



Open day to view spaces for hire in new community centre

By Janet Maitland

The newly built Tarling Road community centre in East Finchley will open its doors this month to give community organisations and members of the public the chance to have a look at the spaces available for daily and weekly hire.

Unsettled issues

The building was completed last October, but a contract with City YMCA to lease part of the building and manage the centre has not yet been finalised despite months of negotiations.

"We're trying to strike the right balance between the service City YMCA provide and the cost to users of the building," said a council spokesperson. Barnet Council made it clear last year that they will not be making any surplus from the centre but are unable to cover the running costs. So whoever manages the centre will have to "pay a rent that ensures the centre is self-sustainable".

Several community organisations who are interested in using the building have been identified and the council is working with them on the terms of their leases. The council estimates that the first lease, for a nursery provider, will be completed in the spring, possibly on a part time basis "depending on demand for other space" and that the centre will then open. They also confirmed that



The new Tarling Road Community Centre. Photo Mike Coles

the Somali Bravanese Welfare Association has "always been earmarked to occupy part of the building".

'Heart' still missing

A big concern is whether the centre will have the space for low-cost and free activities for local people, despite the requirement for it to be self-financing. Another issue is whether the centre will actually be able to open a café in the space allocated for it.

"It will be the heart of the

centre," said Julia Hines from the Grange Big Local community regeneration project. A council spokesperson said that the café space would be advertised shortly to ascertain whether there is interest in leasing the space. It is not known what the rent will be.

Open day

The open day at the Tarling Road community centre takes place between 11am and 2pm on Tuesday 12 March.

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

Oh, just give up!

Once upon a time there was none of this voluntary abstinence we call Stop-tober, Dry-venber or Vegan-uary. Why? Because there was no need. The Christian church had already cobbled the whole lot together and called it Lent.

According to canon law, Lent lasts for 46 days from the day after Pancake Day to the day after Hot Cross Bun day. It is a time for prayer, penance, alms giving and fasting. The good news is that you get Sundays off; the bad news is that you are meant to take it all seriously for the other 40 days.

Back in the Middle Ages, eggs, milk, cheese and meat were banned during Lent. Some banned all animal products, like an early version of veganism. There were some pretty good reasons for it that had more to do with rationing than religion.

Back then, when you couldn't get avocados flown in and trucks of lettuce didn't arrive every morning, spring was a hungry time. You'd eaten most of what you'd stored from the last harvest and you didn't have a fridge freezer so there wasn't a lot to eat until the spring crops appeared.

The few pigs that had not been slaughtered and salted in November were best used to create more pigs rather than spare ribs. The same, with added Yorkshire pudding, applied to beef cattle and, anyway, you wanted the cow's milk to be guzzled by calves, not turned into a full fat latte. So what about eggs? Better to let them turn into chickens than omelettes.

Instead you could have one decent, meat-free meal per day and two small snacks, something probably recommended as healthy eating by the 14th-century equivalent of Fabulously Ella. Oh, and don't forget fish didn't count, maybe because no one understood them or maybe because the fishing industry had some say in it.

Now it's different. After detoxing in January and retoxing with chocolate and champagne in February, Lent's just about making a token sacrifice, maybe by giving up Brexit. Then again you could give up something important. How about annoying that 'nice Mr Zuckerman' and giving up Facelinstabook for six weeks, or giving up CostaBucks and making your own Nescafé? Maybe you could go the whole Keith and give up cigarettes. Me? I think I'll just give up Lent.

Therapist from head to toe

Alan Richardson is one of only 43 Rolfers in the UK, practising techniques developed from the ideas of American biochemist Ida Rolf beginning in the 1940s.



One of the lesser known forms of therapy, essentially it is a method of deep muscle manipulation which aims to dispel pain caused by poor posture, repetitive strain and bad habits like sitting too long.

Alan, who has a practice on Fortis Green, N2, explained that chronic muscle imbalances and connective tissue snags and blockages are dealt with in order to align your body with gravity.

He said: "Clients frequently report that general body use and common actions are easier, such as walking or running, or specifically swivelling the body round to park a car, or sitting effortlessly at a computer. People frequently feel pain free, stronger, taller and more flexible."

Find out more at www.rolfing-london.co.uk or contact Alan on 07957 307616.

Under pressure: Alan Richardson practising Rolfing on a client.

Local creatives - your festival needs you!

Stall bookings are now open for East Finchley Festival, which takes place on Sunday 23 June in Cherry Tree Wood.

Local talent

Having had such a positive reaction to the local craft stalls last year, organisers say they would like to tap into the supply of talented local makers and crafters to exhibit and sell their wares at the festival.

"East Finchley has always

been an arty and bohemian neighbourhood and we would like the festival to reflect that."

Anyone interested in booking a stall should visit www.eastfinchleyfestival.org/book-a-stall or email stalls@eastfinchleyfestival.org for more information.

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