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THE ARCHER




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CARS & COURIERS**

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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Thieves steal from children's charity

By Daphne Chamberlain
Thieves have attacked the Bobath Centre for Children with Cerebral Palsy. CCTV images show four hooded men removing lead from the roof and taking it away in a commercial waste bin.



Rain coming through, plus some bricks coming away around a window, was what led to the discovery of the theft.

Bank Holiday crime
The CCTV images have shown that the thieves struck over the August Bank Holiday weekend, when the premises manager was

Kevin Gillespie, Fundraising and Development Manager, told *THE ARCHER*: "This is very annoying. It's caused a lot of damage. The thieves made a thorough job of it, and we're faced not just with replacement work and fixing to the roof, but also repairs to rooms inside."

Rain damage

The biggest treatment room is worst affected, meaning that work carried out with young babies in that space has had to be relocated and divided between smaller rooms. Mr Gillespie said: "There are visible signs of water on the ceiling of this main room, and we are finding other signs elsewhere, as water will move around until it finds an outlet. We have the buckets out".

away. The Centre has improved its security measures since.

Mr Gillespie told us: "Repairs should take weeks rather than months, but it's very disappointing that people could do this. They won't get much for the lead either. But life goes on".

At this stage, the Centre does not know the full cost of the damage.

The Bobath Centre, in East End Road, is internationally famous for its work with children affected by cerebral palsy. It only recently fundraised £50,000 to replace a defective roof in its reception area. Last year, readers of *THE ARCHER* helped to raise £2,000 for the centre by buying our 2010 calendar.



Red tops: red heads Finlay, nine, and Bentley entered the 'Dog who looks most like their owner' competition at the Muswell Hill Festival in Cherry Tree Wood. Photo by John Lawrence. See page 6 for our festival report

Time to speak out on our library

By Daphne Chamberlain

In what it calls a "root and branch" review of its library service, Barnet Council is looking at closure and/or relocation of libraries, sale and maintenance cost of library buildings, and changes in service delivery.

The national Museums, Libraries and Archives Council has already stated that, under severe financial pressure, no change in library provision "is not an option". It goes on to say: "The key issue is not where services are delivered from, but the quality and consistency of that service and how well it is meeting local needs."

Proper consultation essential

It appears inevitable that drastic changes are in store, but they have to follow a formal consultation. East Finchley Library Users Group is urging the community to co-operate with this. EFLUG's Polly Napper says: "While cuts will be made despite anything that is said in the consultation, it's important to engage fully with this process to demonstrate how vital East Finchley Library is to this community."

Barnet's Strategic Library Review documents emphasise that the council has to safeguard itself against legal challenges to its consultation process. When another local authority failed to do this, its programme of cuts was overturned because of a perceived disregard of local needs. This disregard is a breach of statutory duty under the Public Libraries and Museums Act. Barnet is taking legal guidance

to ensure that no similar challenge can be made here.

From now until the end of the year, the council have said they will be discovering the specific needs of library users and non-users. In the first part of next year, they will put forward their proposals, which will be the second phase of consultation.

Lower tier

Following the 2007 library reorganisation, East Finchley

Library is already on a lower tier from the six main branches in the borough's town centres. Barnet has again stated its policy of developing those town centres.

The message seems clear. Change is going to happen. It is up to us to make our needs and opinions known. For further information, visit <http://committeepapers.barnet.gov.uk/democracy/index.asp>

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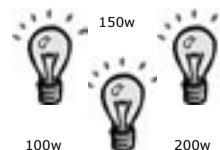
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