



# Traffic Group Declares War

By Daphne Chamberlain

8.30am on Wednesday 10 December marked a new phase in activities of the Agenda 21 Traffic Group. Fed up with rat-running and excessive speed in the Church Lane, Leopold Road and Leslie Road area, local residents went out to stop the cars.

Crossing and recrossing Church Lane at the junction with the High Road brought drivers to repeated standstills for half an hour. Unprintable words were reported from one, but most seemed good-tempered – perhaps because children on their way to Martin School illustrated that the demonstration was for safety reasons. Passing mothers urged a similar protest further up Church Lane, where one claimed it was almost impossible to cross.

### Fed up with rat-runs

Residents said they had had enough of living in the middle of a rat-run, citing the route from Creighton Avenue into Leslie Road, across Church Lane and up Long Lane. In the other direction, Church Lane links with Ossulton Way, as well as being the turn-off point from East End Road. "It's worse since the Manor Cottage was blocked off", they said.

In support were Councillors and our MP. Alison Moore said that the Labour Party had a set of proposals for calming the traffic and protecting The Walks, which had gone by the board. Kathy McGuirk commented that the present administration was obsessed with people driv-



Rudi Vis MP with two protestors in Church Lane

ing through the borough, rather than looking after the interests of people who live here, – a view supported by more than one person there. Rudi Vis said, "This has clearly shown that people are fed up with speed and rat-running."

# Ann Owens Decision Soon?

By Daphne Chamberlain  
As reported last month, the Ann Owens Centre is waiting for a decision on its future. If Barnet Council goes ahead with plans to withdraw funding from Age Concern, Ann Owens and two other day centres in the borough will be affected.

Age Concern's Mark Robinson told *THE ARCHER* that closing the building is not an option, as it also houses other projects run by the charity, which are not Council-funded. However, the present staffing structure is vulnerable to financial cuts.

Users of the purpose-built centre in Oak Lane are justifiably concerned about potential changes to what has been a happy and supportive place, but Mr Robinson has said that nothing has been decided yet.

Barnet will make its proposals public at a Council meeting on Tuesday 13 January, after which consultation must start.

# Is Barnet Council Transgressing its own Code?

By Daphne Chamberlain  
At a time when the Council's consultation record in East Finchley is seen as non-existent or misleading, *THE ARCHER* has been sent an interesting document. It sets out Barnet's code of practice for consulting and communicating with the voluntary and community sector.

**Wilmot Centre Fiasco**  
Headed "Barnet Council's Commitment to the Voluntary Sector", it states, "The Council will make every effort to consult the voluntary sector on matters that will affect them at the earliest possible stage, and do so in a spirit of transparency of decision-making."

Every effort? The Finchley Children's Music Group, the After School Club and The Stanley Road Playing Field Association claim they were simply told – at the latest possible stage – that they could no longer use the Herbert Wilmot Centre.

So this Code of Practice, which was launched at a large

meeting in January 2001, attended by 76 organisations, seems to have been ignored.

Whilst this code of practice refers to dealings with voluntary organisations, the principles should surely be the same for any such exercise, such as the recent library consultation. Sadly, it would appear that the code has been completely ignored in every case, even those which it was specifically produced for.

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