



YOUNG ARCHER



Free fall: A young scout from the 224 North London group tries indoor skydiving.

Air Scouts fly high but need help

The 224 North London Air Scouts, located on the border of East Finchley and Highgate, have been making up for two years of being unable to run activities due to the pandemic. Now they are doing everything possible to give the Scouts an enviable range of evening and weekend adventures.

Most recently they have been taking to the air with indoor skydiving, using a system of high-powered fans at the iFly Centre in Milton Keynes. They've also been snowboarding, learned to shoot air-rifles and archery, played laser tag and tried scuba diving, kayaking and capoeira. And they are doing all the traditional Scout activities, such as earning badges for photography, first aid or camping.

As with all Scout groups around the country, the 224

North London Air Scout Group is run 100% by volunteers and meets in the evenings and weekends. Anyone can volunteer from late teens through to pensioners; no previous scouting experience is required, just a passion to help young people and a willingness to also learn new skills.

Join us

Currently the 224 group doesn't have a Beaver Scout Section (six to eight years) and would love to support a team

of adults who may wish to volunteer with Beaver Scouts. If you are interested, contact the Group Scout Leader, Del, at gsl@224northlondonscouts.org.uk

For any boys or girls, interested in joining Cubs (for 8 to 10.5 years, meeting on Tuesdays from 6.30pm to 8pm) or the Scouts (for 10.5 to 14 years, meeting on Wednesdays from 7pm to 8.30pm), contact the 224 on the above email or come along and talk to them at East Finchley Festival.

Why netball could be so good for you

By Anna M, aged 13, Archer Academy student
I have been playing netball for around five years now. My love for the sport started in year four when my PE teacher in primary school recommended I try joining a netball club called AP Saints, as I was enjoying it in school PE so much.

Funnily enough, in the beginning I hated the idea and told my parents that I wasn't ready to join a club with so many new people. So, I skipped the first session. That was a huge mistake, however, because my friends who did go told me that it was so much fun and I should give it a go.

England one day. To be playing at such a high level is so inspiring and netball finds new ways to push me every single day.

Over the weekend we sometimes play tournaments in addition to league matches. Last weekend, my team came first in the regional championships, making us the best netball club



Team spirit: Anna's NP Saints team celebrate a win

The following week I decided I would go and see what it's like. That was the best decision I've ever made. To this day I play in that same club and in the past years have worked my way up from the junior team to the A-team, making so many friends along the way.

Commitment ... and fun

Not long ago I went to trials for the London Pulse Academy and got in! That team trains girls all over London to play for

in London and the southeast. Soon we will be attending nationals and I can't wait.

For anyone who's thinking about taking up netball, just know it's a lot of commitment if you are looking for something serious, but it is also such a great way to de-stress and spend time with your friends. Netball has helped my mental health a lot and the feeling when you succeed at something you love so much is truly amazing.

Football team scouting for new players

A local youth football team is looking for new players ahead of the next season. Hampstead Hill Wanderers play in the Regents Park Youth League and train on Saturday mornings between 10am and 12pm on Hampstead Heath extension.

Any child born between 1 September 2008 and 31 August

2009 will be eligible. The side is particularly looking for new outfield players and two goalkeepers to fill this age group. The Wanderers are a voluntary team who do not charge for coaching and their ethos is to allow sport for all. The only costs are contributions towards pitch hire and equipment. For more details, contact Mark Simons at marksimons2@me.com



Superheroes: Four youngsters from The Learning Experience nursery in their fundraising costumes

Nursery children help to grant wishes

Youngsters and staff at East Finchley nursery The Learning Experience have raised more than £2,500 for the Make-A-Wish UK charity, which helps dreams come true for critically ill children. Their fundraising activities have included a pyjama day, raffle, bake sale and a superhero day when everyone got to dress up as their favourite character.

Make-A-Wish, established in the UK in 1986, creates life-changing wishes for children aged three to 17 who are living with a critical condition. Six-year-old Sophia, from Harrow, was granted her wish to "have lots and lots of

chocolate" by the charity in October 2021, having been diagnosed with heart failure at 10 weeks.

"It's been a really good way of talking about illness with the children, especially our pre-school rooms," said

Chantelle Gudgeon, manager at The Learning Experience. "When we first started talking about Make-A-Wish UK, they kept asking if the children could come and play with them, so that they could be happy with us."

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