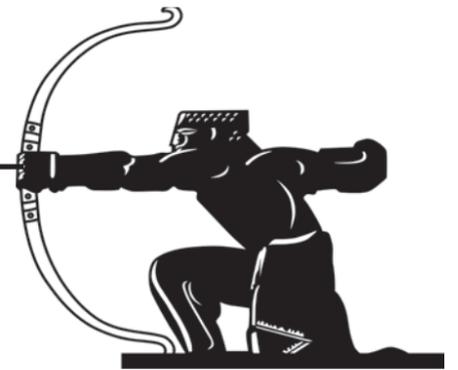




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The Archer

Local News is our Aim



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A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

More people to be housed on Grange

By Janet Maitland

A major redevelopment of the Grange Estate is being planned in order to tackle the shortage of affordable council housing in East Finchley. Described by Barnet Council as “mild interventions to increase density”, 100 new homes will be built amongst the existing blocks of flats.

A spokesperson for Barnet Homes, who manage the council’s housing stock, told us the majority of the homes will be let at affordable rents but there may be a small element of shared ownership.

“There will not be any high rise dwellings as the new dwellings will be designed to blend in with the existing estate,” said the spokesperson. “There is a strong sense of community in the area and not the same need for full redevelopment as there is elsewhere.”

Looking ahead

Planning permission will be sought in about six months’ time, but construction is unlikely to begin until the summer of 2022. The project will take up to three years to complete.

It is unclear what reduction in open spaces there will be. However, the architects say they are aiming to improve the quality of the existing courtyards and green spaces, provide better placed parking areas and introduce play areas, growing areas and areas to meet and exercise.

Consultation

Existing residents of the

Grange Estate are being told of the plans via newsletters, a survey, door-to-door and phone calls, and online workshops. Community engagement advisers NewmanFrancis are running the consultation. Resident involvement is currently said to be patchy.

James Masters, Chair of the Grange Big Local, a lottery funded regeneration project covering the area, said his organisation was trying to facilitate a bit more reach with the consultation to make sure that more people have a voice and are listened to. “We’re not involved in any official capacity and all the timelines are beyond our control, but we do want to make sure they consider things like parking and traffic safety, open and play spaces and we would support the residents forming a residents association,” he said.

Give your view

To make your voice heard, email grangeestate@newmanfrancis.org or phone 020 8536 1436 or freephone 0800 644 6040. You can also go to www.givemyview.com/grangeestate



Fill ‘em up: Viola Slodzinska, Vincenzo Napoletano and Anna Gajda cooking for kids Photo Mike Coles

Busy kitchen cooks up free meals

Over three Tuesday mornings last month a team of volunteers handed out home-made meals for free in a major project to support those who needed a little extra help to get by. Full story on page 4.

N2United wants big ideas for 2021

By David Melsome

Community group N2United is looking ahead to 2021 and is asking for everyone’s ideas on how residents, businesses and organisations in East Finchley can be brought closer together.

The group, originally set up as a business network but now aiming to become a hub for everyone in N2, is hosting its next online meeting on Thursday 14

January. Anyone is welcome to join via Zoom to share their thoughts and ideas. For more details, visit n2united.co.uk.

At last month’s meeting,

N2United Chair Nick Allan reflected on how people in East Finchley had rallied to provide support for those who needed it during the lockdowns of last year. Encouraging people to build on this, he pointed out that in challenging times a strong community spirit makes the difference. There was also a toast to everyone supporting the N2Unique campaign, set up to stimulate trade for all the area’s new and established craftspeople, cafés, restaurants, shops and small businesses.

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The Archer

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Thank you to The Bald Faced Stag and New Local Cafe for providing us with a meeting place.

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 – February: 15 January; March: 12 February
April: 12 February

Neighbourhood Watch groups lose special police contact

By Ann Bronkhorst

The Friends of Coldfall Wood were among the many residents and local groups who received the sad news recently that the funding for a dedicated police point of contact for Haringey Neighbourhood Watch has been lost.

Pauline Syddell, Neighbourhood Watch link manager since 2007, leaves her role on 11 January and will not be replaced. She will be much missed as a friendly, supportive and approachable organiser who as a Haringey girl knows her patch and has built up valuable expertise.

The pandemic, Pauline says, has brought many communities closer in 2020. "It's been heart-warming to read stories of how our Watch members have stepped up to help vulnerable

neighbours and to hear of the creative ideas some Watches came up with to bring joy to their community."

As life, and crime too, starts to return to normal in 2021, Haringey Watch groups will have their Safer Neighbourhood teams as first points of contact. A hopeful sign is the arrival of new recruits to the police generally, enabling new officers to be appointed across all 19 wards. Sadly, it takes years to build the local knowledge held and shared by Pauline.



Caravan park: The travellers and their vehicles occupying part of the station car park.

Travellers moved on from station car park

By Daphne Chamberlain

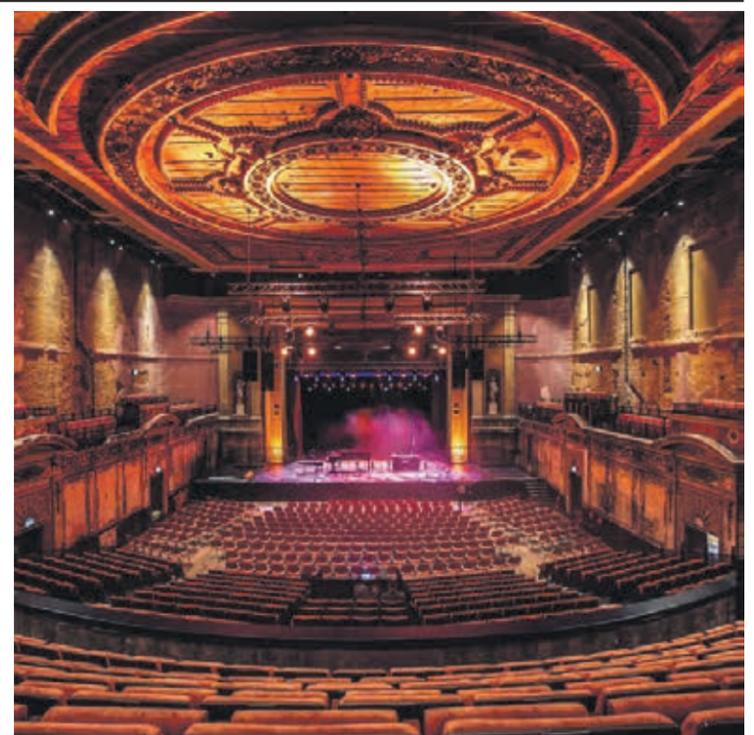
A group of travellers in 10 caravans, plus assorted cars and vans, moved into the car park of East Finchley Station on the evening of Friday 11 December. They remained there until they were moved on peaceably on the following Wednesday afternoon.

Barnet Council community safety officers, Transport for London staff, British Transport Police and local police officers worked in co-operation to use eviction powers under Section 61 of the Public Order Act, and local councillors were kept informed.

Section 61 lists several circumstances in which direct police action can be used if unauthorised "campers" have refused a request from the landowner to leave, and if any one of certain other conditions have not been met.

These circumstances include impact on the environment, illegal activities on the site, and whether more than six vehicles are present.

Residents overlooking the car park were horrified to witness what they believe was a brutal case of cockfighting, and some rubbish was left on the site.



Preserved: The Alexandra Palace Theatre

Ally Pally gets grant to weather the pandemic

Financial worries at Alexandra Palace have been partly lifted after the venue was awarded a £2.9 million grant from a Government fund set up to preserve the nation's heritage sites over the pandemic.

The payout from the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage will enable the Alexandra Palace Trust to maintain the listed building and 196-acre park and carry on hosting events.

The palace warned in November that its future was under threat without emergency grant funding.

Ally Pally trust CEO Louise Stewart said: "The grant will ensure that these unique heritage assets, the palace and park, are cared for and we can deliver more experiences that entertain, inspire and educate. There are many challenges ahead, but for now at least, we have some time and resource to deliver our route to recovery."

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

40 Abbots Gardens, N2

First-floor rear extension. Roof extension involving part hip to gable, rear dormer window and three front roof lights.

Alexander Court, 79 High Road, N2

Installation of public payphone/communication hub, with 86-inch advertisement located on rear.

10 Ashburnham Close, N2

Single-storey side extension. Replacement of conservatory glass roof with flat roof. Conversion of garage into habitable space, replacing door with window.

83 Durham Road, N2

First-floor rear extension.

91 Durham Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension. Associated roof lights.

125 East End Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension, following demolition of existing extension. First-floor rear extension.

32 Heath View, N2

Single-storey rear extension, following demolition of conservatory.

42 High Road, N2

Conversion of first-floor flat into two self-contained flats, involving new front bay window, following removal of dormer window, and new balcony to first floor rear. New access door. Single-storey rear extension, following demolition of existing extension, to facilitate one studio flat.

Rear of 61-63 High Road, N2

Installation of public payphone/communication hub, with 86-inch advertisement on rear face. Addition of second and third level to provide two self-contained units above existing block of flats.

100-102 High Road, N2

Installation of public payphone/communication hub, with 86-inch advertisement located on rear face.

207 High Road, N2

Installation of one illuminated fascia sign. Open hours sign inside door. Illustration vinyl along

windows and doors

Rear of 4-5 King Street, N2

Demolition of single-storey garage, and erection of two-storey detached office building with mansard roof and one front/side dormer window.

60 Lincoln Road, N2

Roof extension, involving rear dormer window and three front roof lights. New pitched roof to rear extension, and replacement of rear window with door.

1 Nursery Road, N2

Single-storey front extension, including disabled access ramp. Roof extension, enlarged rear dormer window. New rear balconies at first and second floor levels, with associated external staircase. New first floor side gable window.

21 Sylvester Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension: depth 4m, eaves height 3m, maximum height 3m. Single storey side extension: depth 6m, eaves height 2.5m, maximum height 3m.

East Finchley Baptist Church

We meet each Sunday for worship at 10.30 am. If you would like to join us please go to our website for further details. All welcome.

For more information please contact the Church Office
Email: office@eastfinchleybc.org.uk
www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk



Problems pile up and put pressure on our traders

By Ruth Anders

Over the past few years, the “death of the high street” has featured on every form of media imaginable, even long before the advent of Covid-19. And it’s certainly true that our N2 shops and businesses, like many around the nation, are feeling the pressure.

In East Finchley, creeping double yellow lines, new cycle lanes, the unheralded overnight moves of loading bays and lockdown-enforced shop closures have all made things much harder for local shopkeepers trying to earn a living.

Traders have no choice

It is the small things that mount up. Staff at Tony’s Continental were recently alarmed to see the notices posted by Haringey Council in Twyford Avenue and neighbouring roads proclaiming that the Controlled Parking Zone will shortly be extended there. Because shop workers are deemed traders rather than residents, they will now have to pay £525 per year for each vehicle they leave parked there while they work.

Elsewhere, the requirement for pavement studs, exacted by Barnet Council for shops with goods or tables and chairs outside to delineate the three-

metre mark from the kerb line, seems to have been applied inconsistently. Some have more studs per frontage than others, some none at all. And the council charges our traders for every stud.

Shopowners have little choice but to accept these additional costs. As Elliot Jacobs, who runs UOE and the Post Office, told us: “Businesses don’t have a vote!”

Further south along the High Road, Loui Doukaki at Everything Electrical was incensed about the cycle lanes preventing customers from parking, while Chris Stavrou from shoemakers Kokos commented: “The absence of cycle lanes doesn’t stop people cycling, but cycle lanes actively prevent customers from parking.”

A few pluses

All this has been happening as Barnet Council has been displaying posters imploring residents to “Shop Local”. On the plus side, Barnet Council has waived business rates until March and lifted parking charges on Saturdays during December.

Everyone thought that the arrival of supermarkets in the 1960s spelled the end for small independent shops. They are still here but they need our constant support and perhaps fewer obstacles thrown in their way.

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Float on: Albert and young helpers on his East Finchley round in the 1980s

Albert was the cream of the crop

By David Gritten

Albert Leon was a popular milkman in East Finchley’s streets for 20 years, starting in 1973. He laughed and joked with customers, knew all their names (and their children’s) and now looks back on that era as the happiest in his career.

Idly wondering if anyone from those days still remembered him, he posted a message on the East Finchley Community Facebook group. He was astonished by their enthusiastic replies; people were crying out to see him again.

A local journalist spotted the conversation and asked Albert if he would be willing to be filmed. So with an ITV news crew, he returned to part of his old patch, which included Long Lane, East End Road as well as Trinity, Leopold and Leslie roads, and reunited with overjoyed ex-customers.

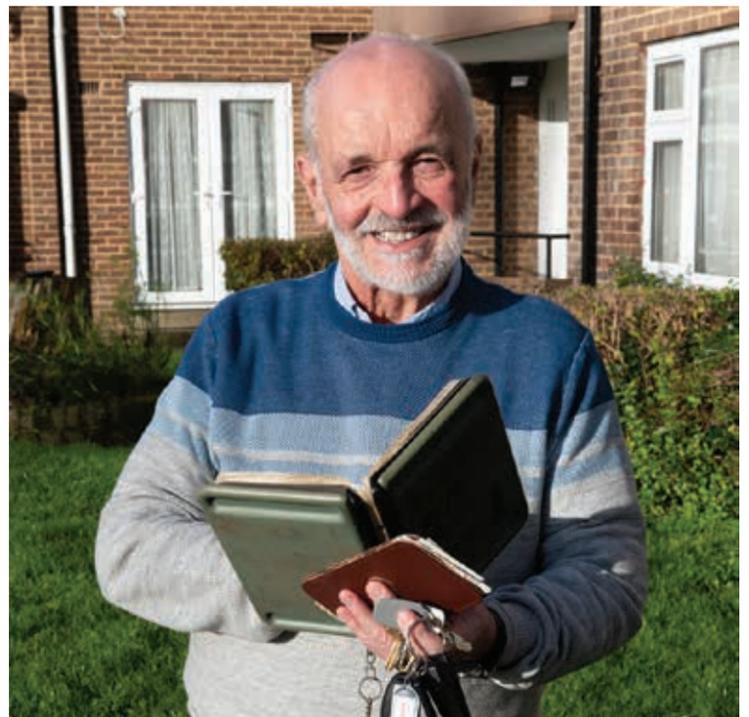
They swapped jokes and anecdotes. He met youngish people who he had last seen as children, begging him for a ride on the back of his milk float. He reunited with neighbour Sallie Rose, who recalled he had given her 35 Bob Dylan cassettes because she had told him she was a Dylan fan.

“I remember a lot of laughs,” Albert recalls about those days. “There was a gentleman who always asked me for ‘two pints of semi-skilled milk’ – not semi-skimmed. I never told him he got that wrong.”

Raffle for a faraway town

Albert, now 76, has another reason for cherishing N2. He was born in Colombia, where in 1985 a volcano erupted, killing 23,000 people in a small town. Determined to help, Albert raffled his Fender Stratocaster guitar to raise money for them and told his customers about it. “Everyone bought tickets off me. I’d been hoping for £500. But they raised £1,100. They were brilliant.”

Retiring as a milkman, he spent 17 years as a bus driver: “Even that route took me through East Finchley, on the



Albert still has his old order book Photo Mike Coles

way to Brent Cross.”

Now Albert continues to stay in touch by posting in the East Finchley Community group: “I met such lovely people there.” And for their part, they think

of him as the world’s greatest milkman.

Footnote: You can join East Finchley’s online community at www.facebook.com/groups/eastfinchley

Hampers spread cheer

By Pravashini Ramsamy

The Finchley Community group is a group of volunteers connected to Finchley and its vicinity, created during the first lockdown to help our neighbours with different services such as meals, groceries and prescription pick-ups.

In November we launched Operation Christmas Hampers, to take the edge off the financial burden that Christmas can be and put a smile on people’s faces after a really hard year.

Once more the community stepped up to help in the form of donations. People brought in bags of toys, books and presents, to go with the food hampers. A local running club called More Than Mums also

helped with donations and it was such a success that each hamper contained more food than just for Christmas and we also included craft activities for the families to enjoy.

Together we delivered hampers to 20 families and hope to be back in 2021 with more community projects. If you would like to join us here is the link: www.facebook.com/groups/657957791673470



Demo: XR protesters outside Budgens. Photo Mike Coles

Older generation campaign for future of the young

By Hazel Mason

A group of grandparents and older people emerged from lockdown in socially-distanced groups of six on the first weekend of December to support International Youth Climate Action Day. This was part of a nationwide action by Extinction Rebellion Grandparents and Elders, concerned about the impact of the environmental crisis on the younger generation.

With a campaign called Our Present... Their Future they shared a seasonal message: "The best present for our children is a safe planet." It also ran as a window poster campaign with local groups and individuals invited to take part throughout the month.

Extinction Rebellion believe that the government's ten-point plan to reach net zero emissions by 2050 is still too little, too late. They say that the recently announced target to further reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 is a much-needed step, but the climate will only respond to actual emission cuts, not targets.

Gifts of hope

The campaigners set up an alternative tree near the Christmas tree on the High Road, N2, decorated with gifts of hope for the future such as "Clean Air" and "Green Jobs". Passers-by stopped to look at the eye-catching tree and to read the gifts of hope and the messages on placards.

"Good for you," said a

passing teenager as she read a placard about the Wellbeing of Future Generations Bill. Another interested bystander asked questions about this private member's bill, more ambitious than the government's current Environmental Bill, which would protect children's lives for years to come.

One of the East Finchley campaigners, Mary Poulter, said: "The future of children across the world is at stake and the best present we can give them is a safe planet."

Online exhibition

The beautiful tree, decorated with ceramic leaves, was made by Claudia Luque, a member of East Finchley Open Artists. She made it for an exhibition on climate change, programmed to open at the Offshoot Gallery in the High Road in April. "Sadly, we had to cancel," said Claudia, "but a display of over 70 exhibits went ahead online, and is currently on the EFOA website."

For more information, search XR Grandparents on www.facebook.com

Food shared from steps of cinema

Over three Tuesday mornings last month a team of volunteers handed out home-made meals for free in a major project to support those who needed a little extra help to get by.

Dozens of dishes of Gnocchi alla Sorrentina and other Italian favourites were cooked locally by a small group of professional chefs and distributed from the steps of the Phoenix Cinema.

Food was given to anyone who came to the collection point, no questions asked. Organisers said that the aim was to share a healthy meal with anyone who might be short of money, feeling exhausted or just not feeding themselves properly. All the meals given out were pre-cooked and chilled, having been freshly prepared the day before. They came with clear instructions on reheating, plus a list of ingredients and allergens in a small leaflet.

Fine dining on a budget

"Cooking for people and sharing food is one of the best ways that we can show solidarity and care for our community," said chef, Giuseppe Sollo.

The food sharing scheme began life back in October when N2 resident Giuseppe put out a call on the East Finchley



Nourishing: Meals being distributed at the Phoenix

Community Facebook group for help to feed families who faced the prospect of not receiving free school meals over the half term holiday.

In the end, the Government provided extra funding to fill that gap but Giuseppe and his friends realised there were many others who still needed a helping hand.

East Finchley Neighbourhood Support group, who had been running support services throughout the first lockdown, came on board and with the help of Grange Big Local and ComUNITY Barnet, the project launched in mid-December.

Donations flooded in from residents and businesses in East Finchley, in order to buy ingredients, kitchen appliances and food boxes. Giuseppe told supporters he was amazed by their response.

Sharing skills

The aim of the food project is to make sure everyone has access to good tasty healthy food, and Giuseppe is now planning a series of videos to help give young people the skills to cook tasty nutritious meals cheaply themselves.

Pay it forward

If you would like to sample the food for yourself, the team is running a 'Pay it forward' scheme, where you can take a meal and make a donation, which will pay for a meal for someone else.

You can also donate at gofundme.com (search 'EFNS - The Food Project').

For more information, visit www.iloven2.co.uk/food-project or www.facebook.com/N2foodproject or contact East Finchley Neighbourhood Support on 0843 886 5900.

Crime rates back up

By Janet Maitland

The number of burglaries in East Finchley rose sharply in October when the nights drew in. Of the 37 burglaries between June and October, 14 were in October and there were four in Abbots Gardens alone that month.

"We treated this as a priority and carried out both uniform and plain clothes patrols in Abbots Gardens and the surrounding area," said Jan Lovell, from the Safer Neighbourhood Team. "There have been no further burglaries there and the number was reduced greatly for November, mainly due to the lockdown. It is very likely that more folks were home during lockdown in November and this keeps the burglars out."

Crime rates in general have been slowly returning back to pre-Covid levels, rising from four for every 1,000 residents in June to just over five in October, the average monthly rate for East Finchley in normal times.

During the spring lockdown, crime rates were the lowest for a year, with just over three crimes for every 1,000 residents in April.



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.

Burglaries

Good news: there has been a decrease in burglaries during November after the seasonal increase the ward experienced in October. The vast majority of burglars do not like to enter a home that is occupied, so anything you can do to make it look like you are home will help. Keeping lights on in different rooms using a timer switch can make this so easy, and it's nice to come home to a lit house too.

Vehicle crime

Unfortunately we are seeing an increase in motor vehicle crime: thefts of vehicles, thefts of catalytic converters, thefts from unlocked vehicles such as tools from vans. Please take an extra minute or so to make sure nothing of value is left in your vehicle and that it is securely locked.

Parcel delivery scams

There are a range of scam parcel delivery emails doing the rounds. One such claims to be DPD saying that they couldn't deliver a parcel to you and asking you to click on a link to re-arrange delivery, which takes you to a spoof website asking you to submit your details, including from your bank card.

If you are expecting a parcel, then contact the company directly to see if they have attempted a delivery. Please forward any scam emails to report@phishing.gov.uk and delete the email.

Please take care not to make any additional payments for deliveries and try to make arrangements with neighbours or create a safe place for deliveries to prevent thefts on the doorstep.

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Salon team remember their good friend George



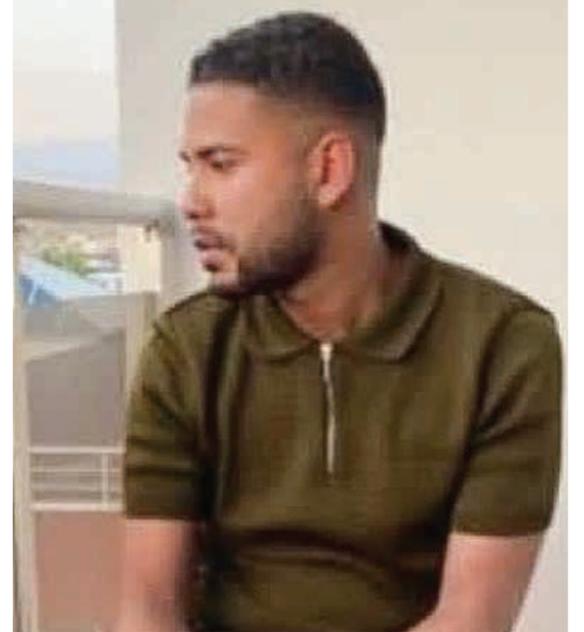
George's memorial Photo by Brooke Hilton

Staff and customers at salon Hair 202 are mourning the death of their friend and team member George Smith, who died in December aged just 24.

Sam, from the team at the salon on the High Road, N2, said: "George had charm, charisma and an infectious personality. He was the life and soul of the salon and would light up your day with a smile. Everyone adored his cheeky ways and humour."

George was just about to complete his exams to become a qualified hairdresser on the shop floor when he died. His colleagues set up an array of candles outside the salon in his memory.

George was a big supporter of talking about mental health and everyday suffering. The Hair 202 team want to carry on raising awareness, urging everyone to be kind and talk about how they are feeling. They also set up a fundraising page at www.gf.me/u/zbrwa7 to help his mother Angela with funeral expenses.



Charismatic: George Smith

Back on the big screen... for four days at least

By John Lawrence

The Phoenix Cinema opened to customers last month for the first time since March, managing to complete four days of screenings before the imposition of stricter Tier 3 conditions forced it to shut down again until further notice. Glad to get the projector fired up after nine months out of action, filmgoers and cinema staff made easy going of the extra hygiene measures in place, and supporters sent in dozens of messages saying they'd be coming to watch films soon.

Operations manager Ewelina Sadlowska said it had been touching to get such a positive response. Even with short notice of the reopening on Thursday 10 December, tickets for the filmed performance of *The Nutcracker* ballet sold quickly. For the time being, the Phoenix can accommodate a maximum of 80 people in an auditorium that usually seats 250.

Ready for the restart

Ewelina said: "People were lovely and very co-operative, sticking to all the rules and advice we've had to introduce. And even though we had to shut again quite soon it was good hearing from so many supporters and knowing they'd be returning when we can reopen again."

"We were all keyed up to run through Christmas but unfortunately it wasn't to be. We had some family films lined up for the holiday and we know people were excited about getting out to the cinema again. But we're ready to restart as soon as we're allowed."

The new Covid-safe hygiene rules mean cinema goers are greeted in the foyer with a temperature check and reminded to wear masks. Spaces are marked to keep people two metres apart and food and drink can be pre-ordered from the café to avoid having to queue twice. After a screening, customers leave through a separate exit and the entire auditorium and waiting area is aired and cleaned before the next show.



Closed again: The Phoenix Cinema. Photo by Alison Roberts

Search for trustees

The Phoenix Cinema board is seeking new trustees to help it meet the challenges ahead and keep the venue operating as an independent. These are unpaid positions and the appointment term is three years,

which can be extended up to a maximum of nine years. To get involved or to ask for more information, email trustees@phoenixcinema.co.uk

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£100 a week for everyone in basic income scheme

By David Melsome

On the day after Jack Dorsey, CEO and founder of Twitter, gave \$15million (£11.2million) to fund a Universal Basic Income (UBI) programme in 30 cities in America, a second conversation on the potential for a similar, albeit smaller trial in East Finchley was held on Wednesday 9 December.

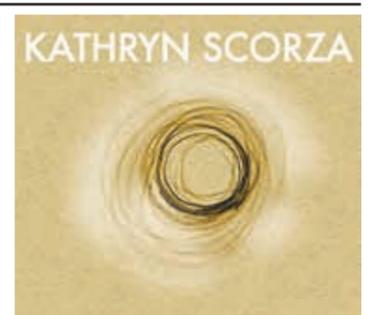
Residents and local organisations including Barnet Citizens Advice, The Grange Big Local and N2United, joined together via Zoom to discuss the next steps in the merits and practicalities of implementing a local trial of UBI. This was a follow up to an initial discussion in October as reported in the November 2020 edition of *The Archer*, and was again led by Michael Pugh, co-founder & director of the Basic Income Conversation. The discussion centred on how a scheme would work in East Finchley and if introduced, what people would spend the proposed £100 a week on.

The money would be paid unconditionally to everyone in work or not, without bias of gender, family structure or size of household including to those not usually eligible for financial support, including any CEOs and millionaires who may live in N2.

This led to questions around means testing and how a trial in the area would be introduced and if so what measures would be applied for its evaluation. A couple of residents at the meet-

ing were a little disappointed to hear that it would be some time before any funds were available as Barnet Council involvement has yet to be agreed as well as getting formal backing to support the proposed cross-party, non-political micro pilot.

Further conversations are planned and again local residents are encouraged to share their thoughts about the value of a trial of UBI in East Finchley via email to info@grangebiglocal.org.



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Relive the highs and lows of a tumultuous year

You may want to forget it ever happened but 2020 will always be a year to remember, as our round-up of the highs and lows in East Finchley over the last 12 months goes to show.



Float on: The Fixation Theatre youngsters alongside their carnival vehicle in central London.

January

The team of volunteers behind **East Finchley Festival** runs a crowdfunding campaign with an £8,000 target to help them start booking essential equipment and services for the planned event in June.

Parents and police resume patrols close to **secondary schools** in East Finchley after a spate of muggings of young people walking home on dark evenings. Hot spots for the robberies had been in the area of Cherry Tree Wood and along The Causeway.

Youngsters from **Fixation Theatre Company**, based at Finchley Youth Theatre in the High Road, N2, dress in a riotous rainbow of colours to represent Barnet in the Lord Mayor of London's New Year's Day Parade. The theme of their float is 'Live Your Best Life', focusing on the importance of good mental health.

February

The **Phoenix Cinema** reports a record loss of £78,000 and admits that its financial crisis is getting worse, not better. Trustees urge film lovers in East Finchley

and beyond to visit the cinema as often as possible to help secure its future.

After more than 30 years standing empty, the **derelict pavilion in Cherry Tree Wood** is finally razed to the ground. Demolition contractors M&L Stevens Ltd move in and take only a few days to knock down the brick structure, originally built in 1926.

A campaign group called Hands Off Finchley Central is formed to oppose a major high-rise development proposed for land around the tube **station car**

park in Finchley Central; there are fears that East Finchley's station car park will be in line for redevelopment in the future.

March

East Finchley is forced to get used to a new way of life as **national lockdown** restrictions are imposed in response to the rapidly spreading Covid-19 pandemic. Cafés, restaurants, pubs and non-food shops close their doors, the Phoenix Cinema stops showing films and students are sent home from schools and colleges.

Residents of Park Hall Road, N2, appear on BBC TV news taking part in the very first **Clap for Carers** from their doorsteps on Thursday 26 March. Across East Finchley, neighbours sound whistles and bang pots and pans in appreciation of the work of everyone in the health services.

Historic **Valona House**, the former GLH mini cab headquarters opposite East Finchley tube station, is listed for sale but the auction is overtaken by the lockdown and the site remains unsold.

April

East Finchley residents rally to support each other as most people isolate at home and the streets fall quiet. Numerous sets of neighbours organise collections for **Finchley Foodbank**,



The pavilion bites the dust. Photo: Mike Coles

May

Police take out extra powers over the Bank Holiday weekend to deal with **anti-social behaviour** by people gathering in large groups in Park Road and on the Grange Estate, N2, in contravention of lockdown rules.

Dozens of volunteers respond to an appeal to deliver **The Archer** to homes and businesses, cov-

July

The East Finchley branch of **KFC** is forced to remove a large metal vent installed only weeks earlier, following complaints that it was pumping foul smells and high levels of noise directly into neighbouring homes in Huntingdon Road.

Geoffrey Hanson, founder and director of the East Finchley



The BBC filmed residents of Park Hall Road clapping for the NHS

ering for some of our regular deliverers who are unable to do their rounds as normal.

Professional musicians **Sue Sutherley and Paul Silverthorne** give mini concerts in their front garden in Lincoln Road as their own way of saying thank you to NHS staff and to entertain their neighbours.

June

People in East Finchley and Muswell Hill come out in their hundreds to show their support for the **Black Lives Matter** movement following the death of George Floyd while being arrested by police in the US. Residents in Bedford Road, N2, take the knee outside their own homes and there is a peaceful demonstration involving more than 500 people at Alexandra Palace.

Much-loved former East Finchley Festival organiser, and chair of East Finchley Community Trust, **Stan Spinks** dies at the age of 82.

Arts Festival and a long-time musical director at All Saints' Church in Durham Road, N2, dies at the age of 80.

Archie, the famous statue by Eric Aumonier that watches over arriving and departing trains at East Finchley Station, celebrates eight decades on his perch above the southbound platform. He was originally unveiled in July 1940.

August

Cafés and restaurants around East Finchley are rushed off their feet as hundreds of diners take advantage of the government's Eat Out to Help Out scheme.

Fire hazards are reported in **Coldfall Wood** after careless den-builders leave campfires smouldering overnight. Meanwhile, incidences of anti-social behaviour in Cherry Tree Wood rise as people use it for barbecues and to meet up with friends.

News emerges that **Valona House**, opposite the tube station, has been sold to Deniz Investments, the company developing



Steve Carr and Helena Pugh delivering donations to the food bank. Photo Mike Coles

Young people unable to meet as normal at local youth organisations **the Monday Club and the Friday Club** are given care packages of healthy food and treats thanks to a generous benefactor and the hard work of club organiser Maureen Clemetson and a team of volunteers.

the Viceroy Close car park in East Finchley. The developers announce proposals to construct 24 luxury flats and one commercial unit on the Valona House site.

Swimmers protest at the introduction of charges to use the men's, women's and mixed bathing ponds on Hampstead Heath.

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

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

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

based at St Mary's Church Hall in the High Road. Support networks are set up online to assist people who cannot get out to shop. Local food shops work extra hard to keep us supplied, with many starting delivery services.

Most of East Finchley's **social calendar** is cancelled. Organisers of the East Finchley Festival reach their fundraising total but announce that the event will not be going ahead in 2020. The annual Race the Neighbours event between East Finchley and Muswell Hill is called off too. Outdoor venues like Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road scrap their spring and summer programmes.

Homeowners start paying an annual charge of £70 for their **green garden waste bin** to be collected by Barnet Council, which says the money raised will be used to invest in other environmental services.



Peaceful protest: Hundreds kneel in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement at Alexandra Palace. Photo Lloyd Winters

September

Obina Ezeoke, 28, is jailed at the Old Bailey for the double murder of mother-of-nine **Annie Ekofo**, 53, and her nephew **Bervil Ekofo**, 21, in their home in Elmshurst Crescent, N2, in 2016. The court had been told that Ezeoke had broken into the flat seeking a teenager in the family as part of a vendetta of violence.

New **parking rules** are introduced at the start of the school term to reduce congestion. Holy Trinity Primary School in Eagans Close, N2, is one of several across Barnet where parent parking immediately outside the school gates is banned.

Donations flood in for the **Phoenix Cinema** thanks to a public fundraising campaign and a generous financial gift from local benefactors Alex Kleiner and Michele McDowall. Staff

and trustees start making plans to reopen in October before finding themselves thwarted by the autumn lockdown.



The closed Phoenix Cinema uses its display to show support for N2United's shop local #N2unique campaign. Photo Nick Allan



Sheelah Stone, left, leads an informal group of cyclists along one of the newly installed cycle lanes on the High Road. Photo Mike Coles

October

Bus and cycle lanes are installed along the High Road from The Bishops Avenue right up to North Finchley, creating safer spaces for cyclists but also causing congestion and confusion for drivers, and consternation for traders over the loss of parking spaces.

The Friends of **Cherry Tree Wood** secure a £20,000 cash grant to roll out a raft of much-needed improvements to the park.

Barnet Council approves changes to **parking zones** in the vicinity of East Finchley station, which will introduce a new all-day 'inner zone' for roads bordering Cherry Tree Wood and around The Causeway and Edmunds Walk.

November

Community and business networking group **N2United** launches its **#N2Unique** project, throwing a spotlight on all the independent traders, craftspeople and small businesses in the East Finchley area.

Barnet Council announces minor changes to the layout of the new bus and cycle lanes in the wake of feedback from local residents.

December

A group of volunteers from **East Finchley Neighbourhood Support** led by local chef **Giuseppe Sollo** cook and serve free meals for needy families from the foyer of the Phoenix Cinema. The project is set up particularly to help those who are excluded from government support.

The **Phoenix Cinema** reopens for the first time since March with a showing of *The Nutcracker*. Customers and staff abide by full Covid-safe hygiene rules but unfortunately the cinema is forced to close again after just four days when London enters Tier 3 restrictions.

It wasn't all bad...

Archer readers and team members recall their own personal highs and lows of 2020.

"For me, being in lockdown in an area that I love really made a difference to my year. I have missed the buzz of the pubs and high street but enjoyed seeing it come back to life even though it's still not 100 percent back to normal."

Stephanie Ogilvie

"Walking far more than previously and loving it. Taking up Ashtanga Yoga most mornings online with a fabulously inspiring French teacher. In so doing, losing two stone and chucking out most of my wardrobe. Reading, mostly in my tiny garden, without a guilty conscience. Growing veggies. Through my road's WhatsApp group getting to know my lovely friendly neighbours far better."

Ruth Anders

"The high point was reaching our crowdfunding target in February, but the low was then having to cancel the festival."

East Finchley Festival CIC team

"East Finchley has always had a good community spirit but it really came into its own this year. That's the high point."

Tessa Redig de Campos

"My East Finchley high of 2020 was during lockdown watching a man walk from about Bedford Road to the Underground station in broad daylight, down the middle of the High Road without hindrance from any vehicles at all! A sight I doubt anybody alive has seen before, or will probably see again, unless Covid-19 has its way."

John Dearing

"Our road had birthday sing-songs in the street for all having big birthdays during lockdown, including my 70th."

Jane Marsh

"For a high, I'd say the weekly gatherings outside our homes to applaud NHS workers everywhere."

Not only did it feel the right thing to do, but it also brought neighbours together on the street. Some people on our road we spoke to for the first time, and now most of us feel we know each other."

David Gritten

"After the first lockdown, some outings: Burnham on Crouch with fish and chips on the quayside, Rye with cobbled streets and a castle and the Grayson Perry exhibition near Old Street with a heron slowly catching insects in the pond in the garden. And two meals 'to help out' that turned out not to be very helpful."

Janet Maitland

"High point was filling in for the more mature volunteers, to do The Archer paper rounds with my nine-year-old daughter."

Semi Jo

"Backward walking fella R.I.P"

Ashley Bond

"A low for me this year was having to give up delivering The Archer on the High Road due to a spinal condition. Being the largest round, it could take more than three hours to complete because going into the all the shops and businesses often included a chat to the traders. I really miss my contact with everyone up and down the High Road."

Diana Cormack

"The highs were being able to cycle on the roads with my children, and seeing the joy on their faces when they were finally allowed to see their friends again. The low was having to work 18-hour days to fit my business around home-schooling."

Alison Roberts

"My highlights are cycling the many hills of north London (and it getting a bit easier), running into the sea in Cornwall on 4 July and feeling free of lockdown and hearing that roar of applause as it surged across London on the first Thursday clap for the NHS."

Lucy Moorman

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Collective creation

The East Finchley Open Artists group has gone live with an exciting collective creation... its brand new website. You can see the end result at www.eastfinchleyopen.org.uk



YOUNG ARCHER



Fill your boots: Leah Rudolf with a food bank collection

Food floods in for needy families

By Ruth Anders

When 12-year-old Leah Rudolf set herself a mission to take some positive action in the community, she could not have dreamed of its success.

Leah is a Year 7 student at JCoSS School in East Barnet, which participates in an initiative to encourage children to volunteer.

So, through both the school and her synagogue, New North London, Leah picked up the challenge to run a local street collection for Food Bank Aid North London. With the help of her "PA" (her mum Helen), she promoted the idea to all her neighbours in Huntingdon Road, N2, where she lives.

The first collection she ran was on Mitzvah Day, an annual day of faith-based social action that takes place in November each year. Her second collection coincided with the "Highlight Huntingdon" event when Huntingdon Road joined its neighbouring streets to light up the houses and front gardens with seasonal illuminations.

Leah said: "The first day we didn't get many responses, but on the second day more people gave food so the number of bags grew quickly. When we loaded everything into the car, we could barely fit it all in! The people at the food bank were very thankful. It was fun and we felt good doing it."

Targeted help

Food Bank Aid was launched in April 2020, to support North London food banks as they struggled with more than triple the normal demand through the lockdown.

What makes Food Bank Aid unique is that by giving the food banks exactly what they are short of, they avoid stockpiling surplus items and have the right stock for the families that they support. For more information visit www.mitzvahday.org.uk/project/foodbank-aid-north-london-network

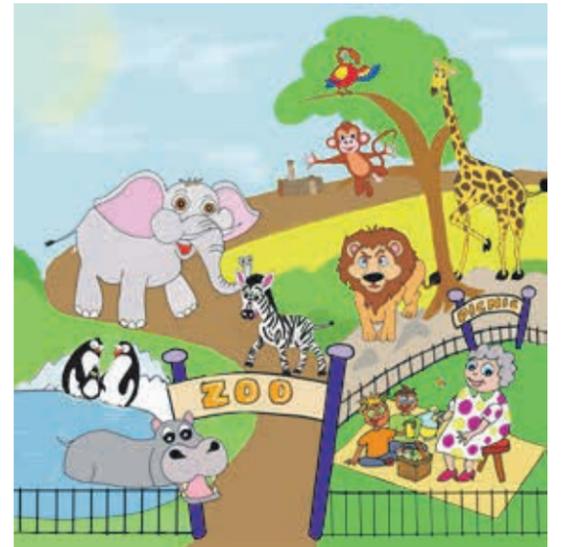
A robin hidden on every page

When we last saw Sonia Beldom in *The Archer* (August 2020), she'd been driving a Routemaster double decker bus around London for tourists and wedding parties and had written her first book for children.

The driving has had to take a back seat this year, of course, so Sonia used the time to write and illustrate a second book for three- to eight-year-olds, called *Granny Franny's Big Zoo Rescue*, all about using a bus to round up some escaped animals.

Sonia says when she was writing the story she was spurred on by daily visits from a friendly robin who sat and watched her work in the back garden of her home in Long Lane, N3. She has placed a robin on every page for young readers to spot and is donating a percentage of sales to the RSPB.

The picture book has already found its way onto the bookshelves of Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis, and Sonia was delighted to receive a letter of thanks from the Duchess of Cambridge. *Granny Franny's Big Zoo Rescue* is available via www.granny-frannysbigredbus.com and on Amazon.



Animal magic: One of Sonia's illustrations

Video tour of primary school

Many parents getting ready to make a choice about the right primary school for their children before the deadline of 15 January have been hampered by being unable to attend open days during the pandemic. Tudor Primary School has overcome the problem by producing a short video tour of their school to introduce pupils and staff, and the work they do.

Tudor School, in Queen's Road, N3, is in a federation with nearby Manorside Primary, in Squires Lane, N3. They share the same headteacher, Simon Jebreel, and both are attended by a fair number of East Finchley

pupils.

The video can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/TudorSchool>. It was filmed and edited by East Finchley father-of-two Almar Hafidason and his company Fetch Publicity.

Make your own skittle set

Once the piles of plastic toys given at Christmas have lost their appeal, Marian Bunzl suggests making your own version of this skittle set from recycled materials.



Collect six or seven of the little cardboard tubes inside rolls of toilet paper. These rather sad-looking objects can be transformed into a game of colourful skittles for children to play with. Both the preparation of the skittles and playing with them will pleasantly while away a good deal of lockdown time both for everyone.

Mark out your design with a pencil and maybe a small ruler and use up any odds and ends of poster colour (water-based) paint in pots or tubes. You can add lines with coloured felt tips to highlight, and then coat the skittles with colourless nail polish or varnish. This prevents the poster paint smudging and also makes the skittles a little hardier.

Finally, find an old tennis ball or any kind of small rubber ball to knock them down, and position the set ideally on a wooden floor to play.

In the time-honoured tradition of *Blue Peter*, pictured are a few I prepared earlier. As you can see, the designs and colours are simple, but the tubes can be decorated in any design or colour you wish.

Have fun!



Still active: Gym classes are running at LAGAD this year

Gym classes bounce back

Like many local businesses that have been affected by the lockdowns of 2020, London Academy of Gymnastics and Dance (LAGAD) has had to adapt constantly. The company runs gymnastics classes for children in East Finchley, Finchley Central and Muswell Hill, but social distancing has inspired a new approach.

LAGAD founder Jessica Shenton says: "With the first lockdown last March we had to close our usual classes completely. We switched to online classes via Zoom, which was a steep learning curve for us. Luckily our enthusiastic coaches rose to the challenge to engage the children in this new format".

With classes resuming in-person, the qualified coaches are observing stringent safety precautions. Jessica adds: "Even with our new Covid-safe systems, the children still have great fun and we are amazed at their progress." For more information, visit www.lagad.co.uk, or call 020 8883 4675.

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Corner shop opens for business

By Lizzie Tomlin

A new off-licence called King Street Food and Wine has recently opened at the junction of King Street and Church Lane, N2. In addition to the usual items found in a corner shop, organic foods and wines are available. Fresh fruit and vegetables will also be stocked soon. Pay-points for gas and electricity top-ups as well as a parcel service are planned.



Well-stocked: Emre Bora (left) and Beoran Karaaslan at King Street Food and Wine. Photo Mike Coles

The proprietors are cousins Emre Bora and Beoran Karaaslan, who saw the property was empty and decided to "give it a go". It is their first time running a business in the area, although they have previously worked for an uncle's high street supermarket in Hendon and in their family's Turkish restaurants in Lewisham.

There has been a lot of interest

in the shop from the community, even before opening. The owners say that East Finchley is 'friendly' and has a 'little village feel'. They have friends who live in the area, and they are familiar with it and looking forward to 'cementing themselves in the community.'

The shop is open from 7am to 11.30pm, six days a week. On Sundays the hours are 8am to 11.30pm.

Car showroom reveals surprises

By Ruth Anders

Something unusual is happening at the Hexagon Classics car showroom on the Great North Road just south of the tube station.

Bottles 'N' Jars is a new Aladdin's cave of wine, coffee and top-quality food offerings from North London producers. It is the brainchild of Paul Michaels, the owner and chairman of Hexagon Classics since 1963, Alan Goulden, owner of the Notes group of coffee shops and wine bars, and Bert Blaize, sommelier and award-winning wine taster.

And there will soon be even more backstage, where Isabella Dwyer is heading up The Engine Rooms, a set of new event spaces in part of the car showroom itself. These have been renovated to a high level, in preparation for use as a restaurant, bar, café and event spaces, indoors and out.

The Engine Rooms: a new venue

Bert only joined the team in October, but preparations for the joint venture have been in train for two years. Once the restrictions imposed by the pandemic are lifted, this series of state-of-the-art spaces will



Food and drink: The shelves at Bottle 'N' Jars. Photo Mike Coles

be available for hire, framed by Hexagon's magnificent classic cars.

These take pride of place and feature sparkling models from brands such as Aston Martin, Lotus, Lamborghini and Ferrari. They sit there, gleaming silently, as though lined up on the grid waiting, like the whole project, to take off.

The Bottles 'N' Jars shop has been open since November and certainly appeared to be trading well in the run-up to Christmas.

On its shelves, cheese from Tottenham's Wine and Rind, beers from Highgate's Gorgeous brewery and charcuterie from Islington's Cobble Lane jostle with loaves and brownies from artisan bakery Bread Ahead. Hand picked spirits such as the elegant backlit bottles of limoncello rub shoulders with olive oils and chocolate bars. Bert told *The Archer*: "I've always wanted to open a wine shop and I'm thrilled about the future of Bottles 'N' Jars."

RICKY SAVAGE ... "The voice of social irresponsibility"

Back to work (from home)

In the weird world of Covid the gleaming glass towers of London have turned into the slumbering towers of Zombieland and your kitchen table has turned into your office. Gone for many is the old routine of getting up, gulping down a coffee and cramming onto the Northern line.

Now you don't need to bother with any of that; you don't even need to get dressed. That said, if you've got a Zoom meeting, being the only naturist in the company may harm your chances of promotion.

Yes, folks, if you work in an office or are something medium-sized in the City, there's probably no commuting, just more time to walk the cat, bake artisanal bread and catch up with *The Crown*. And why stop there, when technology means that almost everyone can work from home?

Let's take teachers. You can keep the schools open, send the kids there, but let the teachers stay out of it. There's no problem with maths or English and it might make chemistry that bit more interesting as Year 7 watches Sir or Miss creating nerve gas using nothing more than two saucepans, the microwave and whatever they've been able to find in the bathroom cabinet.

The same goes for most school subjects, although demonstrating certain aspects of human biology on Microsoft Teams could get you arrested.

With CCTV on every corner, even the police could work from home, just watching the cameras and sending text messages ordering you to arrest yourself.

And what about transport? If self-driving cars are the future, then why not self-driving taxis? Of course, taxi journeys wouldn't be the same without a talking Morning Mule editorial coming from up front, so every vehicle could be fitted with recordings of suitable rants on loop.

Trains are no problem. DLR has had the technology for driverless trains for years. On the main lines, the fat controller could direct Thomas the Tank Engine and all his pals from a simulator in his garage.

Maybe there is one mode of transport where you can't work from home. I mean, how would you feel as your flight to New York taxied down the runway if a voice came over the tannoy saying: "Good morning, this is your captain speaking. Today I am working from home"?



Cherry Tree Wood: More planting and improvements are planned for 2021. Photo Alison Roberts

Busy year ahead for Cherry Tree Wood

Debbie Linton, from the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood group, rounds up the latest news and the 2021 plans for the park and wood.

Gardeners group

Cherry Tree Wood now has a wonderful highly active group of gardeners. They have been out three times and have already planted 4,000 bulbs (English bluebells and Snakes Head fritillaries). They have also been tidying up areas around the entrance of the wood and by the kiosk. Get in touch with the Friends if you would like to join in.

Community orchard

The community did a brilliant job helping water the new orchard near the tennis courts over the summer. The aim now for the area is a wildflower meadow and pollen-friendly plants. There are plans for a small temporary netted fence, with an open gate, to help it establish. The plants will help bees pollinate the orchard and other flowers in the wood.

Litter picks

Socially distanced litter

picks continued in November and December. The next one can be joined at 2pm on Sunday 10 January 2021. Volunteers can be supplied with a litter-picker, hoop and bags to help in their own time if they get in touch.

Council grant

As reported previously, the Friends obtained a Council grant in October for nearly £20,000. Plans for early next year include three new bins, a new path to the back of the playground, a new planted willow area and a new noticeboard. A little later in the year plans include a new wheelchair-accessible raised flower bed

by the kiosk and a nature trail for primary children.

Kiosk and tennis and basketball courts

It looks hopeful that new tenants will take over the kiosk at some time in the new year. Barnet Council are also estimating the costs of refurbishing the basketball and tennis courts. Once they know the cost the Friends will be more able to decide what action to take.

Keep in touch

Come along to the Friends AGM at 7pm on Tuesday 12 January 2020 on Zoom. Email friendsofcherrytreewood@gmail.com for further info.

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Winter leaves, crisp breeze, bike ride? Yes, please!

By Greta Brambilla

Hello, fellow cyclists, I hope you enjoyed the route to Ally Pally in October's edition of The Archer. Here's a new one taking in Highgate, the Heath and Hampstead, which takes about an hour and 15 minutes. As before, start at All Saints' Church in Durham Road, N2, and be sure to dismount on any pedestrian-only paths.

From Durham Road, head to Fortis Green and continue south down Western Road and the passageway into Fordington Road, then Woodside Avenue, and cross the Great North Road to reach Sheldon Avenue. Half-way up the avenue, turn left down Denewood Road, go all the way up and turn right at the end, then left past the school.

Once you reach Hampstead Lane, turn left, then right into The Grove (before Highgate Village). Almost immediately, turn right again down Fitzroy Park, which despite its gate is cycle friendly. This steep and sheltered lane has some really quaint houses to admire as you go. Continue past the Heath on your right down Millfield Lane, then turn right onto Highgate West Hill and pass the roundabout.

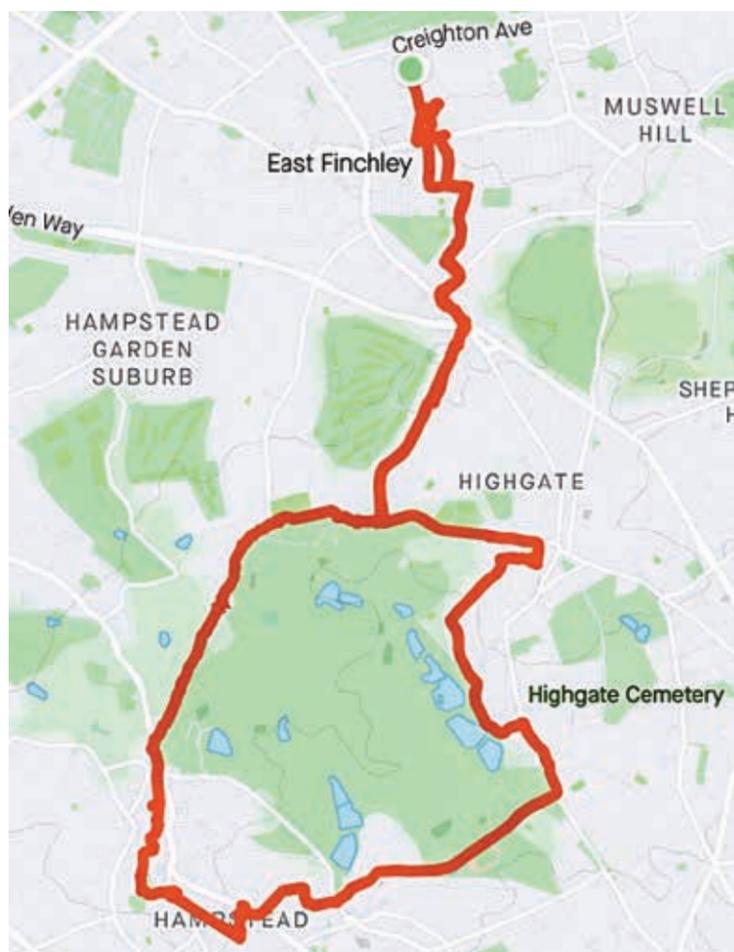
Once you see the Heath's tennis courts, turn right. You could stop for a match if you wanted or, if your timing is right, visit the fantastic weekend Farmers' Market. If you have children, there's a great playground past the athletics track.

Keep going through the park area, veering right at the fork onto Nassington Road. Go left



Round table: An interesting place to take a pit stop near Parliament Hill.

at the end onto Parliament Hill and find yourself at Hampstead Heath Overground station. Turn right and cross over before turning left onto Keats Grove (check out the poet John Keats' fascinating house museum). At the end, turn left up Downshire Hill, right onto Rosslyn Hill, then a quick left after the bus stop onto Shepherd's Walk, which turns into a path taking you to Fitzjohn's Avenue. Turn uphill and find your preferred way through Hampstead, stopping for refreshment of course, to reach Spaniards Road. Return past Kenwood House to find Sheldon Avenue on your left and finally retrace the start of the route to reach home.



Follow me: The route keeps to quiet roads with plenty of interest along the way



35 years behind the counter: Asghar Shaikh at Tops Dry Cleaners Photo Mike Coles

A 1960s look... but not stuck in the past

By Diana Cormack

In 1964 one of the first dry cleaners in East Finchley opened at 3 Fortis Green. It was one of four set up by the then proprietor of Coral Travel Agents on the High Road. About 20 years later the business was put up for sale and an advert in a trade magazine caught the attention of Asghar Shaikh.

Having worked in the trade in Kensington for seven years, the 24-year-old judged it to be a good career move. He opened *Tops Dry Cleaners* on 22 July 1985 and, until recently, Asghar could boast that he had never missed a day travelling from his home in Forest Gate to work in East Finchley.

However, coronavirus put paid to that proud record, with the shop having to close at times, resulting in an inevitable drop in customers. Many have been with him since the start and one

82-year-old was a client of the original business.

Asghar has a cuttings collection of articles from our newspaper over the years which featured any of his customers and on the wall is a range of signed photos of celebrity clients. "Many of these have moved on now and East Finchley has changed," he said, "but I'm not going to alter the shop, despite being told I should modernise it."

Gentle cleaning

So it remains with a definite look and feel of the sixties but

the cleaning routines are up to date. Asghar uses an eco-friendly, water based process with special liquids which are odour-free and kind to the most delicate materials. Improved methods for pressing have recently been introduced.

Asghar told *The Archer* how appreciative he is of all the lovely customers who have kept him going for the last 35 years. To celebrate this special anniversary he is offering a 10% reduction to clients who mention this article to him.

Pat mixes with the million sellers for booming radio station

By Diana Cormack

Over the years that Pat Leacock hosted the entertainment on the main stage at the East Finchley Community Festival, thousands got to know the sound of his voice. Now he is being heard by an even larger audience on hot97uk, the radio station he helped to create earlier this year (The Archer, June 2020).

Pat says that, according to Google Analytics, the station now has 60,000 unique listeners and the number is still growing steadily both here and abroad. It runs for 24 hours a day with male and female DJs, plus newsreaders.

Pat has his own Saturday evening *Cheering up the Nation* show from 8pm to 10pm and he recently introduced a series of Tuesday evening interviews featuring some of the most influential British musicians, composers and producers from the world of funk, soul and beyond. The list includes Dave

Ital, renowned session guitarist for artists such as Chaka Khan and Nile Rodgers, Lee John of British hitmakers Imagination, trombonist Ashley Slater and Red Bus Recording Studios co-founder Ellis Elias.

Pat's 'Million Sellers and Influencers' specials started on 1 December and runs through to mid-January, every Tuesday at 7pm. Interviewees to come are Roger Odell on 5 January and Adam Moseley on 12 January.

From the middle of January re-run times can be found at www.hot97uk.com.



Host with the most: Pat Leacock. Photo Camel Leacock Johns

com, some of which will feature unreleased tracks and nuggets not shared in other broadcasts. For more information contact hot97uk@gmail.com and find *hot97uk* on Mixcloud.



Ziz Chater with her Martin School team Photo Mike Coles

Schools honoured for helping everyone to learn

By David Melsome

Two East Finchley schools have been recognised by the Mayor of London for their exceptional achievements in helping pupils at all levels of learning.

Staff at Bishop Douglass Secondary School, in Hamilton Road, and at Martin Primary School, in Plane Tree Walk, were honoured for their commitment to reducing educational inequality and for attaining exceptional results for children of all abilities academically.

Only around six per cent of London schools are eligible to be members of the Schools for Success programme, which seeks to spread the best ideas to schools across the capital.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq

Khan, said: "These schools' commitment to being supportive and inclusive sets a great example. Covid-19 has presented unforeseen challenges across our city but they have done a fantastic job in maintaining excellence during a very difficult time.

"We created Schools for Success to recognise the positive impact that teachers, headteachers, teaching assistants, support staff and governors are making every day to support students and reduce inequalities."



Bishop Douglass staff and students with the Mayor's award

How to get rid of your glossophobia

By Ellie Franklin

Long-time East Finchley resident Nick Gold has written a book revealing the secrets of speaking confidently in public. Nick is the managing director of international speaker bureau Speakers Corner, originally a small family business.

His book *Speaking with Confidence* was published in November after a four-month writing period. He said he wanted it to "give people the tools and techniques to feel comfortable to get up and deliver a speech, in whatever setting."

Many people suffer from glossophobia, the fear of public speaking, but Nick's key message is that anyone can do it. "Every day you have conversations with friends, family, colleagues, and you tell stories," he says. "Those stories are effectively a speech. One thing which is absolutely critical is that the only people who are

more scared than you about you failing onstage are the audience. They're desperate for you to succeed and are on your side."

Energy-sapping

The book was close to being finished about three weeks into the first lockdown when Nick quickly noticed the shift into the virtual world of Zoom and so added another chapter about speaking online.

"You spend 10 minutes on a Zoom call with anyone and the energy in those 10 minutes is like you've had a four-hour meeting in person," he notes.

Nick says his book focuses less on the structure and for-

Letters

Catalytic converter thefts

Dear Editor,

There has been a spate of thefts of catalytic converters from cars, particularly Honda Jazz and Toyota Yaris models, along Leopold Road in East Finchley. I believe four were taken or attempted to be taken in early December.

The miscreants were in a silver car, something like a Vauxhall, with the number plate obscured, and are three men (captured on a neighbour's camera). They were in action around 9 or 9.30pm and took about two minutes apparently. The police have been informed, but this hasn't stopped the thefts.

I can only advise everyone to be alert, as this is so obviously an organised crime and I suspect that we are not the only road to suffer. It is just that there is a Leopold Road What's App, so news of anything like this spreads almost immediately.

Linda Dolata,
Leopold Road, N2.

Congestion cutters

Dear Editor,

I would like to voice my support for the cycle lanes along East Finchley High Road and respond to some of the objections voiced in *The Archer* (November 2020).

I have cycled regularly in London for the last eight years, and consider myself a confident cyclist. But our roads can often be intimidating, particularly for new or returning cyclists. Safe, segregated space helps to encourage more active travel.

Your article "Huge frustration at 'rushed' cycle lanes on High Road" reports concerns from shopkeepers that they may lose customers during an already difficult period. Whilst these concerns are understandable, in fact, studies have shown that businesses overestimate how many customers arrive by car, and that cycling schemes actually increase footfall and revenue.

As to congestion, encouraging more active travel through the provision of good infrastructure actually stands to reduce motor vehicle congestion and free up road

space for those who need to use it. Whilst I recognise there may be localised effects from removing a traffic lane (e.g. the short distance between East Finchley tube station and Fortis Green), the key factor in road congestion is the volume of motor vehicles on the road, and the simple fact is that we are collectively driving many more miles than we did ten years ago.

Increasing road space for motor vehicles has been shown not to reduce congestion, but to induce demand, encouraging more motor vehicle use in the long term. "Build it and they will come" is as axiomatic for motor vehicle infrastructure as it is for cycle infrastructure. Nobody should be forced to use cycle infrastructure, but its provision will make cycling more attractive and feasible to more people, increasing participation and reducing congestion in the longer term.

Chris Richards,
Address supplied.

What a load of bollards

Dear Editor,

I'd like to congratulate the geniuses on Barnet Council who dreamed up the idea of bollards between the main carriageway and the newly allocated cycle lanes between East Finchley and Tally Ho.

Thank you so much for endangering the lives of all Barnet residents who may unfortunately need an ambulance to take them along this route to Barnet General Hospital.

I presume this idiocy was paid for by our council taxes, and no doubt when they have to be removed there will be another unnecessary expense for the tax payer.

Michele Goldstein,
Edmunds Walk, N2.

Polite objection to cycle lanes

Dear Editor,

I want to be able to express views in a spirit of cooperation and free discussion. The only real current enemy is coronavirus, but the other insidious enemy is hatred.

There are too many people expressing views in a spirit of enmity. They don't want to co-operate but to sneer, threaten, shout and control. There are many important local and national issues, and these require proper reasoned consideration, not hostile confrontation. We should not need to fear putting our names to opinions on controversial subjects, and disagreement should still be treated with respect. A case in point, which is not the purpose of this letter but provoked me to write it, is the placing of cycle lanes and extra parking restrictions

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.

in East Finchley High Road. In my view (shared by everyone I have spoken to) this is a ridiculous and ill-thought out scheme, causing the congestion we are meant to avoid, damage to local businesses and extreme inconvenience to shoppers and residents generally.

In these times of 'green' campaigns, vehicles have to idle, using more fuel, creating more exhaust pollution and fraying tempers, which leads to accidents. Moreover there are few cyclists to be seen in the extra cycle lanes. I hope the arrangements will be reversed when their consequences are seen. There may be those who disagree, but if so I hope they can disagree in a civil manner and not sink to abuse.

Valerie Jablon,
Gurney Drive, N2.

Lost parking spaces

Dear Editor,

Double yellow lines have appeared on the High Road opposite Kitchener Road where there was once an indented bay, where people have parked for years, causing no problems or disruption to traffic flows.

What a pity for those who often use that parking space to pick up things from local shops on their way back from longer journeys. If the Council was trying to kill off use of local shops, it could not have found a better way to do it. But why do this?

I asked Barnet Council for the reason. It will add to the death of the High Road, already badly impacted by the massive traffic scheme at East Finchley station up to the junction of the North Circular Road, now reduced to one lane and causing traffic hold-ups daily.

As the Council has not replied, I have presented it with a Freedom of Information request, only to be told that, due to coronavirus, the normal month it has to reply has been extended. Other comments I have seen in the local NextDoor group are that it will also add pressure to parking in the county roads, which will then lead to calls for the controlled parking zone to run for longer hours, leading to the CPZ being rolled out to further roads, which means more parking charges for more people.

Barry H White
Fordington Road, N6.

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matting of a speech and more about how to deliver stories and engage with your audience. *Speaking with Confidence* is published in Penguin's Business Experts series.



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Station shines in sunny portrait

By John Lawrence

Rich browns of the brick work and plaster contrast with the delicate blues of the art deco waiting room panels and the expansive summer sky overhead... and almost unseen a northbound train departs the platform on its way up the line.

The scene is captured in Pippa King's watercolour painting of East Finchley station, proving that its beautifully maintained 1930s architecture makes it one of the handsomest stations on the entire tube network.

Pippa is actually a piano teacher by profession and only paints as a hobby but when she posted her station scene online she says she was delighted by the positive comments she received. "I put the painting up on the local Facebook group as I thought people might like to see it before it was consigned to my art folder, never to see the light of day again," said Pippa.

"I've never before made public any of my art, I just do it for a hobby but have always found it relaxing, so I was absolutely blown away by the positive comments and people asking for prints... crazy but just lovely and a complete surprise to me."

In response, Pippa is hoping to produce some prints of her painting and sell them to raise funds for the Finchley Foodbank, based at St Mary's Church Hall in the High Road, N2. Keep an eye out for details on her recently created blog at <https://paintingsbypippa.wordpress.com> where you can see other paintings she has completed.

Arts venue wins funding

North Finchley's arts depot has secured £130,000 in funding for a five-year programme to become a beacon venue for accessibility.

The money comes from City Bridge Trust, the City of London Corporation's charity arm, and will enable arts depot to increase the number of accessible performances available.



The train departing: Pippa King's watercolour shows all the art deco beauty of East Finchley station.

You never know what you might find when you browse the station book stall

By Daphne Chamberlain

It's now three years since local resident Lynn Winton set up the East Finchley Book Exchange in our underground station. While Lynn emphasises that she doesn't own it, she does of course keep an eye on it. So now she has contacted us with her thanks, reminders and suggestions.

First of all, many thanks to the anonymous person who donated a second wooden bookshelf, which "just turned up one day". Also, thanks to the station staff and "the lovely lady on the fruit stall", as well as others who keep a watchful eye on the Exchange.

Many people have told Lynn that it's been a lifesaver during lockdown. As she says, you never know what you might find. Donations have included £2,000 of law books and a beautiful Complete

Works of Shakespeare. At the time of writing, there was a great selection of cookery books and stacks of Waitrose recipe cards.

Lynn wants to remind people that any book taken from the Exchange stall can be returned there. Books left on the stall will be "recycled, reread and re-enjoyed" many times, whereas they could be just pulped if taken elsewhere.

Anyone needing help to take books or magazines to the Exchange can contact Lynn

through *The Archer* (details on page 2), leaving their own contact details, and she will do her best to collect them.

Music too?

Reading a book you enjoy is calming and uplifting. So, too, can be listening to music. At the moment, 65 London Underground stations play classical music. It has been shown to relax travellers and discourage

antisocial behaviour. Lynn is seeking approval for a sound system to be installed at East Finchley, and is prepared to find the funding.

She would appreciate hearing from anyone who could give her a rough idea of the cost. *The Archer* will forward any response to Lynn, and we would also like to know your opinions on this.

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