



Photo by John Dearing

Stanley Field update

By Daphne Chamberlain

The battle to save Stanley Road Playing Field as a sports facility for the community goes on.

Paul Allen, from the National Playing Fields Association, will be meeting Barnet Council leader Brian Salinger and Barnet's Chief Valuer David Stephens on 10 March.

Mr Allen will be attempting to save the field for recreational use against the council's alternative option to build housing on the site. The NPFA's brief does not extend to discussing detailed plans or proposals.

Let's start using it again

Meanwhile, East Finchley Community Development Trust is aiming to make the field part of the community again. Watch out for details of litter-pick and field clearance days. After that, games sessions, kick-about,

even mini-marathons may be on the agenda.

The Trust hopes to incorporate the field into this year's East Finchley Festival. If you have any ideas for using the field, please contact *THE ARCHER*. Our contact details are on page 2.

April Forum

The next Finchley Forum will be at the Green Man Centre, Strawberry Vale, at 6.30pm on Wednesday 5 April. The Trust's Chair, Roger Chapman, will be spearheading the campaign to keep Stanley Field for recreation. He hopes to present lots of individual letters of support and wants to see as many supporters as possible there, taking advantage of the Forum being held on 'home ground'.

Stanley Field: make your voice heard now!

Campaign groups fighting to keep Stanley Road Playing Field for the community are sending out an urgent reminder.

The East Finchley Community Development Trust and associated groups say all those wanting to save it from building developers should act now.

Support at January's public meeting (*THE ARCHER*, February 2006) was tremendous, but it is vital that Barnet Council hears individual views.

The groups are asking all supporters to write a letter as soon as possible, giving the message that you support the East Finchley Community Development Trust's proposal

for the Stanley Road Playing Field to be developed for community use as restored playing fields and that the land should not be developed for non-recreational use.

Letters should be written to Barnet Council, but you can send or take them as soon as possible to The Green Man Community Centre, Strawberry Vale, N2 9BA, clearly marked "Stanley Field letter". From there, the Trust will record and deliver them to the council.

Open day for Barnet's twinning groups

Anyone wanting to know more about Barnet's twin towns overseas is invited to the Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon between 1pm and 7pm on Wednesday 8 March.

The Mayor, Councillor Andreas Tambourides, will be hosting a Twin Towns Associations' Open Day. He says: "Barnet is very proud of its municipal links. This is a wonderful opportunity for the residents of the borough to learn more about the associations."

There will be information stalls, photographic and craft exhibitions, film and slide shows, talks, Greek dancing and other special events. Entry will be free.

The twin town associations hope to recruit many new members to join in their social activities and overseas exchange visits. For further details call 020 8359 2010.

Holy Trinity

nursery places

Parents who would like to apply for a nursery place for their child at Holy Trinity School should do so by the middle of March.

Applications are being accepted now for children born between 1 September 2003 and 31 August 2004.

Applications should be made at the school in Eagans Close by the closing date of 17 March.

Library users oppose cuts

By Sheila Armstrong

THE ARCHER reported last month on proposals by Barnet Council to cut funding at East Finchley Library, which would result in fewer staff, reduced hours and the service being downgraded to that of 'community library' status.

Residents were urged by the East Finchley Library Users Group to write to the council in protest before it finally decides on the cost-saving plans at a meeting in early March.

Do people in East Finchley want to preserve the local library service as it is now? *THE ARCHER* talked to library users to find out.

A jewel in the community

Regular user Jean Gilbert said: "A library is not just for books but information of all descriptions, a jewel in the community. Since moving here 49 years ago I have used all their facilities, enriching my life as a reader and author. Without the library I could not have written my books on music education. It would be a criminal act to impose the intended cuts."

Mike Holt, semi-retired teacher and East Finchley resident for 30 years, said he and his family, including children and grandchildren, use the library for pleasure and information. He also uses it to supplement resources in the Special Needs unit where he works. He added that the cut in evening opening hours would affect schoolchildren doing

homework.

He asked: "Why East Finchley? The borrowing figures are high. Why are the cuts not distributed across the borough?"

Pensioner Nicky Gear pointed out how difficult it would be for elderly visitors if the hours were reduced and they had to travel further to get the books they wanted. She saw this move by Barnet Council as the thin end of the wedge towards closing the listed library building. "We must fight these cuts. It could be too late if we don't," she said.

A local student, who did not wish to be named, said the cuts were causing him concern. "I use the library in the evenings for research on the internet. The government is committed to raising literacy standards, and Barnet are undermining that by the proposed cuts."

To protest against the library cuts, write to: Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of Barnet Council, 32 The Ridgeway, N11 3LQ (email: cldr.b.salinger@barnet.gov.uk); or Councillor John Marshall, Member for Education, 66 Sandringham Gardens, N12 0PJ (email: cldr.j.marshall@barnet.gov.uk).

Martin schools - no changes yet

Changes at Martin Junior and Infant Schools, including amalgamation and rebuilding, are many years away and may never happen, according to a senior school governor.

Martin Schools, like all primary schools in the borough, are part of Barnet's Primary School Capital Investment Programme under which schools could be remodelled, rebuilt or amalgamated (*THE ARCHER*, January 2006).

Under current council proposals, the East Finchley schools might be remodelled in 2012-13.

But Dr Adam Fagan, chairman of Martin Infant School governing body, says the proposed timetable and the availability of budget to make the changes were by no means certain at this early stage.

Dr Fagan said: "In terms

of Barnet's plans for local schools, particularly those such as Martin Infant and Juniors that are not in the first developmental phase, much will depend on raising revenue through the Private Finance Initiative".

Barnet's schools plan is a response to national Government policy. Education Secretary Ruth Kelly and Chancellor Gordon Brown announced in March 2005 that the government proposed to rebuild or refurbish 8,900 primary schools across the country by 2010.

Dr Fagan said all separate infant and junior schools were encouraged at every possible juncture to debate amalgamation but there were no specific plans for Martin Schools.

He said: "Amalgamation only really occurs when governing bodies agree that it is in the best interests of both schools to do so. There is absolutely no talk of amalgamation at present."

A friendly welcome awaits you

EAST FINCHLEY METHODIST CHURCH

197 High Road, London N2 (opp. Creighton Ave.)

www.eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk

**Family service and Junior Church
Every Sunday at 10.30 a.m.**

Worship Music Social events Wheelchair friendly
tel: 020 8349 9340 e-mail: info@eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk

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Services

Sunday 6.30 p.m. Thursday 7.30 p.m.

Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month 6.30 p.m.

Healing every Tuesday between 1 p.m. & 3 p.m.

Weddings ~ Christenings ~ Funerals (at the church or cemetery)
by arrangement with the Minister

All are welcome

4 Woodberry Grove N12 (behind Homebase)