

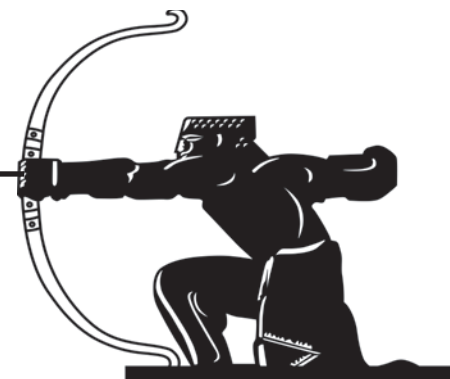


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# The Archer

Local News is our Aim



February 2022 No. 334

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

## Flooding now serious threat to whole wood

By John Lawrence

**Flooding in Cherry Tree Wood is getting worse and urgent action needs to be taken to avoid recreation facilities being seriously affected, say the Friends of the park.**

Roger Chapman, chair of the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, has written to John Hooton, the chief executive of Barnet Council, and Sara Bentley, the chief executive of Thames Water, asking for their help in drying out the land.

The situation is much worse than at this time last year and has developed from a large single pool of water in the middle of the recreation area to widespread mini water pools across the full extent of the grassed field area.

### Buildings and tennis courts threatened

In addition, there is a worrying increase in the amount of ground water accumulating at the edge of the tennis courts and underneath the adjacent 'park keeper' pavilion, right up to the foundations of the toilet block. Roger warned that one council building at least and the money recently spent by the council on resurfacing the tennis courts are under threat.

"The longest circular walk around the wood is now curtailed and completely impassable

because of this latest flooding," said Roger. "The area available to dog walkers and for other activities such as football, yoga, etc. is now extremely restricted and diminishing in area each year."

### Expert assessment needed

The Friends have sent the council and Thames Water the results of ground surveys they carried out to try to understand why the problem is worsening. Initially they are asking Barnet Council to send in an expert assessor and to agree a flood management strategy for the whole wood.

Roger's letter warns: "There is potential for a partnership approach but until a proper expert assessment and evaluation of the problems is undertaken the situation will just continue to worsen and significant parts of the Wood will become off limits for substantial parts of the year."

At the time of going to press, the Friends were awaiting a response from both Barnet Council and Thames Water. *Cherry Tree Wood update: p9.*



Overtuned: The car lying on its roof in the middle of Hamilton Road. Photo Louisa Green

## Three flee after car flips onto roof

By Janet Maitland

**A car flipped over and landed on its roof while being driven down Hamilton Road, N2, from East End Road on Wednesday 12 January.**

Louisa Green, who lives on Hamilton Road, came out of her house at about 7am to see

the overturned car in the middle of the road. She said that a passerby who had witnessed the accident and called the police told her that three people had managed to get out of the car and then ran away.

Another local resident reported that she had taken a look at all the cars parked nearby

to see if the driver had collided with another vehicle, but could see no signs of any damage.

Police confirmed the crash but have not yet provided details of any lines of enquiry. The London Ambulance Service confirmed they had not received any calls to Hamilton Road.

## Grange residents to be consulted at last

By Janet Maitland

**Barnet Homes will be soon be holding a consultation event about the revised plans for the redevelopment of the Grange estate and surrounding streets, reported over recent months in *The Archer*.**

We understand that residents will be invited to an in-person event, likely to be in the week commencing 21 February. Local people had complained that they'd been given no information about the plans, which could affect their homes and green spaces.

We also understand that Newman Francis are no longer working with Barnet Homes as engagement consultants and that Instinctif have been appointed to continue the consultation process.

Last month we reported that although the original plan to build 100 new homes was now

reduced to 47, it was still the intention to build on the green spaces on Brownswell Road and

Tarling Road and to demolish three homes housing 21 people.

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## The Archer

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Thank you to The Bald Faced Stag and Cup of Joy for providing us with a meeting place.

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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 – **March: 11 February** **April: 11 March**  
**May: 15 April**

## Playing field phone mast turned down

A proposal to install a 5G phone mast on land alongside the playing field of Martin Primary School in East Finchley (*The Archer*, October 2021) has been turned down at a planning appeal.

Infrastructure company Hutchison 3G Ltd was seeking to install a 15m high pole with three separate cabinets to improve high-speed 5G signals in the area. The mast and cabinets would have been situated on the High Road on the strip of grass that runs along the edge of the field.

When the mast was originally proposed at the end of 2020, there were 213 public comments lodged, 209 of them raising objections. School governors, parents and The

Finchley Society all said next to a primary school was the wrong site for a phone mast.

Last month the Planning Inspectorate made a final ruling against the proposal saying a mast would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area, and adding that other potential sites had not been properly considered.

Martin Primary School's headteacher Ziz Chater said: "The school is delighted that the Planning Inspectorate has rejected the proposal to locate a phone mast alongside our cherished playing field. The school governors and I would like to thank our entire school community and East Finchley residents for supporting us in our objections throughout the process."

## Motorcyclist injured in collision

By Janet Maitland  
**The rider of a motorcycle was taken to hospital following a collision with a car on the junction between The Bishops Avenue and Lyttleton Road, N2, on Wednesday 12 January.**

Police, ambulance and fire crews all attended the scene at around 6am. The driver was treated at the scene by medics before being taken to hospital. The Bishops Avenue was blocked off by police cars and traffic was diverted while the road was cleared.



Redesign: The playground in Market Place is in line for a revamp. Photo Mike Coles

## Ideas welcome on new design and equipment for ageing playground

By David Melsome

The Friends of Market Place Playground are holding a special event to see new designs and share ideas for the well-used but ageing play space close to Holy Trinity Primary School and The Archer Academy.

The group hopes as many local residents and playground users as possible will come along to have their say on how the space is developed. The community engagement day takes place at the playground in Market Place, N2, from midday to 3pm on Saturday 19 February.

It will be led by chartered landscape architect Aileen Shackell and open space management consultant Phil Doyle, who have been appointed to help take the plans forward. Both have experience in the play sector and have worked together since 2007 on schemes including being play design advisors

to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in east London.

Kathy Batten, chair of the Friends group, said: "We are delighted to have partners of Phil and Aileen's experience, standing and knowledge on board. Our 2021 survey of local residents highlighted the desire of the community to have more natural green features, more varied and challenging play kit and to make Market Place Playground a social hub. We know that Phil and Aileen are committed to making a design that reflects this."

**Strong financial position**  
Friends of Market Place

Playground was formed in December 2020 with £40,000 seed funding from Grange Big Local, part of which is financing the concept design and engagement activity. The group now sits within East Finchley Community Trust, an established charity, which will further enable access to funds and grants.

With a commitment of £30,000 already in place from Barnet Council's area committee, the group hope they are well placed to deliver on their ambition of developing and improving the half-acre site.

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

### Barnet Council

#### 17 Cherry Tree Road, N2

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

#### 7 Deansway, N2

Roof extension, including side dormer window to replace existing rooflight.

#### 84 Durham Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension following demolition of existing rear extension. Roof extension involving rear dormer window and two front rooflights, following demolition of existing rear dormer.

#### Five Bells, 165 - 167 East End Road, N2

Five customer seating garden huts, along with garden refurbishment including new paving, lighting and planting.

#### Grass verge opposite Five Bells, 165-167 East End Road, N2

Removal and replacement of one equipment cabinet and one GPS node, with other associated ancillary works.

#### 12-18 High Road, N2

Variation of condition 1 of planning permission for demolition of former building and construction of two four-storey buildings with basement. Amendments include correction to line of boundary wall, introduction of two angled

windows on first floor central section of eastern elevation, and corrections (*sic*) to neighbouring buildings to north and east of site.

#### 154 High Road, N2

Two internally illuminated projecting/hanging signs, one non illuminated heritage sign, one vinyl sign, two internally illuminated acrylic letters with aluminium returns sign, one internally illuminated flex face front with aluminium returns sign, one internally illuminated aluminium frame with LCD display sign, two non-illuminated kiosk vinyl graphics signs.

#### 5 Huntingdon Road, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer, extension above existing outrigger, one front rooflight and new side gable window.

#### 39 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Replacement of conservatory. Relocation of side window.

### 3 King Street, N2

Details of conditions involving external materials, cycle parking and storage, car parking, enclosures, hard and soft landscaping, levels and privacy screens, pursuant to planning permission.

### 80 Leicester Road, N2

Single-storey rear and side extension

### 18 Leslie Road, N2

Rear garden room and shed with new linked decking area.

### Haringey Council

#### 24 Eastern Road, N2

New side extension, after removal of existing one.

#### 48 Fordington Road, N6

First-floor front extension; part first floor, part ground floor rear extension; associated roof terrace and screening; replacement garage door to window; first-floor windows to Juliet balconies; and enlargement of ground-floor front window and door.

## Advertising manager for The Archer

We are seeking a volunteer to run advertising in *The Archer*. This is a vital role as the running costs of the newspaper, mainly the monthly print run, are funded almost entirely by advertising.

The role involves taking orders and agreeing artwork sizes and formats and checking proofs. There is no cold-calling or selling required.

Ideally, anyone taking on this role will be IT literate and have experience of negotiations with customers and suppliers. It generally takes up to 15-20 hours per month and can be done entirely in your own time.

Please get in touch if you think you can help us out. Email [news@the-archer.co.uk](mailto:news@the-archer.co.uk) or leave a message for free on 0800 612 0748. We look forward to hearing from you.

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# Will CCTV be removed from The Causeway?

By Janet Maitland

The busy pathway running behind East Finchley tube station is scheduled to lose its CCTV cameras at the end of March even though a recent survey pinpointed it as the area where local women and girls feel the most unsafe.

In October 2020 a girl walking home from school was subjected to a serious sexual assault on The Causeway. Just five months later, a man followed and exposed himself to another girl in exactly the same spot before attacking two police officers.

This triggered a campaign by Causeway residents, supported by local councillors, culminating in a petition for CCTV and better lighting, signed by over 3,500 people.

Jan Lovell, from the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team has also patrolled The Causeway with local councillors, to check on lighting and overgrown hedges.

## CCTV only temporary

Barnet Council told us it installed temporary CCTV and cut back foliage last September and the lighting was “upgraded a year ago”. We asked a spokesperson why the CCTV was only temporary and they said it has been “commissioned until 31 March, when we will determine its effectiveness as part of a wider review of CCTV”.

Councillor Alison Moore and her East Finchley colleagues Arjun Mittra and Claire Farrier are arguing that the CCTV should at least be “retained until the new policy, which will have a greater emphasis on evidence and

intelligence-led criteria, is developed during the summer”.

The fact that the crime statistics have improved since the CCTV was installed, may, ironically, impede efforts to make it permanent. “There’s been no reports or recordings of crime,” said Finchley Church End Councillor Jennifer Grocock, Chair of the Safer Communities Partnership Board, adding that “this is a low crime area, compared to others in the borough.”

## Tell your story

Barnet Council may be influenced by a recent Met Police survey, which has revealed that local women and girls feel the least safe on The Causeway. As a result, Hampstead Garden Suburb (HGS) Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), whose patch includes the footpath, have tweeted that it is now “top of our priority list”, and are asking people to email their experiences to gardensuburb.snt@met.police.uk.

The retention of CCTV on The Causeway could also be helped by the government’s 2021-2024 Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWAG) strategy, which includes £25 million funding for making public spaces safer for women and girls, by improving lighting and “increasing CCTV coverage so people think twice before committing a crime”.

# Fencer hits home against national champions

Greg Allen, 49, of East Finchley, won the men’s épée title at his first attempt at the recent British Veterans Fencing Championships in Manchester.

The format for these championships, which are open to all fencers over the age of 40, is two rounds of poules, in which groups of six fence each other, followed by direct elimination, where the winner is the first to score 10 hits.

Greg, who fences at Haverstock Fencing Club in Chalk Farm, was senior national champion 20 years ago, but only ninth seed after the poules in this 72-competitor event.

However, he breezed through the early rounds of direct elimination, then beat number one seed and former champion Chris Howser 10-7 in the quarter-finals, followed by former silver medallist John Leahey 10-4 in the semis.



Swordsman: Greg Allen

In the final he faced number two seed and reigning champion Neal Mallett, 64, who has won this title eight times, more than any other fencer. But the 15-year age difference was too great and Allen won comfortably by 10-5.



Leaner and cleaner: GoodGym members get in shape for a litter pick in Cherry Tree Wood...

# Good exercise and good deeds

By John Lawrence

GoodGym started more than ten years ago with the idea of getting people out of their gyms and into their communities to exercise through volunteering.

Runners come together weekly to provide social support visits to older people and manual labour for community projects like clearing leaves in a local park or shifting soil in a community garden.

Locally, GoodGym members have carried out litter picks in Cherry Tree Wood and cleaned graffiti from the side of the Phoenix Cinema. Volunteers have also visited isolated older people and given their help with one-off tasks like DIY or gardening.

Paul Salman, co-ordinator for GoodGym Barnet, said they were hoping to boost their participant numbers again after the uncertainty of the pandemic hindered some meetings. “What’s great is that you can pick and choose when, where and how often you get involved,” said Paul. “We encourage running if possible to the venue event and we may do additional exercises depending on the circumstances and the leader.

“We have a great website that allows you to see what’s going on and sign up for events all over Barnet or other local boroughs in London. As well as having volunteer-



... and repaint the side of the Phoenix Cinema.

ing activities we have training sessions, a running club, walking groups, and online fitness sessions.”

Find out more at [www.goodgym.org/v3/areas/barnet](http://www.goodgym.org/v3/areas/barnet)

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Walk and talk: The Proper Blokes Club after one of their weekly walks in Greenwich

## A place for men to talk on the move

By John Lawrence

When Londoner Scott Johnson started sharing videos of his walks and his thoughts on coping with stress and anxiety, they led to the formation of a weekly walking group where men could meet to talk.

The Proper Blokes Club established regular walks in Greenwich, Southwark, Wellington and Woolwich and now the first group north of the river meets every Tuesday evening in Finchley Central.

The group is open to men of all ages and backgrounds. Scott hopes the walks are a chance for them to find a friendly ear, share their own experiences and spend time with people they maybe wouldn't normally meet in their daily lives.

Scott said: "People get different things out of the walks, maybe a sense of purpose, a bit of exercise, being out and about in the open, and broadening their horizons, which is always good for the mind."

### An evening stroll

The local group meets at the entrance to Finchley

Central tube station at 7pm on Tuesdays and heads off for an hour's walk around the local streets. Once the lighter evenings arrive, it will take in local green areas and parks as well. Scott added: "I think the Finchley group in particular proves that people from dif-

ferent backgrounds can all get on. It's really interesting to see people walking in their pairs or threes solidly engaged in conversation. "They would probably never have known each other before because they don't move in the same social circles so



A chance to chat: A group also meets in Finchley

this breaks down that barrier. It doesn't matter where you come from or what you do for a living, you are all just men at the end of the day." Find out more by following The Proper Blokes Club on Facebook or just turn up at 7pm on Tuesdays. There's no cost and no weekly commitment, just come along when you want.

## Mike's odyssey on two feet is still on

By Mike Coles

On 17 March 2020, a couple of days before the first lockdown, when everything was being cancelled, I thought I ought to do something to maximise my allowed exercise time—so I decided to walk to Marseilles in Southern France.

I couldn't leave London, of course, so I did the actual walking around local streets and parks and plotted my progress on Google maps, which also plotted the route. I could check local hotels and restaurants on Tripadvisor links.

After 124 consecutive days of walking at just under my target distance of 10km a day I reached Marseilles on 18 July 2020. Covid was still in full swing so I decided to continue walking south. I carried on to reach Gibraltar, and then took the ferry over to Tangier and entered Africa. I then spent every day in 2021 walking south on the west coast of Africa.

I was still averaging just under 10km per day. Crossing the Senegal River at Rosso I reached Dakar in Senegal in December; then 10 January 2022 was a significant day as I reached Banjul in The Gambia, still on the west coast, after 666 consecutive days.

It reminds me how big Africa is and how normal maps don't reflect its true size. That's why I refer to the Gall-Peters projection, a rectangular map projection which maps all areas so they have the correct sizes relative to each other and gives a better idea of relative distances. The journey continues!



Heading south: Mike's walking route from East Finchley to The Gambia

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## Indoor car boot sale

The monthly Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale will take place on Saturday 26 February from 10am to 1pm at Hornsey Parish Church Hall, on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10 3AH.

Admission is 50p and refreshments are available. For information, contact 020 8368 8180.

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# 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](mailto: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](http://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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## ECO-FRIENDLY EAST FINCHLEY



Green shoots: Volunteers survey the site for a tennis court-size forest on the edge of Hampstead Garden Suburb

# Mini forest to be planted on roadside green space

By John Lawrence

**An open space on the border of Hampstead Garden Suburb is to be given its own mini forest as part of an initiative to reintroduce native tree species and wildlife.**

The Tiny Forest will be about the size of a tennis court and will be located on grassland alongside Mutton Brook, close to the junction between the A1 and the North Circular.

Environmental charity Earthwatch has planted dozens of such forests around the country and this will be the first in Barnet. The charity says they are dense, fast-growing woodlands that provide benefits for wildlife and people alike.

Organisers are appealing for volunteers to help with the planting of around 600 trees on

the site on Thursday 24 February. After that, people will be able to get involved in looking after the site by litter picking and weeding.

### Community-building

Paul Salman, Barnet organiser for volunteer group GoodGym, said: "A Tiny Forest is something that people get very excited about. They quickly see it as a really positive community-building activity, so they want to get involved."

"The high-density planting brings all the benefits of a forest, like wildlife habitats,

carbon capture and others, but in an urban-friendly size. It is also an opportunity for local people to reconnect with the environment and their local community."

If you want to help plant the Tiny Forest or to get involved in any way, please email the volunteer coordinators at [tiny-forestbarnet@gmail.com](mailto:tiny-forestbarnet@gmail.com). You can find out more about Tiny Forests at <https://earthwatch.org.uk/>

## Bonfire policy under review

**Plot holders at an allotment association in East Finchley are being asked to give their views on bonfires in the light of health concerns about air pollution.**

A survey has gone out to members of East Finchley Allotments, off Plane Tree Walk, N2, asking for details about what they burn currently and for ideas about other ways to dispose of or recycle green waste.

As reported previously in *The Archer*, residents in neighbouring Creighton Avenue and staff at Martin Primary School immediately next door have raised concerns about bonfire smoke drifting on to their properties from the allotments.

The East Finchley Allotments committee say they will use the survey results to inform their future bonfire policy. The current bylaw for the site states that bonfires can be lit any time between October and April except before 1pm on Sundays, and only after 5pm on the first Wednesday of each month between May and September.

# Zero waste collection points are spreading through East Finchley

Organisers from recycling project *Bin There, Donate That* will speak at the next meeting of community group *N2United* at the Constitutional Club in The Walks, N2, on Thursday 10 February. Everyone is welcome to come along and hear more. Meanwhile, the project's *Emma Frampton* gives us an update.

### Collection points

We have discovered that **Everything Electrical** and **EF Electrical**, both in the High Road, N2, accept a range of dead electrical bits like bulbs and Christmas tree lights.

**Nova Dental** practice, on East End Road, next to the Bald Faced Stag pub, collects the following: electric toothbrush heads and packaging, interdental 'TePe' brushes and dental floss boxes.

And don't forget that **Oakdale Pharmacy** collects used tablet blister packs and **Stewart Duncan** opticians accept unwanted glasses. Again, both are on the High Road. More recycling points are appearing all the time so keep an eye on our website or Facebook group for the latest list. Details below.

### Your ideas

We're still keen to get new ideas for the project and offers of help. Please take just a few minutes to fill in our questionnaire at this link: <https://forms.gle/1n2fwEbxicvqHKHi9>. Do leave your contact details if you'd like to volunteer with us.

### Local charities

We are particularly interested in hearing from organisations collecting things for people who have recently been rehomed (sheets, pans etc) or those working with homeless people who need socks, old jumpers and clothes. Or maybe you work with children or the elderly and need stationery and similar materials. Let us help you by finding a regular collection spot and/or advertising your requirements.

Email the project team at: [bintheredonatethat@gmail.com](mailto:bintheredonatethat@gmail.com). Visit their website at <https://bintheredonatethat.wixsite.com/reuse>, and join them on Facebook by searching 'Bin There Donate That'.

# Bob's one-man war against litter

By Diana Cormack

**Since the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood paused their litter picking for the winter months, one dedicated member of the group has carried on alone. Each weekend Bob Janes has been litter-picking through parts of the park and its environs.**

Bob tells us that he started a long time ago. In his teens he worked in Broomfield Park, and later round the streets of Southgate, cutting grass and picking litter. He thinks that this has given him the habit of noticing things that don't belong.

After the Friends' picking was put on hold for the winter, Bob started noticing just how much rubbish there was along Park Hall Road, where he lives, so he ventured out one Sunday to clean that up, filling a bag in that one street alone. Then he moved on to the Wood.

The litter he finds is mixed: mostly cigarette ends, discarded masks, odd bits of packaging, bits of builders' left-overs, tissues, coffee cups, bottles and cans. Pictured is Bob's New Year's Day haul, much of it, including the wheelbarrow, from what appeared to be a little encampment not far from the playground.

Bob gradually expanded his picks to include the alleyway



Load of litter: Bob's barrow

through to Brompton Grove and onwards to the area near the bus stop on the High Road, all good areas for finding cans and bottles, mostly vodka.

Bob appreciates the occasional thanks he gets from passers-by and he was given an honourable mention at the Friends' annual meeting last month.

*The Friends' regular monthly picks, the Cherry Pickers, resume on Sunday 13 February between 2pm and 3pm. All volunteers are welcome and with Bob's admirable efforts they may find less litter to pick up than in previous months.*



Chosen spot: The Tiny Forest will be sited between Mutton Brook and the North Circular

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## ECO-FRIENDLY EAST FINCHLEY

# How switched on to electric vehicles are we in N2?

By Andrew Niewiarowski

Like most residents of East Finchley, I worry about the impact of vehicles on our environment and the air we breathe, and was delighted by Barnet's net zero pledge (*The Archer*, Jan 2022). To do my bit, I recently switched to a fully electric vehicle (EV).



All charged up: Electric car owner Andrew Niewiarowski

I love driving my EV and want to share my experience with readers and offer an N2 perspective on the benefits and potential pitfalls.

- **You will save money (eventually).** The purchase cost of a new electric car is still higher than the equivalent fossil fuel vehicle, but money can be saved over the long term with cheaper fuel costs and discounts on tax, parking and congestion charge.
- **Local charging is getting better (slowly).** Like most residents, I don't have off-street parking, but am fortunate enough to have a chargepoint at work, covering my daily needs. That said, Barnet Council has been working with Ubitricity to install lamppost chargers around N2 and these are excellent. Look out for their blue LEDs above plug sockets. To request a lamppost charger near you, email [EVCharging@Barnet.gov.uk](mailto:EVCharging@Barnet.gov.uk) (see [barnet.gov.uk/roads-and-pavements/electric-vehicles-barnet](http://barnet.gov.uk/roads-and-pavements/electric-vehicles-barnet) for details). On some busy roads, non-EVs are often parked alongside rendering the charger unusable so it would be great if Barnet could designate these spaces as EV only to improve the return on their investment.
- **Shop around when recharging!** Unfortunately, not all chargers are equal, with some being expensive and some slow-charging (and some both!). Local petrol stations like the BP garage on the North Circular and the Esso in Archway Road have fast chargers that are good in a bind but pricey. Some supermarkets, for example Tesco and Waitrose, offer a free time-limited top-up. Closer to home, the aforementioned lamppost chargers are excellent value for money but do take several hours. Conversely, the Source London chargers on the High Road cost more than double, are slow and frequently broken. Do research and vote with your wallets.
- **Plan ahead for a long journey.** Unlike petrol, the range of EVs is limited to around 200 miles so planning for longer journeys is essential. Apps like Zap-Map are great to see what charging options are available *en route*... and importantly, what's working on the day. Fortunately, motorway EV infrastructure is improving every year.

Above all, as many of us start making the switch to EVs, local and national government must boost EV infrastructure to match demand. With that in mind, I hope to see more EVs on the streets of East Finchley soon.



Corner plot: Volunteers plan to spruce up the garden on the corner of The Walks

## Gardeners get funding and get busy

A number of residents from Leopold Road, N2, have set up a small community group and started creating their own neighbourhood garden.

They plan to repair the untidy brick-built raised beds on the corner of The Walks, provide a new bench and do some planting. The scheme is part of a general improvement plan for The Walks, which secured £33,000 from Barnet Council following a bid backed by East Finchley's councillors. Kathy Batten, a resident and trustee of East Finchley Community Trust, said: "Everyone is delighted to be part of this project on our doorsteps and to improve and green our bit of East Finchley. We are very lucky to have among us Edwina Roberts, an experienced gardener who is happy to lead on the planting."



Get stuck in: Digging and planting work begins

## Eco-friendly N2United

The February meeting of community and business network N2United will focus on everything to do with sustainability.

Lynn Winton, one of the organisers, said: "We'll be looking at greenifying our immediate part of the world, and lowering N2's carbon footprint, with experts to guide us to all local resources."

### Speakers will include:

- Lisa Jones of mobile zero waste shop, The People's Pantry
  - Peter Barnett of A Scott and Son fishmongers, who has made a raft of improvements to make his business as environmentally friendly as possible
  - Emma Frampton of recycling initiative Bin There Donate That (see p6)
  - Maxine Klein of local campaigning group No2PlasticsN2
- Everyone is welcome to the meeting, which takes place at the Constitutional Club, The Walks, N2 8DE, from 7.30pm for an 8pm start. The club has a full bar until 11pm.

N2United is an informal business and community network, which is open to anyone in N2. Meetings are free and take place monthly. For more information visit [N2United.co.uk](http://N2United.co.uk)

## Shop without waste

Two electric floats turn up regularly in East Finchley to let you stock up on food, cleaning and beauty products by refilling your own containers.

The Fair-Well float makes fortnightly visits to Durham Road in front of All Saints' Church on Saturdays from 11am to 1pm. It next arrives on Saturday 5 February and Saturday 19 February, then 5 and 19 March.

Meanwhile The People's Pantry float can be found on the first Saturday of each month next to the café in Cherry Tree Wood and on the forecourt of the Muswell Hill Club on Fortis Green on the last Saturday of every month.



Street food: The Fair-Well float in Durham Road. Photo Mike Coles



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# YOUNG ARCHER



Penmanship: Jake at work on his book and, left, his text and illustrations

## Hand-drawn, hand-written

By John Lawrence

A young author has published his first book after taking a year to write and illustrate every page by hand. Jake H's book *The Lord of the Earth* is inspired by his love of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

The eight-year-old pupil at Martin Primary School in East Finchley came up with the story idea and started putting his words and pictures onto paper. After a year, it was finished and his parents helped him to get copies printed for family and friends.

In doing so, they used Kindle Direct Publishing so

Jake's book is also available for anyone to buy through Amazon. And it has also been on sale at Black Gull Bookshop in the High Road, N2, with a copy going on display in the window alongside dozens of famous authors.

Jake says: "I always liked drawing and wrote many comic books with mainly pictures.

When I turned seven, I made up *The Lord of the Earth* story in Lego, so I had an idea and started to write the book."

Friends at Martin Primary can enjoy his work for free because two copies are kept in the school library. Jake has already started work writing and drawing his next book, to be called *The Lost Pandas*.

## Compose a fanfare for the jubilee

By David Melsome

The team behind the Proms at St Jude's annual music and literary festival in Hampstead Garden Suburb is asking young musicians to compose a short fanfare that could be played to a live audience.

Aaron Czerny, from Fortismere School and Nemunis Jusionis, from Mill Hill County High School, won the senior (15-18) and junior (11-14) competitions respectively in 2021. Their compositions were performed at the Last Night of the Proms last July.

Besides hearing their work performed in public, this year's junior and senior winners will receive a gift token worth £50. The senior winner will also receive a licence for special music notation software Dorico Pro, worth nearly £500. Also, 25 runners-up will win a Dorico Elements licence worth £85.

This year, entrants are being asked to compose a fanfare to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. To find out more and to enter the competition, go to [www.promsatstjudes.org.uk/fanfare-competition](http://www.promsatstjudes.org.uk/fanfare-competition)



Fanfare winners: left to right, Ethan Lieber, Aaron Czerny, Proms organiser Joan Arnold and Nemunis Jusionis

## Protect yourself from the risk of fire

Electrical items are a major fire risk in our homes. The London Fire Brigade website is packed with information about how to avoid the risks and enjoy the benefits of electricity.

For example: only buy appliances with a British or European safety mark; never leave phones or laptops plugged in to charge overnight; always leave hair straighteners to cool on a heatproof surface; empty fluff regularly from tumble dryers; don't plug other items into the socket used for the washing machine.

Look out for scorch marks, flickering lights, hot plugs and sockets, fuses that blow or circuit-breakers that trip for no obvious reason. These could all

be the signs of loose or dangerous wiring. Get them checked by a qualified electrician. If you are a tenant, ask your landlord to do so.

These are only a few examples. For more detail, check the FLB website at [www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety). This also has reminders about free home safety visits. Book one of these, and local firefighters will inspect your home for hazards, and also fix free smoke alarms if necessary. You can also carry out a check yourself, with the help of a mobile app.



Fairground attraction: Ian Holloway and the first users of the bowling alley he created

## Skittles alley is a striking success

Pupils and parents enjoying all the fun of Highgate Primary School's Winter Fair in December were excited to test their skittling skills on a brand new bowling alley.

The attraction appeared thanks to the support of East Finchley's family-run timber merchants PO Joyce Ltd, in Church Lane, and the wood-working skills of local resident and parent Ian Holloway.

Having been volunteered by his partner Clara to build

the bowling alley to help raise funds for their children's school, Ian contacted PO Joyce to ask for a donation of timber and they were only too happy to help.

Headteacher William Dean said: "Our new bowling alley made a great addition to our

Winter Fair, raised over £300 for us in one afternoon, and will provide entertainment to the children at Highgate Primary for years to come. Special thanks go to Ian for creating a thing of beauty and to PO Joyce for supporting the school with all the materials."

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# Facelift for wood entrance ready for next stage

By Debbie Linton

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood held their annual meeting on 11 January. Approximately 20 members of the community attended, with support also from local ward councillors, and all that much had been achieved over the past year, with plenty more plans for the year ahead.

The meeting heard that the bid to extend the wood at the High Road entrance (*The Archer*, October 2021) had been presented to Barnet Council earlier in January, and was now set to progress to the next stage.

The Friends were also continuing their objection to a planned six-storey building overlooking the wood on its western side (*The Archer*, November 2021). This was very much supported.

An outline of the new East Finchley pollinator project was provided, with information about an upcoming January meeting and a seed-swap event on 20 March. Plans to survey the wildlife in the wood were also discussed, with the Friends very keen to hear from any experts or enthusiasts within the community who might like to help with this.

### The year ahead

Further plans include more work on the meadow and

orchard area, with an apple pressing event planned in the autumn. Monthly one-hour litter picks will resume on Sunday 13 February with everyone welcome, meeting near the tennis courts and running from 2pm-3pm.

A new drinking water fountain is to be installed over the next few months. The Friends are also applying later in January for two new pieces of equipment in the children's playground.

### Other concerns

During the meeting a few discussion areas remained of concern. It was agreed these would be specifically focused on in the year ahead. These included the issue of rats, and the problem of flooding and drainage, which has now made the playing field impossible to use during the winter months.

Also of concern was a new proposal to start charging for the use of the tennis courts. For the

moment, having subsequently written a strong objection to the Council, the Friends have abated this proposal. However, the issue is believed to remain ongoing.

The Friends always welcome people to get in touch. They can be emailed at [friendsofcherrytreewood@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofcherrytreewood@gmail.com)



First impressions: The proposed new High Road entrance to Cherry Tree Wood

## Wood wades onto the wetlands list

By Daphne Chamberlain

The return this winter of the mini-lake in the middle of Cherry Tree Wood attracted these winged visitors, identified by the photographer Maggie Eiseman as Egyptian geese.

Maggie told *The Archer*: "I'm no expert, but my appreciation of local wildlife has grown during our weird pandemic time, like so many people's. Egyptian geese are common in lots of London parks (Avenue House, the Heath, Waterlow Park), and you can see some which look just like these guys in ancient Egyptian tomb paintings. I was charmed when I saw the geese for the first time in our park, and watched them fly away together in the direction of Fordington Road an hour or so later."

The RSPB say that Egyptian geese, which are native to Africa south of the Sahara and the Nile Valley, are frequently seen on ornamental ponds, and now can be found on gravel pits and lowland lakes and wetlands. In the UK, the north Norfolk coast holds the highest numbers.



Flying visit: Egyptian geese on the waterlogged grass. Photo Maggie Eiseman

## RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

### Platinum bond

Here we go again. Welcome to February, the coldest, cruellest month when your credit card is still maxed out from Christmas and your bank manager is sending you rude texts about overdrafts. The only thing to look forward to is St Florists Day and the chance to overspend on flowers, chocolates and meals in cheesy restaurants. Or is it? Because you could be celebrating the Platinum Jubilee.

Yes, that's right, because 6 February is when a 56-year-old man died in London and a 25-year-old naval officer's wife and mother of two got his job. OK, so she was in Kenya on a kind of working holiday when her husband gave her the sad news. He probably had to get down on one knee and remember to call her something different, but all the same, that was when 'the new Elizabethan age' began.

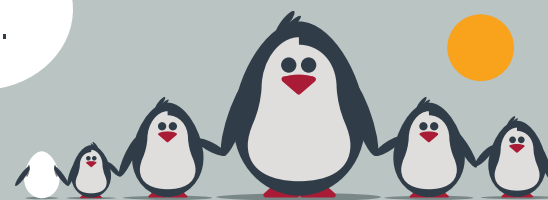
Back then things were different. Men wore hats, there was only one TV station and people 'knew their place', mostly in the queue for rationed bread, meat and almost everything else. By the time she got back to London she was in appropriate black and having to face the fact that nothing would ever be the same again: new house at the end of The Mall, new job and having to meet the Prime Minister every week. And what a PM at the time, an ageing aristocrat and former war leader who was droolingly infatuated with the new queen.

Now, 70 years on, she can look back in shock and horror at all that's changed. In no particular order, two more kids, numerous grandchildren and another 14 prime ministers. That's the good bits. The rest? Two divorces, assorted scandals, and a country that lost its Empire and lost its way. Once we were out of Europe, then inside Europe and then out again. Once there was an optimistic dream of a new age when all would get better, now there is a pandemic and a Churchill tribute act hanging on by his fingertips (at time of going to press).

But she has got one thing to look forward to, a four-day bank holiday at the beginning of June when a new platinum pudding will be launched, kids will wave flags and troops will march about wearing 19th century uniforms. Maybe she will wonder why they're doing all that in June. I mean why are we celebrating the anniversary of her coronation, not the day when she actually came to the throne? I bet a certain fat bloke in Westminster wishes we were all celebrating now to distract us from lockdown-party-gate.

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## Potatoes, the perfect starter crop

By Piers Reilly

**Although February is the month when many of us stare hungrily at whatever amount of bare earth we possess, dreaming of summer tomatoes or strawberries or fresh herbs, it is first worth considering how much effort all that takes**

You sow your seeds and then you'll need to sprout, plant, prune, support, water, fertilise, defend, and put copious amounts of time, effort, and patience into the growing season often to produce just a handful of tomatoes or a scattering of strawberries.

Quality is the point, of course, rather than quantity, plus it's great fun to pluck some of your bounty straight from the plant and shove it into someone's face saying: "See that? Go on, give it a smell. I created it and it's delicious!" But while we do that, how many calories did we actually produce and how much energy did we expend to get them?

### Humble and hardy

The point here is not to suggest we all start growing cereal crops. While it would be utterly hilarious to see individual tiny wheat fields, harvesting wouldn't be very practical. Instead my suggestion is simple, humble, and delicious: potatoes.



*Sons of the soil: Potatoes are a relatively easy crop to get right*

Grow some and see what happens. They are the perfect crop for beginners. Technically with a potato, you can just grab one and stick it in the ground to make more within a few months. The devil is of course in the details, they're not fool proof, but they are hardy and, with care and watering, anyone can try no matter their circumstances.

Growing from seed, potatoes give you access to far more varieties than you can find in a supermarket. And if you only have a small space they can be grown in pots, buckets, and even cardboard boxes. I urge you to try this spring by making space for one or two potato plants. Experiment, and see how much produce you can produce.

## A welcome retreat to revitalise hardworking health workers

By Ruth Anders

**Almost two years ago, industrious fingers started making NHS laundry bags and, all over East Finchley, rainbow posters began to appear in windows in recognition of the sacrifices and dedication of our health services personnel.**

Resident Lucie Ormerod found a way to go a step further by offering her services to Reclaim Yourself NHS Gift Retreats, a remarkable initiative providing sponsored retreats to exhausted NHS healthcare teams and launched by north Londoner Jools Sampson.

Lucie met Jools online last spring, when their businesses had been paused by the grip of Covid restrictions. Lucie, who has worked in the field of health and wellbeing for many years, offered her holistic healthcare services to two retreats.

### Making a difference

After three days pampering with yoga, aromatherapy, massage and reflexology at venues in the countryside, Lucie told *The Archer*: "It was a privilege to do something positive and see the impact of our retreats on guests. They left us looking very different from when they arrived."

Applications from NHS staff are reviewed by an independent committee who shortlist individuals before finalising a group from different hospitals and professional backgrounds, ensuring a diverse and well matched bunch of people from around the UK.

A recent NHS guest told



*Wellbeing: Lucie Ormerod offered her health therapies to NHS workers*

the team: "Thank you for my retreat... I don't think I've ever felt so calm and relaxed. It was very therapeutic to spend time with other healthcare workers and discuss our experiences, compare notes and offer support to each other."

### Fundraising

Having worked on three such events, Lucie fervently hopes to work on more Sussex-based opportunities in the spring and summer, following another busy winter for NHS staff. However,

this can only be achieved through a further fundraising effort. Despite generous support from venues, chefs and others, there is still a significant cost in funding travel, food and miscellaneous fees. With a pot of £1,000 already raised, a further £1,500 needs to be achieved to run the next retreat for 16 attendees.

If this is something you feel you could support, in however modest a way, please donate via their Gofundme page: [www.gofundme.com/f/nhs-gift-retreat](http://www.gofundme.com/f/nhs-gift-retreat)

## Tips on eating for energy in winter

*Local nutritionist Elisa Tricon explains the best foods to eat to keep energy levels high in the winter months. Along with cold temperatures and shorter days, winter often means a lack of energy and motivation for many people. They tend to turn to sugary treats and comfort foods for a little boost while avoiding the gym like the plague. However, it may be this drive to self-indulge with treats that actually leads to a lack of energy.*

Eating well-balanced, healthy and regular meals containing good quality protein, healthy fats, and an array of brightly-coloured, plant-based foods helps promote good energy levels, support our immune system and mitigate the winter blues. Here are my top three recommendations for food choices this winter:

1. Choose complex carbohydrates minimally processed. Foods like whole grains, sweet potatoes, squash and legumes are excellent sources of carbohydrates that provide you with a steady energy source. Avoid simple carbs options such as sugar, white bread, baked treats, etc., which can cause low energy slumps and cravings.

2. Eat a nutrient-rich diet for immune support. Some of the essential nutrients that assist immune function are vitamin C (from vegetables and fruit), zinc (meat, beans, whole grains), and vitamin D (from oily fish, eggs, liver).

3. Support your gut by eating a diverse diet rich in fibre and fermented foods. Gut bacteria manufacture about 95% of the body's serotonin, which influences mood. In other words, if your gut is happy, then you are too!

I recommend starting by making small changes to ease yourself into those good habits. For example:

- Swap your white bread with a low-sugar, wholegrain version
  - Instead of peeling your vegetables, eat them with skin for extra fibre
  - Enjoy vegetable-rich, warming soups and stews
  - Carry some nuts with you (rich in fibre) for snacking instead of overly sugary or salty foods
  - Make a weekly trip to a local greengrocer or subscribe to a vegetable box delivery scheme to commit to a good weekly intake.
- Even just one small step is better than no step at all. For more information on nutritional upkeep and fighting winter blues, check out my website at [www.livingwellbee.com](http://www.livingwellbee.com)

## Become an insider at historic Kenwood

**Anyone interested in art and architecture who fancies something new and interesting to do with their spare time is invited to become part of the volunteer team at Kenwood.**

Cared for by English Heritage, Kenwood is a neoclassical villa on the edge of Hampstead Heath, and is one of London's hidden gems. The breathtaking interiors and stunning world-class art collection, including Rembrandt's *Portrait with Two Circles*, are free for everyone to enjoy.

The team there is currently looking for people to join its band of Explainer Volunteers, who help bring the stories of Kenwood and its collection to life. No specific skills are required to join, just a genuine enthusiasm for getting involved and helping to share information.

A day in the life of the team involves everything from answering questions on 'The Gouty Chair' (one of the first prototype wheelchairs), to explaining the importance of Vermeer's *The Guitar Player*, which is one of just 36 surviving paintings by the artist.

"Our volunteers are at the forefront of our visitor experience, and engage with all

those who come through the door, from regulars who pop in weekly to see a favourite painting, to those who have never stepped through our doors before," said Kenwood's Holly Walker.

If you think you might be interested, you can find both the role description and an online application form by typing 'Volunteer at Kenwood' into your search engine.



*Stately home: Kenwood is looking for tour volunteers*





## Letters

### Traffic fumes

Dear Editor,

Started in November 2020, and due to continue until March 2022, the bus and cycle lane traffic scheme on the A1000 through East Finchley and North Finchley is a disaster. There have been many comments on the scheme, the majority adverse, on the basis that up to three times a day there are long queues of cars crawling along, emitting pollution as they stop and start, but very little use by cyclists, and that parking restrictions introduced on the route have had an adverse effect on local shops. Also that rat runs have developed as motorists use side streets.

Even some cyclists object to the scheme, in which the cycle lane stops and starts several times. The posts which separate the cycle lane are repeatedly knocked down. Moreover the bus lane from East Finchley Fortis Green traffic lights going north is used by only one bus, the 263, so why take half the road for it? As the time for 'consultation' ends in March, it would be reasonable for Barnet Council to say what form the consultation will take, who will be consulted, and in particular what measurements have been made of the numbers of cars and cyclists using the scheme. However when I have asked the question of the Governance Officer, three times so far, I have been told each time that the Highways team will reply. They have not done so. It does seem that the council is trying to steamroller the scheme in, but let us see what if anything they will do to clarify their plans and allow for real consultation.

**Barry H White,**  
Address supplied.

### Can we have our bench back?

Dear Editor,

The public bench outside the Monkey Puzzle Nursery on High Road, opposite East Finchley tube station, disappeared recently. This was a long-standing and useful staging post for the elderly to take a break. Can we have it back please?

Also, for some time now the audible signal on the pedestrian crossing outside the tube has not been functioning. I informed Transport for London a few years ago, but no action was taken. This must be very hazardous for blind people.

**Jacky Wood,**  
Address supplied.

### Puppet pantomime

Dear Editor,

I was grateful and honoured to see the article 'Winter Pantomime for the NHS' in your January edition and I hope people will donate to Whittington Hospital through the JustGiving link in the article.

However, I need to correct the lines that I'd raised money with my singing nightingale puppet. I had originally wanted to do this, but the health and safety team objected to the idea of me bringing strangers' cash into the hospital and said no on these grounds. It was in response to this that the fundraising department suggested an online show.

As I don't feel right accepting credit for raising money I haven't, I felt I needed to clarify that I wasn't allowed to use the nightingale puppet. The rest of the article was correct and I greatly appreciate *The Archer* promoting the show, not so much for me and the other actors, but for the NHS.

**Jake Eiseman-Renyard,**  
Fortis Green, N2.

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

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Picked apart: Donated items left in bags were scattered across the pavement outside All Aboard. Photo Lynn Winton

## Take care not to leave charity shop donations outside

By Diana Cormack

**One morning just before Christmas passers-by on the High Road were greeted with heaps of goods strewn along the pavement outside the All Aboard charity shop and beyond.**

Many such shops display notices requesting that donations are brought to staff inside during opening hours. Those left outside are subject to being ransacked, with the remaining items often no longer classed as appropriate for sale.

However, one of the All Aboard volunteers said that these particular black sacks had been put out after closing time the previous evening to be collected

as rubbish at 6am the following day. There was no indication of what they contained and the situation would be looked at.

They now put these black sacks into stronger pink ones on which details of the refuse collectors are clearly marked. Hopefully this might deter some of the night-time searchers and prevent them from littering our pavements as well as depriving the charity of funds.

## What your library card can do for you

By Daphne Chamberlain

**East Finchley Library has returned to its pre-pandemic opening hours. For all users and potential users, here is a selection of items from the latest edition of the Barnet Libraries Newsletter.**

### Get a library card and save money

Having a library card will help you avoid overdue fines. If your correct email address is on your account, you will get reminders of when your items are due.

A card also lets you read newspapers and magazines free online, get free eBooks and audiobooks and borrow DVDs at a low cost.

### Joining or renewing membership

If you are not yet a member and want to join Barnet Libraries you can do so online at [www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries). If your email address is on your library account, you will be told when your card is due to expire.

### Advance reservations

A selection of the biggest book releases is arriving very soon. You can request them through the Select and Collect service by clicking the link to the catalogue. You will need your library card number and PIN to log into your account and request the item.

### Who Else Writes Like...?

If you have exhausted your favourite authors, then [www.whoelsewriteslike.com](http://www.whoelsewriteslike.com) offers suggestions of others you might like to try. Search by author, character or series, and you will find authors who write in a similar vein, plus additional information on authors' websites, etc.

### Covid-induced staff shortages

The libraries service apologises for any alteration to services and events brought about by staff shortages, and recommends that you check opening hours before visiting.

## Free concerts back on

**East Finchley Methodist Church resumes its popular series of free Sunday evening concerts this month with a programme of three works for trio. Cellist Maryan Balkwill, violinist Junko Ishigaki and pianist Caroline Soresby will perform Trio Pathétique by Glinka, Elegie for Piano Trio by Josef Suk and Dumky Trio by Dvorak.**

The concert takes place at the church on the High Road, opposite the junction with Creighton Avenue, on Sunday 13 February at 7.30pm. Admission is free with a collection in aid of the Nordoff Robbins



No news: The station's newspaper stands have turned into bins

## New use for newspaper stands?

**The two newspaper and magazine stands outside East Finchley station that once held copies of Time Out and Capital AM seem to have fallen out of use.**

However, at the time of writing, some people are dropping their rubbish in them instead, despite there being a black litter bin within a few steps. This may be better than scattering it on the pavement, but what happens when the stands are full?



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# The Archer

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Dominating play: Wingate & Finchley, in blue, on their way to beating visitors East Thurrock 5-0 in January. Photo Martin Addison

## Battling Wingate & Finchley blow away the winter woes

By Dom Hogan

Football club Wingate & Finchley were running the risk of relegation from the Isthmian Premier Division following a poor few months, but their recent form has propelled them up to 15th spot.

Having struggled to keep a clean sheet all season, the Blues finally succeeded in this away at Margate in December, winning 1-0, with Dylan Kearney scoring for the fourth consecutive game.

But not even Kearney's goals could prevent Wingate's arch-rivals Haringey Borough coming from behind to snatch a 2-1 win at their Maurice Rebak Stadium in Summers Lane, N12, later that same month.

Wingate then lost to Merstham on New Year's Day, before finally recording con-

secutive home clean sheet victories, the first of which came in arguably the best game of the season.

The Blues welcomed fellow strugglers East Thurrock United to the Maurice Rebak Stadium on January 3, where a dominant team performance saw them run out 5-0 winners.

Wingate then beat Bowers & Pitsea 2-0 at home for their third win in five and only their second home clean sheet of the season; they now look confidently to the spring. This strong momentum will be key

as Wingate look to build a run of results before clashes with Cray Wanderers on 12 February, which promises to be entertaining, before a derby against Enfield Town on 15 February.

### Training sessions

The club is also offering Development Football Sessions with their UEFA A Licensed coach Diego Nobre on Saturdays from 9.30am to 11am. Sessions cost £8 each and you can either pay as you play, or book blocks of ten sessions, with everyone aged five and above welcome. For more information, visit [www.wingatefinchley.com/development-sessions](http://www.wingatefinchley.com/development-sessions)

## Swim in winter water and you can face anything!

By Jane Revell

Outside it's a chilly 6°C with an icy wind making it feel even colder. In the water, it's a chilly 6°C too, with ripples on the surface of the pond. Fancy a quick dip, or maybe even a leisurely swim alongside some mandarin ducks?

I often do and I'm not alone. The number of people embracing cold water swimming is booming right now. When I first started winter swimming at the Kenwood Ladies Bathing Pond in 1994, there were just a

Nowadays it can sometimes be hard to find a peg to hang all your numerous layers of warm clothes on... and you might have to wait for a shower. So what do we all get out of it?

### Alive and buzzing

For me, the swimming itself is a moment of peace, magic, connection and awareness. It shocks me into being present and completely grabs my attention. It makes me feel very alive.

And it's not just about the swimming. The feeling of camaraderie and mutual sup-




Lovely once you're in: One of the three swimming ponds on Hampstead Heath

port between co-swimmers and life guards is an essential element of the experience too. As is the terrific buzz you get afterwards - physical, mental and emotional - which can last for hours. Basically, if you can face water of 6°C, you feel you can face anything.

When I've asked other winter swimmers why they do it, they've talked about all the benefits to our health and wellbeing, and used words like life-affirming, joyful and invigorating. Some have said that it's helped them deal with issues or with long Covid. Others that it's helped cope with grief or soothe severe physical pain. The list is endless.






### Feel like taking the plunge?

If you do, next month's Archer will offer a few practical guidelines for safe swimming. In the meantime, there's plenty of useful information at [outdoorswimmingsociety.com](http://outdoorswimmingsociety.com) and at [cityoflondon.gov.uk](http://cityoflondon.gov.uk) (for the Hampstead Heath Ponds). And remember, it's always wise to check with your doctor first before embarking on a new activity like this.



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