



Flooding in Cherry Tree Wood has inspired a new leisure plan.
Photo by Diana Boyd

Pool in the park proposal

By Diana Boyd

Recent heavy rain heralded the return of flooding to the field in Cherry Tree Wood (see photo). Looking at the saturated grassland, it is not surprising to learn that this was the site of a watercress farm in the latter part of the nineteenth century. There used to be a permanently wet area in the undergrowth not far from the Lazy Sally café, but that has gradually disappeared in the past few years without its source being firmly established.

The dampness of the ground, coupled with the reluctance of water to drain away, could mean that a plentiful natural supply lies beneath the surface. Now a plan to make use of this untapped source can be revealed.

Developers are hoping to apply for planning permission to build an open-air swimming pool because the deeper pools gather at the tennis/basketball court end of the field. They have described it as "a mini version of that enjoyed by so many in Highgate [Ponds]". The natural water in Highgate Ponds is from the River Fleet, which flows underground to the Thames.

Using resources sensibly

Members of the group "Community Recreation and Play" believe mechanical diggers could create a natural-looking bathing area filled with Cherry Tree Wood's own water. Spokesperson Avril Fullsome said: "The excavated soil could be used to form a grass-covered bank around the pool. Changing facilities for swimmers and tennis players would be provided between the present toilet block and the former park keeper's hut, which would be put back into use for the sale of tickets, hiring of lockers and so on. This is an example of recycling and sensible use of resources at its best."

Olympic link

Connor Lott, financial oper-

ator of Lidos, believes it would be possible to open the pool to coincide with the launch of the London Olympics in 2012. "If local people get behind us we could start tomorrow," he enthused. "Who knows, in 2016 a swimmer from East Finchley could be representing Britain in Brazil?"

Manorside School wins prestigious new award for inclusivity

By Diana Cormack

A local primary school on Squires Lane has become the first recipient of the Accord Award for Religious Inclusion and Equality. The award is sponsored by the Accord Coalition, which links both religious and secular organisations in campaigning for inclusive education and against discrimination in schools. It is offered to primary and secondary schools that celebrate diversity of religious and non-religious beliefs and go beyond what is expected in terms of inclusion and equality in the school and the wider community.

Harmony

"When I read about this I knew we had to apply because Manorside ticked all the boxes," RE coordinator Dianne Cohen told *THE ARCHER*. "It is difficult to define the ethos of a school but everyone who comes through the front door comments on the harmonious atmosphere here. I put this down to the hard work of the staff, the children and support from the parents."

A high proportion of the pupils at the one form entry



Asmaa Ali and Rageh Sabban of Year 6 who received the award from Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain and Baroness Kishwer Falkner.

Photo by Mike Hughes

school are from ethnic minority backgrounds, many with English as an Additional Language, some from refugee families. While assemblies are held to celebrate the major festivals of the six main religions, children who are not from religious homes are encouraged to celebrate their own rituals such as birthdays, weddings or other family occasions. Parents play an important role in the life of Manorside, where culturally significant annual events are given equal importance. Local religious leaders and community figures participate in school activities and the children go on a variety of relevant visits. These include links with local Jewish, Roman Catholic and community schools.

An opportunity, not a problem

The award was presented at

morning assembly on 1 March by Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain, Chair of Accord, and Baroness Kishwer Falkner who summed up succinctly when she said: "I was impressed by the energetic and cheerful way Manorside went about its work of educating and integrating its interesting and varied community, particularly the way it saw its multi-ethnic base not as a problem but as an opportunity to widen the knowledge and experience of its children. An obvious winner."

Cake sale raises money for autistic education

By Diana Cormack

On a cold, wet Saturday in February customers entering Budgens, in Viceroy Parade, were greeted by an unusual sight. A table loaded with delicious home-made cakes welcomed them into the store, along with the beautiful smile of one of its employees, Vanessa Perri-Khoo.

Vanessa and her boyfriend, fellow employee Fabio Raspagliese, had spent hours of their free time preparing Italian fruit flans, tiramisu, chocolate and banana muffins, low fat chocolate cakes and cookies, which were on offer in return for a donation to the TreeHouse School in Woodside Avenue, part of the national charity for autism education.

Budgens generously paid for all the ingredients and other members of staff contributed their own cakes. Many shoppers gave generously to the cause (but not all: see Letters to the Editor on page 11) and some returned to praise their quality.

At the end of the day only a few were left and £130 had been raised for TreeHouse.

Parachute jump

Vanessa, who is a volunteer helper at TreeHouse on her days off, told *THE ARCHER*: "I really admire the people at the school. They work so hard. That is what inspired me to do this."

In fact, so keen is Vanessa to raise funds for TreeHouse that on 9 April she is doing a parachute jump before she returns home to Italy. Anyone who would like to sponsor this jump can do so by visiting: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/VanessaPerriKhoo>

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