



Protest over artsdepot cuts plan

Protesters held a vigil outside Barnet Council offices in the North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, on Monday 10 January. They were protesting against Barnet's proposed cut of all core funding to artsdepot at North Finchley.

Vikki Mizon, artsdepot marketing and PR officer, told *THE ARCHER*: "Monday's flash mob was a creative response to the proposed cuts, and we were really pleased with how it went. We would like to take

this opportunity to thank everybody who came along and showed their support.

"LBB's decision to close the business park showed the impact we can have. We will be continuing with

our lobbying campaign of events, which will be advertised on our website, www.artsdepot.co.uk. Check the website for details, and help keep arts in the frame in Barnet."

Opposition to houses plan

More than 350 signatures were gathered on a petition objecting to plans to build three houses on open land in Lauradale Road, north of Fortis Green allotments. Developers want to construct three two-storey houses, one of them with two bedrooms and the others with four bedrooms.

Residents who are objecting say the development would tower over the allotments and destroy far-reaching views across to Highgate Woods for people in the area.

They claim the building plans are out of keeping with Haringey Council's criteria on development for Significant Local Open Land. There are also worries about vehicle access via a narrow pedestrian alleyway that is heavily used

by locals, including many families.

The plan is being put forward by Cilusom Holdings, an offshore development company based in Cyprus. Haringey Council has rejected the application in its current form but the objectors expect it will be amended and resubmitted.

Residents' spokesperson Livy Clover said: "We are waiting for the next round of plans to come out, when we'll

have to galvanise local opposition all over again. We suspect this will be a long road."

The original application can be viewed on the planning section of www.haringey.gov.uk. Type in reference number HGY/2010/1887. The 'Keep Fortis Green' e-petition is at www.ipetitions.com/petition/keepfortisgreen/

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Public meeting for Stanley Field

By Rob Robertson

Readers will know from recent editions of *THE ARCHER* that the Stanley Road Playing Field is effectively up for sale. Barnet Council's Cabinet Resources Committee, at its meeting on 30 November, declared the site "surplus to its requirements" and agreed that "the disposal of the freehold interest be advertised on the open market to seek details of proposed schemes and initial bids".

It is very important that local residents are kept aware of developments and have the opportunity to voice their opinions on what should now be done with this valuable asset.

The Finchley Community Development Trust (FCDT) is, therefore, very grateful to Tim Bowden, headteacher at Holy Trinity CE school, and to the school governors, for letting us use the school hall for a public meeting on the future of the site..

The meeting will take place from 7.30pm to 9pm on Thursday 17 February. The school is situated in Eagans Close, East Finchley, close to Kitchener Road and Market Place. All local residents with an interest in the playing field are welcome to attend.

Meanwhile, as ever, please feel free to contact me at the FCDT with your comments and opinions (tel: 020 8883 4916; e-mail: rob-robertson@btconnect.com).

Library announcement in March

By Daphne Chamberlain

The results of Barnet Council's consultation on the future of our libraries will probably be announced at a Council meeting on 29 March. In the meantime, "Keep visiting and using the library as much as possible" is the message from East Finchley Library Users Group.

As we reported in last month's *ARCHER*, the most recently published statistics for visiting and borrowing (for the year ending last September) showed that East Finchley performed extremely well in both categories. EFLUG's Polly Napper says: "Even popping in without actually borrowing a book will register on our branch 'visitor numbers' statistics, which are recorded by the wooden frames you walk between in the entrance".

As the 2011/2012 budget goes through on 1 March, it is possible that cuts proposed at the Council meeting on 29 March, though bound to be huge, may not be implemented until next year. Although significant changes to the libraries are not reflected within this coming year's budget that does

not, however, rule out other cuts or changes during the year.

Community resource

Cllr Alison Moore described East Finchley library as "an absolutely vital community resource that will become more, not less, important at a time of service cuts and potential hardship. It's crucial," she added, "that users and supporters have their say about the future of Barnet's libraries and fight to protect the services they value."

Although the public survey on library use ended in December, an extended consultation period was part of the original programme set out in Barnet's "Strategic Library Review" document last September. This is designed to avoid decisions being challenged in court on the grounds of lack of consultation.

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