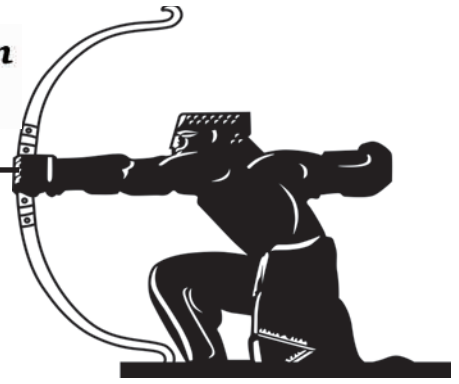




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# The Archer



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## Back on! Race the Neighbours event is saved

By John Lawrence

The massively popular Race the Neighbours event that brings together amateur runners to compete against each other over a 10km course between East Finchley and Muswell Hill has been saved from cancellation.

We reported last month that the volunteer organisers of the annual sporting highlight had reluctantly stepped down after seven years due to pressures on their time. This year's race in June was pulled from the calendar.

But now it's back on after the North London Hospice stepped in. The team there heard the sad news from one of their doctors who takes part each year and decided the race would be the perfect fit for their own calendar of events raising funds to provide free end-of-life care for patients and their families across Barnet, Haringey and Enfield.

so it seemed like an incredible opportunity and one that we didn't want to miss.

"Racegoers can rest assured that we aren't planning on changing anything about this much-loved event. We will be keeping the format and the ethos the same."

### Perfect twist

Avi Freeman, one of the original race organisers, said it was "remarkable and fantastic news" and revealed there was a further little twist that made the handover even better. "At the end of the very first race in 2015 when we had a modest excess we wanted to donate it to a charity," said Avi. "We



Classic sight: A vintage double-decker makes its way down the High Road past the Phoenix Cinema on one of the charity runs. Photo Mike Coles

## On board with the double deckers

Nostalgia levels went all the way to the top deck when a number of Routemaster buses rolled through East Finchley last month as a fundraiser for Red Nose Day.

The vintage double-deckers, always a favourite with Londoners, dated from the 1950s to the 1980s. The routes operating for the special event on Sunday 10 March were the 102 between Muswell Hill and Golders Green, and the 603 from Muswell Hill to Swiss Cottage, both of which pass through East Finchley.

Passengers were free to step on and off with all funds raised from donations and the sale of programmes going to Comic Relief. Retired bus managers, drivers and conductors were on board to keep the routes running smoothly.

See Ricky Savage, p9.



Friendly rivalry: The runners set off in last year's Race the Neighbours. Photo Mike Coles

### Team in place

With a dedicated team of organisers already in place, the hospice will work closely with the former Race team to make sure it goes ahead in June, setting off from Cherry Tree Wood, N2, as usual.

"We are excited to get the race back on its starting blocks," said Anna Cooper, the hospice's Director of Fundraising. "Our community gives a lot to us, and this is one way we can give something valued back to them,

tried to find one with a strong connection to both N2 and N10. Anyhow, you guessed it... it was of course North London Hospice. All of us and them have reflected warmly on this. We even found the letter we sent them with the cheque."

Race the Neighbours will take place on Sunday 30 June, setting off at 9am from Cherry Tree Wood. There are 500 places available. To register go to: [register.enthuse.com/ps/event/RacetheNeighbours](http://register.enthuse.com/ps/event/RacetheNeighbours)

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