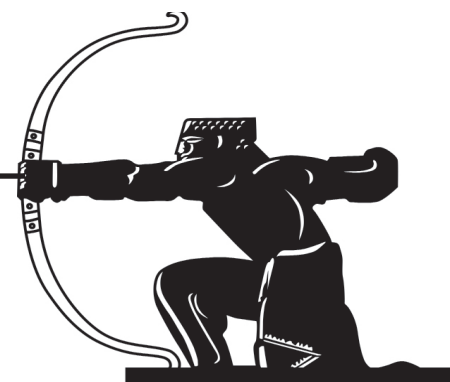




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High Road rubbish still a mess



General waste: Overflowing bins, fly tipping and food bags ripped open by wildlife can leave a grim spectacle along the High Road and its side roads. Photos Mike Coles

By Diana Cormack

A year ago, The Archer reported on the growing concern of locals regarding rubbish strewn along the High Road. Now, despite the provision of new litter bins for general and mixed recyclable waste as well as designated community food waste bins, we have recently received more complaints and disturbing photos of the morning mess which greets passers-by.

Some streets adjoining the High Road are also badly affected, particularly where rubbish is left on the pavement around household wheelie bins for a daytime collection and in spots close to High Road collection points. However, flat dwellers above the shops without bins have to put out their sacks of rubbish somewhere to meet collection times. Part of the

problem is that bags left for collection are a magnet for foxes and other wildlife, which rip open waste sacks and scatter the contents in their search for food. Without the provision of secure sealed rubbish bins it is virtually impossible to protect household waste from these nighttime marauders. It was also pointed out that a significant lack of commercial waste

storage and bin capacity for local businesses (which often contain food) can lead to overflowing and decomposing debris. A Huntingdon Road resident told The Archer that these combined factors lead to waste spread across their pavement with their area on Tuesday mornings resembling "a street that has been abandoned after a major event".

waste being dealt with, and is there adequate bin/waste storage and frequent enough collections to remove the amount of rubbish generated?

Suggestions given to us include regulating household collections with set times for putting out and collecting rubbish and better co-ordinating the collection of commercial

waste, which is currently handled by a variety of companies at different times.

East Finchley councillor Alison Moore is working on these problems with relevant council officers and the East Finchley Town Team. They are looking to find other town centres to emulate where the situation has been sorted out.

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Admiration has been expressed for the hard-working Barnet Council cleaners who clear up the frequent mess but wouldn't it be better to prevent it happening in the first place? Couldn't there be some sort of impregnable lidded container large enough to store the sacks from the flats waiting for collection? Questions include how effectively are any businesses who continually flaunt rules regarding disposal of their

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In this issue

Murder inquiry opens.....p3
Jail terms for killers.....p4
No justice on door kicks.....p5
Favourite postie.....p7
Arts and culture.....p10
Your letters.....p11



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BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

Could you be the new Digital Newsletter Editor for **HGSu3a**, the organisation for retired people where members participate in daily activities, meet new people and make lifelong friends. The newsletter is emailed to members monthly to keep them up to date with new events and groups each month. The role entails liaising with Group Leaders and compiling the copy for the newsletter. You would be working closely with Chair Carole Spiers and the Joint Group Organisers on the final copy. Our outgoing Editor reckons that the job takes about 6-8 hours per month. For an initial discussion please contact cs@carolespiersgroup.co.uk. Find out more at <https://hgsu3a.uk>

Dovetail DaCapo is a friendly place where asylum-seekers and refugees meet to make music together on **Saturdays from 2pm to 3.30pm at Wren Academy, N12 9HB**. The music is followed by a shared vegetarian meal. If you are interested in joining its rota of volunteers who prepare the meal (heating up soup, putting out bread, hummus, fruit, etc), they'd love to hear from you. They are also interested to hear from volunteers who would like to help in other ways. Email: jam@dacapo.co.uk

Join the team at the new **Finchley Free Legal Advice Centre**. This new community-led initiative is providing free legal advice to residents who are most in need. If you have a legal background, and can spare two hours a month, your experience could make a profound impact on someone's life. They are particularly looking for lawyers with experience in immigration, housing, benefits, crime and family. The new Advice Centre will rotate to different venues in the constituency every other weekend. Find out more by emailing sarah.sackman.mp@parliament.uk.

Finchley Foodbank is looking for a new kind of volunteer to help people with all things digital, such as searching the internet, sending emails and booking appointments. You will signpost people to help with the cost of living, employment, housing etc. You will need to be available for food bank sessions on **Tuesdays and/or Saturdays between 11.30am and 2pm twice a month**. To find out more about becoming a digital champion volunteer email: hello@finchleyfoodbank.org.uk

Do you enjoy swimming? **WeSwim** is a London-based charity that creates safe, welcoming spaces where disabled adults can swim with the support of volunteers 1:1 in the water. They are looking for volunteers who are keen to make a difference by working with the disability community in Crouch End, giving just a few hours a month. No swim teaching/coaching qualifications required, although being comfortable in the water is a must. Contact harriet@weswim.club for more information.

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

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet

79 Hertford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with pitched roof and three roof lights. Ref. No: 26/2659/HSE

14 Abbots Gardens, N2

Conversion of garage into habita-

-ble room, insertion of window to replace existing front garage door. Extension of existing roof extension involving hip to gable and enlarged rear dormer window with two juliet balconies. Changes to side elevation fenestration including infill of existing window and new side gable window

A doorway into the creative media



Head start: Anjola Fashawe found confidence to work in the creative industries

Exposure has been giving young people in north London a creative space and platform to publish their work and reach a wide audience since 1996. This year, the charity turns 30 and here Anjola Fashawe tells how she is part of the story.

I first walked through the doors of Exposure in Muswell Hill when I was 16, anxious and unsure I belonged in creative media. What I found was a community that told me I did.

Over 30 years, it has grown into a multi-award-winning youth communications charity working with over 200 young people every year, but its soul hasn't changed. It's still that same space where you can bring your full self, find your voice, and truly be heard.

I'm living proof. At 20, I'm a lead peer mentor supporting the next generation of young people coming through, building my journalism career through an apprenticeship at The i Paper, and profiling fellow Exposure

alumna Little Simz, the north London rap artist who was awarded both the Mercury Prize and a BRIT Award.

This summer marks a new chapter. Founder Andreas Koumi is stepping back, and Fran O'Connell, who has been at the heart of Exposure for 15 years, has become CEO. "Fran knows our young people. She knows what we stand for," says Andreas. "I am handing over the baton with enormous pride." "I've seen what happens when a young person finds their voice,"

Fran says. "It changes everything, their confidence, their sense of what's possible, their future." As it enters this new chapter, Exposure is looking for two new trustees, people who share a genuine commitment to young people and can bring expertise in fundraising, digital media, finance, charity governance or equality and inclusion. The role will entail four or Four trustee meetings a year, with hybrid options available. To find out more or express interest contact: info@exposure.org.uk or visit exposure.org.uk

[Amended Description]. Ref. No: 26/2628/192

10 Oakview Gardens, N2 2

Single-storey rear extension following demolition of the existing conservatory. Ref. No: 26/2492/HSE

330 High Road, N2

Demolition of rear storage/retail unit and construction of a retail unit with basement level and two self-contained flats over first and second floors, with side balconies and privacy screens. Associated refuse/recycling store, cycle store parking and amenity space. Ref. No: 26/2464/FUL

220 High Road, N2

Change of use of part of the ground floor commercial (Class E) to one self-contained flat (Class C3). Ref. No: 26/2377/PNE

47 Hertford Road, N2

Roof extension involving L-shaped rear dormer window and two front-facing roof lights. Ref. No: 26/2374/192

14 Lincoln Road, N2

Roof extension involving one rear dormer window over main roof and one rear dormer over outrigger roof with juliet balcony and three front-facing roof lights. Single-storey rear lean-to extension with parapet roof and one skylight. Changes to fenestration. Ref. No: 26/2339/192

65 Fortis Green, N2

Roof extension involving one rear dormer window over main roof and one rear dormer over outrigger roof with juliet balcony and three front-facing roof lights. Single-storey rear lean-to extension with parapet roof and one skylight. Changes to fenestration. Ref. No: 26/2339/192

Land adjacent to 290 Long Lane, N2

Erection of two terraced two-storey dwellings with rooms in the roof space with associated amenity space, provision of off-street parking and associated crossover, recycling/ refuse/EV charger and cycle storage. New front boundary wall. (Amended Description).

Ref. No: 26/2308/FUL

30 Summerlee Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension with a proposed depth of 4.05m, maximum height of 3.00m and an eaves height of 3.00m. Ref. No: 26/2299/PNH

Haringey

8 Eastern Road, N2

Non-material amendment to the application HGY/2025/0897 as approved on 21/08/2025 for: Demolition of side garage and erection of new single-storey side extension together with new insulated render finish to side and rear elevations, new and adjusted window openings and internal remodelling. Solar panels are to be added the rear elevation roof slope. The proposed amendments sought are: alterations to window positions, amendments to the style of the original windows and installation of PV panels on rear roof slope. Ref: HGY/2026/1449



Man charged after assault victim dies

By Janet Maitland

Police have charged a man with murder following the death of local man Paul Heyfron, 53, who died 12 days after he was assaulted in a shop on Strawberry Vale, East Finchley.

As we went to press, the Metropolitan Police said Tevin Melbourne, 30, of Pittman Gardens, Ilford, was charged on 20 July after being arrested at an address in Lewisham. A woman aged 47 was arrested for assisting an offender at the same location and is now on bail pending further investigation.

It was on Tuesday 30 June at 9.55pm that the London Ambulance Service was called to reports of an assault in a shop on Brook Walk, N2.

"The first paramedics arrived in less than five minutes," said a spokesperson. "We sent an ambulance, a trauma team from London's Air Ambulance service, paramedics in fast response cars, an emergency responder and an incident response officer. We treated the patient at the scene and took him to a major trauma centre as a priority." Reverend Helen Shannon, leader of church@five, which is based at the Green Man Community Centre on the estate, said everybody's

thoughts and prayers were with the victim's family and friends. She told The Archer: "Strawberry Vale is a close-knit community where people look out for one another, so the senseless loss of one of our neighbours has deeply shaken the estate. church@five will continue to support the community in every way we can and we will continue to pray for everyone affected and for peace across our estate."

Detective Inspector Jon Moseling, Senior Investigating Officer, said enquiries were continuing and police would update the community when they could. He said: "We are aware of online and public speculation, and I urge people not to share or engage with it. I would ask anyone with any information, such as CCTV or doorbell camera footage, which could support the investigation, to contact us."

Call police on 101 or, if you want to remain anonymous, ring Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Did you know?

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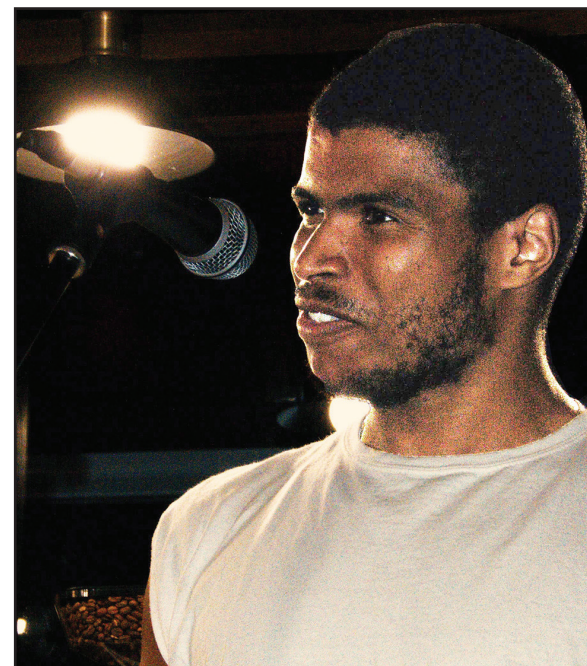


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East Finchley meets East Village



New York vibe: Rose Bardell and Zack Oputu were two of the performers at Coffee Bank. Photos Zack Blacey @Blaceyphoto

By Justine Csaky

A new community music soirée inspired by New York has struck a chord at Coffee Bank on East Finchley High Road and is set to become a quarterly fixture.

The first soirée took place on Thursday 2 July, where a sell-out audience enjoyed an evening of live music, poetry and comedy performed by talented young artists, many with strong links to N2.

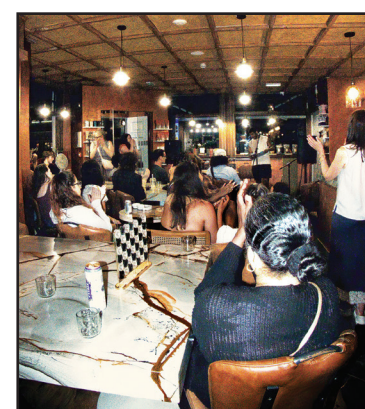
The idea came about when local resident Caryn Berlingieri visited a café in New York last summer which transformed into a live music venue in the evenings.

"I thought, 'Why can't we do this in East Finchley?'" she said. "There was such an incredible atmosphere, with younger and older people together, all supporting local performers. I wanted to bring a little bit of that New York vibe here." The idea found the perfect home when Caryn met Coffee Bank owners Clyde, Adel and Joli while the café was being refurbished.

Together they developed the concept and enlisted former Archer Academy student Sas Hughes, who recruited performers and Mike Hughes, an organiser of the East Finchley Festival, who provided the PA system.

Tickets sold out quickly and around 60 people packed into the café for what organisers described as a relaxed, welcoming evening. Ten acts took to the stage, including musicians, poets and a comedian. The programme featured a mixture of original material and acoustic covers with a folk and indie vibe.

Several performers have strong ties to the local area. Former Archer Academy alumni, Michael and John, who perform together as the band Wet Concrete, played an acoustic set,



The Coffee Bank crowd. Photo Zack Blacey @Blaceyphoto

while other former pupils from Fortismere and APS also took to the stage.

Following the success of the launch, the organisers have decided to make the soirée a seasonal event, with the next evening planned for the autumn, on Thursday 1 October.

Grab your summer reads

By Diana Cormack

A summer reading challenge for children was launched last month by Barnet Libraries. Youngsters aged four to 12 can sign up in their local library to take part, which involves them reading just six books over the school holidays. This means any sort of book they like and includes e-books and audio books.

There are special stickers to be handed out by library staff throughout the challenge and those who complete it will receive a commemorative certificate and medal. The theme this year is 'Read to the Beat' and it is delivered in partnership with the Reading Agency and Universal Music Group UK. There is an accompanying booklet available full of interesting information, exciting stories, poems, puzzles and musical hints. And, for the first

time, there is a special challenge for the under-fours. With this being National Reading Year,

why not celebrate it by encouraging your youngsters to enjoy the world of books?

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Jail terms for brothers found guilty of murder

By David Melsome

The two brothers found guilty of the murder of civil servant Anthony Littler as he walked home from East Finchley tube station in 1984 (The Archer, July 2026) have been jailed.



Justice at last: Detectives reopened the murder investigation and appealed for information outside East Finchley tube station in November 2024

Anthony Stewart, 60, and Michael Stewart, 57, were just 18 and 15 at the time of the attack. The Old Bailey heard that they had boasted about attacking men who they believed to be gay.

Mr Littler, 45, was walking back to his home in Leslie Road, N2, shortly after midnight in May 1984 when he was bludgeoned twice over the head with a blunt weapon. He was found fatally wounded half an hour later following an anonymous phone call to the ambulance service. He still had his briefcase with £80 cash and credit cards. Anthony Stewart, of Old Farm Road, N2, and Michael Stewart, of Station Road, EN5, were finally brought to justice after their younger brother reported them 29 years later, saying his siblings had confessed to the killing and boasted about 'queer bashing'. Detectives then spent several more years amassing evidence to bring them to trial. In a televised sentencing hearing on Friday 10 July, Anthony Stewart and Michael Stewart were sentenced to life imprisonment with a minimum term of 15 years and ten years respectively. Senior judge Mrs Justice Cutts said: "This was

not an impulsive attack, I am quite sure your group was lying in wait for a victim, someone to attack and rob." While there was no evidence Mr Littler was gay, the judge said the pair had targeted gay men to rob, saying: "1984 was a different time and in many respects a different place."

Mr Littler's cousin Patricia McClure, who lives on The Wirral in Merseyside, said she was angry the murderers had had 42 years of freedom but glad they were finally found accountable. "Anthony was a bit like a big brother," she told the BBC. "He was always a kind soul and to die in such a horrendous way, it's just so unfair."



Fellow travellers: Michael Palin introducing the David Attenborough film on stage at the Phoenix. Photo Mike Coles

Two national treasures together at the Phoenix

By Ruth Anders

Two national treasures came together recently at the Phoenix Cinema, one on film and one in person. On Saturday 27 June, Phoenix patron and world traveller Sir Michael Palin was at the East Finchley picturehouse to introduce Sir David Attenborough's film *A Life on Our Planet*.

Made six years ago, Sir David calls this "My Witness Statement and a Vision for the Future", and as such it proved: over an hour of stunning footage, memories of key points in his career and messaging so strong that it was sometimes hard to watch.

There was not a spare seat to be had as Sir Michael took to the stage to talk about the famous naturalist's career and to give us a lively introduction to their friendship. The audience

then settled down to be inspired, dismayed and inspired again.

The film starts and ends in Pripyat, a neighbourhood deserted after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, where plants and animals have taken over the buildings and outside areas. "After humans have disappeared, nature will take over", it tells us.

At the end of the film, we enjoyed a delightfully informal filmed conversation between Sir Michael and Sir David which touched on various topics alongside the importance of the film.

Asked what each of us could do individually to help save the planet, Sir David thought for a moment before replying, "Don't waste. Don't waste food and water, don't waste electricity, don't waste packaging, and don't waste time." Food for thought for us all.

The Phoenix has made a name for itself as an innovative venue where a variety of events like this have been held, and more are planned in the future. The cinema's new fundraising campaign is well underway, and the target to keep the cinema open and thriving is £100,000 during the current financial year.

Can you help with a donation, large or small? Visit www.phoenixcinema.co.uk/phoenixrising to find out more.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago:
August 2016

After more than 100 years the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute faced final closure when a move to Kingsbury failed to improve its situation. Several years of financial difficulties followed the Institute's move from its long-time base in the Henrietta Barnett School building. It was a sad end to an organisation that brought education and pleasure to many thousands of students, young and old, in north London.

15 years ago:
August 2011

Police reported trying to find the owner of thousands of pounds found hidden in Coldfall Wood. The substantial sum was uncovered in woodland off Creighton Avenue, but anyone wishing to claim it had to provide a large amount of detailed information to the police to prove ownership. Obviously, speculation arose that the cash could be the proceeds of criminal activity, but the police declined to comment on this.

25 years ago:
August 2001

A fight involving criminal damage and assault shook the local community, as two successive incidents in the county roads followed a road-rage episode between three or four cars elsewhere in East Finchley. Local residents were further outraged when 14 calls made to the police and emergency services were ignored. This resulted in a hastily convened meeting between residents and police, where miscommunication between shifts was blamed for the inaction.

Tell us the news

Have you got a news story or an interesting photo for us? Our readers are our eyes and ears, and we are always pleased to hear what is going on in East Finchley. Tips, ideas and stories, large or small, are very welcome. Please email news@the-archer.co.uk or leave a message on our free phone line 0800 612 0748. Thank you

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No justice or answers for door kick victims



Terrifying experience: Stills from doorcam footage shows schoolboys attacking the front door of one of the homes in Ludlow Way, N2

By Lynn Winton

In our May issue, The Archer reported on a series of disturbing incidents when several residents of Ludlow Way, N2, had their front doors kicked by a group of pupils from Christ's College Finchley school in East End Road.

These crimes were attributed to a TikTok phenomenon called the Door Kick Challenge, where people are encouraged to post videos of themselves taking part.

Shaken by the violent attacks on their homes, the East Finchley victims, led by Alvin and Gina Lennard, have repeatedly asked the school to let them know what consequences the perpetrators have faced, to no avail. In the face of what they call a "deafening silence" from

the school, they have now engaged a lawyer to represent them. Gina, who was the practice nurse at Heathfields Medical Centre in Hampstead Garden Suburb, is still suffering flashbacks and anxiety. The couple told The Archer: "All we want to ensure is that these boys are made to face up to what they did for the sake of their own future. 'We are older and wiser enough to know that this kind of criminality in school age youths doesn't bode well for them. The

school hopes to brush it under the carpet by refusing to engage. Some satisfaction would have come if we had received some form of apology. After all, the boys were in uniform, but this was rejected out of hand. "Our other suggestion, to have some supervised meeting so we could help the boys understand what it was like to be on the receiving end, was also rejected out of hand. The police, having initially treated the case as an attempted break-in, have closed

the case. Now we simply don't get any response at all. "They have just clammed up." Alvin and Gina have asked for information from Christ's College Finchley as to how, if at all, they dealt with the guilty pupils. Alvin said: "The school's officials have consistently hidden behind the fact they have a duty of care towards its pupils, apparently irrespective of whatever they do. I wonder if this would extend to theft or shoplifting? Talk about spare the rod and spoil the child." The couple's solicitor Mark Fairweather, of Fairweather Law, said: "My impression is that the boys are being protected when they should be required to meet the

victims and at least get to understand the consequences of their actions. Residents are understandably concerned that the whole matter, which has traumatised at least one householder who I have spoken to at length, is being brushed under the carpet."

The Archer has contacted Christ's College Finchley to ask them to respond to the victims' concerns. We have received no response.

The school's website states they "support the development of pupils into well-rounded, compassionate and aspirational young people" who "contribute positively to their community and society".

Pollinator project starts to grow

By Matteo Lanzini

Readers may remember the Mini Meadows grassroots initiative reported in The Archer at the end of last year. This pilot campaign proved such a great success, with many pockets of wildflowers emerging through the neighbourhood this past spring, that its organisers decided to take it to the next level.



The Finchley Pollinator Project has recently launched '600 Mini Meadows in 60 Days' and applications are now open at

<https://join.minimeadow-movement.org>. Participants will be able to collect free seeds from local libraries from 1 August, with seeding recommended during September and October to witness blooming in spring 2027. Everyone in Barnet is welcome to join, individual residents as well as local groups and organisations. As was the case last year, no gardening experience is needed and there will be guidance and support available

along the way. The broader and bigger scope of this year's initiative means more volunteers are needed to support it and make it another success, with flexible roles like community lead, materials donations coordinator and sign-up champion available by registering via the project's website, as above. Organisers told The Archer: "Many people care about biodiversity, but don't know where to start. This project is something anyone can do - even a pot of wildflowers can become a valuable source of food and shelter for pollinators."

With recurring heatwaves, droughts and record temperatures across London and the UK, there is no better time to bring everyone together to restore local biodiversity by supporting bees, butterflies and insects. Join in if you can or spread the word to play your part.

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What does it take to run a pub?

By John Lawrence

Arina Piskunova and Eamonn England were crowned Licensees of the Year by the British Institute of Innkeeping for their stewardship of The Windsor Castle pub in East Finchley (The Archer, July 2026), a huge achievement in a national award scheme. We sat down with the couple to ask what it takes to run a successful pub in these tough times for the hospitality industry.

When you look at the challenges they face, it's a wonder we've got any pubs left at all. Soaring business rates, rising costs of employing staff and VAT payments at 20% mean profit margins, if any, are wafer thin.

"Even a successful pub is not making much money," says Eamonn England, sitting alongside Arina Piskunova in The Windsor Castle in The Walks, N2. "We're constantly up against it. We are a small pub in a location away from the main road, but we still had a £46,000 VAT bill last year."

Arina and Eamonn are vigorously backing the 'VAT's the Problem' campaign, fronted by celebrity chef and publican Tom Kerridge, to give pubs and restaurants some breathing space by reducing the VAT rate for hospitality to 10%. Across the country, 270,000 people have signed the campaign's petition.

Arina and Eamonn have run The Windsor Castle since 2022 and are only too aware of the financial tightrope they walk. They employ six members of staff, including a chef, and work behind the bar and in the kitchen themselves from 4pm to closing time Tuesday to Sunday.

When they're not open, they might be taking deliveries, negotiating deals with suppliers, managing the staff payroll, running the Windsor's

social media accounts or designing its menus and marketing materials. On Mondays they often visit other pubs to see what the competition is doing.

"There are so many cogs behind the scenes in a pub that customers don't see, just to keep it running from week to week," says Arina. "But this is the job and the career we've chosen to do, so a lot of it doesn't feel like work."

"When the doors are open and customers are coming in, it's all about connection. For both of us it's such a great feeling when the pub is buzzing and everyone is having a good time."

The couple were grilled in huge detail as they worked through the process that resulted in them winning the Licensees of the Year Award. There were unannounced pub visits, forensic inspections of their accounts and Dragons Den-style interviews to conquer on their way to the title. Before coming to East Finchley, Arina was a development officer for the Royal Institute of British

Architects and Eamonn was working in marketing in the music industry, as well as being a contestant on the BBC's Masterchef in 2020. When they decided to look for a pub to run, they came in with a five-year business plan and most of what customers see in The Windsor Castle today was in that plan.

It started with a major refurbishment funded by then-owners McMullen's (the pub transferred to Punch earlier this year) and was followed by Arina and Eamonn introducing a monthly quiz night, a folk music night, Sip and Paint classes and, soon, a jazz night. In the background they reopened the kitchen serving a home-cooked menu with farm-sourced food. So what do they see as their biggest success? Their answer is unanimous. "It's the human connections again," says Arina. "We love to see the mix of customers we get in here... young families, people in their 20s talking to people in their 80s on the next table. Lots of people have made friends visiting the Windsor." With a national award under their



Inn business: Eamonn and Arina have run The Windsor Castle for more than four years. Photo John Lawrence

belts, a busy bar and a lively beer garden many nights of the week, Arina and Eamonn are

certainly doing something right. Let's hope government legislation and tax rules let them carry on doing it.

Table tennis club celebrates ten years

East Finchley Table Tennis Club was established in 2015 and held its first session at the Green Man Community Centre on the Strawberry Vale estate in 2016. Originally with one session a week, it soon expanded to two.



Table tennis players in action at the Green Man Community Centre

To celebrate the club's first decade, 22 members and friends enjoyed a dinner and dance at the Club House of North Middlesex Golf Club on Friern Barnet Lane in June.

The evening kicked off with a glass of prosecco on the terrace overlooking the golf course and finished with a rousing chorus of Sweet Caroline to cheer on the England men's football team as they set off across the Atlantic to 'bring back the cup'.

"New members are always welcome," said Stephen Ross, club Chair. "We play social table tennis - having fun rather than furrowed-brow competition is the order of the day."

Sessions are held at the Green Man Community Centre on Tuesdays, starting at 2.15pm, and on Thursday from 10.15am. Stephen added "if any readers would like to have a go, just drop into one of the sessions".

Surprise visit from Bluey on a morning of fun

By Joan McCarthy

During the summer term, Holy Trinity Primary School hosted its much-anticipated Holy Trinity Games, welcoming not only its own children but also local nurseries. The event was filled with lively and engaging activities that kept the little ones busy.

Cartoon character Bluey made a surprise visit, delighting children and some of the adults too.

Organisers at the school in Eagans Close, N2, sent out a big thank you to Bishop Douglass Secondary School, Push2Perform and Fixation Academy for their support.

Support for children with complex health needs to find help

By David Melsome

A major project led by University College London has been launched to transform how children with complex health needs are supported at critical moments in their lives, with a strong focus on families in Barnet and Haringey and across north London.

The SPROCKET Innovation Hub has been awarded £6.2m over the next five years to develop and implement practical ideas that help children and



Bluey entertains children

families. Potentially difficult stages being looked at include a child moving from primary to secondary school when families have to navigate the process of securing special educational needs support. Another is when a child with special needs leaves hospital with a requirement for adaptations at home and ongoing support in the community.

Parent co-investigator Meaghan Kall described the reality many families face: navigating multiple services, repeating their story, and managing long delays for essential support. "There is no road map and no guidebook," she said. Find out more by going to www.ucl.ac.uk and searching 'Sprocket hub'.



Push to spread benefits of pickleball to more children

By Lynn Winton

Pickleball is booming in the UK right now. It's a fun, lower impact alternative to tennis, with no expensive infrastructure, as any sports court or hall can be set up ready to play in a few minutes.

Here in East Finchley, the company leading the way is Lemon Pickleball. You can book their classes and play sessions in many local venues including Christ's College Finchley and Bishop Douglass schools. Their free taster sessions on the courts at the East Finchley Festival in June were very busy with whole families getting into the game.

On the strength of their success, the company founders have launched a charitable foundation to teach underserved children in London, one session at a time.

"More than half of London's children don't reach the government recommendation for daily activity," explained Lemon Pickleball's operations lead Josh Crine, who is experienced in advising charities providing sport in schools across London. "Pickleball is accessible, doesn't need any expensive kit, and can be played all year round inside and out. It's great fun from the get-go and every child deserves the chance to benefit from the physical, mental and social wellbeing we know it brings."

The Foundation will have its own trustee board, executive team, financial structure,



Lemon Pickleball sessions at the East Finchley Festival in June.

Photo Mike Coles

governance accountability and mission, and it will benefit from the knowledge and relationships that the current business has with schools and equipment suppliers, boosted by access to charitable grants alongside private and corporate contributions.

If you want to know more about being involved in the start of the Lemon Pickleball Foundation, whether by donating, giving your time and expertise, or suggesting your school as being one of the first to benefit, Josh would love to hear from you at josh@lemonpickleball.com. Find out more at lemonpickleball.com/pickleball-foundation.

Protect your parcels from doorstep theft

By Jan Lovell, East Finchley community police officer

People in East Finchley are continuing to fall victim to the theft of parcels from doorsteps with one or two happening every month. The best way to avoid this is to choose a more secure delivery option than your home address when ordering online.

There are several alternatives. Select a shop where you can collect your parcel. Many corner shops provide this service. When you choose this option, a list appears and you tick the shop that's best for you.

Or you can choose to pick up your parcel from an In Post locker near where you live, such as Budgens, or on the High Road by Creighton Avenue and Chandos Avenue. You can also post a parcel from an In Post Locker. Sometimes retailers

offer no options other than home delivery, but you can always provide delivery instructions in the event that you are not in, such as redirecting to a trusted neighbour who you know will take in parcel for you, or even a 'safe place' within the property boundary.

You could also consider buying a parcel box to put near your front door. Make sure it's sturdy, lockable, weather-proof and has an anti-fishing mechanism to prevent theft.



Always delivers: Jane Ray and Denise Ballard-Wyllie with their poster tribute to postman Manuel Dabey.
Photo Mike Coles

Fight to keep special postie

By Ruth Anders and John Lawrence

Celebration turned to sadness when neighbours around the Long Lane area of N2 marking the birthday of their treasured postman discovered days later that he could be taken off the round where he has delivered for nearly 20 years.

In that time, Manuel Dabey has become a treasured part of the local community in Long Lane, Elmfield Road, Trinity Road, Brighton Road, Chamberlain Road, Richmond Road and Font Hills.

Friday 26 June was Manuel's 55th birthday. Residents Denise Ballard-Wyllie, a professional artist, and Jane surprised him by distributing posters for people to display on their windows, gardens and doors by way of a thank you for all that he does.

But within days Manuel was notified by his managers that he was likely to lose his current round and be moved elsewhere. Neighbours were upset at the news and as we went to press on this edition many were writing to the North London Area Manager to protest. A petition has also been started at: <http://bit.ly/4vLOSKE>. The QR code in this article also links to it.

Testimonials say Manuel is always friendly and takes pride in his work. He knows the households he serves and knows the neighbours where he can leave parcels if someone is out at work.

Denise Ballard-Wyllie told The Archer: "Everyone seems to have their own story about Manuel's kindness and the genuine interest he takes in people. I've known him for well over ten years through his round and I've come to appreciate what a special person he is." Jane Ray added: "Manuel is much loved by us locals for his cheery welcome and total reliability.

We think he is also a life saver, as he was especially during Covid, for the way he supports the sick and the vulnerable."

Manuel was very touched by the community's response to his birthday, but also rather overwhelmed by the attention, saying that the appreciation should really be shared with the whole N2 postal team.



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Academy students volunteer time and skills at local groups

Students at the Archer Academy in East Finchley have been taking part in community projects to encourage them to engage with local people, causes and organisations by volunteering their time and skills.

Each year group has a specific focus. Year 8 students focus on food poverty through their partnership with Finchley Foodbank, supporting vulnerable people across the borough. Students visit the food bank every Friday to help sort donations and organise supplies and also take part in restocking sessions with their parents. They also organise school-wide collections of food and toiletries throughout the year.

Finchley Foodbank manager Rachel Nelson said: "We aren't just getting extra help; we are helping the next generation understand the value of community and the reality of food poverty in our area."

Year 9 students work with pupils at neighbouring Holy Trinity Primary School, supporting younger children through reading sessions and playground support. Weekly reading sessions with Key Stage 1 pupils help develop literacy skills and foster a love of reading.

Year 10 students support older members of the community through weekly visits to Spring Lane Care Home in Muswell Hill. Students spend time talking with residents,



Archer Academy students help sort items at the Finchley Foodbank. Photo Archer Academy

listening to their stories, and learning about their life experiences and memories.

Finally, Year 11 students focus on environmental responsibility through fundraising and local action. They organised a collection for the One More Tree Foundation, raising funds to help plant over 100 trees. Alongside this, students take part in weekly litter-picking activities in Cherry Tree Wood and along East Finchley High Road.

Olivia from Year 11 said: "Having walked down The Causeway and seen the sheer amount of litter constantly present, it felt great to get out and collect three big bags of rubbish. A small token to give back to our community."

Mini street party for clinic's anniversary

Staff and clients from an East Finchley clinic celebrated its 25th anniversary with a mini street party. The Creighton Clinic threw open its driveway in Creighton Avenue, N2, for the occasion featuring a Nigerian barbecue, cakes and cocktails.



Neighbours and clients enjoy the mini street party at Creighton Clinic

There were also several stands manned by local young entrepreneurs selling their home-made wares, from lemonade to jewellery and fidget spinners.

Principal osteopath Stephany Clark set up the clinic in 2001 with osteopathy and naturopathy before expanding over the years into acupuncture and shockwave therapy.

Stephany said: "I am very grateful to this community for being so wonderful. It was heartwarming to see so many patients, neighbours, friends and family. Thank you to everyone who came and enjoyed the day with us. With your support we raised just over £700 which will be split between charities for MS and ME."

ADHD start-up from entrepreneur aged eight

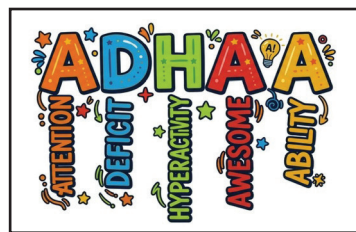
By David Melsome

A young entrepreneur has started a business selling clothes to build awareness of what it's like to have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and to raise money to support children who have been diagnosed with the condition.

Nate Zilberkweit Lewy is eight years old and lives with his family on Church Vale, N2. He does not like the name ADHD because he thinks labelling it as a 'disorder' is too negative.

For that reason, he has come up with a new term which is also the name of his clothes business: ADHAA, or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Awesome Ability.

Nate says: "I started ADHAA because I wanted to do something really cool — make awesome clothes that also help people. I have ADHD, and I know lots of other kids have it too. Sometimes it can be tough to focus or follow instructions,



especially if it's something I think is boring, but it's definitely not a disorder. 'I'd like to give ADHD a rebrand. I'm calling it Attention Deficit Hyperactivity



Amazing abilities: Nate Zilberkweit Lewy, right, founder of ADHAA, with his younger brother Eli

Awesome Ability because it gives me Awesome Abilities like being super creative and full of energy. I think it's cool to stand out and be different, and kids with ADHAA are all different to each other too."

Every item customers buy from Nate's online shop is unique as they can pick their colour and the ADHAA logo is put on for them. Items to buy include t-shirts, hoodies, caps and tote bags.

A donation of £5 from every item sold goes to ADHD UK, the country's leading ADHD charity. So far, Nate's enterprise has raised more than £700 to support its work.

The website also includes Nate's tips and tricks to help other children make the most of their 'awesome abilities'. Find out more and shop at www.adhaa.co.uk

Monsters at Martin Primary

By Ruth Anders

During the summer term, the students in Years 3 to 6 at Martin Primary School in East Finchley were invited by a young writers' organisation to take part in a poetry writing contest. A voluntary competition, it gave the children a chance to have their winning entries published and also an opportunity to win a goodie bag and money for the school.

The children had to design, draw and write a poem about a monster and 77 children from across the school submitted entries. Sophie Cowley-Baughen, Year 6 class teacher, told The Archer: "Remarkably, the competition runners were so impressed by what we sent them that they opted to publish all 77 children's poems!"

"We are still waiting to hear who won the overall competition, but it was certainly a great accomplishment for all involved. It is also a credit to the children and their teachers.

Martin Primary is clearly producing some fantastic writers of the future." Teachers did show and discuss some ideas and examples to get the creative juices flowing but apart from that there was minimal input from staff, except of course explaining the rules and details of the competition and encouraging pupils to take part.

Mrs Cowley-Baughen added: "We always work to promote a love of writing and literature here at the school, and to have so many children choosing to write for pleasure is a credit to staff and families."



Write away: The poetry competition poster

Tell us the news

Have you got a news story or an interesting photo for us? Our readers are our eyes

and ears, and we are always pleased to hear what is going on in East Finchley. Tips, ideas and stories, large or small,

are very welcome. Please email news@the-archer.co.uk or leave a message on our free phone line 0800 612 0748. Thank you



Darn It! Nothing to be ashamed of

By Margaret Crockett

Late June saw the N2 Knitting and Crochet Group hold its first workshop at its regular meeting place, the Bald Faced Stag pub in the High Road, N2. Hikaru Noguchi, credited with spearheading the recent revival in visible mending, led a class in darning techniques.



Make do and mend: Masami Yokoyama and Kazuyo Yasuda at one of the needlework sessions. Photo N2 Knitting & Crochet Group

Hikaru showed traditional woven darning as well as more innovative methods such as honeycomb stitch, based on blanket stitch. Her needlework expertise evident from the examples she brought along and from her demonstrations, she helped the class of seven women revive and transform their much-loved textile items.

In addition to cashmere sweaters, lacy natural wool cardigans and soft scarves, one mother set out to repair the stuffed pig she had knitted for her now-grown son.

Hikaru explained that she learned how to darn in the UK when she was studying. She learned that darning and repairing clothes was not something to be ashamed of and that the repairs did not need to be hidden.



Hikaru Noguchi displays her beautifully repaired garment

Visible mending allows us to embellish and transform clothing into something new and different. On her return to Japan, Hikaru introduced visible mending through her darning workshops. 'Darning' has become a new Japanese word.

Whether visible or not, repairing our clothes is also great for the environment.

According to Keep Britain Tidy, clothing production has roughly doubled in the last 15 years. It is estimated that the average garment is worn only ten times before disposal.

Less than 1% of all materials in clothes are recycled into new garments and 300,000 tonnes of used clothes end up in landfills or are incinerated annually in the UK. Hikaru's book Darning: Repair, Make, Mend beautifully illustrates one way to avoid the impact of clothing waste on the environment.

The N2 Knitting and Crochet Group was founded by Masami Yokoyama and Kazuyo Yasuda.

It meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 2.30pm to 5pm at the Bald Faced Stag. The next meeting is Tuesday 11 August. Everyone is welcome to bring along their project and chat with like-minded people.



One of the needlework sessions. Photo N2 Knitting & Crochet Group

Unsung hero says he's 'just doing his job'

Brookland Junior School teacher Simon Greenhouse, better known by pupils as 'Mr G', has been recognised as a National Unsung Hero of the Year after winning a silver award at the 2026 Pearson National Teaching Awards. He is now in the running for the overall gold award later this year.

Simon has worked at the junior school in Hill Top, NW11, for 22 years, starting as a teaching assistant before becoming a Year 3 teacher. Although he says he is "just doing my job," his dedication goes beyond the classroom.

He runs the school choir, organises art week, and leads the school's wellbeing programme. He also hosts parent support sessions on topics such as behaviour and social media addiction. During lunch breaks, he gives up his own time to run creative clubs for pupils.

Simon, who lives in East Finchley, says one of his biggest achievements is creating an in-school counselling service.

Working with volunteer therapists, the programme supports children dealing with anxiety, trauma, neurodiversity, and emotional regulation. He believes this support is especially important because NHS waiting lists are often very long.

Despite saying he "can't sing a note", he also started the school choir from scratch. The choir now performs at local festivals and community events, giving many children their first opportunity to sing on stage.



Recognition: Simon Greenhouse

Headteacher Jenny Aylen praised Mr Greenhouse for his passion and commitment, saying his work has transformed the school's approach to wellbeing.

She explained that children who receive emotional support often improve their attendance, confidence, and academic performance.

RICKY SAVAGE... THE VOICE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

Weird times

These are confusing times as heatwave follows heatwave and you don't need to go to the Costa del Lager for sun, sea and fish and chips; this year you can get that in Clacton. On second thoughts, maybe not, even if Count Binface is there.

It has been so hot that only mad dogs are interested in walkies, the average hound just wants to chill out in the shade and whine miserably. And what about the cat? Well mine has used its fridge-opening skills to find somewhere cool to sleep rather than to nick food. That said, I'd love to know where he ordered the tuna sorbet from.

For some people it has been glorious, a chance to holiday at home and get sunburnt without the dodgy food. But not for me. Take the buses. They are local mobile greenhouses and the perfect place to grow tomatoes, but hell to travel on. And the tube is just as bad, especially when some sadist has turned the heating on in case it gets cold later.

But there's always the pub, isn't there? Well, that depends on whether you want your ice-cold lager to boil in the glass before you've got halfway through it. And it's just been too hot for food. It's enough to drive a man to drink, but only if the car has air conditioning.

So cometh the time cometh the campaign. What we need is a return to proper British summers. You know, rain on alternate days and the Met Office forever promising the possibility of sunshine next week. A world where the average temperature never gets above 22C and at least one test match is lost to rain. Even Wimbledon has not had that traditional rain in the first week or with it the need for an al fresco concert by Cliff Richard.

I want a return to the summers of my youth where you piled in the car to head to the seaside to build sandcastles in the rain before eating sandwiches in the car. A summer when the only warm thing was the beer and the seagulls were as keen on sheltering from the rain as the rest of us. Back then you always took an extra jumper and an umbrella and hoped that next year you could go to Spain instead of Southend.

So please, rain gods, do not forsake us. Remember that Glastonbury is back next year and it wouldn't be Glastonbury without rain. Bring back the proper British summer.

Re-Griddable: Try our puzzle

Re-Griddable is a twist on the free daily online game grid-dable.co.uk created by two East Finchley residents, Stuart Miller and Matt Robinson.

There may be more than one solution to each Re-Griddable but there is definitely at least one, which comes from a maximum scoring game of Griddable.

If you get stuck the official Griddable word-checker may help (griddable.co.uk/word-checker).

If you like playing Griddable online, why not join the East Finchley Leaderboard? Go to Groups on the site and use code BUJRM4.

No.6

Place the letters to create eight four-letter words — four left-to-right and four downwards.

EEILORVV

S	H	O	W
			E
			N
P			T

Turn to page 11 for this month's solution



Street protest: A still from the film *Everybody to Kenmure Street*. Photo courtesy Phoenix Cinema

Stories of solidarity

By Zalan Pall

This year's Refugee Week took place from 15 to 21 June and the Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley put on a special event in aid of the annual celebration of the contributions, creativity and resilience of refugees.

Partnering with Refugees at Home, the UK's largest independent hosting charity for people seeking sanctuary, the cinema held a special screening of Sundance award-winning documentary *Everybody to Kenmure Street*.

Tying in with this year's Refugee Week theme of courage, the film blends re-enactments with crowd-sourced footage of the Home Office attempt to detain two Sikh men in Pollokshields, Glasgow, in May 2021 and the successful act of

civil resistance that followed. The screening was followed by a panel discussion where some of the charity's volunteers reflected on the film, and their own experiences and motivations for supporting refugees.

One of them, local resident Karen Goodman, had a particular connection to the film. She said: "Kenmure Street has a long history of welcoming refugees. In 1938, my great-great aunt lived there after fleeing Vienna. My mother later came on the Kindertransport in

1939. As a child I spent many school holidays there in the 60s amongst the refugees who were welcomed and lived in harmony with the residents."

Refugees at Home, who this year are celebrating their 10th anniversary, are always looking for more hosts to open their homes and support people fleeing war, violence, and persecution. To find out more or arrange a call with a member of the team, visit refugeesathome.org.

Great oaks from little acorns grow

By Diana Cormack

With more than 1,000 signatures collected for the petition to save the trees and green space at Park House opposite East Finchley Tube station, it wasn't so surprising to see such a large audience for a recent screening of the documentary film *Making a Mini-Forest*.

On a hot evening in late June, Earthwatch Europe hosted the screening at the Phoenix cinema as part of London Climate Action Week. Greeted at this free event with welcome drinks in the foyer, participants got the chance to meet others sharing an interest in community environmental action.

The particular topic featured was the Tiny Forest movement which has evolved since the removal of old growth and

native forests, with a detrimental effect on local biodiversity and recognised contribution to climate change.

In many countries, people have been using the Japanese Miyawaki Method, an afforestation technique using small pieces of land to create dense areas of native vegetation, for example planting mini-forests.

The film showed this happening in France, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and

the United Kingdom, with London reckoned to already have more than 40 of them. Planted and cared for by young and old, it showed how people with a passion can join together to re-green their surroundings. Contact hello@earthwatch.org.uk for more information.

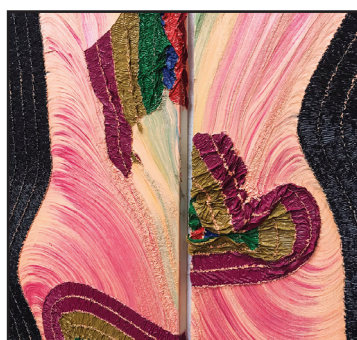
The audience appreciated the Q&A session that rounded off the evening, with everyone grateful for the air-conditioning cooling the auditorium.

Dynamic works on the walls of the Phoenix

Paintings by abstract artist Alexis Harding are on show at the Phoenix Cinema in August.

Harding mixes oil paint and household gloss to create a dynamic style

that he calls 'grunge abstraction'. The artist has staged more than 30 solo exhibitions in the UK and internationally and won the John Moores Painting Prize in 2004.



Mixed media: A detail from one of Alexis's works

What's on at the Phoenix in August

By Zalan Pall, general manager

A mythical epic, a delicate drama, a summer kids' season, Spanish classics, exhibitions plus many more await you at the Phoenix Cinema in August.

Reinvigorating an ancient adventure with majestic sweep and sterling work by its colossal ensemble, Christopher Nolan's *The Odyssey* (showing all through August) imbues myth with primal human feeling.

At her family's home on a Finnish island, young Sophia explores the natural world with her father and grandmother (Glenn Close). Adapted from Tove Jansson's beloved novel, *The Summer Book* (7 August) is a delicate account of growing up and growing old.

As part of our Kids' Summer Holiday Season, we are launching the Phoenix Summer Film Passport, a fun activity to encourage children and families to enjoy more films at the Phoenix over the holidays. Children can collect stamps throughout the summer by watching our featured family films: *Toy Story 5* (1 August), *The Magic Faraway Tree* (7 August), *Minions & Monsters* (14 August), *Animal Farm* (28 August). Tickets are only £4 for kids all summer! The Phoenix invites you to our



summer season of Almodovar classics, celebrating the legendary director's colourful tales of melodrama and metafiction in all their vibrant glory, leading up to his new release: *Bitter Christmas* (28 August); *All About My Mother* (2 August), *Talk to Me* (9 August), *Bad Education* (16 August) and *Volver* (23 August).

We also have an exciting season of Exhibition on Screen encores: *Cezanne* (1 August), *Hockney* (8 August), *Hopper* (15 August) and *Leonardo* (22 August).

Find full details of screenings at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or pop into our foyer.

The Archer online

Did you know you can catch up with past issues of *The Archer* online? Every edition since the 2000 is available on our website start of

at www.the-archer.co.uk. The site also gives information on advertising in our pages and how you can contribute to the paper.

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Letters

Unliveable homes?

Dear Editor,

Robin's letter in the July edition of The Archer supporting the building of 1,485 homes at the Great North Leisure Park in North Finchley rather misses the point.

We do need new homes but these must be fit to live in. As I write we are in our third heatwave of the year, reminding us of the urgency to cope with a changing climate. This excessively dense proposal at the leisure park (four times greater than recommended for the poor transport) with blocks close together will create an urban heat island.

It does not leave sufficient space between blocks for cooling green spaces and trees. Many of the flats cannot cool their homes at night by opening windows each side as they only

have windows facing one way. The so-called affordable units are the worst affected.

Flats there will have tiny outdoor spaces so there will be no chance of escaping to a cooler garden. And where is the external shading to windows?

Barnet Council recognised this poor design but unfortunately sheer numbers outweighed all the planning guidance for good home design.

We have known the planet is heating up for more than 20 years yet still new housing is not being designed for climate resilience. This is an opportunity lost to bring well designed housing to Finchley.

Mary Hogben
Finchley Society



High rise: An artist's view of how the leisure park development will look

Waste of space

Dear Editor,

As I compost most of my general food waste by using my garden composter, I must advise that the new Barnet Council collection system introduced in March 2026 for meat and fish waste etc is not working for me.

Since the inception of this scheme, I find today, for the third time, Barnet has failed to collect my food waste. Short of inventing a robotic collection box that can attract the attention of the collection team, I have decided with regret not to participate in the scheme any more.

It's a pity and sorry to kick up a stink about it.

Michael Thomason
Abbotts Gardens, N2



Uncollected: Food waste brown bins



Nice to meet you: Prince Edward chats to passing Archer Academy students during his visit to Leopold Road, N2

Royal encounter

Dear Editor,

We were on our way home from school one day in June when we came across a wonderful surprise. We happened to see Prince Edward visiting the community garden on Leopold Road and were introduced to him.

He asked us about our plans for the Duke of Edinburgh Award and made us feel comfortable and at ease. He was very friendly, and it was a really special and memorable experience. We felt very proud to have had the opportunity to meet him.

Lucy and Maya
Year 9, Archer Academy



News team: Our article in last month's edition

Keep up the good work

Dear Editor,

I very much enjoyed Margaret Crockett's "Where East Finchley gets its news" in the July edition of The Archer. I remember the early days of the paper. From the beginning it soon became one of East Finchley's gems, helping to cement the strong sense of community that the area has always had.

I used to write pieces for it that I came across now and again; think of it as citizen journalism. And I was pleasantly surprised to see in this May's Archer Archives of 25 years ago that you had pulled out a piece about the windscreen of our local milkman's float being deliberately smashed with stones. I just happened to be walking past after it had happened. I took a photo and sent it in.

Although I moved from East Finchley to Whetstone over 20 years ago, some of my family and friends still live in the area and I still have a deep connection with it. Keep up the good work.

Martin Earl
Simmons Close, N20

Errant sign

Dear Editor,

At the eastern end of Squires Lane, where it joins the A1000, facing the ramp on to the North Circular, there is a large Road Closed sign on a tripod. It has been there for at least a month but there is no road closed ahead.

Is it the work of a prankster or did road workers forget it after some works? Either way it needs to be removed. We locals know to ignore it. Pity the poor visitors who might change their planned route.

Fr Terry Tastard,
East End Road, N2



Misleading: The Road Closed sign

Information is power when it comes to fines

Peter O'Shannessy never imagined that collecting his daughter from East Finchley Tube station would end with a lesson in the power of a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. Here he explains what happened.

On the evening of 23 April this year, roadworks were in place along the High Road between the Tube station and the junction with East End Road. Temporary barriers created a contraflow that directed traffic into the bus lane.

Like everyone else, I followed the car in front, with several more vehicles following behind me. A couple of weeks later, I received a £100 Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) for driving in the bus lane.

I appealed to Barnet Council, explaining that the temporary traffic management had directed vehicles into the lane, and suggesting that other motorists may also have been caught out.

I even suggested that better communication between the roadworks team and the council might have avoided the situation altogether.

To my surprise, my appeal was rejected. Although the council accepted there had been a contraflow, they said I should have left the bus lane before the enforcement camera and then rejoined it afterwards. Reluctantly, I paid the fine rather than risk the charge increasing.

The whole thing didn't sit right with me, so I submitted a Freedom of Information request. It was free, easy to do and, as it turned out, very revealing.

The figures showed that the camera usually issued fewer

than 10 PCNs a day, generating around £400. On 23 April, however, it issued 170 PCNs, bringing in £10,800.

Not long afterwards, I received a letter from the council thanking me for bringing the problem to their attention. They acknowledged the error, confirmed that my PCN would be cancelled and refunded, and said that everyone else affected would also be contacted and reimbursed.

If you were one of the 170 drivers caught by the East Finchley High Road bus lane camera that day, keep an eye on your post.

Receiving a PCN is one of the more annoying perils of modern life. Therefore, it stands to reason there are little more joyful things than possibly having 170 PCNs cancelled. Sometimes, simply asking the right questions really can make a difference.

How to make an FOI request
Make a Freedom of Information request by writing to the organisation concerned by letter, email, social media or by online form if they have one.

You should give your name, a contact postal or email address and a detailed description of the information you want.

For example, you might want all information held on a subject, or just a summary. The organisation has 20 days to respond to your request.

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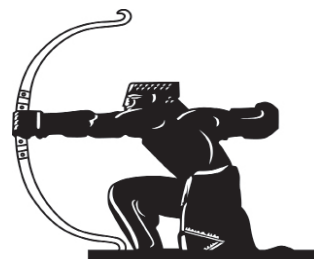
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What draws you to East Finchley?

By Diana Cormack

Visitors to our stall at East Finchley Community Festival often compliment us on The Archer, telling us how much they love the newspaper and also how much they love East Finchley.

This year James Dillon, of Creighton Avenue, N2, a young man who attended Martin Primary and Fortismere schools, did just that and was brimming with enthusiasm for the place.

So much so, he told us, that he has marked his devotion by having an image of Archie, the tube station's famous art-deco statue and symbol for this newspaper, tattooed on his leg.

When he rolled up his trouser leg in front of our stall, we were all suitably impressed. Intrigued, I asked James to tell us why he had chosen to have this tattoo. Here is his reply:

"Being born and bred in East Finchley, I grew up looking up at the statue as I walked into the station, always thinking how beautiful and mystical it looked. Only more recently did I realise that Eric Aumonier's design was paying homage to East Finchley's past. Now a well-connected suburb, it was once part of the expansive hunting forests north of London. "I have this tattoo because I love how the statue looks, but also because the drastic change our area has seen is fascinating.

I love being from here. As nationalism rises around us, I choose local pride instead. I choose to celebrate rich history, vibrancy and diversity in East Finchley and wider London, whether that is through going



Under his skin: James Dillon shows off his Archie tattoo. Photo Margaret Crockett

to the local festival, or getting a tattoo which to me represents East Finchley, past and present."

A well-thought-out reply and, who knows, James might have started a tattoo trend for East Finchley.

Happy 107th birthday, Joe

By Lynn Winton

A very happy 107th birthday to Joe Slyper, a long-time local resident, who is now enjoying life at Hammerson House, which cares for older members of the Jewish community in East Finchley.

They seem to be doing a marvellous job as he could easily pass for a youngster in his 80s. He is just one of ten remarkable centenarians who live there, each with their own unique stories and a lifetime of memories to share.

Joe was born in the East End, where he witnessed the Battle of Cable Street, and found work in the textile industry. In 1939 he was among the first to volunteer for the British Army, earning the rank of Sergeant with the 9th Battalion Devonshire Regiment. He was still active in supporting ex-servicemen and women and marched in parades

right up to his 100th birthday.

In 1940 he married his sweetheart Rose at East London Synagogue; they had a family and were married for 73 years until her passing. Joe dedicated his life to his family which includes nine great grandchildren, built a successful career, served his community and remained a passionate Tottenham Hotspur supporter throughout the decades.

The Archer cannot say for sure if Joe is the oldest man in East Finchley but we think there's every chance. We hope our readers will let us know if we are mistaken.



Birthday boy: Joe Slyper is 107

Garden goes self-sustaining

By Gail Norcliffe

The last week of June was exceptionally busy for the neighbourhood gardeners of Leopold Road, N2. After spending the Tuesday hosting the Duke of Edinburgh on his visit (The Archer, July 2026), Edwina Roberts and Kathy Batten then threw themselves into organising a successful fundraising afternoon on the Sunday.

The fundraiser coincided with the regular monthly play street held on Leopold Road, when for a couple of precious hours traffic is banished and children can play safely in the road. As more residents are out and about with their children on play street afternoons, it was a perfect opportunity to try to raise money for the Leopold Road Neighbourhood Garden, which is now wholly reliant

on donations for maintenance costs. Locals made generous contributions to what was on offer and Tony's Continental kindly donated plants. Those attending were tempted by an array of delicious looking home baked cakes and bread, plants, key rings and jewellery.

Games were arranged including hook-a-duck and design-a-bag. The afternoon raised £600 and the hard-working gardeners are thinking of making it a regular event.



Fundraising items on sale at the neighbourhood garden



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