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THE ARCHER




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CARS & COURIERS

January 2015 No. 253
ISSN 1361-3952

20p
where sold

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Martin School choir sings carols with the London Metropolitan Brass Band. Photo Mike Coles

A touch of magic at the winter festival

Crowds of people turned out under sunny skies for East Finchley's third Christmas Festival and, as darkness fell, the stars came out as the community carol singing began. The only snow came from a machine. Turn to pages 6-7 for our report and photo special.

A fourth way for our library?

By Daphne Chamberlain

Members of East Finchley Library Users' Group are thinking positively in the campaign against the Council's proposed library cuts, and encourage us all to do the same. They are putting together a fourth option as an alternative to the three options proposed by Barnet.

EFLUG's Polly Napper says: "Unlike Barnet, we need to be imaginative and entrepreneurial, focused on people's needs and passions. Please share your thoughts and ideas, however small or ambitious, on the Facebook group or via the website contact form so they can contribute to thinking behind our fourth option and perhaps inspire others. We'll compile them into one coherent plan as part of our response to the consultation."

Local feeling against the cuts is strong. We have a library whose membership is increasing, and which is important to every part of our community. At the East Finchley Christmas Festival alone, 622 signatures were added to the EFLUG petition. At the time of writing, signatures had reached 3,705. The number that will take a petition to a full Council

meeting is 10,000.

Also this month, EFLUG is aiming to put a leaflet through every East Finchley door, encouraging residents to "protest the cuts, fill in the consultation, and hopefully to join us".

Members of trade union Barnet Unison, of course, are very much affected by the proposed cuts. The three options inevitably entail loss of jobs for library staff. Hugh Jordan, libraries convenor for Unison and one of only six qualified librarians employed by Barnet, will be speaking to EFLUG's next meeting at 7pm on 7 January at Martin Primary School. The meeting is open to everyone.

EFLUG's new website is www.eflibrary.com. The online petition is at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/no-to-closure-of-barnet-libraries>.

Politicians to contact are: Richard Cornelius, leader of Barnet Council, on cllr.r.cornelius@barnet.gov.uk or Leader's Office, London Borough of Barnet, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, N11 1NP; Councillor Reuben Thompstone, chair of the Children, Education, Libraries & Safeguarding Committee on cllr.r.thompstone@barnet.gov.uk or Conservative Group Room, Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, NW4 4BG; and Mike Freer MP for Finchley & Golders Green on mike.freer.mp@parliament.uk or House of Commons, SW1A 0AA.

Turn to page 2 for EFLUG's advice on filling out the council's library consultation.

Ann Owens Centre update

Age UK Barnet on the future of the day centre. Turn to page 3.

Double dose of darkness

A power company issued an apology after parts of East Finchley were left without electricity for several hours on two consecutive nights in late November.

Homes and businesses close to the tube station and around The Causeway lost power from early to late evening on the first night and during the middle of

the evening on the second night.

UK Power Networks sent out engineers to repair the two separate faults on the high voltage network. The company said 79 properties were affected.

"We understand how difficult it is to be without power and we apologise for any inconvenience caused," said a spokeswoman.

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