



Seniors walk in road to avoid trip hazards

By John Lawrence

People aged in their 70s, 80s and 90s are calling for action after being forced to walk in the middle of the road to avoid dangerous trip hazards on the pavements.



Watch your step: A mountainous tree root is just one of the pavement obstacles in Sylvester Road. Photo Annette Morris

Residents of The Finchley Charities homes in Wilmot Close, N2, have been campaigning for two years for repair work to be carried out on the walkways in nearby Sylvester Road. For most of them, this is their main route to the nearest shops in the High Road and to the 263 bus route. But severe cracks and mounds caused by tree roots, along with loose and uneven paving slabs, mean there are several spots on both sides of the road that are impassable for anyone less steady on their feet or with a bulky walking frame. Annette Morris, who has been leading the campaign, says this means many of her neighbours would rather walk out into the road, between the two sides of closely parked cars, rather than risk falling over an obstacle. Annette said: "The pavement is generally in a shocking condition and it's getting worse all the time. There are paving stones that actually rock when you walk on them, and large mounds of tree roots that you are forced to climb over. Even for those who are sure-footed it

is a difficult road to walk down."

Pavement petition

Annette originally reported the pavements to Barnet Council and submitted a petition signed by fellow residents in 2023. At the time, she received the backing of Cllr Danny Rich, who is a trustee at The Finchley Charities. Cllr Rich is now Mayor of Barnet and is continuing to support the residents in their call for repair work to be carried out.

"We've done as much as we can and taken it through all the right channels but still nothing has been done," said Annette. "We all worry that someone will suffer a serious injury down Sylvester Road before the council takes notice."

A Barnet Council spokesperson told The Archer that the council was investing a record £97m to fix Barnet's roads and pavements. He added: "We will inspect Sylvester Road and ensure that damage that meets the council level for repair will be fixed and are working to develop a solution for raised tree roots."

Date set for murder trial

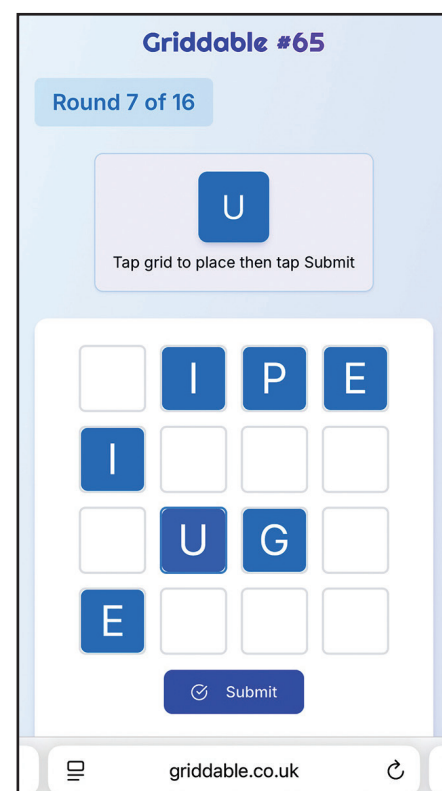
A trial date has been set for the two men charged with the murder of Anthony Littler close to East Finchley tube station in 1984.

Anthony Stewart, 59, of Old Farm Road, N2, and Michael Stewart, 55, of Station Road,

New Barnet, EN5, will stand trial at the Old Bailey on Thursday 16 April next year. Customs and Excise executive Anthony Littler, 45, was found with serious head injuries on a path leading from the station to East End Road at around 12.15am on 1 May 1984. He died at the scene.



Puzzlers: Matt Robinson and Stuart Miller are hoping their daily word challenge game will take off



Game on: Players use a 4 x 4 grid to form as many words as possible

Move over, Wordle, there's a new word game in town!

By John Lawrence

A word game invented for the digital age by two East Finchley men could be the next smash hit daily challenge to rank alongside global favourites like Scrabble and Wordle.

Brothers-in-law Stuart Miller and Matt Robinson have created Griddable, where players can compete with a friend or against the computer to fill a grid with as many four-letter words as possible.

Sounds easy? Well, not quite, because players take turns choosing letters for the grid, meaning you have to play with the letters you're given... and they may not fit the words you were planning.

Having tried it for myself, I can say it is fun, frustrating and addictive in all the right ways, and it's a great four or five-minute diversion whenever you're on your phone or laptop. It's free to play and no app is required.

Origins of the game

Stuart, who works in financial services and lives in Ashburnham Close, N2, said: "The origin of the game is that my dad used to play this back in the 1950s with a pencil and paper against friends. He then played with us growing up and I challenged Matt on a holiday in Spain about three years ago to a game. We thought it would translate really well to an online version. Matt, who works in the tech

sector and lives in Oakview Gardens, N2, said: "Neither of us are coders so we didn't know how to start developing it, but I was able to use AI platforms to do it for us. After a lot of tweaking and troubleshooting, we created a final version.

"What we wanted was something simple, easy to use with no barriers and no log in. If

people like it and share it, even better. It seems really popular with friends and family and the leaderboards have taken off." The pair are waiting to see if Griddable takes off and may then create a physical version of the game that could be a great stocking filler at Christmas. Try it for yourself at griddable.co.uk



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