



## Prescription for charity

The annual charity walk organised by the Oshwal Pharmacists is to take place on Sunday 19 June in Potters Bar. It is open to Oshwal pharmacists, their families, friends and staff. The sponsored walkers will set off from the Oshwal Centre at 10am for a 10km trek through the countryside. On their return they will be welcomed with a hot meal as well as being awarded trophies for the three highest fundraisers in both the under-16 and adult categories.

The charities to benefit this year are The Stroke Association, Arthritis Research Campaign and the Oshwal Association for the UK. As usual, Paresh Shah of CW Andrew Pharmacy, 32 High Road, East Finchley is taking part. If you would like to sponsor him, please call in at the shop to fill in the sponsorship form.

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# The future for Long Lane Pasture?

By John Lawrence

A vision for the future of a long-neglected open space could see it turned into a wildlife haven for the enjoyment of local people.

Long Lane Pasture, which occupies a two-hectare site just north of the North Circular Road, could become a true green space once again and reopened to the public.

The site is currently overrun by brambles and rough grass but is kept in some order by volunteers from the Long Lane Pasture Action Group.

The same group is seeking to gain a 99-year lease for the land from Barnet Council and has already engaged the services of internationally renowned wildlife landscape designer Julie Toll to shape its ambitious plans.

Julie was praised for her work in designing a wildlife garden in the grounds of 10 Downing Street.

Her plans for the pasture include creating a pond and a border of plants to attract butterflies. There would be seating areas and level paths for exploring, although the aim would be to keep it as close to nature as possible.

#### A forgotten resource

A public meeting was held on 28 April at the Sea Cadets Hall in Long Lane to present the site plans to residents and around 35 people attended. Many fully supported the proposal although some expressed concerns about security should the pasture be opened to the public.

Group spokesperson Ann Brown said she was 80% confident of gaining a lease on the land although there were still a lot of hoops to go through.

She said, "It would be wonderful if we could restore this land to public use again. We would like to see people return here to fly kites or to have picnics. It's a lovely local resource which has been forgotten for



Looking northbound over the land. Photo by Erini Rodis

too long."

Barnet Council has indicated that it is prepared to hand over the site to the voluntary group but a final decision is not expected to be made until later this year at the earliest.

The action group is calling on Finchley residents to show their support for the wildlife plan by registering as a friend of the pasture. This can be done by contacting Ann Brown on 020 8346 5011.

## Your festival line-up

The East Finchley Community Festival is the longest-standing free festival in Barnet run entirely by volunteers. Great music on two stages, food, beer, craft and charitable stalls all make for a great day in the park.

This year the festival takes place on Sunday 26 June 12noon-6pm at Cherry Tree Wood.

The full programme for the festival day itself will be confirmed at the beginning of June but, in the meantime, here are the highlights of festival week:

#### Saturday 18 June

**Festival Football at Martin School Field, 11am-4pm**

The annual football competition between local primary schools takes place as part of the school's summer fun day. The winning team gets to lead the festival parade.

#### Saturday 25 June

**Festival Workshop at the Green Man Community Centre, 12noon-5pm**

A super fun day for families at the Green Man including bouncy castles, face painting and a workshop for those preparing masks and costumes for the festival parade.

#### Saturday 25 June

**Volunteers Party at Cherry Tree Woods, 6-11pm**

Invitation-only event to thank our team of volunteers. Live music, bar and BBQ.

#### Sunday 26 June

**Festival Parade, leaving from the Green Man at 11.15am**

The parade will make its way along the High Road. The arrival at Cherry Tree Wood for 12 noon marks the start of the festival.

#### Sunday 26 June

**The Festival, Cherry Tree Wood, 12noon-6pm**

The main event: music on two stages, world food, more than 60 craft and charitable stalls and a beer tent.

For more information call 020 8883 4916 or e-mail festival@eastfinchley.co.uk.

## Changing fortunes of Long Lane Pasture

1912: Pasture purchased with public funds for recreation purposes

1980s: Pasture still an open space but falling into serious neglect

1995: Shut to the public and used as a depot by the Highways Agency during redevelopment of the North Circular

1999: Identified as a potential Millennium redevelopment project by local campaign group Church End LA21 Partnership

1999: Diggers sent in by property development company Fairview Homes after being given permission by Barnet Council to investigate the land for housing

1999-2002: Long Lane Pasture Action Group fights housing development plans

2002: Conservative-controlled Barnet Council promises not to develop the pasture for housing

2005: Long Lane Pasture Action Group presents plans to turn the land into a wildlife haven open to the public

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