



Barbara Proud, left, with fellow childminders and mums at the Park Road playground.

## Play area 'needs an urgent makeover'

By John Lawrence

One of East Finchley's most popular playgrounds is woefully under-equipped and in some places a danger to children, says a group of mothers and childminders. Parents and carers who take their young ones to the play area in Park Road, close to Holy Trinity Primary School, say it is in urgent need of repair and modernisation.

Two new items, a spinning cup and a small see-saw, were installed around four years ago but the rest of the play equipment, including four swings and two 'spring' seats, dates back up to 15 years.

A climbing frame and a slide have been removed without being replaced, seats on the roundabout are broken and the see-saw does not work properly. The group is also worried about large gaps in the fence around the play area that can let children wander onto Park Road.

### Children's needs

Childminder Barbara Proud, who looks after three children of school age and two under-fours, has contacted Barnet Council to plead the case for the play area to be refurbished.

Mrs Proud, of Richmond Road, said: "A lot of children use this playground every day and when the Academy is built nearby there may be even more. We feel it deserves more attention and now is the time."

Her friend June Bettison, who cares for three children under three, added: "There's such a lot of space here and it could be put to better use. As it is, older children just play football among the equipment, and that can be dangerous for the little ones."

### Good news

THE ARCHER contacted Barnet Council and it seems there is good news for the playground. A spokesman said: "Barnet

Council is improving the play area, including replacing the broken slide and installing two other pieces of play equipment before this summer so our younger residents can enjoy it during the warmer weather."

The council is also encouraging residents to form a 'Friends of the Park' group to get external funding to renovate the play area, which is happening in other parts of the borough. During the last two years Mill Hill Park and Lytton Playing Field play areas

were transformed as a result of local people suggesting new designs and finding funding.

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## Be a hero for the hospice

Children's Hospice Week is the UK's only awareness and fundraising week for children with life-limiting conditions and the services, such as children's hospices, that support them. This year it takes place between 26 April and 3 May, culminating in Superhero Friday, a special day of hero-inspired fundraising, on Friday 3 May.

North London-based Noah's Ark Children's Hospice cares for and supports families while their child is undergoing stressful treatment, through a variety of community and home-based initiatives and programmes.

The hospice is calling on businesses, schools, community groups and organisations and asking them to be heroes in Children's Hospice Week and help raise funds so that it can continue to provide these vital local services.

Visit [www.noahsarkhospice.org.uk](http://www.noahsarkhospice.org.uk) for more information and to download fundraising resources. To donate to Noah's Ark Children's Hospice during Children's Hospice Week, visit [www.justgiving.com/childrenshospiceweek](http://www.justgiving.com/childrenshospiceweek).



Could you be a superhero for Noah's Ark Children's Hospice?

## Body found in allotment shed

By Janet Maitland

Firefighters discovered the body of a man in a blazing shed on the allotments behind Chandos Road. Crews were called to the scene shortly after midnight on 27 February. Sadly, they discovered the body of a man in one of the sheds affected by the fire. By 2am the fire was under control.

The cause of the blaze is under investigation by the police and fire brigade. The fire is not being treated as suspicious. A postmortem examination is underway to identify the deceased and determine the exact cause of death.

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