



Green oasis: The Fortis Green Tennis Club

## Homes plan for tennis club site turned down

By Diana Cormack

**A controversial proposal to build five houses and a block of three flats on part of Fortis Green Tennis Club site, taking away one of the four courts and reducing the open space, has been turned down by Haringey Council.**

The decision last month by the Planning Services team came nine months after the end of a public consultation about the proposed redevelopment.

The tennis club land is owned by Muswell Hill United Reform Church and is in Haringey, whilst vehicular access would only be possible through Barnet Council territory.

So concerned residents living around the area plus tennis club members had made their feelings known both to Haringey and Barnet councils. Last summer, East Finchley councillor Arjun Mittra met

with residents living off Southern Road, Summerlee Gardens, Shakespeare Gardens and Cherry Tree Road, which was in line to lose its cul-de-sac status to create a new vehicle access into the development.

Problems such as traffic dangers, parking, the club's potential loss of members, space and its green and tree-lined setting were also raised with Catherine West, MP for Hornsey and Wood Green.

The club is welcoming new members at the moment. Membership info can be found on [www.fortisgreentennis.com](http://www.fortisgreentennis.com)

## Booking opens for summer Proms in the Suburb

By David Melsome

**Booking opens this month for the Proms at St Jude's Music and Literary Festival, which is promising another star-studded programme of events over nine days in late June.**

The festival kicks off with LitFest on Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 June when eight best-selling authors will discuss their latest books at The Henrietta Barnett School in Hampstead Garden Suburb. Among them will be comedian and actor Sir Michael Palin, BBC Radio 3 presenter Petroc Trelawny and Tracy Chevalier, the world-renowned author of *Girl With A Pearl Earring*.

The music programme at neighbouring St Jude on the Hill features world-class musicians like percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie, The Transatlantic Ensemble performing



Proms guest: Michael Palin

Fleetwood Mac's iconic Rumours album and Grammy Award-winning band The

## School chef sizzles as TV kitchen contest heats up



Kitchen contest: CCF school chef Amber Francis with Great British Menu judges Andi Oliver and Michael Caines

**Amber Francis, head chef at Christ's College Finchley, is turning out to be one of the stars of the BBC's Great British Menu, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.**

Amber, the first school head chef to appear on the show, topped her local heat after serving up an array of dishes inspired by influential figures from the South West region. She will now go on to compete against winners of other regional heats for a chance to cook one course of the final four-course banquet. Amber said: "Feeding hundreds of teenagers every day has given me a new appreciation and different perspective on food, creativity and nutrition, all of which I'll be putting to good use in this competition."

Amber joined Christ's College Finchley in East End Road in late 2023 and, together with the charity and the school's support, retrained the kitchen team, introducing new menu and food education initiatives

Headteacher of Christ's College Finchley, Dr Ruth Hill

said: "The work of Amber and her team has been transformative. Every day up to 1000 pupils are treated to food made

from scratch and within school budgets."

The show is available to watch now on the iPlayer.

## RICKY SAVAGE... THE VOICE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

### Sucker punch

**Sometimes things happen that drag you screaming and kicking back to when you were young and reckless. Sometimes just when you've haven't recovered from one shock, another turns up to leave you flat out on the floor. And that's what has happened to me.**

Back when I was young and obsessed with music, I got bored with the cheesecloth and denim posing and wanted something harder that really would annoy the grown-ups. Okay, there was David Bowie doing his spaceman act, but that was too clean for me. And then I tuned into The Old Grey Whistle Test to watch Whispering Bob Harris enthusing over California and flares and found what I was looking for... and it wasn't from California.

The New York Dolls were not nice or normal tripped out hippies, they were raw. As they blasted through 'Jet Boy', looking weird and dangerous with Johnny Thunders flicking out licks like knives and David Johansen, all high heels and poses singing about things too weird for suburbia, I thought this could be for me. When Bob Harris described them as 'mock rock' I knew for certain. There were only two patchy, but electric LPs, before they crashed and burned, but they were the start of something special.

In the sleazy world of New York rock they weren't the only ones, The Ramones were starting out and what would become Blondie was beginning. This was a world so far from London and California that I started looking for something equally strange and annoying in London. It took a couple of years to find it, but in 1976 punk arrived and I was there at the start.

Everyone talks about the Sex Pistols. They were in your face, aggressive and marketed to the limit by Malcolm McLaren, but they were just one of a quartet of miscreant trailblazers. There was also The Clash, wrapped in a political flag and The Stranglers, a bunch of time-served pub rockers who made a career out of being nastier than they really were.

But most of all, for me, there was The Damned. Why? Because they didn't seem to take themselves too seriously and because, when Brian James wrote 'New Rose' the band produced one of the greatest two and a half minutes of adrenaline rush I'd ever heard.

But times changed, the Dolls never got to a third album and The Damned were not the same after Brian James left in 1977. The Pistols exploded by the end of 1977 and even if the others continued, it was never the same. It was just last month within the space of a couple of short weeks that I was taken back to those days by the death of David Johansen, the last surviving Doll, and then Brian James dying a week or so later. So I did the only thing I could do and dug out my old vinyl and reminded myself why they changed everything for me.

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