



We need another bus

By Daphne Chamberlain

“We are not going away. We need another bus, and we are going to fight to get it.” That was the message from East Finchley Bus Watch at their meeting last month. They are angry and frustrated at what they see as political manoeuvrings which condemn people at the northern end of East Finchley to an inferior bus service.

Co-ordinator Hazel Burnett is furious that Transport for London has assured her that the 263 bus service is satisfactory, even though statistics submitted by the group from two week-long surveys, a year apart, show that the service is not running reliably.

A spokesperson for TfL said that the target excess waiting time (time over and above the maximum amount of time a passenger should expect to have to wait for a bus) is 1 min 30s, for the 263 but, between February and June this year, buses were often coming in with an EWT of under one minute.

TfL attributed any recorded delays this year to “roadworks being carried out along the route.”

The averages game

Ms Burnett said, “They are playing the averages game. If you average a very long wait with a short wait between bunched buses, of course everything seems all right on paper. Barnet Highways Department has agreed that we need a better service, but TfL is blaming Barnet Council’s road policy for any delays.”

The 263 service is up for review next year but East

Finchley’s bus group predict no improvements as long as we have one solitary north-south bus route. They are asking for a second service.

There have been suggestions from other quarters to extend the 271 past Highgate Village, or the 17 past Archway. East Finchley’s bus group would welcome either, but only if the route ran on to North Finchley. Stopping at East Finchley station would not help those people living towards the North Circular. And that solo stretch is where the bulk of housing development is taking place.

More housing needs more buses

Bus Watch say, “The 17 ran up to Tally Ho for many years, and now, with all the new housing developments, there are far more people living between East and North Finchley. The High Road north of Fortis Green is a major route, but it’s overlooked the whole time. We haven’t got a night bus either, even though one runs along East End Road, and a night service is proposed for Fortis Green.”

East Finchley Bus Watch is supported by its powerful neighbouring group in West Haringey. For further information, contact Hazel Burnett on 020 8444 6824.

Footnote: a half-hourly night service on the 102 route is due to start on 1 September, “to help serve the growing night time economy of such places as Muswell Hill”.



Clan of creativity: Left to right Photographer Craig Johnson, Sculptor Mylene Goodman & Painters Mari l’Anson & Hazel Turvey. Photograph by Alex Nunes

Open all hours

This year’s East Finchley Open event was a massive success, running over two weekends and featuring the work of more artists than ever before.

More than 40 artists put their work on show and on sale at a string of private homes, shops and other venues in N2. This was the fourth year the event has been run and organisers were delighted with the turn out on the first two weekends of July.

One venue visited by *THE ARCHER* was typical of the ethos of the event. Catalan artist Amelia Casas had opened her home to be a venue for a group of artists who complemented each other.

Amelia herself exhibited paintings, prints and, a new medium for her, decorative basketry. As well as jewellery in silver and semi-precious stones, Lesley Brooke showed bead and resin necklaces and

earrings in jewel-like colours.

Ann Froemberg’s paintings, scarves and bespoke wedding stationery fitted in well with the colours and general feel of the other artists’ work at this venue. “The EFO is the best thing that’s happened to me,” Ann told us.

The next event to look forward to from the EFO artists is the third annual Art Fair at Martin School on Sunday 18 November when art lovers will again have the chance to go along and buy unique presents by local artists and crafts people.



One of Craig Johnson’s model cows, depicting landmarks of East Finchley

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Library lottery decision two months away

By Daphne Chamberlain

We should know in October whether East Finchley Library Users Group has succeeded in its bid for Big Lottery funding. The bid went ahead at the end of March, and the Heritage Lottery Fund has contacted Barnet Council with several follow-up enquiries. Barnet have told *THE ARCHER* that they are “hopeful” of a good outcome.

If the bid does succeed, the library would gain a lift which will fit in with the requirements for a Grade 2 listed building, and a fully utilised upper floor, including an “EyebRARY”. This would be a specialist centre for dyslexia and a display space for artwork.

The area would also provide a meeting place for learning-based activities and community clubs, with projects coordinated by a part-time community

worker. Other spin-offs for existing library users would be dramatically improved signage, and improved toilet and café facilities.

The bid is supported by the Institute, East Finchley Open Artists, Contact, and other local and borough-wide groups.

Many fingers in East Finchley and beyond are firmly crossed for the October decision.

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