



Gone to pot

By John Dearing

Everyone who has the misfortune to have to drive up Oak Lane from the High Road will tell you that the road surface has been breaking up for months. Recently, one of the potholes has grown to a size big enough and deep enough to cause damage to car wheels and suspension.

If you know of another pothole in East Finchley that warrants attention, take a picture of it, with something alongside to show its size (a tape measure, your shoe, even your head) and email it to us at the-archer@lineone.net.

Barnet Council says it inspects all public highways at least four times a year and arranges repairs to both footways and carriageways where defects are identified as dangerous or urgent. Where the general condition of a road is poor, it may be put on the planned maintenance programme.

You can report potholes directly to the council by phoning the Customer Care Unit on 020 8359 4600 or



One of the offending holes in Oak Lane. Photo by John Dearing

going to the Transport and Streets section of the council website www.barnet.gov.uk.

Is your road scheduled for resurfacing?

Barnet Council plans to resurface some local roads before the end of April 2008.

This may include closing some footpaths and adjacent side roads where appropriate, though access for residents and essential services will be maintained as far as is practicable. The following roads in N2 will be affected:

Brighton Road, Canons

Close, Central Avenue, Church Lane, Deansway, Elmfield Road, Hamilton Road, Leslie Road, Oak Lane, Ossulton Way, Tarling Road, The Walks, Alley between Brim Hill and Abbots Gardens.

Please phone Brian Francis on 8359 7514 or Kugan Sabanayagam on 8359 7344 for further information.

In addition, to facilitate the installation of a new trunk main scheme, temporary waiting and loading restriction orders will affect Central Avenue, King Street, Leopold Road and The Walks. These were expected to commence on 2 January and to last for eight weeks.

For further information please phone Colin Reeder on 8359 3039

Speed fears after car crashes in Church Lane

By John Lawrence

A car travelling down Church Lane - a major route between East End Road and the High Road - went out of control and crashed into the walls and gardens of three houses.

Residents heard an enormous crash like an explosion at 8.30pm on Wednesday 9 January. They rushed outside to see the uninjured driver attempting unsuccessfully to manoeuvre his Mini Cooper out of the mess.

The force of the crash sent bricks hurtling against the front door of 27 Church Lane and wrecked walls, gates and shrubs in the gardens of two neighbouring houses.

Downhill speed

People living in Church Lane and parents at nearby Martin Primary School say the incident raises serious concerns about the safety of the road. They are calling on Barnet Council to introduce traffic calming measures urgently.

They claim it is too easy for drivers to pick up speed coming down the hill from the bridge over the railway line, and then to lose control at a point where the road narrows and bends at the junction with King Street, immediately prior to the scene of this latest crash.



Photograph courtesy Jane Higginson

Risk to pedestrians

Jane Higginson, who lives at no 27, said: "I was sitting in the front room at the time. There was a huge bang and bricks came flying against my front door. That time of the evening is still busy for pedestrians along here but if anyone had been walking on the pavement at the time, they wouldn't have stood a chance."

Ruth Brown, a parent and former governor at Martin Primary School, said many families walk along this stretch of road to get to and from school. The school's first Travel Plan asked for Church Lane to be made a 20mph zone with road humps but, in response, the council only widened some of the pavements to give pedestrians more room. Ruth said this failed to tackle the real issue which she believes is speed, although this has not been proved to be a factor in this incident.

Councillor Matthew Offord, cabinet member for transport and environment, said the council was looking into the causes of the crash. He said: "Once we know the facts behind this incident, we will be able to make a judgment and carry out any changes that may be necessary to the road. The council takes road traffic safety extremely seriously."

Lights, litter and leisure

Coming up for its first birthday in April, the REEF group plans to take more action to improve life and business in East Finchley.

The group, whose name stands for Regeneration and Enhancement of East Finchley, started the 'I Love N2' campaign and has supported initiatives like the campaign to make N2 a plastic bag-free zone and events like the Oktoberfest at the East Finchley Constitutional Club.

In the coming year, the group wants to launch a litter-free campaign to improve the local environment. They also plan to raise awareness of the parking facilities in the area, to encourage more people to pay short and long visits.

REEF believes the High

Road's Christmas lights are an embarrassment and will push Barnet Council to provide better ones in 2008.

The group is also promising to work with the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood to improve the condition of the park, one of the area's key leisure facilities.

REEF is looking for volunteers who would like to support some of these initiatives. For more information, go to www.east-finchley.com or call Paul Homer on 020 8442 0442, or Michael Hughes at MJH Design on 020 8343 1763.

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