



Shops and eateries back in business

By Nick Allan

The East Finchley community has welcomed the re-opening of more local shops that had been shuttered during the lockdown, including a number of new businesses that have opened along the High Road and in East End Road.

Traders and small businesses are hoping that the restart will encourage local residents to keep using the variety of services they offer, which has been the only thing keeping many of them open. Despite this, some of the shops that did remain open have seen a slight reduction in footfall, which they put down to the fact that shoppers now have a wider local choice of shop as well as the usual decline during the holiday month of August.

Most of the restaurants in the area that participated in the Government 'Eat Out to Help

Out' scheme in August reported that it was a welcome boost to trade in the early part of the week but a side effect was a reduction in diners later in the week and especially Friday and Saturday.

Local business network N2United told *The Archer*: "We'll have a better idea of the longer term effects of the coronavirus pandemic on businesses once we get through and beyond September. In the meantime, and on behalf of the local shops and traders, thank you East Finchley for your custom, it really makes a difference."



Time to act: Ozzie takes to the boards. Photo Mike Coles

Barber wears boards in one-man campaign

By John Lawrence

Like many other small businesses, Barbers in the Village in Church Lane, N2, has taken a massive knock during the pandemic so owner Ozzie Akalin is doing everything he can to win back the customers he's lost.

Ozzie has turned himself into a mobile advertisement for his barber shop by wearing an A-board round his neck and walking the High Road close to his shop for an hour every day.

He's been cutting hair in Church Lane for 10 years and his one-man business was doing well before the virus struck. After four months of enforced closure, he reopened on 4 July and many regular customers returned but his trade is still down by 50 per cent.

Ozzie is finding it hard to support his wife and son and cover the daily running costs on his

shop. He said: "It's only me in the business so I have to do what I need to do to let people know I'm here. I'm closing my doors for half an hour each morning and evening and wearing the board out on the High Road. I'm just hoping everyone realises we can all do our bit to get the economy moving again."



Chef switches to sewing machine

By Emma Magnus

For East Finchley chef Breno Morais, face masks have proven a lifeline in more ways than one. His new mask business, BDA Masks, has provided a vital means of support throughout the pandemic.

Breno had worked in kitchens for 17 years but once the lockdown began the catering company he worked for was forced to close. Facing economic uncertainty and struggling with the influx of troubling news, Breno suffered a panic attack.

Then he found solace in an unlikely place: mask production. Inspired by his mother, a professional seamstress in Brazil, he launched BDA Masks. The name, which stands for 'Better Days Ahead', is a nod to the hope the business has provided.

Breno's triple-layered masks are constructed in accordance with WHO guidelines. They are made from cotton, have adjustable elastic and are offered in six different sizes, from three-year-olds to men's large. Breno points out: "A whole family can buy a mask in the same print."



Man and machine: Breno Morais at work on his face masks

Breno is donating 20% of the cost of each mask to the NHS in order to support their work throughout the pandemic. All packaging is reusable and Breno will hand deliver locally, meaning customers can save on postage.

With masks now mandatory in many indoor public spaces,

Breno's enterprise has taken off and his orders have multiplied overnight. In Breno's case, something positive has emerged from these challenging circumstances: sewing masks has proved therapeutic, and he has successfully set up his own business. To find out more, visit www.BDAmasks.co.uk.

Climate change relay postponed

Barnet Extinction Rebellion's community relay race has been postponed. It was planned to take place in Cherry Tree Wood on Saturday 29 August, but will be run on a later date.

For further information, email hazell@btinternet.com. To keep in touch with local climate change activists, check facebook.com/XRBarnet or @BarnetXR on Twitter.



Good girl, Rosie

We're pleased to see even Rosie, the collection dog outside the RSPCA charity shop in East Finchley High Road, is taking mask-wearing seriously. She's a handy reminder that we should all be wearing face coverings when we're popping into our local shops. Photo by Mike Coles.

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