



Dexter and George with Sam and Razor. Photo by Diana Cormack

Budgies going cheap

By Diana Cormack

Two brothers in Fortis Green Avenue are looking for a new home for their budgerigars. Six-year-old Dexter and nine-year-old George have had the birds since September 2007. They wanted a pet but thought their garden was unsuitable for a dog, cat or rabbit because it has fake grass. So they chose two male budgies and named them Sam and Razor.

Dexter told *THE ARCHER* that the birds like to watch out of the window and George believes they enjoy music: "When I play my guitar, they look like they're listening to it," he said.

But because they are at Tetherdown School in the day and sometimes away on holiday, these obviously caring boys feel bad about leaving the birds on their own. So they are hoping that someone in the locality could give the budgies, complete with

their impressive cage, a warm and loving home.

However, there is one proviso. Dexter and George would like to be able to visit Sam and Razor from time to time, so are hoping for an offer of a home within walking distance of Fortis Green Avenue.

If you think you fit the bill and would like to give the budgies a home, please contact us at *THE ARCHER*. Our contact details are on page 2.

Five year wait for allotments

Demand for allotments has been so high that the East Finchley Allotment Holders' Association has been forced to close its waiting list for new plots.

There are 75 people waiting for an allotment on the site off Plane Tree Walk but only seven became free last year. The average waiting time for a plot is now five years.

The Association says it is unfair to put people on the list and keep them waiting for so long. The list will be closed until January 2010 when the situation will be reviewed.

Direct payment advice

Age Concern Barnet has received funding to employ a benefits adviser, to assist older people and their carers with the new system of Direct Payments.

For information contact Lisa Dubow at Age Concern Barnet on 020 8346 3511 or lisa-finchley.acb@btconnect.com

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Jacksons Lane Arts Centre

saved

By Caroline Ayre

The future of Jacksons Lane Art Centre did not look bright at the beginning of 2009. After 25 years, the leading arts and community centre in Archway Road, Highgate, was threatened with closure because the Arts Council was considering withdrawing the centre's funding.

However, in a crunch meeting on 10 February, the Arts Council's committee rejected the move and agreed to a further £135,712 over the next financial year.

Jacksons Lane chief executive Kate Sarley said: "I feel ecstatic. It's like Christmas and Easter and Valentine's Day all in one."

Letter campaign

Lynne Featherstone, MP for Hornsey and Wood Green, and Liberal Democrat Councillor Rachel Allison joined forces to campaign for the Arts Council England and Haringey Council to come up with the funds needed to ensure the centre's survival. They launched a letter writing campaign urging Haringey Council to give £50,000 to hire a fundraiser in order to satisfy the Arts Council that the centre had a future. Local residents took up the call to arms and flooded the council with letters.

On receiving the news, Councillor Allison said: "This is brilliant news, and we want to thank the hundreds of people who took the time to write in support of Jacksons Lane."

Jacksons Lane now has two years to demonstrate it can deliver a fantastic arts programme for local people. For information on Jacksons Lane's spring programme and events, visit www.jacksonslane.org.uk.

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Picturesque Holy Trinity Church in February's snow. Photo by Andrew Louth. See page 6 for more East Finchley snow scenes.

Phone mast alarm bells ring again

By David Melsome

Residents in the Church Lane area are gearing up again to oppose plans to place three mobile phone masts in the bell tower of Holy Trinity Church. They claim the masts would not benefit the community and would look unsightly.

Twenty-six people who attended a meeting of the East Finchley Village Residents' Association on 9 February voted unanimously to continue fighting the plan. "The diocese needs to know that our opinions haven't changed," said association member Caroline Broome.

Chequered history

The Rev Laurence Hill, of Holy Trinity Church, first put forward a proposal to install three mobile phone masts in the Grade II listed building in 2006. It was turned down by Barnet Council and then given permission on appeal by a Government inspector, before being withdrawn shortly before a hearing by the Diocese of London two years ago. The proposal was reactivated in January.

Residents agreed at the meeting to write to the diocese to put forward their objections again. They will then wait to see which way the process goes before deciding their next steps.

The association acknowledged that some residents may approve of the phone mast plan but said it would always be guided by the majority view.

