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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

The Institute is on the move again

By Diana Cormack

The Institute is, partially, on the move again, this time from The Bishops Avenue to Bishop Douglass RC School in Hamilton Road.

Last November came the revelation that the new Archer Academy is to be located alongside The Institute in its Arts Centre building behind East Finchley tube station; then came the question of space. As part of their agreement with the new school The Institute will retain access to the specialist art rooms on the ground floor. However, they have had to look elsewhere for premises to house other courses.

The Institute has been in negotiations with Bishop Douglass School and from September 2013 some classrooms in the school's art block will be reserved for the exclusive use of The Institute's classes. The Institute will also share some additional classrooms and move its administration to the school. There is also an agreement to construct a new dedicated shared building on the site which will become The Institute's permanent and long-term home.

This move follows three others made by HGSI since relocating from the Henrietta Barnett School in 2004. It was first based in Park House opposite the station and later used part of McDonald's headquarters. Meanwhile, a purpose-built Institute Arts Centre was constructed alongside Beaumont Close. The Centre opened in 2006 and, when the Institute quit McDonald's last year, became the main study base.

However, there were financial difficulties at the Institute, so the co-location arrangement with the Archer Academy has eased the situation.

In a letter to students the Institute's chairman Greville Waterman said: "This is an exciting moment for The Institute: we have guaranteed our survival, are back from the brink, in the black for the first time in living memory and about to enter into two significant life-long learning partnerships with two excellent local schools."

Armed robbery at bookie's

By Janet Maitland

Staff at a local bookmaker were horrified when two men burst through the door just as they were closing and held them up with a gun. The robbery took place at William Hill's on Church Lane at about 9.30pm on 20 March.

The men stole a quantity of cash, believed to be several hundred pounds, before escaping. No one was hurt, but staff were threatened and felt very shaken. "We always offer counselling when such things happen," said Kate Miller from William Hill. "But it's a hard one to get over, having a gun pointed at you."

One of the men is described as black, six foot tall, wearing a dark hooded top with a grey top underneath and armed with a black handgun. The other man is described as Asian, of medium build and wearing a grey hooded top and blue denim jeans. He had short black hair and hid his face behind a white surgical mask.

Anyone with any information should contact DC Mess on 020 8358 1751 or ring Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you want to remain anonymous.



TV star David Walliams with two of the Big Fun walkers. Photo courtesy of North London Hospice

Fancy meeting you here

You never know who you're going to bump into when you go out for a walk. These two participants in the North London Hospice's Big Fun Walk found themselves in the company of David Walliams at one point along the route.

They bumped into the TV comic actor out exercising close to his home in Primrose Hill, around the halfway mark for the walk's seven-and-a-half-mile route from East Finchley Station through London's Royal Parks to Westminster.

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