



## Finchley academy set for 2008

By David Melsome

A new secondary school for Finchley will open a first intake of pupils in 2008 while the school buildings are still being developed around them.

Architectural plans for the Wren Academy in Hilton Avenue, North Finchley, were shown to prospective pupils and their parents as part of a consultation process on 1 February.

State-of-the-art teaching and gymnasium blocks will be built or converted from existing classrooms on the site while the first 162 students are taken through year 7. All building work is then scheduled to be completed by the middle of 2009 ready for the next intake.

The Wren Academy will be a church school with a Christian ethos which will also serve children from all faith backgrounds. It will be a mixed school but pupils will be taught for the most part in single sex classes.

Uniquely to London, it will specialise in Design and the Built Environment – hence its link to Sir Christopher Wren – while offering the full national curriculum. The International

Baccalaureate will be available as an alternative to A-levels and there will be three or four vocational courses.

The admissions process begins in September and application details will be available from Barnet Council. It is proposed that 50 per cent of places will be on a foundation basis, related to attendance at church or a church school, and 50 per cent will be community places for students living within easy travelling distance.

Sustainability will be a key consideration for the new buildings and there are plans for the school site to have its own power sources.

Sylvia Duthie, former chair of governors at Holy Trinity School in East Finchley, is part of the team setting up the school. She was on the interview panel that has already appointed the academy's headteacher.

Further information on the academy can be found at [www.wrenacademy.org](http://www.wrenacademy.org).

## A safer crossing

By Daphne Chamberlain

The Crossing, based at East Finchley, has been awarded Big Lottery funding to develop a pilot project with families affected by parental alcohol abuse. The project, which will receive a share of £1.2 million, is one of only three in the country, along with projects in Wakefield and Manchester.

All three recipients are part of Turning Point, a national organisation providing services for people affected by drug and alcohol misuse, mental health problems or those with a learning disability. Turning Point say this award is a result of last year's Bottling It campaign, which looked at the impact of parental alcohol misuse and called on the government to develop services for children and parents.

Although a 2004 report found 1.3 million children in the UK are affected by parental alcohol problems, The Crossing's service manager, Eon Butler, said there are few services dealing specifically with these children, and even fewer providing support for the whole family. The award will also help build on The Crossing's existing specialist work with families of drug-users, funded by Barnet.

These pilot projects will include children whose parents are not in treatment.

Started in 2000, The Crossing moved to its present home at 82 High Road in 2002, and last year welcomed more than 400 new clients. Senior administrator Zoe Matthews told *THE ARCHER* that its staff of 14 engage with a wide range of people, divided almost equally between the sexes, of all ethnicities, and ages ranging from 18 to over 65, though most are between 35 and 45. It is the community drugs and alcohol service for Barnet residents, and clients use a variety of substances, with the emphasis slightly on alcohol.

Clients can be referred, but most are self-referred. The Crossing offers a drop-in service, one-one and group support, including help with problems and projects, techniques against relapse, counselling and goal-oriented services, complementary therapies and



A staff member and client at The Crossing. Photo courtesy The Crossing

needle exchange.

The Crossing can be contacted on 020 8815 1800 or at [info@thecrossing.org.uk](mailto:info@thecrossing.org.uk) or just drop in.

Footnote

Turning Point is compiling a dossier of testimonies from children of alcohol-affected parents, detailed on [www.turning-point.co.uk/bottlingitup](http://www.turning-point.co.uk/bottlingitup). Anyone wanting to contribute can e-mail [bottlingitup@turning-point.co.uk](mailto:bottlingitup@turning-point.co.uk) or write to Bottling it up, Turning Point, new Loom House, Backchurch Lane, E1 1LU.

### Martin Open Day

Parents are being given the chance to see learning in action at Martin Nursery, Infant and Junior Schools. Visitors will be able to see classes for three to 11-year-olds and afterwards meet with governors, teachers and members of the PTA.

The open afternoon takes place at the school in High Road on Tuesday 13 March from 1.30-3.30pm, with the first of five tours starting at 1.30pm.



The brick that did the breaking. Photo by Diana Cormack

## Smash and grab

By Diana Cormack

Towards the end of January, Kokos shoe shop at 72-74 High Road was robbed during the night after a brick had been hurled through the window. Two expensive handbags were taken from the window display.

A previous robbery occurred last November when, despite surveillance cameras being used in the shop, thieves wearing hooded garments entered the premises and stole eight handbags. Since then the bags on show inside Kokos have been chained up.

The shop's front windows

now have laminated glass, which should deter any further attempts at a break in. Because he feels they will spoil the look of the High Road, the owner has resisted installing metal shutters and is hoping that Barnet's new CCTV (*THE ARCHER*, January 2007) will prove to be a useful aid in crime prevention locally.

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