



Pressure for direct bus to Royal Free Hospital

By Daphne Chamberlain
London's Mayor has been asked to support calls for a bus route from North Finchley down the High Road to East Finchley, then via Kenwood to Hampstead and the Royal Free Hospital. The Green Party, who made this proposal, are compiling a petition to show local support.

Local Buswatch Chair Hazel Burnett told *THE ARCHER*: "This route would be particularly useful as more and more people in this area are being referred to the Royal Free. It would also give us another bus service between East and North Finchley, which is increasingly necessary in view of Barnet's expected population explosion in the next 10 years."

Several readers have told us that a direct link to Hampstead is long overdue, and how vital it is to have an easier journey to the Royal Free. As one said: "Not all of us have cars, and parking would be a nightmare anyway."

Current routes too long

Another said: "Transport for London's route planner gives 54 minutes for the current journey from East Finchley to the Royal Free by the 263 or C11 services, and 27 minutes by tube to Camden, then 24 by bus. By car, the AA route planner says 15 minutes. Says it all for me."

Noel Lynch, Chair of East Finchley Green Party, told us: "My daughter had to take that journey [by public transport] recently, with her child and mother-in-law. It took her nearly two hours to get there. Our other objective is to improve the North Finchley/East Finchley bus service."

Mayor's support

When Green Party member Darren Johnson, who will be Chair of the Greater London Assembly from next May, asked Boris Johnson for support, the Mayor replied that a direct route to the hospital was preferable, and said he would ask Transport for London to investigate the feasibility of introducing one. He also undertook to ensure that TfL would liaise closely with the constituency member and local council.

Meanwhile, local Greens have been providing petition forms at information stalls in East Finchley. For more information, call 020 8445 6312 or email eastfinchley@greenparty.org.uk.

Volunteers work for Cherry Tree Wood

By Ian Cormack
Despite a recent snowfall, the works relating to the Big Lottery grant obtained by the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood commenced on a late October morning.

At 10am an intrepid band of volunteers from BTCV (British Trust of Conservation Volunteers) arrived by minibus and started unloading their equipment. Two youngsters who rolled up were unfortunately not allowed to help as they were under 16.

Clearing the clutter

After a quick brew-up, head honcho Gillian gave a very clear briefing about how to use the various tools and how to keep safe. Then everyone started clearing brambles, elder and invasive ash, maple and other unwanted clutter from areas by the railway and the unofficial path up to the playground, including the fenced area.

They worked with good heart and cheer in cold, damp conditions. All the debris had to be taken to the Summerlee Avenue entrance ready for shredding and removal by Barnet Council's contractors. At lunchtime, organic soup from the Lazy Sally café was much appreciated.

The motley crew of men and women, young and old, waged and unwaged gave up their day



Gillian demonstrates how to hack it.. Photo by Ian Cormack

to help improve the amenity of our Wood and we should be grateful for their generosity. BTCV itself makes a fairly nominal charge for all the organisation and transport.

Bulbs and bird boxes

There is a similar day coming up on 9 December and another in spring 2009, when it is anticipated that bird boxes will be made. The spring day may be on a weekend so anyone

with an hour or two to spare is welcome to join the Friends' working party.

Native bulbs are due to be planted and some areas may need to be ring fenced by dead hedging or chestnut palings to give them a chance to regenerate. The Friends ask park users to bear with them while these areas are out of bounds as the work will be for the longer-term benefit of the Wood.

Oooh! Aaah!

By Carolyn Drake
Large crowds gathered in Martin Primary School field on Thursday 6 November, eagerly awaiting what turned out to be a breathtakingly beautiful firework display.



Children munching on toffee apples at the fabulous Martin Primary School Fireworks Display. Photo by Helen Drake

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Just after 7pm, headteacher Helen Morrison led an enthusiastic vocal countdown to the event and Colin Searle unleashed a dazzling series of sky-filling, multi-coloured fountains of light.

The event was organised

by the PCTA, in conjunction with the Finchley Community Development Trust and The East Finchley Festival. The organisers would like to thank Budgens for the generous donation of food and drinks, plus everyone who sold tickets in advance.

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