



Residents braced for impact of new flats

By Nick Young

"A village of colourful character, fine restaurants and modern convenience. Step into a cosmopolitan new lifestyle that exudes the finer qualities of luxurious living - N2 London has it all." So runs the opening line on an international estate agency's website extolling the virtues of East Finchley in general, and the flats in the new property development on Lancaster Gardens in particular.

The development is called Archer Gardens, named after the landmark statue on the Tube station. Building work started in November 2009 and was completed in August of this year, at a total cost of £26million.

Archer Gardens is a modern-looking apartment block that consists of 105 residential spaces, including 32 general need units, 20 shared ownership flats and 53 properties for outright sale, of which three had been sold at time of going to press. Secure underground parking, one place per flat, is provided.

Addressing local issues

Local residents' concerns about the building process have been taken into account. For instance, the new development is no higher than the existing houses, answering concerns raised by residents during the planning permission stage. "We were concerned about the height but they reduced it when we all complained," explained Lancaster Gardens resident Jessica Wyman.

Concerns about the impact on

the local infrastructure and how Barnet Council will respond continue to be expressed. "We're wondering what will happen when they're all sold," said John Lucas, also of Lancaster Gardens. "What will Council do about the schools? There's huge pressure on school places in this area already."

During the consultation period, residents of Lancaster Gardens and Chambers Gardens expressed concerns about the impact on their streets of increased traffic and further pressure on street parking.

Those anxieties are still keenly felt, but it would seem that the full impact of the new development on East Finchley will only become apparent once most or all of the flats are occupied.

The organisation behind the development is One Housing Group (OHG), a housing association that receives funding from the Government to provide affordable housing. OHG has been responsible for many recent developments in Greater London and the Home Counties.



Ready for residents: the new flats in Archer Gardens. Photo by John Lawrence.



Underground artist Michael Haynes with his work

Underground artist brightens things up

By Diana Cormack

Did you know that London Underground has managers in charge of station ambience? The one tasked with brightening up East Finchley tube station certainly knows his stuff, and his staff. He suggested that station worker Michael Haynes should put some of his pencil drawings on display.

The first two entitled "The Archer" and "Platform 2" went up in the ticket hall in early October and have proved to be a great success. "The customers love them," Michael told *THE ARCHER*. "They want to know when prints are going to be on sale."

Michael, who was born in East Finchley and lives in Muswell Hill, has loved painting all his life and studied art and graphic design at Barnet College and Hertford Regional College. Last year his pencil and crayon picture of the gardens at Finchley Central station won first prize in an art competition. He has been featured in the LU company magazine

and has had much positive feedback from colleagues along with great support from his wife. There are plans to put up more of his work in the station entrance.

Artist and illustrator Michael is hoping to hold

an exhibition featuring in particular his many colourful abstracts, but has yet to find a suitable venue. Pop into the station to take a look or, for more information about his work for sale or on commission, visit www.michaelhaynesart.com.

Christmas art and craft fair

Local artists and craftspeople will be exhibiting their work at a new event this month. The Wren Academy in North Finchley, established only four years ago and already rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted, is hosting its first Christmas fair, and is continuing its commitment to the local community by joining with members of the East Finchley Open Studios group of artists.

The work on show will include fine art, ceramics, textiles, and sculpture, and offers a chance to browse and shop for unique works of art at affordable prices. With hot mulled wine and home-made mince pies, not to mention a raffle for an iPhone4S, this promises to be a colourful and

welcoming event, and a great start to the festive season. All funds raised will go towards helping the school buy a new minibus.

The fair takes place on Sunday 27 November from 12.30-4.30pm at the Academy in Hilton Avenue, North Finchley, N12 9HB.

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