

Delivered free to 10,000 homes and businesses across East Finchley
 The Archer is a non-profit-making, non-political & non-religious newspaper, run entirely by volunteers

Senseless

By Maryam Bitezge and John Lawrence

Café, restaurant and business owners are trying to recover from a spate of break-ins and criminal damage along the High Road and beyond that has left them feeling dismayed at being targeted and confused about how to protect their premises.

Doner and burger restaurant Brudis, general store Amy's, café Coffee Bank, Mexican restaurant Taco Bros and Hampstead Dental Studio were among those who had their windows smashed and, in some cases, their premises rifled in the early hours.

CCTV at Taco Bros captured one perpetrator in the act. Footage shows him dressed in a grey Nike hooded top and masked with only his eyes visible. Brudis also captured footage of an intruder. It is not known if the same person, or different individuals, are responsible for the various incidents, which occurred over a period of eight days at the end of September and start of October.

Hit twice

Coffee Bank had just reopened with an enthusiastic new team when their windows were targeted not once but on two separate nights. Owners Clyde, Joli and Adel told The Archer: "It puts you in the place where you wonder what you can do. Right now, we don't know. We can't put iron bars on the window and turn the place into a jail."

Nothing was stolen but the plate glass windows were expensive to replace. The Coffee Bank team emphasised that they are trying to get their business off the ground and

don't have "deep pockets". Over the road at Brudis, the intruder came along at 5.30am on a Saturday morning, found a heavy slab in a nearby garden and used it to smash his way in through a glass pane in the front door. With no cash left on the premises, he left with just an old phone and a few burger buns.

"It's a worry and an expense and nobody needs it," said owner Farzad Fourgh. "We've been in East Finchley for two years and it's a lovely place but this has given us sleepless nights. The police came and said they were going to do their best to catch him but since then I've not seen any officers walking by."

Ruin of business

Khilan Shah, who runs Hampstead Dental Studio in Market Place, NW11, wrote to the Metropolitan Police and Finchley and Golders Green MP Sarah



CCTV image: The perpetrator of the Taco Bros break-in was caught on film.



Criminal damage: One of the smashed windows at Coffee Bank. The café was attacked twice

Sackman to express his frustration. He said: "Like many others, I have built a family-run business from the ground up employing local people, contributing to the economy, and giving back wherever possible.

"The reality is that while businesses like mine do everything we can to strengthen and support our community, petty criminals are left free to continue causing damage without real consequence.

The result is devastating: financial loss, emotional distress, and in some cases the complete ruin of businesses that have taken years to build."

Continues on Page 2

Nursery move

As we went to press, we learned that Monkey Puzzle Nursery will move from its current home in Park House, opposite East Finchley station, to Langley House, further up the High Road opposite Creighton Avenue.

Park House is in line for demolition if the Cherry Tree Quarter housing development goes ahead.

Up to now, it was thought nursery owner Paula Murphy had reached agreement with developers Places for Barnet to create a safe nursery space onsite during construction. Paula told us she hopes to return to the site once the development is complete but is glad that the impact of the building work on the nursery's 120 children will now be avoided.

The move will happen when the current council lease expires at the end of March 2026 although Sarah Sackman MP says she will ask if that can be extended to summer 2026. More in our next edition.

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In this issue

Dangerous dogs p3
Basic income p4
Pigeon death trap p5

Station parking p7
John's Not Mad p9
NEW: Ask Joy p11

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Thank you to The East Finchley Constitutional Club for providing us with a meeting place.

Copy deadlines - December: 14 November; January: 12 December; February: 16 January

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted Compiled by Lynn Winton

Finchley Foodbank has supported people in need in Barnet for ten years, and demand continues to grow. It helps more than 500 people a week with emergency food and essentials. Volunteers are crucial and rewarding roles range from receiving/sorting deliveries and donations to restocking and staffing twice weekly client sessions. The food bank offers connection, growth, and a real sense of purpose. Email finchleyfoodbank@gmail.com to find out how you can give back to your community.

The **224 North London Scouts group** is looking for adults to help its Beavers (ages six to eight) and Cubs (ages eight to ten) have fun, learn new skills, and go on adventures. From games and crafts to cooking, outdoor activities, and trips, no two weeks are the same! You don't need experience, just enthusiasm and a willingness to join in. Whether it's a weekly commitment, occasional help, or support behind the scenes, you'll make a real difference and be part of a friendly team. Interested? Get in touch today to find out more and start your own adventure. Email del@224northlondonscouts.org.uk

Friends of Coldfall Wood & Muswell Hill Playing Fields are a small informal group of volunteers who share a common interest in protecting and enhancing these two green spaces. They are involved in a range of things to support the wood, such as arranging free guided walks and events and supporting its many users (human and animal!). They are always looking for new members - for just a handful of hours a month - to help with admin and liaising with other local groups and the council. For more information, please email: info@coldfallwoods.co.uk

The **North London Hospice** shop in the High Road, N2, would love to hear from people of all ages who are interested in helping out. It offers places for students 16 years old as well and can help you with work experience placements. Please drop into the shop and speak to the manager Anastasiya.

If you'd like your organisation to be included in this column please email news@the-archer.co.uk

Highgate Art Fair

Highgate Art Fair returns for its second edition this month, showcasing a selection of work from 48 international and local artists.

There will be a children's art exhibition and a number of interactive workshops, led by participating artists, giving everyone the chance to learn new techniques and creative processes. The event is partnering with Art Against Knives in

2025, who will bring their Print Pop-Up Shop to the fair, showcasing independent artists, galleries, and collectives.

It all takes place at Highgate Primary School, North Hill, N6, from Friday 7 to Sunday 9 November. Ticket prices are £10 for adults, £8 concessions and free for children. Find out more at www.highgateartfair.co.uk

Tell us the news

Have you got a news story or an interesting photo for us? Tell us what is going on in East Finchley by emailing

news@the-archer.co.uk or leave a message on our free phone line **0800 612 0748**. Thank you.

Continued from Page 1

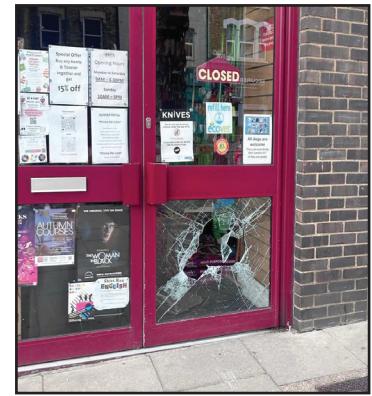
Sarah Sackman said she and East Finchley's councillors had been in constant communication with the police to relay the sense of urgency that those responsible must be caught. She added: "I will be convening local business, the police and council to find long-term solutions to crime and anti-social behaviour on our High Road."

Increased patrols

A Met Police spokesman said: "The neighbourhood policing team have visited the addresses to provide re-assurance and crime prevention advice including increasing security to deter suspects.

"The team have also increased patrols on the High Road and will utilise all relevant Police powers to identify and deter any potential suspects who may be involved in burglary."

Spate of criminal damage



Broken glass: A burglar entered the Brudis restaurant by smashing through the front door, left, and a similar attempt was made at Amy's hardware store

"In general burglary crime within Barnet is currently down 19% for the financial year and the East Finchley ward team are focused on ensuring that Barnet remains a safe place to work and live."

Good neighbours

On a positive note, the businesses we spoke to told us the

Frost fair

The Finchley WI has announced its Annual Frost Fair will be returning for the 14th year at Stephens House and Gardens on East End Road, N3, on Sunday 23 November, from 10.30am to 4.30pm.

This festive event features local artisans offering handmade gifts, edibles, jewellery, candles, artwork and more. Children are encouraged to find many of their favourite characters on post boxes in the Finchley area, adding a touch of festive fun around the area in the run up to the fair.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet

297 Long Lane, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension. Ref: 25/4132/HSE

Ash Tree Court, 106 Prospect Ring, N2

Re-pollard lime tree to previous points removing up to 3m of regrowth to keep tree at a size suitable for its location and as part of regular maintenance. Standing in T1 of Tree Preservation Order. Ref: TPP/0679/25

12-18 High Road, N2

Installation of one internally illuminated fascia sign, four non-illuminated fascia signs, one non-illuminated fascia sign and one internally illuminated projecting sign. Ref: 25/4054/ADV.

Installation of a new plant room at basement level including alterations to existing fenestration including new louvres to rear (east) elevation at basement level. Ref: 25/4053/FUL. Alterations to the existing shop front including new sliding doors at ground floor level. Ref: 25/4052/FUL

49 Baronsmere Road, N2

Single-storey side/rear extension. Ref: 25/4030/HSE

Land between 1 Flaxman Villas and 70 Manor Park Road, N2

Mixed use as a public car park and public open space (Sui Generis). Ref: 25/4045/191

Five Bells, 165-167 East End Road, N2

Remove one 12.5m pole and replace with one 20m pole with wraparound cabinet, remove three antennas and replace with nine antennas, install one cabinet, install one GPS Node and ancillary equipment works. Ref: 25/4000/LIC

5 Park Road, N2

Single-storey side infill extension. Roof extension including rear dormer and three front-facing roof lights. Ref: 25/3956/HSE

72 Hamilton Road, N2

Roof extension involving two rear dormer windows and two front-facing roof lights. Ref: 25/3901/192

67 Leicester Road, N2

Roof extension with one rear dormer window over main roof and one rear dormer over outrigger roof with Juliet balcony, two rear dormer flat roof lights and three front facing roof lights. Ref: IN/2025/2463/A

Ref: 25/3894/192. Single storey side/rear extension. Changes to fenestration. Ref: 25/3893/HSE

Haringey

One and a half Southern Road, N2

Demolition and construction of a new garden room. New kitchen including associated appliances. New lighting and upgrades to existing consumer units. Reconfiguration of existing layout to first and second floors (non-structural). Removal of spiralised staircase and forming of a new staircase to mezzanine level. Forming new timber-framed structure to mezzanine including new roof lights. New floor finishes and decoration works. External building fabric repairs. Ref: FP/2025/1238/A

25 Twyford Avenue, N2

A First-floor side extension and reconfiguration with associated works. Ref: IN/2025/2493

Garages rear of Lynton Grange, Fortis Green, N2

Construction of four two-bed houses (two terraced, two end of terrace) plus one three-bed. Ref: IN/2025/2463/A



Woman needed knee surgery after dog attack

By Cobi Jacobs

A reader has warned about the need to keep dogs under control after her mother was left needing surgery when she was bitten outside her home in East Finchley.

The incident occurred shortly before midnight on Friday, 12 September, as the two women returned to their home in the Prospect Ring area after work.

As she approached the entrance, a large dog, which was off its lead, ran up to her three times. The animal was being supervised by its owner, who ignored repeated requests to restrain it. On the third approach, the dog attacked, biting her on the knee.

The victim's daughter, Yasemin, told The Archer: "My mum was screaming for help, but it all happened so fast. The owner just stood there and then walked away." Following the attack, the victim spent 13 hours in A&E, requiring surgery on the wound.

Beyond the physical impact of the injury, the victim's daughter said her mother has been left feeling anxious and fearful, describing her as "scared to leave the house".

The incident has been reported to the police, though the victim has yet to receive an update. Yasemin urged all dog owners to keep their pets under control.

This attack takes place in the context of growing concerns over dangerous dogs across England and Wales. Last year, there were 31,920 reports of dog attacks on people, a 2% increase from 2023.

This rise has come despite new legislation requiring owners to muzzle breeds deemed dangerous and keep them on leads at all times.

Comedy stars align

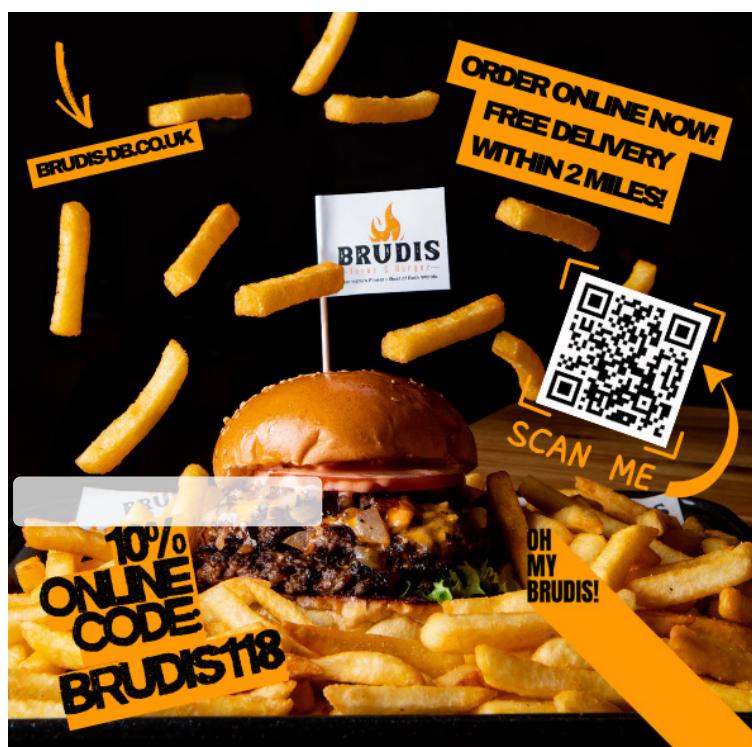
Top comedians Nish Kumar, Kerry Godliman and Rich Hall are among those on the line-up for a fundraiser this month in aid of a Haringey-based charity helping young people.

Fatiha El-Ghorri and Joshua Robertson will also be performing in aid of Head Held High, which leads motivational workshops to coach young people at risk of exclusion or affiliated with knife crime.

The comedy night takes place at The Comedy Store, Oxendon Street, SW1, on Tuesday 25 November. Find out more and book at london.thecomedy-store.co.uk



On stage: Kerry Godliman



The future's yellow: Children at Holy Trinity Primary School out of uniform for World Mental Health Day. Photo Holy Trinity

Tips on staying mellow in yellow

Well done to all of the children at Holy Trinity Primary School in Eagans Close, N2, who dressed in yellow to take part in World Mental Health Day on Friday 10 October.

It's an event organised by the mental health charity Young Minds with the hashtag #HelloYellow, and the children spoke about the different strategies they use to keep themselves calm and happy.

There was everything from going to bed early to eating lots of fruit and vegetables.

The school's young Wellbeing ambassadors will be continuing their work related to this across the year.

Festive party for seniors

Bishop Douglass School will be holding their annual Christmas party for senior East Finchley residents again this year on Thursday 4 December, from 5-7pm. Guests are asked to arrive by 4.45pm in order to make a prompt start. East Finchley residents who are over 65 are welcome and you should book your place without delay.

As usual, you will be welcomed by Year 10 students and enjoy a Christmas meal, followed by carol singing and entertainment by pupils and staff.

Games of bingo and a gift from Santa Claus will round off the evening. Transport can be provided for those residents who are less able.

To book your place, phone 020 8883 0433, leave your name and a contact number and someone will get back to you.

Seasonal switch-on

By Hilary Townley

Christmas starts in East Finchley on Saturday 29 November at 5pm when everyone is invited to celebrate the start of the festive season as dusk gathers.

Our festive lights will be switched on to the sound of heavenly music as carols will be led by our local choirs and seasonal brass band.

In typically quirky East Finchley style our Christmas tree will be like no other for, yes,

Archie's wooden wigwam will shape shift into a totem of festive cheer and as always, thanks to the generosity of Budgens, there'll be mince pies to cheer our souls and mulled wine to warm our voices for. 'Tis the season to be jolly... and to sing!



Festive fun: Get ready for the big switch-on. Photo Mike Coles

Double dose of artworks from HGS

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Art Group is inviting visitors to two events in November.

Their group show, entitled Resonance, runs from Monday 3 November to Friday 28 November at Fellowship House, Willifield Way, NW11 6YD, with a private view and a chance to meet the artists on Thursday 6 November from 7pm.

Then on Saturday 29 November the group stages its Winter Fair from 11am to 6pm at Henrietta Barnett School, Central Square, NW11 7BN, offering handmade gifts ranging from ceramics to glass, wall art to cards and jewellery to prints. Refreshments will be sold in aid of the North London Hospice.

Find out more on both events at hgsart.co.uk



Be part of the conversation on Universal Basic Income

By Tamsin Curror

East Finchley residents have an opportunity to take part in sessions in late November exploring how Universal Basic Income (UBI) might work in practice.

UBI would provide every citizen with regular, unconditional monthly payments and the N2-based Grange Big Local (GBL) project has been exploring this idea since 2023 as a potential response to problems in the current benefits system.

A pilot study with Northumbria University proposed giving 15 local residents £1,600 per month for two years. Through door-to-door conversations and focus groups, GBL has already documented how the current benefits system affects local people, from five-week waits for Universal Credit leaving people without food, to workers trapped in low-paid jobs because taking better-paid work would mean losing housing support.

James Masters, chair of GBL,

said: "A UBI pilot would provide real insight into the problems and poverty traps the welfare system can create. It's so important that people who have lived-experience of this are part of the discussion about how it should be changed." To find out more about taking part in the panels, which are funded by the National Institute for Health Research, sign up for the GBL newsletter at www.grangebiglocal.org.uk

This opportunity comes as the London Assembly publishes a report examining UBI. The Economy, Culture and Skills Committee's report, titled 'Universal Basic Income in London: A Review', draws on evidence from various experts, including testimony from East Finchley residents gathered during a visit arranged by GBL.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

**10 years ago:
November 2015**

Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson officially opened the Archer Academy's new Stanley Road campus, and three Year 7 students reported on the event for this newspaper. After cutting the rope during the ceremony, Tanni answered questions from students. She then addressed the whole school with stories of her own early life and schooldays, highlighting her initial ambition to be a lawyer.

**15 years ago:
November 2010**

After several years of planning and consultation by Haringey Council, new play facilities were finally opened on Muswell Hill Playing Fields. The project was mainly funded by Wimpey Homes and Playbuilder, and nearby facilities also included a skate park and multi-use games area.

**25 years ago:
November 2000**

The Phoenix, believed to be the oldest working cinema in Britain, was granted Grade II listed status by English Heritage. This gave the venue the same architectural status as Finchley's Stephens House in East End Road. The possibility of being listed had been under discussion for some time, and this award highlighted the part the Phoenix played in the history of British cinema.

Coffee and cakes

The new sixth form at Oak Lodge special school in Heath View, N2 started the academic year by holding a MacMillan coffee morning on Friday 26 September.

Class P4 and the Community Room were filled with an impressive array of delicious looking cakes. Colourful iced creations, tempting chocolate items and tasteful plainer pieces had been made by the students and staff in school and at home.

As well as serving these to their visitors, smiling sixth formers politely waited at table, carrying coffee and tea to them. The event in aid of MacMillan Cancer Support raised well over its target of £250, with a final total of £350.



Oak Lodge students with cakes

In remembrance

Finchley Chamber Choir is staging a programme of works to mark Remembrance weekend. Duruflé's Requiem will be accompanied by Tavener's Song for Athene, MacMillan's O Radiant Dawn and other pieces. The concert takes place at Trinity Church, Nether Street, N12, on Saturday 15 November at 7.30pm. Discounted tickets at £18 are available from www.fccchoir.co.uk, with full price tickets on the door.



Super-charged: Tanuja Pandit, CEO of Power Up North London, and Finchley Foodbank Treasurer Helen Doran

Energy advice at the food bank

By Ann Campbell

Finchley Foodbank has teamed up with volunteer-led Power Up North London partner to provide free energy advice to people in need in Barnet.

The food bank runs twice weekly sessions at St Mary's Church in East Finchley for individuals and families experiencing food poverty. These sessions will now be enhanced with advice on energy bills and tariffs, changing suppliers and accessing discounts.

Free energy-saving items will also be available, including LED bulbs, radiator foils and draught-proofing kits, plus

simple, practical tips to reduce energy costs and stay warm.

The partnership launched at the beginning of September, and runs through the winter, with support from Barnet Council's Community Energy Fund.

Paul Woodward, Chair of Trustees for Finchley Foodbank said: "This collaboration comes at a critical time, as the weather gets colder and people start to

struggle with the costs of keeping warm and dry." Tanuja Pandit, CEO at Power Up North London, said "Working in partnership with a well-established organisation, like Finchley Foodbank, means we can make a real impact together on tackling fuel poverty in Barnet."

Find out more at www.finchesfoodbank.org.uk

A carer who is part of the family

By Lynn Winton

A carer who has used her training to provide vital services to many people with disabilities in East Finchley has received a Department of Health Chief Nurse Adult Social Care Gold Award for her dedication to her patients.

Marcia Williams, who works for the Practical Care Agency, commutes here from her home in Goodmayes, Essex, six times a week. I spoke to East Finchley resident Jennifer Pearl who has been assisted by Marcia for seven years. She told me:

"Marcia has never missed a day and is never even late. I know it's her as my doorbell rings on the dot of 7.30am, and she always has a smile. Nothing is ever too much trouble. She keeps me well and she's become part of our family."



Family friend: Jennifer Pearl with nursing award recipient Marcia Williams



Bridge netting becomes death trap for birds

By Craig Johnson

In mid-September I was shocked and saddened along with other passers-by to see a family of pigeons caged inside chicken wire covering piping above the 143 bus stop under the East Finchley tube station bridge.



Trapped: Firemen rescue pigeons, dead and alive, from netting under the tube station bridge

Many of the birds' corpses were hanging through the wire, one live bird had its feet caught and was dangling. Closer inspection revealed baby birds trapped behind the netting.

The irony is that the wire must have been put in place originally to stop birds nesting or roosting under the bridge. But it is clear they have still found

a way in and it has turned into a death trap. I originally contacted the RSPCA who told me to contact Network Rail, who told me to contact Transport for London (TfL) and they told me to contact the RSPCA and the station manager. A bit of swings and roundabouts about who was claiming responsibility. A few days later, my mother contacted

the Wildlife Rescue Team, who called the Fire Brigade to the scene. They came straight away and released the trapped birds, some of which had died over the week.

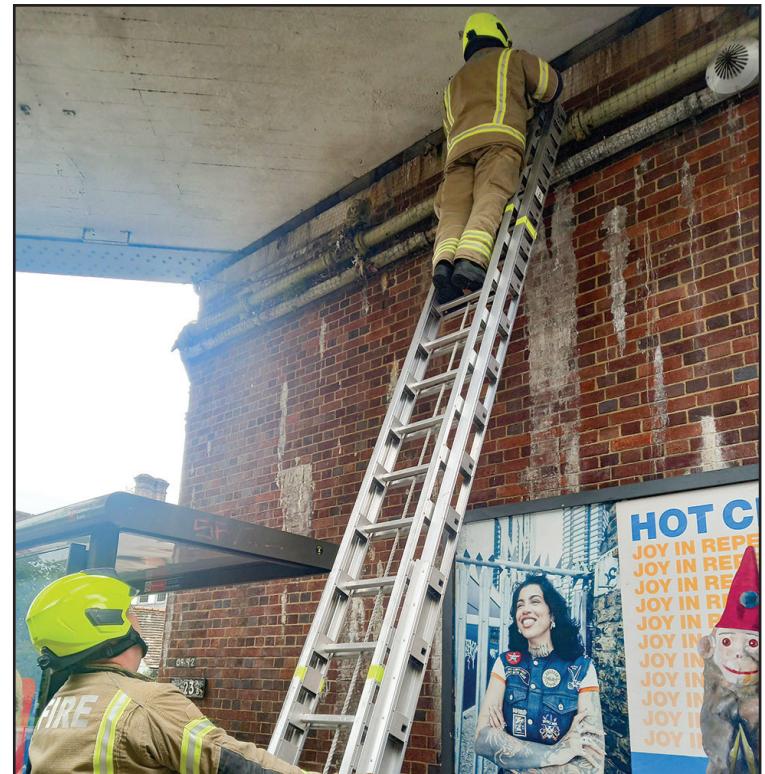
I also contacted Sarah Sackman, MP for Finchley and Golders Green, who has written to TfL to raise the matter with them and, at the time of writing,

was awaiting a response. It seems that the netting is on TfL property and therefore their responsibility.

Look and report

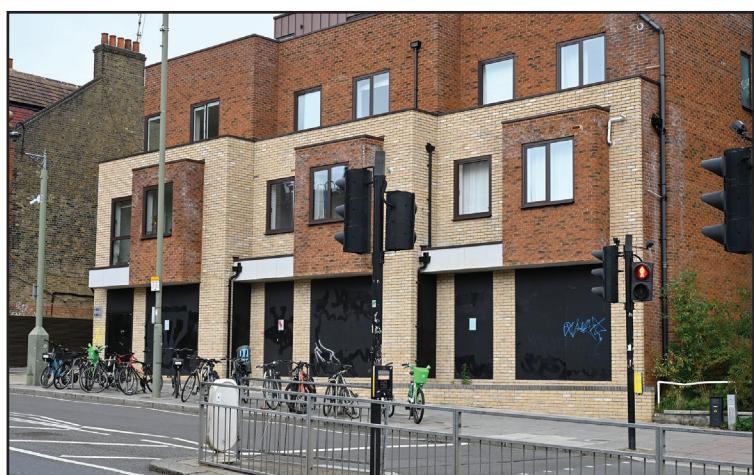
Until a permanent solution is found for this awful situation, could people waiting at the 143 or 263 bus stops under the station side of the bridge

remember to look up and see if any birds are trapped behind the netting? If you see any, please contact an agency like London Wildlife Protection for, as soon as these birds are trapped, they fall under the 2006 Wildlife Protection Act. The Archer has also contacted TfL but at the time of going to press had not received a response.



Tesco plans second store on the High Road

Tesco is getting ready to move into a second store in East Finchley. The supermarket chain is taking over the vacant ground floor of the new housing block at 12-18 High Road, opposite the Tube station.



New store: The future Tesco Express site

The arrival of the Express store will add to the existing Tesco outlet further up the High Road, near the junction with Creighton Avenue.

So far, Tesco has submitted a licensing application to sell alcohol at the new site from 6am to midnight, Monday to Sunday, along with planning applications for the installation of electrical equipment in a basement level and for storefront signage. Some neighbours, including nearby traders, have urged people to oppose the second store, citing concerns

about the parking of daily delivery lorries at a very congested point in the High Road and the threat of independent

stores being driven out of business. The Archer has contacted Tesco for comment.

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Homelessness call

Homelessness project
Housing Justice has issued a call for volunteers in north London to support people forced into rough sleeping across the capital.

The Community Connectors appeal in Barnet and Haringey expands the reach of the existing South East London Citadel project set up in 2020 to help homeless people find somewhere to live and integrate into a community. Rough sleeping

figures in the capital have increased by 58% since 2014, with more than 183,000 Londoners currently estimated to be homeless and living in

temporary accommodation, equivalent to one in 50 Londoners. Find out more and volunteer at housingjustice.org.uk/citadel

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Tourist walks find their way to East Finchley

By Lynn Winton

Most of our readers are aware that they are living in an enviable London enclave, but how much, if anything at all, does the rest of the world know about East Finchley?



The rest is history: Sam Jacobs leads his inaugural London Walk around N2, here at the Northern line. Photo Mike Coles

Now they have a chance to find out, as we have made our first entry into the list of iconic 'London Walks', the first port of call for visitors looking for an expert guided walking tour. N2 now sits alongside the usual attractions like St Paul's Cathedral, the Houses of Parliament and Dickens' London.

I met our convivial City of London Guide Sam Jacobs on a 'dry run' with a couple of other curious tourists, Irina from Russia and Sabrina from Singapore. Both were keen to know how "real" London looks and works, and what was here before. Sam, our guide, lived here with his parents until he went up to Cambridge University and has researched a fascinating historical walk from the Tube station all the way to the Glebelands green area alongside the North Circular.

Highwaymen

The chances are you are reading this while living on either the Bishop of London's old hunting

park, or on those bywords for danger, Finchley Common, the haunt of highwaymen.

The site of your home might once have looked onto the country's most famous hog market, now Market Place, the toll booth for The King's Highway, or the local gibbet on the High Road, thankfully long gone, where a convict's body was left to hang and rot away for years.

We have pubs that still remember the stagecoaches, and a nursery, once an industrial school, that turned the children of the poor into parlour maids and footmen.

Sam weaves an intriguing narrative and whilst it would be wonderful for the High Road to become a destination for first-time visitors, residents might want to soak up the stories of the last 800 years as well. Sam's next walk is on 14 January and you can reserve a place online by searching for East Finchley or Sam Jacobs at www.walks.com.

Woodland rain dance



Tales to tell: Kate Brown leads the Cherry Tree Wood story time. Photo Diana Cormack

October story time led by Kate Brown for the under-nines in the children's nature area by the playground in Cherry Tree Wood ended with a rain dance. This had first been tried in the

spring when the wood's newly-planted quince trees were in need of water. They survived with a little help from the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood group.



In business: Customers enjoy the new Coffee Bank café in the High Road. Photo Mike Coles

Warm welcome for café team

By Maryam Bitegi

After Clyde, Joli and Adel searched across London for a home for their new café, they knew they'd made the right choice within days of arriving in East Finchley.

"We were adopted, that is the real word, adopted," said Clyde. "People of all ages were asking who are you, what are you doing, in a very positive way. They told us about the community, about the families here, about the street's history. We'd been to Dulwich Village, to Willesden, but nothing comes close to East Finchley when it comes to the warmth."

After four months transforming the former Triple Two

premises at 85 High Road, the three partners opened Coffee Bank in September. On one of their first days, Clyde saw a grandmother, parent and child all sitting together. "That's what we want," he said. "Not a restaurant, not just a coffee shop. Somewhere in between."

Open roastery

The café features an open roastery where customers watch coffee being roasted, rare in

London. Craft matcha has become their most popular drink. Unlike most cafés, they blend fresh fruit directly with matcha rather than using syrups. The team plans coffee tasting events and hands-on workshops where customers roast their own beans to take home.

Late at night while working in the café, neighbours knock on the window to check if they need help. "We'd never seen anything like it. Thank you for adopting us," said Clyde.

Santa is coming

A Christmas Fair is being held at St Mary's Catholic Church, 279 High Road, N2, on **Sunday 30 November** from **11am to 2pm**. There will be carol singing, hot food and beverages, a tombola, arts and crafts, a hamper stall, toys, henna and glitter tattoos and much more.

You'll also be able to visit Santa in his Grotto, and all are welcome (it's not just for the young ones). As always, entry is free.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

How to report a crime

- Call **999** in an emergency when there is a danger to life or a crime is in progress

- Call **101** for non-emergencies, if your property has been stolen or damaged, you wish to report drug dealing or a minor traffic accident, and for general police enquiries

- Report crime to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team by email:

eastfinchley.snt@met.police.uk
gardensuburb.snt@met.police.uk or fortisgreen.snt@met.police.uk

Find full details for the local SNTs at www.iloven2.co.uk/local-government-and-policing

- Stay anonymous and report information to Crimestoppers on **0800 555111**

Art for trees

East Finchley artist Denise Ballard-Wyllie is bringing her vibrant prints and paintings to help The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood plant new native trees in the park. Her new exhibition, Buy Art, Grow Trees, runs throughout November and December at Dan & DeCarlo Café, 20 High Road, N2, with proceeds from every sale contributing directly to the tree-planting fund. There's a private view on Wednesday 12 November from 5pm to 7.30pm.

Denise says: "With every artwork sold, we'll be helping to grow new life in the woodland, for people, birds and future generations."



Bird life: One of Denise Ballard-Wyllie's works

Celebration of strange fruits



Roger Chapman. Photo Diana Cormack

On a lovely October afternoon Roger Chapman gave an interesting talk about quince and medlar in the Forest Garden near the Fordington Road entrance in Cherry Tree Wood.

Free quinces were given away along with recipe sheets for dishes involving the ancient fruits.

Landmark for the Proms

This year's Proms at St Jude's season in Hampstead Garden Suburb raised £65,000 for North London Hospice and anti-poverty charity Toynbee Hall, as well as contributing to music education in local schools.

This year's donations will take the volunteers organisation past the landmark of £1.3million donated to charity over 33 years of running the arts and music festival.

Traditionally, £3 in every £4 has gone to help young people at

Toynbee Hall, with the remainder going to the Hospice, but from 2026 onwards, the donations will be split half and half.

At the same time, the dates for next year's festival have been announced as 27 June to 5 July 2026.



Steep increase in tube station parking charges

By David Melsome

A reader recently brought our attention to the rise in parking fees at East Finchley Tube station. The current rate of £10 is sharply up from the £6.50 that was in place less than three years ago and is a 100% increase from 2013, when it rose to £5.

Elisa Foppa told us: "As a regular commuter, I find this change both excessive and unjustified, especially considering the limited improvements to the parking facility itself.

"It is unclear what operational costs could warrant such a steep rise, particularly when the service provided remains basic: no security personnel, minimal maintenance, and no added amenities.

"This increase places an unnecessary financial burden on those who rely on public transport and are trying to make sustainable travel choices. It also risks discouraging use of the station altogether, pushing commuters toward less environmentally friendly alternatives."

Frustration

The car park is owned by Transport for London and operated by management company Saba. In response, TfL said they could understand Elisa's frustration, particularly when

improvements to the facility may not be immediately visible. But parking charges are reviewed periodically "to reflect operational costs and broader transport policy objectives". TfL said: "We are committed to keeping our car parking tariffs affordable, but having last adjusted the tariffs in 2019, we need to make sure that they reflect local rates and demand, while continuing to provide revenue for reinvesting in improving transport.

"Since Saba took over our car parks, they have completed a detailed analysis on each of the station car parks, including factors such as competitors' car parks within 0.5 miles, local authority parking restrictions (controlled parking zones) and current occupancy.

"These price rises will help us make improvements to the car parks in areas such as resurfacing and drainage. We have continued to use the revenue generated from our car parks to reinvest in the transport network and maintain them."

Local issues aired

By Diana Cormack

The East Finchley Town Team social held at the Constitutional Club last month attracted a large number of locals interested in what is going on in and around N2. They responded throughout with comments, questions and suggestions about a variety of topics.

The meeting started with a report on the development of the space outside Budgens and Iceland in the High Road. Earmarked to be our future town square, present plans are hampered by lack of finance.

There was no particular news about the proposed housing developments at Cherry Tree Quarter and Manor Park Road, but meetings are being arranged with the group fighting the Great North Leisure Park and North Finchley developments.

High road issues

Barnet Council's plans to re-introduce domestic food waste collections were welcomed, but there were queries about how this would be managed, particularly for flat dwellers. They might have to use metal,

itemised bins along the High Road for refuse disposal, which would sadly add to the street furniture.

Feelings ran high about the recent spate of vandalism/burglaries along the High Road and about the possibility of a second Tesco store opposite the station, with its application for an extensive liquor licence and potentially traffic-blocking delivery lorries.

Parking problems at Martin Primary School were mentioned as were the rent rises being suffered by local traders and businesses.

The meeting ended with the good news that East Finchley has gone international by being only the second British town to join the Town Team Movement, based mainly in Australia, but with growing numbers of members around the world.



Hard at play: Tudor pupils try out their sculpting skills in the classroom

Turnaround for Tudor Primary

By Gail Norcliffe

Staff and pupils at Tudor Primary School are celebrating after a significant improvement in its Ofsted ratings. Formerly rated as 'requires improvement' and a school that was causing concern in Barnet, Tudor has now achieved 'outstanding' or 'good' in all key areas.

On top of this, their 2025 Key Stage 2 results have improved by almost double on the previous year, with maths being a notable strength.

On the border between N2 and N3 with an intake from both postcodes, Tudor works closely with nearby Manorside Primary as part of the Squires Lane Learning Federation. The new leadership team at the schools, executive headteacher Andy Griffiths and heads of school Iain Dalziel and Jenny Mitchell, attribute the turnaround to a drive to change behaviour and culture so children can focus on their learning.

They say embedding consistency and continuity has been crucial to help ensure pupils meet the high expectations promoted by all staff. Children are

encouraged to think there is no ceiling on their development.

School trips

At a practical level, work in the classroom is enhanced by helping children identify with and see themselves in projects. As an example, to reflect the school's multiculturalism, one topic studied in history is early Islamic civilisations.

A wide array of school trips has also helped to bring classroom work to life, ranging from role play in a Stone Age camp to visiting the Take One Picture project at the National Gallery.

Tudor and Manorside work in tandem on music, dance and sport. They participated in a dance and music festival at Artsdepot in North Finchley, and Barnet primary schools'



Autumn art: Pupils with their pine cone pictures

concert 'All Under One Sky' at the Royal Albert Hall.

Iain Dalziel said: "We are so proud of our children and the positive learning environment created by our whole school community. We hope the recognition of what a fantastic place of learning our school is will help change perceptions and encourage more people to make Tudor their school of choice."

Fallen tree

Thanks to reader Tim Clarke for this photo of a huge branch lying across Woodside Avenue, which runs between East Finchley and Muswell Hill, after breaking loose during the high winds of Storm Amy on Friday 3 and Saturday 4 October.

The obstruction was quickly cleared but it came just weeks after another huge tree further down Woodside Avenue split apart possibly due to disease or drought, as we reported last month.



Storm damage: Woodside Ave

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HALAL



Diary of an allotment beginner

By Nadia Savvopoulou

I have always liked the porches of American houses seen in horror films, in the middle of nowhere with weathered wood, as symbols of defiance. The shed on my plot brought to mind those films, bluegrass music, and a glass of bourbon in hand. It was in desperate need of work, but otherwise, it was good to host my creative thoughts.



My shed at the end of the plot
Photos: Nadia Savvopoulou

When I saw the shed on the plot, its door was secured with a lock that had seen better days. Next day, I found it burgled, the door flung open to the elements, most of the contents thrown out as if in a state of panic and left scattered around. Perhaps I had summoned the forces of those horror movies too intensely. My inheritance included rusty old tools suitable for a big person, a floor that had been fouled by animals, cobwebs, and an ossified beehive.

With heavy duty gloves, mask, a bucket, and a lot of bravery, the shed was emptied, the unhygienic layer of rocks, feathers, and filthy soil was meticulously taken out and a 'clean', flat surface established.

Re-use vs buy new

Being an architect who prioritises restoration and refurbishment, all decisions are a balancing act between using existing materials as appropriate (e.g. no waste of high-quality materials better suited for other tasks,

minimum amount of sawing) and buying new ones.

The pieces of wood I found inside were large, solid timbers in good condition, perfect for replacing rafters or creating a much-needed workbench. Wasting them for a floor substrate was not a good idea, so the search to source 2x2 timber began. Market research was key when it came to choosing the supplier, so here is my next tip: **keeping an allotment is not a cheap activity, so always have in mind that savings are key.**



The shed got a new floor with a solid base, a waterproof layer of thick polythene (sourced from the plot) and nailed to the sides of the wall with inherited nails, and timber joists onto which load-bearing chipboard would be screwed. Deciding the orientation of the timber frame determined the amount and cost of the timber required, so I decided wisely! As a result, this task did not cost too much, and once complete, I was less worried about hygiene!

But how about the rest of the plot? Glad you asked! Let's talk about this in the next chapter...

THE AVENUE TENNIS CLUB

The Avenue Lawn Tennis Club, Sylvan Avenue, Finchley Central, N3 2LE

We're seeking a dedicated Club Manager to oversee day-to-day operations of our well-established local tennis club.

Key Responsibilities:

- Facilities & Member Services:** Supervise maintenance, manage supplies, handle membership renewals and enquiries
- Court & Communications:** Oversee ClubSpark booking system, coordinate with Head Coach, maintain website and member communications
- Project Management:** Supervise club upgrades and coordinate with contractors

What We're Looking For:

- 15 hours per week;** available 3 days per week with evening/weekend flexibility for urgent matters
- Ideally local to the Club for short-notice visits
- IT competent and willing to learn ClubSpark software
- Excellent communication skills and reliable self-management

You will work alongside the Head Coach and report to the Club Secretary or Club Chair in the absence of a secretary. You will be self-employed and be paid £10,000 p.a.

Perfect for someone who enjoys variety and wants to join a vibrant local tennis community!

To apply, please send cv and covering letter to Chair@avenuetennisclub.co.uk

For more information or an informal chat call our Head Coach, Sally on 07958 758 580 or email sally@avenuetennisclub.co.uk
The Avenue Lawn Tennis Club is committed to equal opportunities



Play project: The Market Place Playground had support from Grange Big Local. Photo Mike Coles

Grange Big Local: A decade of community action

As Grange Big Local (GBL) reaches the end of its ten-year term, project manager Karen Hart says the team behind it want to say a huge thank you to the residents, volunteers, and partners who helped make it all happen.

Back in 2014, GBL was entrusted with just over £1 million of National Lottery funding to support projects chosen, shaped and delivered by local people. Run by a partnership board of residents, the goal was to make East Finchley a better place to live for everyone in the community.

GBL has supported dozens of projects, large and small, from playgrounds and gardens to youth and arts programmes, including the transformation of Market Place Playground into an imaginative play space for families and the creation of Barnwood Community Forest Garden, now a haven for people and wildlife. It has also supported Lymore Gardens Football Club to grow opportunities for girls' football, Art Against Knives to help young people express themselves through creativity and stay safe from violence, and a Warm Spaces initiative, bringing people together for conversation and connection.

Among GBL's final projects is the long-awaited refurbishment of the Trinity Road/Manor Park Road underpass. GBL has

engaged local schools, residents and artists to feature new artwork and poetry. The refurbishment is also adding play features, lighting, landscaping and better drainage.

GBL has always been about local people working together and there has been so much positive collaboration across our community. Hundreds of people have given their time, skills and energy, running activities, leading projects and building connections.

Chair James Masters said: "This has always been about neighbours helping neighbours. Thank you to everyone who played a part. We did what communities do best - we listened, we disagreed, we tried, we adapted. Some ideas worked brilliantly. Others took longer than planned. But together,

we've shown the power of local people to make change happen" GBL would also like to thank Inclusion Barnet for hosting our team and supporting our final plan, as well as Local Trust, our main funder over the past ten years. Thanks also to our collaborators and friends: Barnet Council, East Finchley Community Trust, Finchley Charities, Age UK Barnet, local schools, churches, and so many more who shared our journey.

To mark the end of this chapter, GBL is producing a short film and a legacy book, sharing reflections on what worked, what was challenging and what might inspire others to try and create change in their communities. Watch this space for further details on how to order a free e-copy or printed version.

At the heart of the Disneyland parade

As part of the 25th anniversary celebrations for performing arts school Razzamataz Barnet, East Finchley residents Emily and Ava Henwood joined a trip to Disneyland Paris, where they performed for a global audience in the iconic Disney parade. Here their mum Kate recalls the experience.

The Disneyland performance was a long-awaited return to the stage after a planned 2020 visit was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic. After group auditions and a year of rehearsals, to ensure they met the exacting Disney standards, Emily and Ava set off for Disneyland Paris with over 300 other Razzamataz students from across the UK.



Fairy tale: The Razzamataz dancers at Disneyland Paris

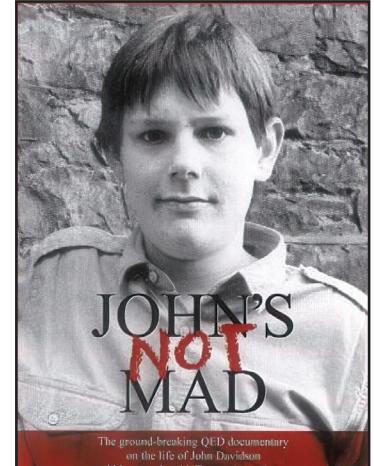
classes in dance, drama and singing for children aged four to 18, with additional classes available to prepare those young

people who are considering vocational training. Find out more at www.barnet.razzamataz.co.uk



A documentary that shed light on Tourette's

The acclaimed new British film *I Swear* about John Davidson and his life with Tourette Syndrome draws heavily on a 1988 BBC documentary called *John's Not Mad*, on which our photo editor Mike Coles worked. Here he recalls the experience.



Compulsive disorder: John Davidson with his mother Heather and in a scene from the BBC documentary *John's Not Mad*, filmed by Mike Coles

Tourette Syndrome is an inherited neurological condition which causes sufferers to make involuntary vocal and movement tics. Sufferers feel compelled to act on any thought or action that is suggested or comes into their head, particularly swearing or sexual references.

For decades, very little was known about it. Children suffering from it were considered naughty and disruptive and often punished or expelled from school. This all changed after the transmission of BBC documentary film *John's Not Mad* as part of the QED series in 1988, on which I was the cameraman.

The film is a simple observational piece following the day-to-day life of 16-year-old John Davidson, who lived in Galashiels on the Scottish Borders. At that time there was no provision or guidance in the education system for dealing with the condition. Originally

thought to be rare, it's now recognised that as many as one in 100 schoolchildren have some form of the syndrome, which varies in its severity.

When we arrived to film in Galashiels I had no knowledge of Tourette's but I was soon to find out. John quickly spat out 'big nose' as soon as he met me and the female producer got a much less pleasant welcome. With our expensive film equipment, we had to be constantly on guard for any sudden movements.

Despite this, John was a genuinely likeable boy. Initially he didn't spit but when we were filming an evening meal, someone said "at least

he doesn't spit". From then on it was non-stop spitting, which was hard to take. In retrospect filming him in the quiet local library wasn't very fair, prompting an unstoppable torrent of obscenities, but it certainly highlighted the problem. It was tragic and funny at the same time. Educational reforms

followed and John Davidson became an ambassador for Tourette's sufferers. He was awarded an MBE in 2019 for his campaigning. Now, *I Swear*, a feature film based on his story, is on general release. The original documentary *John's Not Mad* can be found on YouTube.



I Swear is based on John's life and stars Robert Aramayo

Plans for cinema car park site

By David Melsome

Plans have been submitted to build a two-storey house on land off Fairlawn Avenue, N2, that was formerly the car park for the Phoenix Cinema.

The cinema sold the plot last year to help fund a major refurbishment project, including the installation of a second screen. Proposals submitted to Barnet Council with the reference 25/3816/FUL seek permission for a home with two storeys above ground plus a basement level, with landscaping, recycling storage, car and cycle parking and amenity space.

Some residents have objected to the plans on the basis that building work could worsen already-existing groundwater and flooding issues in and around the site.

Others say a potential 16-month build on a plot with a narrow entrance would be disruptive for people living in Fairlawn Avenue, while a number of residents in Baronsmere Road object to the loss of privacy from a new home backing onto their properties.

A planning statement submitted on behalf of the developers Andreas Christodoulou Architectural Associates states that the application meets all necessary regulations and that the site has been designated as having a low probability of flooding.



Bountiful basket: Produce at the Horticultural Society show. Photo Michael Eleftheriades

cut flowers and garden birds further enriched the visual feast. Prizes were awarded across the board, recognising the hard work of each green-fingered participant.

Outside, the ever-popular Grimsdyke Band played a cheerful set, adding to the event's lively and nostalgic charm. A raffle held in support of Thrive and the HGS Kids Garden Club added a touch of excitement. Here's to next year's 297th outing!

Flawless flowers and a cornucopia of produce

By Christine Geissmar

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society Flower Show returned in spectacular style for its 296th year with tables full of colour, creativity and cultivation prowess.

Organised by the tireless Robyn Price with the Hort Soc committee and valuable help from volunteers, the show at the Free Church Hall in the Suburb offered a dazzling variety of entries across multiple categories.

This year's jam-making competition proved to be a particular highlight, breaking previous records for entries. The air was filled with fruity aromas as judges made their careful rounds, tasting spoonfuls and scrutinising consistency, flavour, and presentation. One standout among the produce entries was a dramatically curved gourd, its elegant arc drawing admiration from both judges and visitors alike.

Its natural artistry was the subject of many a photograph and appreciative comment. Photographic entries featuring

RICKY SAVAGE... THE VOICE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

Hey, Galileo

Some songs are born great, some songs achieve greatness, some songs have greatness thrust upon them and then there is *Bohemian Rhapsody*. Why? Because no one before or in the 50 years since has dared to produce a six-minute, six-part magnum opus and call it a rock song.

And it doesn't sound like rock'n'roll, it sounds like something from the darkest recesses of Liszt or Wagner's minds dragged screaming and kicking through an electric guitar.

Starting with an intro, followed by a ballad, a guitar solo, a slice of opera, a quick blast of guitar rock before returning to harmonies for the outro this was the highwater mark of 1970s pomposity. And only one man in one band would have tried it. It was 1975, the band was Queen and the man was Freddie Mercury, so maybe it wasn't a surprise.

Back then Queen had been around for five years and produced three albums. They were the bog-standard rock four piece. In Brian May, they had the ace guitarist, John Deacon was the electronic wizard on bass, drummer Roger Taylor hit things and Freddie Mercury added the panache on vocals.

They'd had a bit of success but nothing to worry the megastars like Led Zeppelin. The only thing that set them apart was that they were a bit more flamboyant and Brian had made his own guitar from an old fireplace. Oh, and they were ever so slightly pretentious and wore white satin jumpsuits.

The fourth album changed things. They spent a couple of months in Wales recording it and decided that the perfect name was *A Night at the Opera*. With a name like that there had to be a showstopper, something so over the top that people would listen, and Freddie provided it.

From a close harmony intro, the piano ballad and on through the operatic centrepiece with its Galileo Scaramouche and Fandango sung in perfect multitrack harmony before letting Brian loose on guitar, the result was spectacular in a way that no one ever dared repeat. And they had a video that looked more like a movie than a band thrashing their latest single.

Reviews were bemused and mixed. They said it was too long for radio, but somehow, someone at Radio 1 played it, and the rest is history. It spent nine weeks at number one and returned there for five more weeks in 1991 when Freddie Mercury died.

No other British rock single has outsold it apart from Band Aid and Elton John's Diana tribute, and they don't count. It was magnificent and still sounds it, but it came at the end of an era. A year on, we had punk and Queen themselves moved on to other great hits. By then they were titans, and they always will be.



New community asset status granted to Phoenix Cinema

By Ruth Anders

In early September, Kate Brown, Chair of East Finchley Community Trust, got the welcome news that a successful application to Barnet Council had achieved the Phoenix Cinema's listing as an Asset of Community Value.

Said Kate: "This new ranking demonstrates how much the cinema is valued in the community and could be useful when applying for philanthropic grants or lottery bids in the future. Additionally, if in the future the Phoenix Trust wants to sell the asset, there is a community right to bid, and time is allowed for interested parties in the local community to seek funds. That is how a range of cultural institutions have been maintained in local communities up and down the country."

East Finchley residents certainly don't want to lose their cherished local cinema. But the Phoenix Trustees are very aware of the need to launch a determined fundraising campaign in order to secure the venue's future.

Financial support

Quite apart from new financial support needed to improve toilets and facilities in the foyer, considerable investment is required to ensure that the Phoenix can remain open for business. Chair of the Phoenix



New status: The Phoenix Cinema

Cinema Trust Ltd Paul Rossi told The Archer: "We have a terrific new executive director in Kathryn Smith, and her appointment has helped sharpen our approach."

The Trust keeps the cinema as a locally run, community focussed, treasure for us all to enjoy. "The support of our members and regular audience is critically important to us. But we are also seeking significant new investment to maintain and develop our beloved Phoenix for the future. If you think you can help by making a donation, please get in touch with Kathryn

If you value our wonderful community asset and would like to make a contribution, small or large, please visit www.phoenixcinema.co.uk/make-a-donation/

Attenborough at the Phoenix

By Ruth Anders

The Phoenix Cinema will host a special screening of the 1993 film *Shadowlands* on Sunday 30 November, followed by a Q&A with distinguished theatre director Michael Attenborough CBE.

Michael looks forward to talking about his father, the late Sir Richard Attenborough, who directed the acclaimed film.

"It's always a privilege to see *Shadowlands* resonating with new audiences and delighting those who've seen it before," Michael told The Archer. "Given the complexity and length of the original stage play, the screenplay was a brilliant version. Writer William Nicholson chopped his text back with astonishing bravery. He clearly understands how movies work. There's far more reliance on the visual."

Ahead of the screening, Michael reflected: "Dad was known as an actors' director.

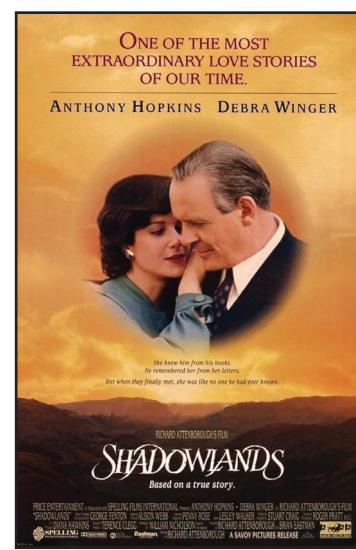
A solo Christmas Carol

Happy Valley and *The Thick Of It*'s Vincent Franklin is bringing *A Christmas Carol* to Artsdepot in North Finchley on Friday 12 December.

Following a sell-out tour in 2024, the actor returns to play more than 30 characters in an adaptation that is based on Dickens' own performance script. "Most productions of *A Christmas Carol* use Dickens' dialogue but have to lose his fantastic descriptions, of

He really connected with actors, being one himself. He looked after everyone, no matter how modest their role, something he'd learned from my godfather Noel Coward. He worked with Anthony Hopkins on five different films, so knew him very well, and the combination of Anthony and Debra Winger in *Shadowlands* was genius."

Michael is a hugely entertaining individual with over 50 years of theatre directing behind him. He has stories galore about his father and his own career, and will divulge far more during the Q&A. An unmissable event! Find out more at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or pop into the cinema foyer.



Movie classic: *Shadowlands*, directed by Richard Attenborough



On stage: Vincent Franklin

hearts warmed." Find out more and book at artsdepot.co.uk

What's on at the Phoenix in November

By Zalan Pall, general manager

A black comedy, a Second World War drama, a French classic, a live exhibition, theatre, opera and ballet, plus much more awaits you at the Phoenix in November.

In Bugonia early in the month two conspiracy-obsessed men kidnap the CEO of a major company when they become convinced that she's an alien who wants to destroy Earth. This absurdist black comedy stars Emma Stone.

The Choral, from Friday 7 November, is set in 1916 as war rages on the Western Front and the Choral Society in Ramsden, Yorkshire, has lost most of its men to the army. The ambitious committee decides to recruit local young males to swell their ranks. They must also engage a new chorus master, and despite their suspicions that he has something to hide, their best bet seems to be Dr. Henry Guthrie, played by Ralph Fiennes.

The UK Jewish Film Festival returns from Saturday 8 November to Monday 17 November with a fascinating programme and plenty of screenings.

Meanwhile, John Cleese *Packs It In*, from Friday 14 November, is a wry, behind-the-scenes portrait of a comedy legend on the road, battling various ailments, chaotic travel, and his own stubborn refusal to stop.

In Nurnberg, also from



Friday 14 November, a US Army psychiatrist gets locked in a dramatic psychological showdown with accused Nazi war criminal Hermann Göring (Russell Crowe).

For lovers of screen arts, we will have *Met Live: Arabella* on Saturday 22 November, *RBO Live: Cinderella* on Tuesday 25 November, *NT Live: The Fifth Steps* on Thursday 27 November, a Q&A with Exhibition on Screen director Phil Gatsky discussing Caravaggio on Tuesday 11 November, plus *Picasso: A Rebel in Paris* on Wednesday 26 November.

On top of all this, we carry on with our French Classic Season on Sunday 23 November with a screening of *Jules et Jim*. Find full details and book at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or pop into our foyer.

COMING SOON AT ARTSDEPOT

STEPHEN K AMOS
NOW WE'RE TALKING!
Thu 13 Nov



STOPGAP DANCE COMPANY
LIVED FICTION
Thu 20 Nov



STICK MAN
Fri 28 – Sun 30 Nov



THE YOUNG'UNS
Sat 6 Dec



...and lots more!
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Box Office: 020 8369 5454
artsdepot.co.uk

artsdepot, North Finchley, N12 0GA



Letters



Daubed: Graffiti on the Long Lane Pasture noticeboard

Knock off Dear Editor

You published a letter in your October issue from a reader talking about people knocking on the door offering to clean the gutters. From reading the letter, I think they had a lucky escape from what could have been a big bill and very ugly incident.

I first worked in the construction industry in 1975, so I have a little bit of experience. May I give your readers some advice.

If ANYONE knocks on your door saying you need your roof, walls, windows, drains, driveway, etc, etc, etc fixing and they can do it cheap, ALWAYS say no. It is a scam. Even if you do need work doing NEVER (and I mean never) say yes to cold-calling 'tradespeople', however convincing they may seem. If you do, you will regret it.

There is a huge shortage of good tradespeople in this area, subsequently all the good guys are always busy and have plenty of work. If we do get a last-minute cancellation (a line the scammers often use), we either start the next job early or say 'great I can have a day off'.

So, ask yourself why would we go knocking on doors? We don't. The only people that do that are the scammers, the cheats and the cowboys.

Nasty rash

Dear Editor

There seems to be an absolute rash of graffiti, notably along the High Road.

Upsettingly, we have been targeted on Long Lane Pastures. It's run by volunteers, and frankly, we have more than enough to do, without dealing with these idiotic tags. Also, as a nature reserve, the chemicals in them (and in removing them) are very toxic to wildlife.

Please could responsible residents of East Finchley adopt a zero-tolerance approach by cleaning any graffiti they see as soon as possible. Like litter, more breeds more.

Linda Dolata
Leopold Road

Andy (surname supplied)
Long Lane N2

Send your letters to:
news@the-archer.co.uk

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

ST MARY'S



CHRISTMAS FAIR

CAROLS ★ FOOD ★ CRAFT ★ HAMPERS

Sunday 30 November 2025 | 11am-2pm
Parish Hall 279 High Road N2 8HG

Our new advice column: Ask Joy

Email Joy at askjoyatthearcher@gmail.com.

Something has happened and you don't know what to do. You don't feel comfortable talking to anyone in your family about it and you're worried that your friends won't understand. It's making you feel miserable and you don't know where to turn. You've looked online, but none of the advice is relatable. So now it's time to do something different.



Design by @archnote

Here at The Archer, we are introducing an advice column to give help and support. Joy is a trained counsellor and an East Finchley resident and she'll be tackling issues that matter now.

No problem is too big or too small to be shared. Every email will be answered by Joy and we will anonymise those that go into print, so confidentiality is assured.

Joy trained as a counsellor in the 1990s and worked in education for 20 years with young people and parents. She has many years' experience of listening and problem-solving. It's always good to talk, so don't hesitate to reach out.

Write to Joy at the email address at the top of this article and she will do her best to give advice each month.

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Dear Joy,

I've been divorced for about three years. It was an extremely messy break-up, but I'm out the other side and would like to meet someone new. I'm 48 and all my friends are in long-term relationships, so I feel a bit isolated. They keep telling me to try online dating, but I just don't think I can face it. Work and kids keep me very busy, but I do miss adult company and, if I'm really honest, I also miss sex. Is going online my only option? F.

Dear F,

You've survived divorce, well done! You've talked about wanting a new relationship, but also about feeling isolated within your friendship group.

Perhaps getting yourself to a happier place, building new friendships and finding things that you enjoy doing outside of family life, could be your first priority. Adding someone into the mix when you already have a life you like is often the best recipe for success. You're not placing all your happiness eggs in one relationship basket and that's important.

You will feel more relaxed about the whole thing and, as a result, make better dating decisions. Maybe then this is a good time to do a life review. You're not the same person you were when you met your ex-husband.

You're older, wiser, more experienced. You've survived divorce and its fall-out and you're a parent. All these things impact on what type of relationship will work for you now. Going online to meet new people opens up a world of possibility. Rather than waiting for life to happen to you,

you're taking control, which is empowering. Online dating isn't always easy and there will be disappointments along the way, but with so many options to choose from, I think you have a good chance of finding what you need online. Good luck, and here are some starting points:

- www.meetup.com – a way to connect with people with shared interests
- bumble.com - a platform to make new friends as well as find a new partner
- uk.match.com – a long-established dating website

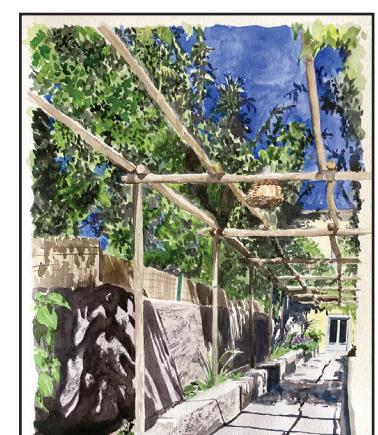
Artists explore the shadow side of life

East Finchley Open Artists is this month presenting The Colour of Shadows, a group exhibition of painting, photography, printmaking, glass and ceramics.

Inspired by the poetic pull of shadow, the artists say they are exploring cool-warm colour shifts that create depth and recession, twilight silhouettes that hint at memory and place, and the fleeting reflections where light meets surface. From intimate studies to bold abstractions, the show invites visitors to see how colour gives shadow

its mystery and mood. It's also an ideal opportunity to find original, affordable art and craft gifts ahead of Christmas and the holiday season.

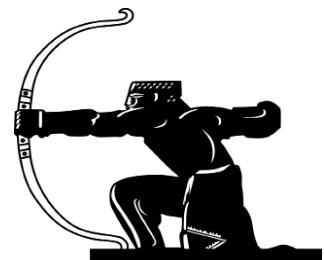
The show runs at The Original Gallery, Hornsey Library, Harringey Park, London N8 9JA on weekdays 1pm-5pm and Sundays 12pm-4pm from Tuesday 4 to Sunday 16 November.



On show: Lemon Groves in Ischia, by Ann Froomberg

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Roman kiln is a roaring success



Hot stuff. The replica kiln was stoked only with local wood and reached over 1,000 degrees before being sealed. Crowds later gathered in Highgate Wood to see the pots being unloaded. Photos Lucinda Costello @lucindacostellostudio

By Lucinda Costello

At noon on Monday 22 September, crowds from East Finchley, Highgate and surrounding areas gathered beside the cricket pitch in Highgate Wood for a first glimpse of pots fired in the replica Roman kiln there two weeks earlier.

The moment of truth came as the kiln roof was broken open to reveal the Firing London's Imagination project's most successful firing to date. Full reduction – when fire consumes all oxygen inside a kiln, including that contained within the clay – had been achieved, resulting in pots that gave the impression of being made from pewter.

This was the outcome Roman potters accomplished as they worked close to this same site from 50-160AD, making their distinctive Highgate Ware, prized in Roman London.

Fired in clay

Back in the summer months, potters from Turning Earth pottery studio made more than 300 vessels, alongside a parade of weird and wonderful clay beasts made by local children on a Heritage Day in early September.

All used the characteristic wild clay that runs through Highgate Wood and probably Cherry Tree Wood too, since they were once joined as one woodland. The ten original Roman kilns were unearthed between 1966 and 1974, located

to take advantage of the characteristic high-quality clay, wood fuel, water and proximity to Londinium's markets.

This third firing of the replica kiln was skillfully supervised by Shem Morgan, Turning Earth's studio manager, and dedicated volunteers including Nick Peacey MBE, who was involved in the first replica firings in the 1970s. The project, now known as Firing London's Imagination, is a collaboration between Friends of Highgate Roman Kiln and the City of London, supported by the

National Lottery Heritage Fund.



Roman-style pots are carefully loaded into the kiln

Shem and Nick agreed: "The firing has exceeded our expectations in terms of beauty of finish achieved on this year's pots. Months of planning and hard work, cleaning the raw clay, plus a long, hot day loading the kiln with wood to reach over 1,000°C... it was all worth it. The project inspires local people and really brings the connection with our Roman past to life. Huge thanks to all those involved."

All are welcome on Roman pottery workshops in 2026 at www.turningearth.org and to find out more see firingleondonimagination.com

Firing London's Imagination is a partnership between City of London Corporation, the custodians of Highgate Wood, Bruce Castle Museum and Friends of Highgate Roman Kiln, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



Supervisor Shem checks the kiln temperature on firing day



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