and to perform an iconic work.

The DaCapo Music Foundation is opening its Saturday orchestra, based at Wren Academy in North Finchley, to new players. Musicians of any age in the strings, woodwind, brass and percussion sections are

welcome, with playing abilities ranging from around grade 3 through to grade 8 and beyond.

Those who take part in rehearsals each Saturday from 12.45pm to 1.30pm will have the chance to take part in a

performance of the *March to the Scaffold* from Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* at a concert in May.

For more details and to book a place contact: jam@dacapo.co.uk or call 07595 367194.



Through London's parks: The Big Fun Walkers head through Highgate Wood. Photo North London Hospice

Big Fun Walk is back on for hospice

By David Melsome

North London Hospice has announced that its annual flagship fundraising event is back on for 2022. The Big Fun Walk will follow its much-loved route from East Finchley to Westminster through some of London's most beautiful woods and parks.

For the last two years, participants have been asked to walk in individual groups following

routes of their own choosing. This year, the traditional route is restored and everyone is invited to take part on Sunday 1 May.

The Big Fun Walk is a major fundraiser for all the hospice's services and this year marks the 30th anniversary of its inpatient unit in Woodside Avenue, North Finchley, which will undergo a major refurbishment in 2023.

To find out more and register to take part, visit www.bigfunwalk.co.uk.

Parking fines at Covid test centre

Motorists driving into the car park at East Finchley tube station to use the Covid-19 testing centre at the start of the year were issued with penalty charges.

Car park operator NCP sent out the fines last month to those who didn't buy a ticket, despite people being told that fees would be waived for anyone getting tested, the Ham & High newspaper reported.

NCP, which operates the car park on behalf of Transport for London, said the mistake was the result of a "miscommunication" and is cancelling all penalty charge notices issued during the time the car park was used as a testing centre.

A TfL spokesperson was quoted as saying: "We can confirm that enforcement should have been suspended whilst the testing was taking place. NCP has cancelled all PCNs issued over this period and any paid PCNs will be refunded directly back to the customer as soon as possible. We apologise for the inconvenience that this has caused."

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