



Trial date for parking zone challenge

The legal action to overturn Barnet Council's 2011 hike in residents' parking charges will be decided at a High Court trial in July next year. The increases, by as much as 300%, left residents living in Barnet's controlled parking zones paying some of the highest parking charges anywhere in London.

When the trial takes place on 2 July 2013, it will be the culmination of a two-year battle by opponents who have argued that the charges are unfair and unlawful. The legal challenge is being led by solicitor David Atfield and is supported by the Barnet CPZ Action Group.

He expressed relief that the trial date has been fixed but also frustration at the delay.

"Unfortunately, the courts are facing an unprecedented number of claims and we must take our turn," he said.

Achievements

Although the legal action has progressed more slowly than had been hoped, the group highlighted the success of the campaign to date which has included delaying the introduction of the increases after legal flaws

were highlighted and the recent introduction of cheaper half-day visitor parking vouchers. Mr Atfield said: "All the evidence has now been served and nothing Barnet has put forward alters our view that it targeted CPZ residents in order to subsidise transport services across the borough. We say quite simply that this is unlawful."

He also confirmed that the campaign will continue during the period before the trial. "Due to the generosity of supporters we are well placed to prepare for the trial but further funds are needed in case we are ordered to pay Barnet's legal costs."

Donations can be made online at the group's website: www.barnetcpz.blogspot.com. If the action is successful, the group hopes to be able to return the bulk of the donated money.



Former MP and war correspondent Martin Bell opens the Combat Fair.

Fair fights combat stress

By Ruth Smith

Former MP and BBC war correspondent Martin Bell opened the fourth winter fair in aid of Combat Stress at the Free Church Hall in Hampstead Garden Suburb on 3 November. Rifle Morgan from the Territorial Army also came along to offer his support and give visitors a chance to talk to him about life in the TA and his recent deployment in Afghanistan.

Nearly 300 people came to the fair and there was something for everyone from home-made refreshments, cakes and produce, books, plants, children's activities and a tombola to Combat Stress Christmas cards. The event raised over £3,000 for Combat Stress, a 50% increase on last year's total.

Combat Stress was founded in 1919 and is the leading UK

military charity and service provider in the care of veterans' mental health, including post traumatic stress disorder. Combat Stress has a current case load of 4,800 veterans including over 800 from the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; the youngest veteran is just 20 years old.



Two-year-old Kadri Krasniqi, of The Grange, turns the fruit crusher to make juice on apple day, watched by Guy Bardoe, of East Finchley Abundance. Photo by John Lawrence.

Crushing success for Apple Day

By Margi McAlister

Autumn is the season of reds, golds, nights drawing in ... and the apple harvest. That's why on a bright October Saturday morning a group of East Finchley residents set up a stall outside the Post Office on the High Road. They were giving away apples, apple juice, apple cake and information about why they were there.

The group, called East Finchley Abundance, had collected and received surplus apples that would otherwise have gone to waste in people's gardens. Guy Bardoe and Roger Chapman, who live nearby, brought their own fruit presses.

They were kept busy pulping and pressing apples while Harriet Copperman poured the juice into cups for shoppers to taste. It was delicious, as were the cakes, flapjacks and other apple delicacies baked by Dymna.

Luke Berman said the group aims not only to salvage surplus fruit "but to educate children about where food comes from". He said the group was working on a map showing where free fruit could be found in public areas.

Village atmosphere

Woven baskets made from East Finchley wood by local resident May Poulter held varieties of apples. There were recipes to take home and an interesting newspaper called *Positive News* with articles about protecting bees, the health benefits of camels' milk and lots more. Other members of the group were answering the many questions asked by an animated crowd of shoppers and passers-by.

There are notices at both ends of East Finchley announc-

ing that we are a 'Village' and the atmosphere on the High Road was certainly reminiscent of a country market even though we are only 20 minutes away from central London. Find out more about East Finchley Abundance by emailing efabundance@btinternet.com

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