



When you wish upon a star

We asked readers and contributors what they were wishing for in 2008. Here's what they said:

Hazel Burnett, East Finchley Bus Watch organizer:

I have three wishes for 2008:
1) A decent, reliable bus service for all the people of East Finchley.
2) For each of us to be aware of our individual carbon footprint, and take personal responsibility for how we can reduce this.
3) Peace, and an end to the suffering of so many of the peoples of this world.

Maggie Driscoll, head of Martin Primary School:

I wish the whole of East Finchley peace and joy for the new year.

Staff at TD Hair Designers:

Peace and harmony for the world and a nice little wine bar for the High Road.

Helen O'Toole:

1) More shops with ramps
2) Lowered kerbs
3) Bins for recycling plastic
4) Safer, wheelchair-friendly buses: ones where the ramps work properly and come out at every bus stop. If the pavements were at the correct height, then the ramps would lower to the right level! If possible, I would like more space inside the buses for everyone to park a wheelchair, pushchair or shopping trolley.

Paul Homer, Phoenix Cinema general manager:

2007 was a great year for the Phoenix. We showed some excellent films and had lots of people through the doors. As a result, we were able to do lots of much needed work to the building, and also a new website and education work. I want to build on this in 2008 and push forward our redevelopment plans to ensure we have the brilliant cinema that East Finchley deserves. For East Finchley, I hope we can get our park keeper back, I hope we can save Stanley Field and make full use of that facility. I hope the farmers' market becomes a weekly fixture and that everyone living here grabs all the great things we have to offer in this community.

Sippy Azizollah:

1) More say by disabled people in designs of products made for them.
2) Kerb drops to be put back

where they were removed when the High Road was retarred.

3) The invention of a zapper for police that can disable a driver's mobile phone when not being used hands free, or (to satisfy the grumpy old woman in me) why not a zapper that melts the inside of the phone?

Maureen Antoinette, Brownies and youth club leader:

My wish would be for more people to get involved with the young generation and see the good within them. I recollect an article written earlier in the year regarding the Muswell Hill scouts and cubs group. Many children from East Finchley, including my youngest Gabriel, have had the privilege of attending the group; however it was noted that there were no cubs or scouts groups in East Finchley. I am not aware of any progress. East Finchley is a community full of talent, resources and church halls. It would be wonderful if we could all give a little back to this generation who need and deserve it.

Daphne Chamberlain rounds up N2's wishes from past years:

Millennium year 2000: more clothes, toy and shoe shops in East Finchley; a children's bookshop; playground and adventure playground in Cherry Tree Wood; sports facilities; fewer yellow lines; more buses; a cleaned-up tube station.

2004: investment in youth and community provision (including saving the Herbert Wilmott Centre); improved children's playground and new café in Cherry Tree Wood; survival of, and investment in, the library; "The 263 should run on time"; the Institute should move to East Finchley.

2007: refurbishment of Stanley Field; more use of Cherry Tree Wood; better Christmas decorations; buses going beyond Archway; fewer betting shops and more bookshops; more clothes shops and shops for children; recycling service for plastics; safer crossing on Creighton Avenue; a lift in the tube station and a 'Next train' sign in the station car park.

Winter warmer from Contact

By Sarah Conway

The charity East Finchley Neighbourhood Contact held its Winter Fayre on Saturday 8 December and was delighted to raise just short of £1,000 to support elderly and vulnerable people.

Actress Pooja Shah, Kareena Ferreira from East-Enders, made a guest appearance and was more than happy to stay and chat with people, pose for photographs and announce the winners of the raffle towards the end of the day. One lucky winner won a £150 token for a photographic session with Photographic Synergy in Finchley.

Despite the wet and windy day outside there was a warm and charitable atmosphere inside and plenty to keep the children entertained whilst their parents chatted over baguettes and delicious homemade cakes.

Much appreciation and thanks go out to the fabulous stallholders and also to our sponsors, not to mention Tristan Green and Martin Primary School for all their support. And finally to all the volunteers, clients and friends who donated gifts, time and effort.

Sponsors of the Winter Fayre were Prickett and Ellis, Pentland, Fiori, Cootes Pharmacy, McDonald's, Jeremy



Masie, Stan and Mary barter at the book stall. Photograph by Sarah Clackson

Leaf, Love and Lilly, East Finchley Electrical, Casa Pepe, Photographic Synergy, Barnet Library Services, Ron's Colney Hatch Post Office and Squires Estates.

The support offered by Contact includes befriending, transport, weekly shopping bus, lunch club, Muslim lunch club,

gardening service, advocacy and advice as well as arranging outings throughout the year.

If you are interested in supporting us or if you know of someone who could benefit from one of our services please contact Sian or Tareshia on 020 8444 1161 or email efncontact@dsl.pipex.com.

A difficult year for the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood

By David Attfield

The past 12 months proved to be a difficult time for the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, with the loss of the park keeper and with the haemorrhaging of staff within Barnet Council's Greenspaces team.

This has meant that planned improvements in the park have been put back and, for much of the year, there has been nobody within Barnet Council able to address concerns about the park.

However, all is not gloomy and we have some exciting developments to report. The Friends held a very positive public meeting in Cherry Tree Wood in September to discuss the widespread concerns about the maintenance of the Wood following the loss of the park keeper. A lot of ideas were discussed and we hope over the coming months to develop at least two of them.

Conservation

First, a major concern is that no work is being undertaken, currently, for the conservation of the woodland. Without active maintenance the woodland is likely to decline further, meaning more trees becoming stressed and diseased, fewer new trees growing and less wildlife.

We plan to tackle this by working with a local expert to devise a maintenance and conservation plan for the woodland. Our aim is then to seek grants to realise that plan which is likely to see areas coppiced and extensive replanting. This is a big project which will require a good deal of work.

We also plan to develop our

website (www.cherrytreewood.co.uk) encouraging members to contribute to it and to pass on comments about the Wood to ourselves and to Barnet Council

Pavilion news

Barnet Council have informed us that they are in discussions with a prospective tenant for the disused pavilion. The plan would be to transform it into a day nursery. It would be great to have this near-derelect building restored and put to good use. There has also been interest in transforming part of the pavilion into an education area, though cost is a big obstacle.

Petition

A 400-signature petition opposing the axing of the park

keeper, lodged by the Friends, prompted Barnet Council leader Mike Freer to write a reply that claimed Cherry Tree Wood receives the highest level of maintenance of any park in Barnet. He has also promised to look into why a number of planned improvements to the playground have not been carried out.

Barnet Council, we are assured, will soon be recruiting a Greenspaces officer to oversee the upkeep of Cherry Tree Wood and a number of other parks. The post has been vacant since early summer; we look forward to having again a contact point within the Council.

Maybe things will be better in 2008?

A friendly welcome awaits you

EAST FINCHLEY METHODIST CHURCH

197 High Road, London N2 (opp. Creighton Ave.)
www.eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk

**Family service and Junior Church
Every Sunday at 10.30 a.m.**

Worship Music Social events Youth Club Wheelchair friendly
Tel: 0208 346 1700 e-mail: info@eastfinchleymethodist.org.uk

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>