



Dog, bowl: Vet Josh Rusnak, left, with ceramics artist Jonathan Sacerdoti and Jamie the dog.

Vet surgery and art gallery in one

By John Lawrence

A new veterinary practice has opened in East Finchley that is not only hoping to welcome our four-legged friends through its doors but also anyone on two legs with an interest in art.

Aylmer Parade Vet has taken over the former Post Office and aims to contribute to the revival of this interesting parade of shops where the Great North Road meets the A1.

Owner Dr Josh Rusnak has run a companion practice in West Hampstead for almost 20 years and will be looking after pet patients in his three new fully-equipped treatment rooms. Meanwhile, out front, their owners can peruse and purchase works by a local ceramics artist, a pet portraitist and artists inspired by Aboriginal designs.

Something different
“We could have had a large empty reception area with deworming posters on the walls but we wanted to do something different,” says Josh. “Anyone is welcome to drop in any time to see the art on show. We want it to be a community space, as well as a working vet’s.”

The ceramics artist whose work occupies one wall of the reception, alongside pouches of dog and cat food, is Josh’s brother-in-law Jonathan Sacerdoti. He works in stoneware and porcelain, throwing on a wheel or hand-building each of his

pieces, which are designed to be used in everyday life.

“It’s very valuable as an artist to have a space like this to show work,” says Jonathan. “Sometimes it’s hard to let go of pieces you’ve made but this reminds me that really I want people to take them home and use them.”

The pet portrait artist showing her work at the practice is June Schneider. She prints her portraits on aluminium, giving a striking and glossy effect. The Aborigine-inspired artists include Rex Winston Walford and Dulcie Pula Long.

Letters



Summer tennis at the Fortis Green Tennis Club. See ‘Open space under threat’ below.

Offsetting is not enough

Dear Editor,
Last month *The Archer* reported on the granting of planning permission to the new development opposite the Tube station in the face of considerable public opposition. This will provide 24 new homes, six with rooms in the basement with little light and no view, and two storeys of office building, a considerable amount underground.

We know that we have a climate emergency. One of the key contributors to our warming earth, estimated at 55% in London according to the Mayor’s office, is the energy used to heat our homes. One might therefore assume that there would be a concerted effort to ensure that new buildings at least are as energy efficient as possible to save carbon and to achieve the Mayor’s aim of a carbon-neutral London by 2050.

Barnet Council asked the developer in this case to send in calculations to show the likely performance of these new buildings and these were posted on the website too late for anyone to comment. In fact they show that this new development is very far from efficient and the council recognises this and has put a price of £34,000 to ‘offset carbon savings’.

This is quite shocking and we would have hoped that the council would be setting a much higher standard for the new homes that we would expect to be fit for habitation for at least 30 years. So far the council has been unable to say specifically what the money will be used for and whether East Finchley will in fact benefit.

Yours faithfully,
Mary Hogben,
The Finchley Society.

Left in the dark

Dear Editor,
It was certainly a memorable experience buying my morning newspaper by candlelight at Pacey’s newsagent on the High Road when they had a power cut just before Christmas. But it can’t

have been much fun for them and their neighbouring shops trying to serve customers without electricity.

I was told this is the third time in a year they have lost power like this, and it lasted for hours over two days. Of course, faults happen but this seems to be a recurring problem that needs fixing properly. We hear that local shops are struggling enough as it is. I hope those affected this time can pull through and recover some of the custom they lost at an important time of the year.

Yours faithfully,
Anita Byers,
Kitchener Road, N2.

Open space ‘under threat’

Dear Editor,
With the backdrop of climate crisis and environmental protection, intense scrutiny on land use is being applied across the board by various authorities and concerned bodies. Most councils have published their policy on open spaces and are extremely keen to maintain them.

It is a great concern then to learn that there are development plans for some or all of the land between Cherry Tree Road, Southern Road and Shakespeare Gardens, N2, which has been enjoyed by the Fortis Green Tennis Club for nearly 100 years. This site currently comprises four clay courts, a clubhouse, mature shrubs and trees, open grassed space with benches plus a play area for kids.

It would appear that these proposals have been discussed for some time without consultation with the local community nor with immediate neighbours who would be most impacted by the development of houses on the site.

The diminishment of this open and green space would have a number of adverse impacts locally including loss of habitat, trees, amenity, sports facilities, meeting space and outdoor recreation. The effect on local people and the environment are not minor inconveniences; this development idea is entirely inappropriate for this location.

At the time of writing I understand that the owners of the land, who are not the tennis club, have not yet sought planning permission from Haringey Council but that a formal application is expected to be submitted in early 2020.

Yours faithfully,
M Randall,
Address supplied.

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