



Plan for polyclinic expansion is blocked

By Janet Maitland

Barnet Council has refused planning permission for a larger medical centre on East End Road. Cloverdale Estates, a property development company, were given permission for the centre last September, but then submitted plans for a much bigger building.

The site of the planned centre is on Metropolitan Open Land, which has building restrictions similar to those applying to the Green Belt.

In November we reported that the Mayor of London had decided that the application did not comply with the London Plan for new developments. His objections were not about the size of the building, although the developers

want to make it twice as big. He was concerned about access, transport, parking and sustainability.

Safeguarding Open Land

Similarly, Barnet Council has refused permission because sustainability issues were not properly addressed. However, the planning department was also concerned that the number of enclosed cycle parking places now required because of the increased size

of the centre would mean that the open character of the land would be spoilt.

"The important planning facts are that existing permission is for a centre of under 1,000 square metres, no higher than a single storey, and that the land is Metropolitan Open Land," said Councillor Colin Rogers.

Planning permission for a centre of under 1,000 square metres still stands.



Adam and his son Dylan.

Guerillas on the loose

Keep an eye out for this sign around East Finchley. If you see it next to a bed of neatly planted winter pansies or nestled in amongst the first crocuses, then it means N2's very own guerrilla gardeners have swung into action.

A group of green-fingered but anonymous people have got together to bring a splash of colour to the drab and untended corners of our public spaces. When they find a spot that needs some tender loving care, they bring their own tools and



plants and set about giving it a natural makeover. Guerilla gardening is a growing trend across the UK as more people realise they can do something themselves to bring beauty to urban life. If you'd like to get involved yourself, contact the group by email at n2gardeners@gmail.com.

Drugs raids net major haul

By Janet Maitland

Drugs with a street value of £9,000 were seized by police during early-morning raids at three addresses on 29 October. Police were acting on intelligence received by the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

One of the raids was at Cecilia Close, N2. "There were about 20 police with sniffer dogs," said a neighbour, who asked not to be named.

The largest quantity of drugs, mainly cannabis and cocaine, was found at a house in Regents Park Road. The other house raided was in Hale Lane, Mill Hill. No arrests were made.

"Although the suspect was not at any of the three addresses searched, the evidence has been secured," said Sergeant Andy Matthews of the Safer Neighbourhood Team. "I am confident that he will be apprehended in the near future. In the meantime his ability to deal drugs has been dealt a severe blow. This is a great example of the team listening to public concerns."

Fathers reunited

By Diana Cormack

Many parents find that, instead of the mother being the main carer, it suits their situation better for the father to take on this role. Adam Porter, of Leslie Road, thoroughly enjoys looking after his two-and-a-half year old son Dylan, but earlier this year he did have a problem and THE ARCHER came to his rescue.

An article in our August edition featured Lydik Grynfell who, two months earlier, had set up a club for dads taking care of children while their partners were at work. It was just what Adam was looking for.

Minority men

He said: "When I went to playgroups I felt like an outsider; I felt uncomfortable with some of the women there because I was in the minority and I still am." Adam met Lydik at the Methodist Church Toddler Group, which scored top marks in a London survey for being father-friendly. He joined The Dads' Club and shortly afterwards, when Lydik went back to work, he took over its running.

Apparently there are only three such groups in the capital and East Finchley has the largest. It is for full or

part-time carers and provides friendly and informal contacts for Muswell Hill and Highgate too, with activities being held in these areas. Cherry Tree Wood is a favourite spot but winter weather means that the club needs an indoor venue. Newstead Children's Centre in Fallows Close has offered a share of its premises at weekends, but this is usually when families spend the most time together.

On the day of his interview with THE ARCHER Adam, who describes himself as a full-time dad, appeared on Channel Five's "Live from Studio 5" to give his views on Wayne Rooney's self-confessed lack of nappy-changing skills. He sees the club as a social network that can give help and support to first-time fathers and to those with young children. It also helps children to socialise. Find out more by contacting him on 07957 441 435 or at <http://thedadsclublondon.blogspot.com>



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