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## Bobath Centre: "The best place in the world."

By Kevin Gillespie, Bobath Centre fundraising manager

**On a recent visit with her son Laurence, Ann Williams described the Bobath Centre as "The best place in the world."**

Laurence was five months old when he began twitching uncontrollably. Epilepsy was diagnosed and a MRI scan confirmed that brain damage had occurred during pregnancy. There was no obvious cause; he was just one of the unlucky children born with cerebral palsy.

Happily, Laurence has benefited over the years from visits to the internationally-acclaimed treatment clinic in East Finchley and, as a consequence, has been able to go to his local school.

### What is cerebral palsy?

It is an umbrella term describing a group of disorders caused by damage to the immature brain. It takes many forms, but usually a child will find it hard to control their muscles, maintain postures and co-ordinate movement. This makes it difficult for them to do simple tasks like getting dressed and eating, and to cope with the demands of mainstream education.

"Our aim," says the centre's director Jayne Pearce, "is to improve a child's quality of life so that they are healthy, active and able to be as independent as possible. The centre works almost exclusively with children who have cerebral palsy.

This has given us a wealth of knowledge and experience that's hard to find anywhere else."

### Meeting a range of needs

Ann agrees: "They don't accept the notion that nothing can be done for a child. They keep searching for solutions." Laurence has limited use of his right side, and problems chewing, using his tongue and closing his lips. His condition requires not only the skills of a physiotherapist to make his right side stronger, but also a speech and language therapist to improve his eating and speaking, and an occupational therapist to work with him on activities that will give him the independence he needs as he gets older.

This is where the centre comes into its own. "If a child has a variety of different problems our specialists work collectively to devise a single treatment plan incorporating all the child's therapy needs," says Jayne. "This bespoke service can make a difference even for children with highly complex conditions."

*Names of the mother and child in this article have been changed. You can contact the Bobath Centre on 020 8444 3355.*

## THE ARCHER Calendar 2010 on sale

**THE ARCHER** Calendar 2010 is on sale now. It is the perfect accompaniment to any wall and, at just £5, makes a very affordable Christmas or New Year gift for family and friends.

Our special thanks go to Photobox.co.uk, who are printing the calendars free of charge, meaning every time you buy one the whole £5 goes straight to our chosen charity.

This year, we are sup-

porting the vital work of the Bobath Centre for Children with Cerebral Palsy in East End Road, which provides therapy, treatment and emotional support for families affected by this debilitating condition.

Thank you to everyone who sent in photographs of life in East Finchley for us to choose from. Our judges had a tough job whittling them down to the final 12 but the end result is a truly special calendar celebrating people and places in N2.

### Buy your calendar now

Thanks to the support of local traders and businesses, you can buy your calendar over the counter at shops and venues in the High Road and East End Road. Look out for **THE ARCHER** Calendar 2010 posters in shop windows across East Finchley.

Or turn to page 11 and use our form to order by post. Send us your name and address, along with payment, and the calendar will be delivered straight to your door. Delivery is free.



The Archer Calendar 2010 in aid of the Bobath Centre

## Review: Whistle and Wink

By Betti Blatman  
**Waiting for The Whistle and Wink Comedy Show to begin, the audience at the Finchley Youth Theatre were warmed up by the show's hostess, Shelley, before Cecilia Holmes's arrival on stage.**

Cecilia gave an over-the-top hilarious improvisation of 'Ivana' emphasising extensive plastic surgery and Botox procedures carried out by 'Dr Freedman' (Howard Mattingley) in exchange for personal favours.

Later, a mysterious psychic medium appeared through a cloud of smoke before revealing herself to be Cecilia under a huge wig, and once again we listened to her fabulous vocals and keyboard whilst accompanied by drummer Jason Everitt. Cecilia's finale was as herself in formal dress, accompanied by Julian on guitar, singing *Angel Child*, which she wrote and dedicated to her 11-year-old daughter.

Although Cecilia performs regular spots on the comedy circuit, this performance on 26 September was her first full-length gig in association with Gareth Nash, her co-writer of songs, lyrics and acts.

Next up will be a Valentine's comedy event, "The Whistle and Wink Comedy Show Under Cupid's Bow", on Sunday 14 February 2010 at 8pm. Tickets are priced £12.50 and include a glass of wine and canapes. Contact Cecilia on 020 8444 8702 or 07533 750400.

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