



Cherry Tree Wood photo by David Tupman

New life for Cherry Tree Wood

THE ARCHER has seen a confidential policy options paper, circulating among key opinion formers in the borough, about proposals for the modernisation of Cherry Tree Wood.

Various new facilities are being considered but the frontrunner is to create "London's first museum dedicated to the history of local woods, together with an exciting multi-media amenity called the East Finchley Experience." Income from this public-private partnership and the Lottery would pay for the refurbishment of Cherry Tree Wood.

Work could start in the summer of 2008 with three key features. First, the wood would need to be closed for some years to allow essential works to be undertaken with full regard to health and safety. The paper's author was rightly concerned that local opinion would need "to be handled with great care" and suggested that "three large TV screens should be erected at each of the entrances showing seasonal images of the woods together with assorted sound effects of birdsong, barking dogs and children playing, thus reminding residents of what they were missing."

Festival to relocate

A top firm of media relations consultants would advise

the developers of appropriate opinion forming strategies, especially with the possible backlash regarding the relocation of the annual East Finchley Community Festival to Cricklewood.

Secondly, as most of the new museum building would be below ground it is envisaged that one in three of the current stock of trees would need to be felled in order to allow sustainable air ducts to ventilate the galleries. To allay local concerns, "top quality, life-size, plastic replica tree specimens would be installed for ventilation and sourced from carbon neutral providers" which the paper says "are indistinguishable from the real thing but have the advantage of being maintenance free and no longer a burden on council

tax payers."

Celebrating East Finchley

Thirdly, the establishment of the East Finchley Experience as part of the new museum will allow local people to record their memories and anecdotes about life in N2. Initial thinking is that interactive media screens would help celebrate "local bus services which ran every five minutes to North Finchley", "usable public toilets on East End Road" and "the library which opened during lunchtime".

The paper concludes that these, and a late proposal for a 100-foot wind turbine to power the new museum and to be located on the Tube station's south plinth, will be considered as priority business on 1 April.

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Star of stage and screen

Twenty-two year old actor Ryan Sampson hails from Yorkshire but is now living on the High Road, East Finchley. Although he has had no formal training, Ryan is making his mark in the acting profession, having appeared alongside Nicholas Lyndhurst in the BBC comedy *After You've Gone*. He has also been in *Heartbeat*, *Holby City* and *Wire in the Blood*.

With more television work in the pipeline, Ryan is still continuing with his stage career, which now includes two plays, *DNA* and *The Miracle* at the

prestigious National Theatre. Previous theatre work includes performing at the Royal Court, Southwark Playhouse and the Sheffield Crucible.

In April Ryan can be seen in what many actors now count as a great accolade when he appears in two episodes of *Doctor Who*.

Tenants wanted for desirable new homes

By Ann Bronkhorst

With all the house-building in the south-east it's no surprise to find some new dwellings just north of Creighton Avenue. These, however, are state-of-the-art roosting and nest boxes put up by the Friends of Coldfall Wood. It's hoped that bats and birds will move in, rear their young and add to the woodland life.

Or, in some cases, take away from it. Controversially, two of the new boxes are designed for owls and kestrels, one for each. A healthy wood needs natural predators and at present Coldfall is overpopulated by rats and pigeons. It's hoped that a few owl and kestrel families will help to right the balance.

Since last autumn, bird life in Coldfall has thrived, with reports of many sightings of wrens, robins and wagtails around the stream and pools. The dead hedges and the settled, bramble-covered log piles are providing welcome shelter and nest sites.

The pools have not been vandalised lately and the newly-planted reeds are flourishing. There's at least one resident frog and more to follow, no doubt, as the frogspawn becomes tadpoles. Though it may be tempting to add a

water plant or two, or some creatures from a garden pond, Haringey Conservation Officer Ian Holt asks us to leave well alone, as the wrong plants or organisms might multiply or bring disease.

School gets involved

Gradually the word is spreading about the wood and its regeneration. Now Coldfall Primary School, on the eastern side of the wood, is taking an interest in its neighbour. They have an eco action group and are planning their own clean-up of the wood, as well as a nature wall in the woodland area of the school grounds. Come on, Fortismere, it's your turn now!

Anyone with ideas or resources for helping with the regeneration of Coldfall Wood can contact the Friends at info@coldfallwood.info or at the Vampires Clubhouse at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of each month.



A select estate in woodland surroundings. Photo by Ann Bronkhorst

Feathering your nest

East Finchley estate agents Prickett & Ellis marked National Nest Box week by providing some new homes for wildlife at Fortis Green Reservoir allotments.

The selection of exciting new residences for the local bat and bird populations include traditional wooden bat boxes, chalet-style boxes for small birds such as blue tits, and a spacious ranch-style abode for barn owls.

Anyone who would like to provide refuge for wild-

life nest boxes can buy them online from the RSPB at <http://shopping.rspb.org.uk>.

Major patron

Major Paddy O'Brien has become a patron of The Finchley Society in succession to the late comedian Spike Milligan. Major O'Brien and his wife Una are Finchley residents.

From 2003 to 2006, he was Representative Deputy Lieutenant for Barnet, representing the Queen and arranging royal visits.

The society said he will not be just a figurehead but will also attend meetings of the trustees where his wide experience in management and training will provide valuable support.

**All Saints' Church,
Durham Road, East Finchley
Church of England**

**Sunday masses at 8.00 a.m. and 10.00 a.m.
Weekday masses at 10.00 a.m.
Prayer requests are gladly accepted.**

**The Parish has a flourishing social life.
Contact the Vicar, Fr Christopher Hardy,
on 020 8883 9315.**

All Saints' also has a strong musical tradition and an enthusiastic choir of both adults and children.

**Experienced singers are always welcome.
Contact Geoffrey Hanson on 020 8444 9214.**

<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>

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

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