



More play facilities for older children

By Diana Cormack

The new play area for older children in Cherry Tree Wood (see *THE ARCHER*, November 2009) should be open by April. It is to be installed adjacent to the current play park, on the open grassland. An artist's impression of the proposed equipment can be seen at www.barnet.gov.uk/playbuilder-consultation.

Residents can also use this website to leave comments and suggestions about the borough's 11 play areas proposed for 2010, funded through the Department for Children, Schools and Families' Playbuilder Initiative.

Local consultation

Barnet had to move quickly with online consultations in order to meet the Government's timetable for implementation, thus ensuring £1.1 million funding. As well as putting notices on the park railings before Christmas encouraging local parents and children to respond, East Finchley schools and youth

groups were consulted. Barnet Council told *THE ARCHER* that questionnaires were completed between September and December at Holy Trinity Primary and Bishop Douglass Secondary Schools. Both these schools, along with Martin Primary and the Monday Youth Club, attended an event to give their views.

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have provided feedback on the design proposals. While supporting the need to provide play facilities for older children, some are concerned about the site and any effects there might be on the ancient woodland.

"The design of the play area is very much in keeping with the natural setting," says the Council. "Natural elements such as logs, boulders and grass mounds have been incorporated into the design with any safety surfacing comprising of either grass or bark chipping."

The play areas are aimed at 8-13 year olds, who have less access to play areas than younger children, and are designed to allow youngsters of all abilities to play together without boundaries.

Fraudsters use police logo in lottery scam

By Janet Maitland

Police have issued a warning that fraudsters have added the logo of the Metropolitan Police to an internet lottery scam.

The fraudsters have taken the official logo and page header used by the Metropolitan Police Service on its Fraud Alert website and added them to a lottery scam that asks for payment in advance. They have also added an email link to draw potential victims further into the scam.

Police have warned people that, although the 'alerts@metropolitan-police.co.uk' address looks like a legitimate police internet link, it isn't. The only email addresses used by the police use one of two formats: either Name@met.police.uk or Name@met.pnn.police.uk. Any other email address means it is a fraud.

If you want to confirm the identity of a police employee, call the Scotland Yard switchboard on 020 7230 1212 and ask to be put through to the relevant person.

Seeking will

Solicitors are trying to trace relatives or friends of the late Fay Witriol, of Summerlee Avenue, N2.

She died on 19 October 2009 and the legal firm would like to make contact with anyone knowing of a will. Contact Statham Gill Davies at 54 Welbeck Street, London W1G 4XS or on 020 7317 3210.

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Mobile networks exploit planning catch 22

As residents of Viceroy Close, above Budgens, learn that they may be getting yet another mobile phone mast above their homes, John Dearing investigates the planning system that is creating such 'mast farms'.

A mobile telephone network wishing to install an aerial system need not apply for planning permission provided the building is not listed or in a conservation area, the equipment does not exceed a height of 15 metres, and the system is the first or second on that site.

If tenants or leaseholders object, the only way they can stop an installation is to persuade their landlord to change his mind. When, as is often the case, the freeholder lives elsewhere, and stands to receive a substantial windfall rent from the mobile operator, the chances of this happening are remote.

Mast farms

The legislation requires that plans for a third system intended for a given site be submitted as a full planning application. However, at relevant appeals, the planning inspectorate has ruled that the unsightly nature of further masts on a building already hosting one or more is not a basis for refusing the application. Indeed, the Mayor of London's policy is to encourage clustering onto as few buildings as possible, in so-called 'mast farms'.

In a further twist, it appears

that there is nothing to stop the first or second systems being extended with further masts. If the network operators then wish to sub-let these new masts to a third (or fourth or fifth) operator, no permission to install them is required as they fall under the aegis of the original systems.

Objectors powerless

The only basis for objecting to a new system is the appearance or location of base stations, and, sadly, it is all too easy to find a dark corner in which to hide them.

In other words, it is virtually impossible for unwilling residents to prevent the proliferation of mobile phone masts on their buildings, once the network operators have decided to set up a mast farm on their roof. Those who are inclined to look upwards from time to time will soon see the result of this, right in the centre of East Finchley.

Not too late for ARCHER calendar

It may be February already, but *THE ARCHER* Calendar 2010 is still on sale. Don't miss your chance to own 12 superb photographs of life in East Finchley to enjoy all year round. Every calendar raises £5 for 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.

Look out for *ARCHER* Calendar 2010 posters in shop windows in the High Road. 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.

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