



Best feet forward at the start of last year's Big Fun Walk

A fun day out supporting the North London Hospice

The Big Fun Walk is a family-friendly sponsored event held every year in aid of the North London Hospice. Its annual running costs of over £5.8 million come mainly from activities such as this, as only 22% is met by public funding.

Community participation has grown steadily, from 300 participants in the first walk in the mid-1990s to some 1,500 people in 2010.

The next Big Fun Walk will be on Sunday 10 April 2011. The 7.5-mile route from East

Finchley tube station to Storey's Gate near Westminster Abbey passes through many of London's beautiful Royal parks and is suitable for all ages and abilities. Small children in buggies and well-behaved dogs on leads are

very welcome. Food, drink and entertainment for everyone are provided at no charge.

Please note that advance registration by 24 March is essential for every participant, including children. There is no fee but every adult walker is asked to raise at least £30 in sponsorship or donations to support the hospice and those aged 17 and under are asked to make their best efforts.

For further information visit the website at www.bigfunwalk.co.uk, email bigfunwalk@netscape.net or phone the 24-hour Big Fun Walk line on 020 8202 5586. All calls will be returned if you leave a clear message and give your contact details. Note that this event is organised by volunteer fundraisers who work away from the hospice premises so please use only the contact details above.

Support us in 2011

For details of sponsored runs, challenges and volunteering opportunities, contact us

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Comfort food

Budgens East Finchley has again sponsored old time lunches and dinners of boiled bacon, carrots and pease pudding at Age Concern's Ann Owens Centre, the Green Man Centre and Paul Byrne House on the Thomas More Estate for over 100 senior citizens late last year.

It was good old-fashioned dining and a gesture of gratitude from the store to the people of East Finchley who have given them tremendous support. The idea was repeated from last year due to popular demand. Budgens' owners welcome other ideas for helping the local community, young and old.

Six months to save Stanley Field

By Daphne Chamberlain

Brian Coleman, Barnet's Cabinet Member for the Environment, has secured six months for East Finchley to put together a plan to keep Stanley Road Playing Field for the community. Cllr Coleman intervened at November's Cabinet Resources Committee, which was expected to agree that the freehold interest of the land should be marketed and disposed of.

Cllr Coleman has attended events put on at the field by local people working to keep it for East Finchley, and presented the prizes at the football tournament held there in September 2009. He asked for the community to have a year

to work on a viable proposal, but the time was reduced to six months.

Barnet Council will be soliciting "expressions of interest" during that time, but will not make any formal decision. See Letters, page 11.

New ideas for community festival

By Roger Chapman

People from the festival committee, local community groups, businesses, schools and stallholders met in November to discuss how to build a better East Finchley Festival for 2011.

The group noted with deep regret and sadness the untimely death of Helen O'Toole. Helen had been an active member of the festival committee, including a stint as secretary, and participated in many festivals on the community stage.

To remember Helen the meeting unanimously agreed that the community stage should in future be known as 'The Helen O'Toole Community Stage' and that future festival programmes should acknowledge the contribution Helen made to the festival.

The meeting then broke into smaller groups to discuss ideas on how to make next year's festival, to be held on Sunday 19 June, more success-

ful. Numerous ideas emerged including: improving the range of activities for children, possibly with a children's zone; promoting 'I love N2' merchandise; dispersing food stalls amongst the other stalls rather than concentrating them in one place; improving the advertising catchment area, and updating the website and Facebook links.

These ideas will be developed over the coming months by the new festival committee. East Finchley Festival is run entirely by local volunteers.

To know more, volunteer to help or put forward your own ideas for improving the festival, please e-mail roger.chapman99@gmail.com

Was your road gritted?

During the snowy spell in early December, *THE ARCHER* received an email from reader Melvyn Friend copying us in on a request he had sent to Barnet Council, asking for a gritting team to be sent to Hamilton Road and Brackenbury Road as they were covered in ice.

Mr Friend pointed out that these were important access roads to Bishop Douglass School, were used by a care bus transporting disabled people and also had a number of disabled parking spaces for drivers who relied on their cars for mobility.

The reply from the council's highways team, seen by *THE ARCHER*, stated that his request had been referred to the relevant department and he could expect to receive a reply within five working days.

Mr Friend said this was too long to wait for the residents, teachers, parents and disabled people hoping to use the roads safely.

Was your road gritted during the icy spell? Let us know here

at *THE ARCHER* by emailing the-archer@lineone.net or leaving a message on 0844 579 6949 (enter mailbox number 63450).

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Fiona Hurlock M.A.S. MASS. D.I.A.M.
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