



A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Fingers crossed at this crossing!



By Janet Maitland

Martin Primary School children protesting at the dangerous crossing outside their school. Photo Mike Coles

Shocked parents and teachers are calling for changes to improve safety at an East Finchley crossing after an accident at the traffic lights there in which a driver collided with a father and child.

The 42-year-old father was rushed to hospital with a head injury which was fortunately not life threatening. His young daughter had minor facial injuries but was also taken to hospital as a precaution.

Community response

The accident at the pedestrian crossing on the High Road outside Martin Primary School on the afternoon of Monday 4

February has galvanized local people into lobbying Barnet Council members, London Mayor Sadiq Khan and Transport for London (TfL) to carry out a safety review urgently.

"This accident should never have happened and could have ended with loss of life," said Emily Candler, one of a group of parents and local residents leading the campaign. "We've heard from many other people who have experienced drivers failing to stop at these lights, with two near misses in the past week.

"We want immediate changes such as better lighting, signage and road markings. We also need a

transport study to review the issues thoroughly and identify long-term safety measures." Parents and children staged a demonstration outside the school in the week after the accident, waving banners reading 'Fingers crossed when you cross this crossing' and 'Slow down for a happy town'.

Right time for a safety review

In 2012 the school's Walk-safe campaign was successful in getting the council to make changes to improve the safety of nearby walking routes, such as a speed limit of 20mph on Church Lane and a zebra crossing on Creighton Avenue. It was agreed then that the crossing outside the school would be kept under review.

Campaigners, who have started a petition, say the time for a review is now as the school has almost 50% more pupils than it did in 2012 and the school building and field

are more heavily used by community groups on evenings and weekends.

They suggest safety improvements could include three-way lights at the Church Lane junction, coloured non-slip road surfaces, yellow lines around the crossing and traffic cameras to stop parking on the zig zags.

Rebecca Bakar, headteacher

of Martin Primary, said: "We are humbled by the community response to support us in ensuring safety is prioritised and we look forward to hearing from the council and TfL about the changes they will introduce."

Petition

You can find more details and sign the petition at www.tinyurl.com/safercrossingN2

Jam every day for drivers

The section of the North Circular Road from East Finchley to Edmonton has been singled out as one of the most congested in the UK.

Those who regularly queue all along the east-bound carriageway from Colney Hatch Lane to the lights at the right-turn near Arnos Grove will not be surprised at the news that it was placed at number six in the top 10.

Motorists heading that way have to run the gauntlet of two or three more sets of traffic

lights before the road generally starts to run more freely along the underpass beneath the A10.

Top of the congestion list was the section of the North Circular running from Chiswick Roundabout to Hanger Lane, notorious for multiple traffic lights and a bottleneck forcing traffic into two narrow lanes. Other hotspots were the A23 Brixton Road in south London, the A657 Saltaire Road in Leeds and the A34 Strafford Road in Birmingham. Traffic data firm Inrix, who released the survey, said drivers lost the equivalent of a week, or 178 hours, each to jams in 2018. It estimated the value of the time lost at about £7.9 billion or £1,317 per driver.

London's drivers lost about 227 hours each on average, compared with 190 hours in Belfast, 165 in Edinburgh and 143 in Cardiff.

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