

THE ARCHER



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Here in black & white



Left-right: campaigner Rachel Abedi with Raphael, Majjo Ashraf, Mahmood Ahmad and Shezad Abedi with baby Leila Noor. Photo by Erini Rodis

By Diana Cormack

At long last we have the crossing we have been fighting for! It is almost two years since local mother Rachel Abedi contacted *THE ARCHER* about the campaign of Fortis Green residents for a pedestrian crossing between the one at Collingwood Avenue and the one at the High Road intersection.

Petitioning the local council, writing to councillors and speaking strongly at the appropriate Haringey Council meetings proved to be fruitless. Despite dire warnings of the danger threatening both young and old on the "race track" which this stretch of road had become, nothing was done.

Unfortunately, there had to be a tragic accident before any action was taken. Mrs Maria Bussandri, of Summerlee Avenue, was taking a present to her new baby granddaughter when she was hit by a motorbike. Neither the bike nor its rider has been traced.

Already deeply involved with the campaign, the incident inspired Magda Polushko of Fortis Green to collect over four hundred signatures as well as to take on Haringey MP Barbara Roche.

The fatal accident occurred on the Barnet section of Fortis Green and, after further appeals to them, Barnet Council agreed to provide some sort of crossing. People no longer have to dice with death and many local residents have expressed their gratitude to *THE ARCHER* for its support, which they feel helped their cause enormously.

Traffic scheme to go ahead

The scheme to ban traffic turning right into or out of Baronsmere Road has now been approved by the Traffic Director for London (TDFL).

The original plan was shelved after a public consultation back in November because the TDFL was concerned that buses were going to be adversely delayed.

However, a bus lane has since been installed along the affected stretch of the High Road and a new application made to the TDFL, which has subsequently been accepted.

The works are due to begin in late April.

Barriers on hold

East Finchley residents have won a temporary reprieve over the installation of new ticket barriers at East Finchley station.

After intervention by East Finchley ward councillor, Helen Gordon, London Underground Ltd have backed down and deferred the scheme in order to discuss other options.

Safety concerns

LUL had installed ticket barriers across the rear entrance to the station, preventing any access from The Causeway. Passengers were to be left with the choice of taking either a 10-15 minute detour via East End Road or using the narrow, unlit southern stretch of The Causeway to the High Road entrance in order to purchase a ticket.

English Heritage reportedly raised objections to plans to install a ticket machine at The Causeway entrance, because the station is a listed building.

Complaints to LUL from angry residents were simply answered with a standard letter, which stated:

"The implementation of this project followed a series of site

surveys and discussions with local managers, the London Underground Safety Team, the Network Capacity Planning Group and English Heritage", but gave no explanation as to why there had been no consultation of local residents.

One resident said, "I've received what looks like a sales pitch from LU. I couldn't care less if the new ticket machines will accept my credit card... I simply want to know how I'm supposed to get to the ticket hall!"

Strength in numbers

Local councillors have joined with residents in their fight to be heard: Hampstead Garden Suburb Councillor, John Marshall

(Con), having been inundated by complaints, has requested a meeting with the Northern Line management; whilst leaflets, letters and e-mails have been distributed by residents.

Clr Helen Gordon (Lab), who recently met with a manager of London Underground Ltd to discuss residents' concerns, said,

"These changes were unacceptable and failing to consult the residents was wrong... My next step is to get LUL to consult locally."

A spokesperson for London Underground Ltd said that new plans for the station would be submitted within the month.

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