



A family day out at the Fun Palace

By John Lawrence



Beauty bar: Nail painting with Art Against Knives. Photo Mike Coles.



Feeding time: The Appreciating Animals farmyard. Photo Mike Coles.

Chicks and ducks and geese had to scurry when hundreds of visitors turned up to enjoy the Fun Palace hosted by Grange Big Local at the new Barnwood green space and community centre in Tarling Road, N2.

The farmyard birds, including a free range turkey, were joined by rabbits, hamsters and a whole family of goats as part of the Appreciating Animals petting farm set up in the wood, and they captivated children and parents all afternoon.

This was another chance for East Finchley residents to explore Barnwood, their newest green space. As we reported last month, the wood now has charitable status along with a board of trustees, and hopes to open on a regular basis soon.

Inside the community centre

And just next door, the Fun Palace on Sunday 6 October gave them their first chance to see inside the new Tarling Road Community Centre, completed a year ago but still waiting to be

fully opened to public use.

Visitors to the centre could try calligraphy, arts and crafts, and test their culinary skills with help from the BreadnButter social enterprise group. Art Against Knives hosted a nail bar, Barnet TV ran a video workshop and The Flower Bank led flower arranging classes, all to the accompaniment of live music.

The centre's kitchen was open serving hot drinks and pizza, and there were information stalls manned by Fixation Theatre Company, the RAF Museum in Hendon and parking

problem expert Mr Mustard.

Attracting a lot of attention was the Grange Big Local's own stall asking residents for their ideas on improving life in the area of East Finchley that is centred on the Grange Estate. Among the ideas posted up were: "We need a youth club", "Something for kids to do", "Enforce the speed limit in Church Lane", "Get the council to empty the litter bins", "Build a playground outside Willow House", "Safe parking for bikes" and "Bring back the clothing recycling banks".

The community centre itself is a smart new building with a spacious entrance hall and atrium. Inside there is a good range of rooms, large and small, spread over two floors, that could be used for functions, classes and regular groups. There is a kitchen and serving hatch near the front entrance, and toilets on both floors. Outside there are two table tennis tables, neat lawns and plenty of parking.

As we reported last month, the building is being opened for select occasions but it cannot open full-time until the management group City YMCA settles terms with Barnet Council. No date has been set for when this might happen.

Time is short for library survey

Campaigners in the Save Barnet Libraries group are drawing attention to an online survey which is seeking users' views on the library service and the significant changes it has undergone over the last few years.

The deadline for the survey, being carried out by an independent organisation called Activist Group, is Thursday 7 November so time is short to take part. Find it here: ow.ly/TO0H50wMSpa.

Save Barnet Libraries says the survey will inform the long-awaited review they fought for, about the impact of staff cuts and timetable changes, "which continue to lock out the majority of school-aged children and anyone who feels vulnerable in an enclosed public space with

no staff, little help & locked toilets".

The group says publicity for the survey has been scarce and is encouraging as many people as possible to take part and register their comments. Views will be fed into a report that recommends adaptations and improvements to be presented to Barnet Council on 20 November.

Lest we forget...

By Diana Cormack

With the traditional parades and services that take place in the UK this month on Remembrance Sunday, it may come as a surprise to some that we lack a specific memorial to the thousands who lost their lives during a time vital to securing freedom in Western Europe.

The Americans have one at Omaha Beach; the Canadians have one at Juno Beach but it has taken Britain 75 years to decide to dedicate a single memorial recording the names of those who fell in the D-Day landings of June 1944 and the subsequent Battle of Normandy.

A site at Ver-sur-Mer overlooking Gold Beach where our forces landed and near to the remains of the wartime Mulberry harbour is where

it is to be constructed. Liam O'Connor, who created the Bomber Command Memorial in Green Park, is the lead consultant and British artist David Williams-Ellis is designing the D-Day sculpture on which more than 22,500 names will be seen. Core completion is scheduled for summer 2020.

The purpose is to create a place where present day visitors and future generations can appreciate the significance of what happened there. Partially financed by the British government, support is being sought from trusts, foundations and individuals. For further information on this and progress of the scheme visit www.normandydymemorialtrust.org.



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