



Stunning! Is this the most beautiful tree in East Finchley?

By David Melsome

This beautiful weeping cherry tree has lifted the spirits of anyone passing the patch of open land at the junction of East End Road and Church Lane, N2, throughout the last two months.

So glorious has the tree's cascading blossom been that one member of the East Finchley community Facebook group couldn't resist posting a number of photos and calling it "my favourite tree in East Finchley". Others agreed and her post attracted dozens of appreciative comments, with many noting how the tree's elegant canopy gives its beauty a different shape from every angle.

Are there any other trees out there who have their own fan club? Please send photos and details to: news@the-archer.co.uk

Progress on plastics brought to a halt

By Ann Inglis

Before the virus, I was loading information from the second round of the No2PlasticsN2 shop survey into our database and the force of legislation was rammed home. Concentrating as we are on shops which are profligate users of single-use plastics we have turned our attention to cafés.

With Spring here and the government ban on shops giving out plastic straws and plastic stirrers, none of the eight cafes on the High Road in East Finchley, two of which are also bakeries, use them anymore.

Until now we have been nudging shops to do the right thing. Many managers tell us that they want the government to legislate so that all shops will work from the same level playing field. Changing the behaviour of consumers, whilst powerful, is an extremely slow process.

MP helps campaign

With the Environment Bill at committee stage in Parliament, the committee was supposed to report back to the house on 5 May. We had successfully campaigned to get our MP Mike Freer to put forward our demand for legislation to ban single use plastic bags and ban schools from selling water in single use plastic bottles. Unfortunately, because Mr Freer is a government whip the rules state that he can't speak for his constituents during debates outside his policy area. However, he promised to go one better and take our demands directly to Rebecca Pow MP, the Minister shepherding the Bill through Parliament.

Parliamentary work suspended

Then enter the virus, and all sittings of the committee were suspended until further notice. We would have been the 75th country in the world to ban single use plastic bags but now that position has been taken by China, long a receiver of our plastic waste. Britain is not a leader in banning plastics... very much a follower.

To find out more about the activities of the plastics campaign group, email No2Plastics@gmail.com, or follow [No2PlasticsN2](https://www.facebook.com/No2PlasticsN2) on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Anti-plastics: Ann Inglis

Decision on 10k race will be made soon

By John Lawrence

Organisers of the annual Race the Neighbours event between East Finchley and Muswell Hill say they will make a decision later this month on whether to go ahead as planned in July.

Around 450 runners are due to take part in the 10km race on Sunday 12 July, starting in Cherry Tree Wood and taking a circular route to Alexandra Palace and back.

Most arrangements were in place before the lockdown began so organisers will check with their suppliers and various authorities once a clear end date for social distancing rules has passed or is in sight. They are likely to make a decision by the end of May or the start of June.

"We would like to go ahead, but that will depend entirely on the course of the pandemic over the next few weeks, and we will take our lead from government and health authorities. Our first priority will always be the safety and good health of our runners and wider community," said the team.

If they are not permitted to go ahead, or believe it would not be responsible to do so, then the race will be cancelled rather than postponed and all entrants will receive a full refund.

Festival will not go ahead in June

By John Lawrence

The team running the East Finchley Festival has announced that it will not now go ahead as planned on Sunday 21 June after a decision by Barnet Council.

Uncertainty over the ending of the lockdown and the rules around public gatherings mean the volunteer organisers do not know at this stage whether it will be possible to reschedule the festival for later in the year.

A statement from the festival team said: "It's obviously very disappointing after the fundraising and preparations, but public safety must always come first, and we hope to bring you a fantastic festival when it is safe to do so."

"Thank you for your support and patience during these uncertain times. Stay safe and well, everyone, and we'll see you on the other side."

It will be only the second time in its more-than-40-year history that East Finchley's annual community party has been called off. In 2012 the festival was cancelled altogether when Cherry Tree Wood became waterlogged after weeks of rain in May and early June.

Proms march on

Organisers of the cancelled Proms at St Jude's festival have announced that it will run as normal in 2021 after a series of generous donations secured its financial future.

This year's season in June was called off due to the lockdown but there will still be some performances available to view online. Find out more at www.promsatstjudes.org.uk

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