

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.



Fiona Jones with her funny face hedge Photo Mike Coles

That's one happy hedge

There's no mistaking the mood of the hedge in the front garden of Fiona Jones in Leicester Road, N2. A huge happy face emoji stares out of the greenery after Fiona spent the last few months growing and trimming it into shape.

Fiona says: "It was meant as a bit of fun when lockdown first started but having taken much longer to do than I'd thought it's actually been a great way to get to know people passing by and it's made a few people laugh along the way."



Clampdown on parking outside primary schools

By Diana Cormack

Barnet Council is to restrict traffic for short periods outside some schools from the start of this term, with Holy Trinity Primary School in East Finchley identified as one of the first in the borough to come under the scheme.

The council is proposing to create five School Streets, which place temporary restrictions on motorised traffic on designated roads or sections of roads near schools during drop-off and pick-up times.

Traffic reduction

It feels that, with pupils returning to school, the reduced capacity on public transport as a result of Covid-19 restrictions could lead to an increase in car journeys and consequently more traffic congestion.

So certain roads or sections of roads will be designated as pedestrian or cycle zones for up to one and a half hours daily during those times. The restrictions will be enforced with the use of signage and physical barriers, marshalled by school staff and volunteers.

Only blue badge holders, emergency service vehicles and teachers will be able to enter. Previously parked cars will be allowed to leave. Access for residents will be maintained and the restrictions will only apply when schools are open.

Limited consultation

The five schools taking part in this initial phase have been consulted, including Holy Trinity Primary School, whose

restricted zone will be all of Eagans Close, N2. In its last newsletter of the summer term, the school urged parents to "walk, scoot, cycle or park and stride". Another participant is Garden Suburb Primary School in Childs Road, NW11, while Akiva School in East End Road, N3, will have some more minor restrictions immediately outside its entrance.

Barnet Council says: "We have had to work quickly to identify the schools and establish the appropriate traffic measures. This means that we have had little time for resident consultation. We will be sending a notification letter to affected residents."

The School Streets scheme, funded by a £93,000 grant from Transport for London and the Department for Transport, will initially operate for six months with the council keeping it under review and potentially expanding it to other schools.

Man fleeing police hides in garden shed

By Janet Maitland

A resident of Red Lion Hill in East Finchley was shocked when a man burst out of his garden shed at about 5.30pm on Friday 31 July. "Sorry mate, I'm hiding from the police," he said, escaping through the house and onto the street. The resident called the police who quickly came to his house to take a statement.

Unbeknownst to the resident, police had already been called about an hour earlier, to reports of a theft in nearby Chaloners Close. As soon as they arrived police saw a number of men running away, prompting an intensive search of surrounding streets using police dogs while a police helicopter circled overhead.

"One man, aged in his 20s, was arrested nearby on suspicion of theft and assault of an emergency services worker," said a police spokesperson. "He's been bailed pending further enquiries to a date in late August." It's not known if the man who was arrested was the intruder hiding in the shed.

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The Archer team wishes to thank all the generous people who give up their spare time, in all weather, to deliver the paper for us.

If you have a story for us, please contact us at the above address. Comments to The Archer may be published unless clearly marked 'Not for publication' within the text.

Copy deadlines – **October: 11 September;**
November: 16 October; December: 13 November

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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Barnet Council	020 8359 2000	Childline	0800 1111	Health Info Service	0800 665544
Recycling & refuse	020 8359 4600	Citizens Advice Barnet	0300 4568365	MIND	020 8343 5700
Benefits	0800 882200	Cruse Bereavement Care	0800 8081677	National Blood Centre	0845 7711 7711
Haringey Council	020 8489 0000	EF Advice Service	0300 4568365	Crime	
Recycling & refuse	020 88857700	Lone Parent Centre	020 3828 4834	Emergency	999
Benefits	020 8489 2800	Missing Persons Helpline	116 000	Police non-emergency	101
Leisure		National Debt Line	0808 156 7718	CrimeStoppers	0800 555111
Alexandra Palace	020 8365 2121	NSPCC	0808 8005000	Victim Support	0845 303 0900
East Finchley Library	020 8359 3815	Rape Crisis helpline	0808 802 9999	Hospitals	
Everyman, Muswell Hill	0872 436 9060	Refuge Crisis Helpline	0808 2000 247	NHS	111
Garden Suburb Library	020 8458 3301	Relate Helpline	0300 100 1234	Barnet General	08451 114000
Muswell Hill Library	020 8489 8773	RSPCA	0300 1234 999	Edgware General	020 8952 2381
Phoenix Cinema	020 8444 6789	Samaritans	116 123	Finchley Memorial	020 8349 7500
Vue, North Finchley	0345 3084620	SENDIASS Barnet	020 8359 7637	Oak Lane Clinic	020 8346 9343
Transport		SENDIASS Haringey	020 3667 5233	Royal Free	020 7794 0500
National Rail	0845 7484950	Health Advice		Whittington	020 7272 3070
City Airport	020 7646 0088	AIDSline	020 8363 2141	OAPs' Advice	
Heathrow Airport	0844 3351801	Alcoholics Anonymous	0845 7697555	Age UK Barnet	020 8203 5040
National Express	0871 781 8181	Barnet MENCAP	020 8203 6688	Independent Age	0800 319 6789
TfL	0343 222 1234	Cancer Support	020 8202 2211	Age UK	0800 169 2081
Thameslink	0345 026 4700	Carers' Line	0808 808 7777		
		Drinkline	0800 917 8282		

Wanted: Someone to run the Cherry Tree Wood café

By Diana Cormack

This year has undoubtedly been the busiest time ever for Cherry Tree Wood, with people packing the park to enjoy the beautiful weather during the pandemic. Picnics were plentiful and drinks were particularly necessary, there being no access to drinking water.

Also missing was any service from the kiosk café opposite the tennis courts, which opened in its present vandal-proof metal form in 2005.

At the time of writing Barnet Council is advertising the kiosk for use as a coffee shop. Park users are hoping that a suitable person who is community minded will be found soon to get it up and running.

Remembering Eileen, Sally-Anne and Pepe

The kiosk has a chequered history. The previous wooden construction was burned down in 2002, with its original lessee taking it on again, two years later than anticipated. Eileen Cannon was noted for her good home cooking and caring atti-

tude towards customers. She organised some entertaining events for them, including dog shows.

In 2007 it became known as the Lazy Sally Café when it was taken over by East Finchley resident Sally-Anne Wigfield. Her emphasis on natural and organic products in a menu of affordable high quality, healthy fresh food and drink attracted many customers. Sally ran a variety of activities organised for both children and adults, made picnics available and would stay open for as long as the weather held. She moved on from the business in 2012.

Its third lessee, Pepe, hoped to extend the café to make it into an all year round facility.



Vacant: Cherry Tree Wood kiosk

However, he lost the lease last year along with that of the now demolished pavilion, following the failure of his efforts to turn it into an eatery.

So good luck to whoever is chosen to run the kiosk next. Whoever takes it on, though, is unlikely to see another season to match this one.



On the line: Protesters hang out swimming costumes and hold a banner to demonstrate against charges on Hampstead Heath. Photo Joshua Bratt.

Pond swimmers protest

By David Melsome

Scores of swimmers protested against the imposition of compulsory charges to swim in the public ponds on Hampstead Heath. As we reported last month, the new online booking system introduced for the women's, men's and mixed bathing ponds has charges ranging from £2.40 to £4.

The Save Our Ponds campaigners say the charges destroy the unique ethos, culture and open access of the historic ponds and claim the decision by the City of London Corporation to introduce them, taken just before lockdown, was anti-democratic.

The Corporation itself says the online booking system is designed to be temporary while the pandemic lasts. However, it does not say the same for the charges, which it says in future may become contactless at the ponds themselves as well as via season ticket wristbands.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

55 Abbots Gardens, N2
Rear patio. (Development certificate.)

115 Abbots Gardens, N2
Roof extension involving hip to gable, rear dormer windows and two front rooflights.

44 Bancroft Avenue, N2
Retention of first floor rear windows/doors, and use of flat roof as terrace with railings and privacy screen.

15 Beresford Road, N2
Extension of approved rear dormer.

18 Chamberlain Road, N2
Single-storey side and rear extension following demolition of garage. New side entrance door. Conversion of loft space. Insertion of rear window.

24B Church Lane, N2

Conversion of ground floor office into one self-contained flat, using existing access from Church Lane.

253 East End Road, N2
Conversion into two maisonettes including single-storey rear extension. Associated refuse/recycling store and cycle stand.

23 Elmhurst Avenue, N2
Single-storey rear extension with pitched green roof.

44 Fortis Green, N2, 9EL
Single-storey rear extension, following demolition of existing conservatory.

28 Greenhalgh Walk, N2
Conversion of garage into habitable room, including new rooflight, replacement of garage doors, and replacement of rear windows/doors with double glazed metal

windows/doors. New timber shed in rear garden.

339 High Road, N2 8HL
Part single, part two-storey rear/side extension. Roof extension involving rear and side dormer windows. Two front rooflights.

78 Ossulton Way, N2
Alterations to existing roof, including two rear rooflights and three flat rooflights.

Prospect Ring, N2
Submission of details pursuant to planning permission.

Viceroy Parade, High Road, N2
Replacing existing tripod frame and antennas with six antennas apertures. Replacing two cabinets with four cabinets and ancillary development thereto at roof level, and one meter cabinet, plus ancillary development, at ground level.

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Players: Members of a basketball training team, with coach Kevin Lukau, second left, on the ageing courts in Cherry Tree Wood. Photo Mike Coles

Basketball courts becoming a danger

By Luke Tiratsoo

If one walks through Cherry Tree Wood it is rare not to see a rag-tag group of young, or in some cases “youthful looking”, gentlemen using the basketball courts. For as long as I can remember these courts have been a pivotal source of community entertainment and personal athletic development. To this day I have a scar on my knee from playing there as a 12-year-old.

Sadly in recent years, the courts have been reduced to a state of disrepair. The playing surface is known to be by far the worst in the area and it is almost a running joke locally when planning a basketball session and Cherry Tree Wood is suggested.

One player, Alex, 24, told me playing on the surface was “like trying to make quick turns on your grandmother’s gravel driveway.” Recently there have been many injuries, some minor, one serious.

Popular sport needs backing

It has never been more important to support the upkeep of public resources for underprivileged young people, and to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in sports.

A study by the Department for Culture Media and Sport revealed that basketball was the second-most popular sport

among 11- to 15-year-olds. Another study by Sport England Active revealed that of the 155,000 young people that play basketball regularly, 42% of them were of BAME origin, the most in any team sport.

In June, the tennis and basketball courts in Victoria Park, off Long Lane, N3, were completely resurfaced. In Cherry Tree Wood, the players have had to install new nets for themselves as there are no other affordable courts nearby but the surface continues to deteriorate.

However, Barnet Council has recently swept the courts to remove the loose grit on the surface and our East Finchley councillors are lobbying to get proper repairs done when money is available. Barnet Council told them this could cost anywhere between £5,000 and £60,000 depending on what is required.

Phoenix Cinema gets ready to welcome filmgoers again

By John Lawrence

East Finchley’s Phoenix Cinema was effectively mothballed in March when the pandemic closed down all entertainment venues. Now after almost six months of hibernation the historic picturehouse is getting ready to welcome film lovers again.

Trustees of the charity that runs the cinema are hoping to make decisions this month on a date to reopen and on how the building and screenings will be organised to keep audiences safe and socially distanced.

The Tenet test

They will be watching closely the delayed late-August UK release of spy blockbuster *Tenet*, directed by Christopher Nolan, who grew up in Highgate, which is being seen as a nationwide test for whether people are ready to return to the cinema experience. And the trustees are asking to hear directly from Friends of the Phoenix and any potential filmgoers in East Finchley about what will bring them back, and what concerns they might have. Email your views to: management@phoenixcinema.co.uk

Down but not out

All but one of the Phoenix’s 23 staff were put on furlough in March and the cinema was shuttered for the duration with the volunteer trustees taking it in turns to inspect the building each day.

Financially, the Phoenix has been struggling against fall-



Defiant message: The Phoenix Cinema last month. Photo Mike Coles

ing sales for some years. When lockdown came it had to refund thousands of pounds worth of tickets for sold-out screenings of live opera, which were cancelled at short notice.

However, chair of trustees Alison Gold said the cinema was no worse off now than at the start of March and it had been assisted by generous public donations and a £25,000 grant from Barnet Council, with the potential of further financial help to come from a British Film Institute grant scheme.

She said the Phoenix team were “cautiously optimistic” that screenings could start again soon. “It’s been an enormous challenge to be shut for this long but we have been able to keep stable,” she said.

“The next few weeks are when we have to make decisions. We know we can make the cinema hygienically safe for audiences and our aim is also to make sure we can stay open for years to come. We will be using this time to think about how we can make the Phoenix better and reshape it for the future.”

The man who walked backwards

By Diana Cormack

Many readers may have seen or heard of Michael Dickinson, who sadly died in July at the age of 70. They may not know his name but they might recognise him as the man who walked backwards.

Michael lived in Camden Town but was sometimes seen in East Finchley, where he used to visit the Phoenix Cinema. He liked to sit near the front of the cinema, which of course he reached by walking down the stairs backwards.

Born in the north of England, he began studying at Manchester School of Theatre in 1969 and became an actor in the 1970s, later taking up collage art. He spent nearly 30 years in Turkey working as a teacher and artist, but was eventually deported in 2013 amid objections to some of his political views.

In London he lived on the streets, in a tent and with squatters before acquiring more regular accommodation. Known for his political writing and admired art work, he kept up his acting talents and it was when leaving the stage after a performance that he suddenly started walking backwards. This was not long after his return from Turkey.

Michael claimed this “retropulsion” was not an act but a genuine psychological condition and that he would rather be walking forwards. Having been stared at, filmed and photographed wherever he went, let us hope that the man who walked backwards can now rest in peace.



Retropulsion: Michael Dickinson in East Finchley.

Two men arrested after High Road fracas

By Janet Maitland

A man was attacked on the corner of Huntingdon Road and the High Road, East Finchley, on Wednesday 5 August.

Reports from local people on social media described how a number of youths gathered on the corner by KFC, several of whom attacked another youth passing by and tried to rob him.

“We were called just after 5pm to the High Road following reports that a man had been attacked by approximately four males,” said a police spokesperson. “Officers attended and arrested two males on suspicion of robbery and assault.”

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Major cash boost for cerebral palsy charity

Muswell Hill-based CPotential Trust, a charity that provides support to children with cerebral palsy, has been awarded a £19,500 grant by the Morrisons Foundation.

The donation from the charitable arm of the supermarket will enable the charity to provide Neuromuscular Electrical Stimulation care. This innovative therapy uses electrical pulses to help muscles contract, aiding the movement of children's limbs and improving their overall strength to help them move independently.

Every year 1,800 children are diagnosed with cerebral palsy in the UK. It is the most common physical disability in childhood affecting movement and sensory development such as the ability to walk, talk or eat. Local charities are encouraged to visit www.morrisonsfoundation.com to find out how to apply for a grant.



Play time: A youngster learns new skills at CPotential

Bench stolen from historic house

By Emma Magnus

Thieves made off with a large wooden picnic bench from outside the café at Stephens House and Gardens on East End Road, N3, in the middle of the day on Tuesday 28 July. In the last month, the Grade II listed property has reported other instances of damage, including littering and fires being lit overnight in their children's playground.

The house team put up posters asking for information on the stolen bench, which they can ill afford to replace. The number to call is 020 8346 7812. They

have also started a crowdfunding appeal to raise funds for playground maintenance, which can be found at: localgiving.org/appeal/Support-the-Playground.

Giant phone mast 'out of keeping' with Garden Suburb

By David Melsome

Objections are being raised to an application by telecoms company Hutchison 3G to erect an 18-metre phone mast on Lyttelton Road, N2. The 5G mast would be installed opposite Lyttelton Court and Blandford Close, and 150 metres from the junction with Ossulton Way.

Objectors claim the mast and its four equipment cabinets would be detrimental to the local street scene. They say its height, possibly higher than 18 metres, would far exceed the tops of surrounding trees and buildings, which reach up to 14 metres.

Resident Louise Berwin said the surrounding area was of one great character in a designated Garden Suburb with very strict planning regulations governing the appearance of all parts of the area.

She said: "There have been numerous similar applications which were all refused in Hampstead Garden Suburb and the size and number of street boxes of this proposed mast make it more intrusive than others which have been refused."

"The Hampstead Garden Suburb owes its continuing charm and beauty to the sensible

approach of its guardians. This application would add a mast taller than all surrounding buildings and street lights as well as multiple boxes on the grass verge and I would urge this application is refused."

Road rage incident on Oak Lane

By Janet Maitland
A man was attacked and badly injured in a reported road rage incident in Oak Lane, N2, on Friday 31 July.

Emergency services were called to the junction of the High Road and Oak Lane at about 3.30pm. Police officers arrested two men aged 19, one on suspicion of GBH and the other on suspicion of ABH.

The London Ambulance Service treated a man at the scene and took him to hospital. His injuries are not thought to be life changing or life threatening. Police later released the men under investigation pending further enquiries.

Light plight

The traffic lights on the corner of the High Road and Fortis Green, outside Domino's, were flattened again on the morning of Tuesday 18 August. This regular occurrence is often caused by southbound heavy vehicles attempting to turn left round the tight corner.

One proposed solution, fixing the lights to a shop front rather than mounting them on a pole, was found to be unfeasible. So meanwhile we can expect to see the lights demolished and replaced three or four times a year.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Jan Lovell, of the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team, updates us on the latest crime news. Jan and the team can be contacted by email at: EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk, or by phone on 020 7161 9014. Follow the team on Twitter @MPSEastFinchley.

Burglary deterrents

During the months of lockdown burglaries were almost non-existent in East Finchley. Unfortunately, as we all begin to go out more the number of burglaries is likely to rise, especially with August and September being holiday months.

Below is the general advice we give towards improving home security. I will also stress that, although all the points below are valid, the very best investment you can make to protect your home is a burglar alarm. They work. I cannot recall a successful burglary in East Finchley where a working alarm was employed.

East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team advises all residents that, after good locks on your doors and windows, most important is fitting a house alarm.

Garden fences and side gates should be 1.8m high and are best topped with trellis or Prikka Strip, the same as fences. Always remove keys from locks, keep them nearby but away from doors and windows. Use timer switches to give the impression that your home is occupied. Of course suspect/s could just knock to see if someone comes to the door, so think about fitting an alarm and/or the newer doorbell phone app alarm/monitors – look for Ring or Sky Bell.

Keep wheelie bins either chained away from side gates or behind them to prevent burglars using them to climb on. Wooden front and back doors should be solid timber with a five-lever mortice lock one third of the way up and an automatic deadlocking rim lock one third of the way down.

With UPVC doors, closing the door and pushing the handle up is not secure. Lock the door with a key when leaving the property, ensuring that the multi-locking mechanism is engaged.

Glass panels on doors should be at least 6.4mm thick and either laminated or reinforced with security film. Consider using internal grilles on external doors if there is a risk that lock releases can be accessed via a broken pane of glass.

Shopping trip ends up costing a fortune

Archer reader Jacqui Cramp describes how a visit to Tesco turned into a very bad day when her car's catalytic converter was stolen while she shopped.

It was meant to be a nice quick shop at Tesco Colney Hatch. However, when I went to drive home there was an awful scraping sound from under my car. A quick look and my worst fears were confirmed. The catalytic converter had been jemmied out and wires cut.

After contacting the AA, I reported the theft to Tesco but was told the car park outside their store does not belong to them. Only the police can view the CCTV footage but they told me I had to request the footage for myself and, if I saw a clear face, I should send them the footage.

I later spoke to Tesco's head office and was told that the car park is leased by Tesco and

they gave me an email address to request the CCTV footage.

My car is a Toyota Auris and apparently that is the car most at risk as it is so easy to steal the 'Cat' and extract the precious metals it contains. The thieves on average take four and a half minutes.

I am now having a special anti-theft protection shield fitted, the total cost for which is £1,600. I urge anyone to spend the approximately £250 for a regular anti-theft guard; it could save you your catalytic converter.

Editor's note: The Archer has also received reports of catalytic converter thefts in Long Lane and other areas of East Finchley in August.

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Private garden provides peaceful escape in lockdown

By Ruth Anders

Readers may remember our May 2018 edition featuring Muswell Hill resident Nicky Grace's garden and the magical Green Shed she uses for craft workshops and children's parties.

The lovely informal space in Tetherdown, N10, came into its own anew during lockdown, when Nicky became aware of the difficult situation facing those without gardens, especially mums with young children. Knowing that many were having to roam around the streets with toddlers, Nicky, a textile artist, had the idea of offering her tranquil garden for others to use free of charge.

Outdoor freedom

She told *The Archer*: "I put a post on Facebook in April as I knew that so many were suffering without outside space. People started booking time slots and entering via the side gate.

"They'd tell me how otherwise they would go to local parks for the allotted one hour. The benches were blocked off with tape and police would bellow through megaphones for everyone to keep walking so they couldn't sit anywhere.

"Doing this, I met such lovely people, some heavily pregnant with toddlers, some who brought laptops and worked, some who celebrated birthdays with picnics or just wanted to lie outside. One family played games for three hours and others enjoyed their first Easter egg hunts."

Reasons to be cheerful

Nicky's small dog Maisie loved having new families to play with every day. Nicky added: "It was uplifting for me too as my business had suddenly come to a standstill but keeping busy arranging garden appointments meant that I still saw people every day, at a safe distance. I had so many nice comments and it motivated me to keep the garden up to scratch rather than succumbing to lockdown gloom".

Nicky's Green Shed is now available again to hire for children's parties, craft workshops and courses. For more information visit: thegreenshedn10.com



Retreat: Nicky Grace's garden in Tetherdown. Photo Mike Coles

Sunflower spread

By John Lawrence

Pedestrians and passengers passing by on the 263 bus have enjoyed seeing a cheery guard of sunflowers standing sentry on a patch of public land at the top end of the High Road in East Finchley.

Twenty sunflowers have grown up against a long fence in a sheltered spot between Sylvester Road and Brownswell Road, all planted and cared for by nearby resident Declan Scott. Declan, who has lived in East Finchley for 30 years, grew them from seed gathered from a single sunflower that grew in his front garden last year. Lining them up where everyone can see them has been a double pleasure, he says. "They were growing all through lockdown



Standing tall: Declan Scott with the sunflowers he planted alongside the High Road. Photo John Lawrence

and it's been a way of cheering people up. For me, I find it therapeutic and relaxing. I just water them morning and evening but I've made an army of

friends out there when people stop to ask me how to grow them."

And he adds that there's no secret to successful sunflower

growing: "Start them under glass, then once they're a few inches tall, plant them out, water them well and they grow themselves."

A garden too good to keep to yourself

By Ruth Anders

While most gardens, however modest, give pleasure, some beg to be shared. The magnificent garden belonging to drama teacher Jeremy Pratt and Rachel Lindsay in Twyford Avenue, N2, is one of the first private gardens in North London to open this summer under the National Garden Scheme, and what a joy it proved.

Transformation

When Jeremy and Rachel arrived 15 years ago, they found only a bit of grass, three apple trees and a jungle. Since then, the garden has been transformed into a horticultural wonderland. Nearest the house, the sun drenched lawn ("Good for the grandchildren," admits Jeremy, who hankers after larger flower beds) contrasts with borders, pots, small trees, and a pretty fountain. Beyond, a winding path leads to a seemingly endless leafy woodland area, filled with birds and seating under the huge ancient trees.

Sedums, hostas and daisies all jostle for space alongside a variety of more unusual plants. Geraniums and nasturtiums burst from pots of all sizes and Rachel's figurative sculptures add a delightful note of serendipity.

Helping charities

Said Rachel, "We usually make hundreds of pounds for charity from our teas, but we



Idyllic: Jeremy and Rachel's garden. Photo Ruth Anders

couldn't offer those this year. Sales of honey and cuttings from friends and our greenhouse also help."

NGS Ambassador Joe Swift told *The Archer*: "The NGS is a wonderful charity where garden owners share their garden with visitors, raising money mainly for nursing charities like Macmillan and Marie Curie.

"This year the NGS has endured extremely challenging times. During lockdown the only way to visit gardens

was virtually, but now some are opening with clear guidance so treat yourself and visit them whenever possible."

While the NGS demands '45 minutes of interest' for a garden to qualify for inclusion, I could happily have stayed for the whole lazy afternoon.

If you've missed Jeremy's and Rachel's garden this year, do make a note for 2021. For more information see ngs.org.uk



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Spread a little kindness during the pandemic

By Diana Cormack

At the end of March the government appealed for volunteers to help in the fight against coronavirus. They were particularly looking for up to 250,000 people to assist the 1.5 million who had been advised to shield themselves because of underlying health conditions. Suggestions for the tasks they could do were: delivering medicines from pharmacies, driving patients to appointments or home from hospital and regularly phoning those isolated at home. Initial cynicism from some about this request was blown out of the water when 750,000 responded.

Now, nearly six months on, examples of people helping others have become quite commonplace, happening daily all over the country, stimulated no doubt by the growth of neighbourhood WhatsApp groups and social media in general.

The kindness of strangers

Along with these everyday acts there are also random acts of kindness, one of which was recently highlighted on East Finchley Community Facebook by Guiseppe Sollo.

He wrote: "Thank you to the stranger who paid for my book. This morning I went to the local bookshop on the High Road to find a rare edition of J. Grisham. Unfortunately their card machine was not working and I was running out of cash, so I asked the bookseller if he could put the book aside while I went to the cash machine nearby. On my

return the bookseller told me that the book had already been paid for by the woman behind me in the queue. The world is full of good people."

Another local resident told *The Archer* that, early in lockdown, she was walking along Fortis Green wearing an inadequate mask meant for woodworkers. A young man passing by announced: "You can't wear that! I'll get you a proper mask." He ran to his home nearby and returned with two impressive high-quality masks, saying a large batch had been supplied to his work place. She and her husband have used them gratefully ever since.

The Archer would like to hear about any acts of kindness which you would like to share with the community. Please send details to news@the-archer.co.uk or write to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE.

A study of life in lockdown

By Diana Cormack

Since the beginning of lockdown, randomly selected people have been regularly answering questions online about how the coronavirus situation is affecting them, with particular reference to isolation and what effect the measures are having on them.

The survey asks about how they feel things have changed in the preceding week. Their responses help towards understanding what effect social isolation is having on people's mental health and on the advice being offered about this.

My husband is a participant. He isn't sure how he was selected, but thinks it might be because he is a blood donor, particularly recently since monthly samples of blood are being requested for analysis.

Survey results given to government and national organisations support advice and decision-making related to the coronavirus outbreak. More specifically, it aims to identify

what support is needed for people psychologically and socially at this time.

Because of the sensitivity of some questions, the volunteers are assured of the anonymity applied to their answers, with email addresses being removed. Data will be stored for ten years after this research by University College London ends. Then, if deemed to still be of public interest, it will be kept for longer.

Based on the course of the pandemic, the weekly surveys are to be replaced by monthly ones as isolation reduces. Let's hope this comes sooner rather than later as perhaps it could be an indication of progress in the fight against Covid-19.

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Needle is back on the records at Alan's

By David Gritten

It's been a trying summer for shop owners on East Finchley's High Road. But at least one of them feels he's weathered the storm and is optimistic about the future.

Alan Dobrin, owner of the legendary Alan's Records, was forced to close for three months during the lockdown but since re-opening he reports he has been extremely busy.

"In the lockdown, people had a lot of time on their hands," he reflects. "So they had the opportunity to listen to or rediscover a lot of music."

Many other record shops went online to survive. Some prospered. But Alan decided against that option: "Making money out of a pandemic didn't sit well with me." And when he re-opened, his customers flocked back: the first few days after his return were among the busiest in his 26 years running the shop.

He attributes this to people



Browse and buy: Customers in Alan's Records. Photo Mike Coles

appreciating music more when a disaster like the pandemic strikes. "A friend of mine in the music industry told me people bought music during the lockdown more than ever."

Regulars like a rummage

His customers actively enjoy visiting Alan's Records, and rummaging through his huge second-hand collection of 15,000 albums and 4,000 CDs: "The online thing is fine," he observes, "but there's an appetite for coming into the shop and talking to people."

And they've done just that. Half of them are locals, while

the rest travel from all over the UK, from 12 European countries, the US and even Brazil. "A lot come over here every year, and they'll be back," says Alan. "Foreign customers are the lifeblood of the shop as well."

He adds: "There are 82 record shops in London, at least a quarter of them in the West End. Some are really struggling. Their rates are high and their rents are just ridiculous. This was my first shop, and I've never wanted to leave here. East Finchley's such a friendly place."

New Local Café team brings new life to old premises

By John Lawrence

Now might seem to be a brave time to be opening a new business, but that's what Arif Yildirim and the team from the New Local Café are doing with the arrival of their new venture Cup of Joy.

After four months of refurbishment work, their café is ready to open in the High Road premises that used to be the Big Chef. Arif promises good coffee, breakfasts and lunches with plenty of vegan and vegetarian options, as well as cocktail hours from 5pm to 7pm each evening.

Four staff will service the Cup of Joy, which has been

fitted out in a rustic wooden style and has distanced space for 20 inside, including a long bench for families, as well as tables outside.

Arif, the son-in-law of Niyazi, who has owned the New Local Café since 1990, acknowledges the timing for a new opening is tough but is optimistic. "We made the commitment to take over the place right back at the start of the year so we had no choice but to go ahead," he said. "But we know already that East Finchley people like to support local places so if they do the same with us we will be all right."

They are coming up with



Opening soon: Arif Yildirim

fresh ideas to pull in local customers, such as bottomless champagne to match what you might find at a bar in town, and picnic lunch boxes for people to take away and enjoy in their gardens or in Cherry Tree Wood.

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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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Eye catching: Jake Moss behind the lens

Jake is a natural behind the camera

Film maker Jake Moss has been named runner-up among hundreds of entries in a national competition that asked young people to capture what nature means to them in their neighbourhood.

Jake, 13, of Lincoln Road, N2, filmed, edited and wrote the music for a short film called *Contrast*. By mixing busy and chaotic scenes of shopping on the High Road, and even the Black Lives Matter protests, with tranquil scenes from Hampstead Heath, it certainly lives up to its title.

The competition was organised by UK film education charity Into Film at the beginning of May as a response to school closures and as part of a home-learning campaign for teachers and young people.

Jake said: "I was bored so I thought I'd give it a go. I

wrote the music on computer first and then filmed and edited to the music. I didn't have a script, I was just trying to concentrate on how it felt to me. "I was thinking how stressful and overwhelming just being on the High Road was at that time with coronavirus around. I wanted to show how being in nature is so different and can really help."

Jake got his first taste of film making at a summer camp four years ago and has kept it up at a weekly club in Highgate. You can watch his 90-second film at vimeo.com/429226761

School and college in maths partnership

By Daphne Chamberlain

Imperial College London has been given the go-ahead by the government to set up a maths school on the campus of Woodhouse Academy in North Finchley. The school will be for sixth-form students learning maths, further maths and other science A-levels. If all goes well, it should open in the autumn of 2023.

It is the first time that a world top ten university has partnered with a school in this way. Imperial College greeted the decision as "wonderful news", with the opportunity to transform lives by seeking out the most able students from the widest range of backgrounds, including female students, BAME groups and those from disadvantaged and under-represented communities.

They are hoping that a specialist school will help discover talent, and open up the path to careers including technology, computing and financial industries.

Woodhouse College, rated outstanding by Ofsted, has become an Academy to facilitate this. It is consistently rated as one of the best sixth form colleges in the country, drawing

its pupils from over 180 North London schools. All the students study A-levels.

National network

Working together, Imperial College and Woodhouse hope to "improve social mobility and diversity in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths)". The new school will also be part of a growing national network of Maths Schools aimed at increasing STEM graduates, including those linked with the universities of Cambridge, Durham, Exeter, Lancaster, Liverpool, Surrey, and King's College London.

To find out more, e-mail enquiries@woodhouse.ac.uk or call 020 8445 1210. For admissions enquiries, e-mail admissions@woodhouse.ac.uk. You can follow the project on Facebook @WoodhouseAcademy.

Bin it or take it home from the woods

By Ann Bronkhorst

As lockdown restrictions ease, more and more people are using parks for recreation so litter appears daily rather than mainly at weekends. Last month *The Archer* highlighted litter problems in two local open spaces, Coldfall Wood and Cherry Tree Wood.

Now Haringey, the borough which manages Coldfall Wood and Muswell Hill Playing Field, has launched a campaign called 'Bin it or take it home' with banners, bin stickers, floor stencils, even new bins all promoting the message.

The campaign is designed to encourage lasting behavioural change. Sarah Jones, who works for Haringey, points out that staff and volunteers "are working incredibly hard, in extreme heat, picking up rubbish others have selfishly left... This is a problem that we as a council can't solve alone." And the environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy has warned of "a littering epidemic as lockdown eases" unless people change their habits.

Haringey plan some as yet unspecified "publicity stunts" to generate interest and "face to face engagement" with park users. Tougher action will follow with enforcement officers visiting parks and with the use of fixed penalty notices as a last resort.

Wherever you live you can carry out your own litter pick. Check out www.cleanupuk.org.uk first for guidance on health and safety and risk assessment. In Haringey, litter pickers and bags are available on loan for community-minded residents and the council can remove the collected litter. Further information from parkprojects@haringey.gov.uk or from the council's website www.haringey.gov.uk/bin-it-or-take-it-home

Search for teachers

A former student of Christ's College Finchley is hoping to make contact with two teachers who worked there in the 1980s. The student is trying to locate Ms Taylor and Ms Maitland, who both taught English at the school in East End Road, N2, from 1984 to 1989. Anyone who can help is asked to email the student's partner at: melaniavicario@hotmail.com



Sweet treats: Huxley, Roni and Jemima at their cake stall

Children host cake sale

A charity cake sale is a fun and delicious way to raise money for worthwhile causes and a great way to meet your neighbours.

East Finchley residents Huxley, Roni and Jemima baked black sticky gingerbread, apple pie bites, apple and cinnamon crisps, with blackberry and yoghurt ice lollies for their cake sale.

"We picked the blackberries in Coldfall Woods," said Roni. "And all the apples are from my garden," added Jemima.

The children came up with the idea for hosting the cake

sale, chose the recipes, did all the baking, decorated a tablecloth, and even made a cake sale sign out of Lego.

The glorious sunshine turned to drizzle and finally heavy rain, but friends and neighbours turned up with umbrellas to support the children, who raised £36 for the NHS. "We like making cakes," said Huxley, "and our neighbours like eating cakes, so it was easy."

Senior learners adapt to classes online

By David Melsome

The Hampstead Garden Suburb branch of the University of the Third Age (U3A) reports that it has responded to the challenge of its leaders and members being in lockdown by shifting most of its programme online.

Almost 40 online groups are now active, sharing skills and knowledge among members, who are mainly of retirement age. Some groups that previously could hold only a limited number of members in their leaders' homes can now welcome many more members via the internet. Classes include Play Reading where the 'cast' had great fun acting in classic plays such as *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Divine Laughter* and *Pygmalion*.

Crafting took on a new impetus with members making protective masks and hospital scrubs, alongside their regular knitting, crocheting and sewing.

Staying connected

Groups co-ordinator Daphne Berkovi said: "Online learning is not impeding the continuation of our U3A. Indeed, it is in many ways enhancing the opportunity to have larger group meetings and develop groups with a diverse range of topics."

"We do hope that at some point in the future we will be able to meet in a more personal way, rather than just virtually. Nevertheless, we are filling the void by staying connected, which is the most important aspect."

The HGS U3A also welcomes new members and new ideas. A virtual Open Day is planned for the autumn. Find more details at <https://hgsu3a.uk/>

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Celebration: Mike Coles in Marseilles... virtually.

Mike makes it all the way to Marseilles

Archer photo editor Mike Coles used his daily exercise allowance during lockdown to do a virtual walk from East Finchley to the south of France. Here he reveals the unforgettable reason he chose Marseilles as his destination.

From the end of March, my aim was to walk 10 km per day around East Finchley and tot up the distances on a map of the virtual journey, checking each day to see how far I had got and where to 'virtually' stay and eat. Fast forward to Saturday 18 July and I arrived at the Old Port in Marseilles at a quarter to four in the afternoon. It had taken 124 consecutive days at 9.5 km per day.

Drugs and low life

People have asked, why Marseilles? I hope the reason is not too offensive! After leaving college in the 1970s, one of my first jobs was as an assistant film cameraman to slightly eccentric producer John Tiffin at the London base of American company CBS News. The first foreign job I worked on with him was a documentary about the illegal heroin drug factories in the hills around Marseilles, known in drug enforcement circles as 'The French Connection'.

While there, having established that I was vaguely competent, John let me do some of the filming. One night when he had an 'important meeting' at an expensive restaurant with the presenter Morley Safer he dispatched me to the red light district to get some general shots of the low life around La Canebière.

P... off, in French

Off I went enthusiastically. Things were going well and I was getting some good shots when a 'lady' tipped the contents of a chamber pot over me from an upstairs window. This has somehow stuck in my mind. I only found out when I read John Tiffin's obituary in The Guardian a few years ago that the film had won an Emmy, although I don't think I was mentioned in dispatches!

Of course, looking back, I was very naive and was lucky to get away with an extra shower and a laundry bill, given that shootings and stabbings were a weekly occurrence, and the media was distinctly unpopular.

So in memory of those times, I made it to Marseilles. And I'm

still walking. Now I'm heading for the heights of the Pyrenees and then either Barcelona or Santiago de Compostela.

Geoffrey Hanson

9 December 1939 – 21 July 2020

By Daphne Chamberlain

Geoffrey Hanson, who died in July, was a music man: organist, teacher and composer. He brought the annual Arts Festival to East Finchley for 22 years, and was organist and choir leader at All Saints' Church in Durham Road for 30 years.

In his funeral eulogy last month, church trustee Nick Starling said: "We have so much to be thankful to Geoffrey for: for coming into our lives, for writing music for us, for being such a delightful company. We shall miss the kindness, the warmth, the sense of humour, even the occasional irascibility..."

"People came pouring through the doors of All Saints' for his memorable 80th birthday concert last December. We are so lucky that he made his recording *Odyssey* for us to treasure his music by."

Geoffrey composed in many genres: organ music, masses, anthems, songs, chamber music,

choral and orchestral works, concertos and operas. He wrote for choirs, orchestras and friends, who gave the first performances. Often the premieres were for the London Ripieno Society, which he had founded in 1962, or the London Mozart Players, who appeared regularly at the Arts Festival.

Born in Eastbourne, Geoffrey seems to have been energised by the sea air. He was learning the piano by the age of five, and was appointed a church organist at 17. He studied at Trinity College of Music, becoming a professor there in 1964. In the next six years he was appointed organist at St Mark's, Regent's Park, and Director of Music at the Polytechnic of Central London, now the University of Westminster.

In 1986 he came to All Saints', and he staged the first Arts Festival there 11 years later.

Speaking to *The Archer* in 2007, he said "Variety is the spice of life", and the festival programmes reflected that.

At various times, they brought us jazz, brass bands, opera, choirs, poetry, readings by local writers, storytelling, a one-man drama about Dr Johnson, two actors from *The*



Music man: Geoffrey Hanson

Archers, linked films at the Phoenix Cinema, and a guided walk around Camden and Islington Cemetery. And that's just a selection.

The art exhibition, which ran throughout the duration of each festival, raised healthy sums for the North London Hospice, Noah's Ark and the Harington Society.

Geoffrey believed it was important for performers, artists and writers, whether just starting out or internationally acclaimed, to have all the encouragement and support they could get. And credit must go to him and his dedicated and hard-working committee for 'keeping the show on the road' when funding and resources were being cut.

His funeral service included a reading by committee member and renowned poet Fleur Adcock of John Donne's *Death Be Not Proud*, a poem that Geoffrey had set to music.

Tributes described him as "A gentle man with a steely reserve to get things done as he saw fit" and "A dear, generous and kind brother, uncle, companion and friend."

Choose your own route for Big Fun Walk this year

By David Melsome

Postponed from its usual date in May, North London Hospice's flagship fundraiser of the year, the Big Fun Walk, is set to go ahead in September but with a new feel.

My Big Fun Walk will take place across the weekend of 12-13 September and will enable supporters to personalise their own route or choose a pre-planned walk to complete across one or two days.

Sign up by noon on Friday 11 September to take part. You can register at www.bigfunwalk.co.uk

RICKY SAVAGE ...

"The voice of social irresponsibility"

Who will lift the curse?

There's an old Chinese curse: 'May you live in interesting times', and oh boy we sure as hell are right now. It doesn't matter if you're being locked down, locked up or quarantined for going to France to get your eyes tested, the new normal just ain't the same as the old. Someone needs to explain the new rules.

Let's start with schools and the mass return to education. For our young people, this is not going to be about what they did on their holidays and who they did it with. No, it's going to be about the length of their bargepole and where they managed to get hold of a Gucci-labelled haz-chem suit.

They will only have been able to chat up the object of their desires by semaphore and there will have been no teenage sex without a Covid-19 test certificate signed by their parents and at least two teachers.

And don't think allowing fans in to watch football will be like the old days either. Not when you have to keep quiet, wear a mask and stay at least two metres from the next person. And that's just the players. Which kind of rules out rugby.

Getting married? Just think of the chaos a 30-person limit will cause as the mass infighting starts over which weird relative to leave off the guest list. That's before you get to the church, put on your matching face masks and throw socially distanced confetti at each other. You're going to need a long train to keep your bridesmaids apart, and don't forget singing is still banned.

Well, not banned entirely, not with socially distanced gigs coming back. Which is fine if you are Ed Sheeran and your guitar, but a bit of a problem if you are a symphony orchestra. The need to keep two metres apart means that by the time you've got 70-odd musicians together for the Last Night of the Proms there will only be room to let an audience of one into the Royal Albert Hall.

But don't worry, everything will be all right by next summer and we'll have been tested and vaccinated in time to go to Glastonbury. The weather gods are already excited and making preparations. They are planning a six-day thunder storm to make us feel at home.

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A register of licencing applications can be inspected at Building 4, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London, N11 1 NP. Appointments to inspect the register can be made by telephoning 020 8359 7995 during office hours.

Any person wishing to submit relevant representations concerning this application must give notice in writing to the London Borough of Barnet, Licensing Team at the address above, giving in detail the grounds of the representation no later than: **28 / 09 / 2020**

The Council will not entertain representations where the writer requests that his identity remains anonymous. Copies of all representations will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Authorities Sub Committee and will therefore pass into the public domain.

Representations must relate to one or more of the four Licensing Objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

It is an offence liable on conviction to a fine up to £5000 under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003 knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application.

Dated this 31st day of August 2020



The woman behind *The Secret Garden*

Frances Hodgson Burnett's name is known world-wide, mainly today as the author of the eternally popular *The Secret Garden*, but also of *A Little Princess* and her biggest hit *Little Lord Fauntleroy*.

Born in Manchester and going on to live a truly trans-Atlantic lifestyle, she was as famous and as popular as Charles Dickens in her day. She published an astonishing 52 books in her lifetime and was seen by some as a rather scandalous figure.



Words with music: Alexis Leighton



Popular author: Frances Hodgson Burnett

All this and more features in the new one-woman show about her life called *In the Secret Garden of Frances Hodgson Burnett*, starring Alexis Leighton as Frances. It is being produced by the team behind last year's Edinburgh Fringe show *Mrs Shaw Herself*.

The hour-long piece is all Frances' words from letters and diaries. She once said: "If you look the right way you can see that the whole world is a garden." It will be underscored by live music on Celtic harp and accordion played by Helen Tierney, who lives in East Finchley.

The show will be in the beautiful Bothy Garden at Stephen's House, East End Road, Finchley N3, on Sunday 6 September at 3pm. Tickets are £10 and pre-booking is essential through Stephen's House website at www.stephenshouseandgardens.co.uk.

Theatre makes a comeback ... and it's a real hoot!

One of the first theatre shows to be staged in London since March was an outdoor performance at Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road, N3. Janet Maitland was there to review it.

A socially distanced outdoor show with hand sanitiser on tap sounds about as joyless as queuing outside a supermarket in the rain, doesn't it? But the performance of *Sherlock Holmes* by The Pantomoon Theatre Company at Stephens House on Wednesday 29 July was a shot in the arm. It was hilarious, inventive and full of glorious silliness.

The company gave it everything they'd got. Holmes and Watson tackled a fiendishly complex case featuring flashbacks, audience participation, live music and a fabulous Moriarty twirling a black velvet cape while holding her head back to keep her moustache from falling off.

Yes, everyone did keep their distance but, just for once, the pandemic wasn't centre stage.



Off the wall: Pantomoon's Sherlock

And it didn't rain and there was a bar and the volunteers organising it all were efficient and unobtrusive, chilled and friendly.

The last time I lay on a blanket on a warm summer evening and watched a live performance was 50 years ago

eating spaghetti hoops straight out of the tin while watching Jimi Hendrix at the Isle of Wight Festival. This time it was a bit more difficult getting up again, but the experience of watching someone giving their all for you was the same.

Looking ahead

Stephens House is a Grade 2 listed house with extensive gardens at 17 East End Road, N3 3QE. September events include *The Secret Garden* of Frances Hodgson Burnett on Sunday 6th, a one-woman performance with live music on Celtic harp and accordion. There's also Street Food Sunday on the 13th, Gin on the Terrace on Thursday 17th and High Tea on the Terrace on Sunday 20th. For more information and booking go to www.stephenshouseandgardens.com/events.

Sea Feverish

It's been a fraught summer of hot temperatures, hot tempers and confusion over how safe it is for crowds to flock to our seaside resorts. Marian Bunzl offers this poem in the style of John Masefield's Sea Fever to sum it all up.

I must go down to the sea again, to Bournemouth Beach for the day
And all I ask is we're six feet apart, with a mask if we've something to say,
And the sun is shining and the waves are gently swishing
And we can picnic or swim, or drink our gin, or try our hand at fishing.

I must go down to the sea again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that cannot be denied.
And all I ask is a blue sky with white clouds flying,
And an ice cream man and a hot dog van, so the kids can stop their crying.

I must go down to the sea again, I'm at the end of my lockdown tether.
I've got to go down to the sea again in this glorious summer weather!
If crowds of people feel the same as me, I can only pray that they're virus-free,
So that I'm safe as along the beach I roam, and can enjoy a cream tea before I go home.



Vibrant venue: How the Jacksons Lane foyer and café space could look next summer

Jacksons Lane stays closed until July 2021

By David Melsome

Jacksons Lane arts centre in Highgate has announced that it is to stay closed until July 2021 while it undergoes a £3.3 million redevelopment programme.

The venue's management said combining two periods of closure, for the pandemic and for the essential modernisation work, was the best way to secure its future and minimize the length of time the doors stay shut.

Highlights of the redevelopment include a new lift to allow wheelchair access to Studio 1, a foyer almost tripled in size and doubled in height, sound-proofed and modernised studio spaces, an enhanced auditorium with increased and better quality seating, and two new riggable spaces for circus artists.

Funding was secured last year from Arts Council England and Haringey Council with work due to start in 2021, but that has now been brought forward to tie in with the venue's enforced closure while the pandemic lasts.

ward to tie in with the venue's enforced closure while the pandemic lasts.

Jacksons Lane executive director Monique Deletant said: "We're excited by this opportunity to transform Jacksons Lane. We love how much our building is cherished by our communities, but for years they've endured noise bleed in studios, buckets catching leaks when it rains and an overcrowded foyer."

Artistic director Adrian Berry said: "I'm happy that we've been able to push forward our plans to reshape our beloved building, because it gives us the best chance of emerging from the pandemic as a strong, resilient centre for circus, culture and community engagement."



Humans in or out of harmony with nature

Offshoot Gallery is opening its doors to art lovers again this month with an exhibition of paintings by Araminta Blue called *Splinters & Swimmers*.

The artist's work considers the role of natural spaces and how we as humans connect with nature, or damage it. The exhibition runs at the gallery at 162 High Road, N2, until Thursday 24 September.



To CBD or not to CBD?

By Greta Brambilla

East Finchley author Mary Biles has celebrated the recent launch of her publication *The CBD Book: A User's Guide*. In this detailed book she debunks myths about cannabidiol and explores why it has become the biggest trend in natural health remedies over the last few years.

Derived from the hemp plant, CBD oil is a nutritional supplement that, although



controversial, has claimed success in treating a broad range of conditions including pain, inflammation, low moods, insomnia and seizures.

While it comes from the

same botanical family as marijuana, it does not have intoxicating or addicting effects and the World Health Organisation has approved it as a safe product to use. CBD oil is also legal to buy on the high street or online and almost 10% of people in the UK have already tried it.

Mary, a medical cannabis journalist and educator, uses her book to explore the science behind CBD oil, backed up by an array of case studies. She also uncovers the difference between oil types and the advantages and disadvantages of different delivery methods, such as vaping, tinctures, edibles and capsules.

The CBD Book: A User's Guide is available at bookshops and on Amazon. Find out more at marybiles.com and listen to her podcast at: cannabisvoices.buzzsprout.com.

Plastics campaign finds a new home online

By Andrew Niewiarowski
It's a year since my wife Ali and I made East Finchley our home, and we've loved every minute of it. Intrigued by the round, bright-green signs hanging in many shop windows declaring 'No2Plastics', as an eco-warrior and keen environmentalist I was eager to join the campaign.

The ongoing pandemic has been a challenging time, and with it has come an exponential rise in single-use plastics. We have only one planet and we must collectively reduce our plastic consumption.

Discarded plastic never disappears; it just breaks up into smaller and smaller pieces, often ending up in our beautiful oceans. When we overcome this virus, we cannot afford to slip back into old habits.

Check out the website

The pandemic has given us time to reflect and reassess our priorities. No2PlasticsN2 have seized this opportunity by developing our website. Despite having no website building experience, I put myself forward as a rookie webmaster.

So, it is with great pleasure (and a newfound respect for web developers everywhere) that we announce the launch of our website at www.no2plasticsn2.com to promote our vision and our campaign.

Shoppers will now be able to choose which N2 establishment to patronise based upon its plastic usage. Suggestions are offered about what to buy and how to live as plastic-free a life as possible, with good ideas always welcome. We hope that all our residents, reinvigorated, will discover their own route towards living a better, cleaner, plastic-free life. Watch out for new website features as our campaign grows.

I have very much enjoyed working on the website and would love feedback from residents and retailers alike via the website contact form.

Letters

Dangerous crossing

Dear Editor,

In my opinion the zebra crossing on the High Road is potentially dangerous. To show this I took photos at about 4.30pm on a very bright day in July when the left of the crossing, facing north, was in deep shade, making it hard to spot anyone waiting to cross.

As a driver, your view of someone hoping to cross is further obscured by many big dustbins, on top of which shopkeepers sometimes pile boxes, and a tall set of metal barricades.

Visually there is so much going on that in one photo alone it is hard to see that there's a pedestrian standing in the middle wanting to cross.

Not only that but the presence of a double bus stop, just before the crossing, means that the white zigzag road markings are a shorter strip than usual. On the crossing itself, there's only one white stripe



Heading south: The obscured and badly marked crossing. Photo Gill Steiner

on each side of the centre island as the other ones have worn away.

In the southerly direction there are five tall dustbins as well as a barricade obscuring anyone waiting to cross. And there will be plenty of times when drivers heading south are having to contend with the distraction of traffic entering or trying to exit Huntingdon Road, right next to the crossing.

It's easy to see that worse conditions could prevail: darkness, rain, mist, high vehicles in front of a driver giving him or her very little time to assess visually whether a pedestrian is present and wants to cross. Thank the Lord that I use a bicycle.

Gill Steiner,

Address supplied.

Overflowing litter

Dear Editor

Cherry Tree Wood is such a pretty place and an excellent amenity especially at this time. Why oh why is it so abused by the leaving of litter by all the bins and around the woods in general; it spoils it for everyone. Can Barnet Council either leave much bigger bins, or collect daily, as it is becoming a serious health hazard?

Ros Goldfarb,

Address supplied.

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page" The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE or e-mail news@the-archer.co.uk

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

Hedgehog sightings

Dear Editor,

We too have seen hedgehogs in East Finchley (*The Archer*, August 2020). I got photos on two separate occasions when one was walking down Park Road in the evening. Maybe it could be the same one as is living in Kitchener Road. There is a website to report hedgehogs spotted in London at wildlondon.org.uk and a map to show you where the sightings have been. It's wonderful that there are hedgehogs out and about in East Finchley!

Sally Norris,

Address supplied.

Ponds need protecting

Dear Editor,

'Ponds swimmers kick out' (*The Archer*, August 2020) is quite right as this amenity has always been a happy place where everyone could turn up casually and enjoy a day of pleasure. The ponds were formally established by Parliament, an elected body, as a free facility for everyone's benefit. Margaret Thatcher, who did not believe in democracy, removed this and gave them instead to the City of London Corporation, a big money concern that is not such a body.

They need therefore to be returned to public ownership where elected officials who are accountable can see that the public need is properly met.

There have been protests which are likely to continue about this new arrangement of limited entry, which now has to be paid for, and there is an online petition that readers are encouraged to sign at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-our-ponds-hampstead-heath-1>

John McPartlin

Creighton Avenue, N2.

TV licence letters sent out to over-75s

Last month, TV Licensing began sending out letters to people aged over 75, asking them to either pay for their TV licence or apply for a free one. Age UK are again warning about possible scammers.

Please remember that the genuine letter will only ask you to use the following payment options:

by post, using the address: TV Licensing, PO Box 578, Darlington DL98 1AN; or online at tv1.co.uk/75pay and tv1.co.uk/75apply; or by phone on 0300 790 6151.

If you are contacted and asked to pay for your TV licence using a different phone number, a different website or by posting your details to a different address you have been contacted by a scammer. TV

Licensing will not come to your doorstep to collect the licence fee if you are over 75. Anyone who approaches you in this way is also a scammer.

If you're unsure about anything, you can call TV Licensing on 0300 303 9695 to speak with someone who can help. Meanwhile, Twitter @ageukcampaigns will be keeping pressure on the BBC and the Government to come together and save free TV for over 75s. Find out more at www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns

All Saints' Church, Durham Road, East Finchley Church of England

You are welcome to join us for:

Sunday mass at 10.00 a.m. and Weekday masses as advertised on the website
Face masks must be worn for the time being.

Or join our live-streamed services on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsef/>

The church is also open for private prayer as advertised on the website.

Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

For more information, contact the Vicar, Fr Ian Chandler, on 020 8883 9315

Email: vicar.saintsabounding@gmail.com or check out our website:

<http://www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk>

From cooking to chatting

The Age UK Barnet men's cookery group missed their weekly banter and conversation during lockdown so decided to get together on Zoom each week and talk about the news.

"We talk about how we are getting on, what we've been doing and, especially if our teacher Nancy joins us, bragging about what we have been cooking," says Des, who organises the sessions.

Victor, another participant, says: "One week we talked about slavery, statues, racism and the good news about finding a steroid that reduces deaths on the ventilating machines."

Your news

Send your stories, letters, and photos to news@the-archer.co.uk or by post to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE. Find us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @TheArcherN2. You can view our online archive at www.the-archer.co.uk

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The play's the thing

By David Melsome

Actor Benjamin Victor is passionate about bringing attention to the plight of his industry. Outdoor performances are back in the calendar but indoor theatre venues have not yet worked out how they can reopen safely and still survive financially.

Benjamin said: "On 11 July, UK theatre was officially allowed to resume outdoor performances. Little to zero notice was given by the government, making rehearsal and preparation of work impossible. What is most sad about this is it indicates a fundamental lack of understanding of how the sector truly functions."

So Benjamin, who has worked in theatres including Greenwich Theatre and the Park Theatre in Finsbury as well as running theatre workshops,

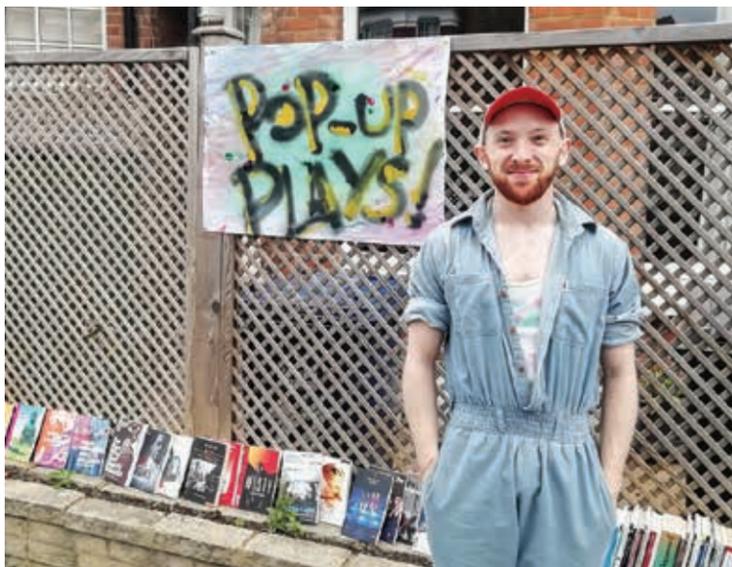
works of drama, all carefully sanitised in between visitors.

"Following a discussion with a friend and colleague, we chose to make small pieces of community theatre with zero notice," he said. "Some colleagues performed in public spaces at a safe distance from the public. I chose to donate every single play on my shelf to a temporary, pop-up play library."

"People from my local community came out in the sun to flick through plays, sit and



Matey python: Fashion models and their reptile friend in Coldfall Wood. Photo Mike Coles



Drama in a crisis: Benjamin Victor with his pop-up library of plays

chose to run his own small-scale event at short notice. He set up a play library outside his home in Sedgemere Avenue, N2, and invited neighbours and passers-by to peruse some of the greatest

read, and discuss the state of the arts in the UK. It was a truly beautiful experience for me and I hope it sparked some positive connections for members of my community."

Slither my timbers!

Birds, squirrels and the occasional fox we can probably all cope with, but a snake in Coldfall Wood could be stretching it too far. Well, just one appeared during a video shoot for fashion brand Plan in Motion in late July.

The one-year-old albino granite python was filmed as it slid over tree trunks and then over the shoulders of two human fashion models. Borrowed from a snake collector in Muswell Hill, the python is completely harmless at the moment but could grow to be 10ft long in five years' time. Watch the results of the fashion shoot at www.planinmotion.co.uk

Civic award for young people's volunteer

Congratulations to East Finchley resident Doreen Ball, winner of a London Borough of Barnet Civic Award, presented at her front door by the Mayor Cllr Caroline Stock.

Doreen is the longest standing Home Start volunteer, having started in 2004. She was Brown Owl for 10 years for Holy Trinity Brownie Pack, and, before retiring, was a speech and language therapist, helping with child/parent relationships and improving the life chances of young children. Doreen also helps with volunteer reading in a local school.



The Mayor presents Doreen Ball's award. Photo Simon O'Conner



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