



# Primary school playing field ‘no place for a phone mast’

By John Lawrence

Parents and governors at Martin Primary in East Finchley are fighting plans to install a phone mast immediately next to the school’s playing field

Hutchison 3G Ltd is seeking to install a 15m high pole with three separate cabinets to improve high-speed 5G signals in the area. The mast and cabinets would be situated on the High Road on the strip of grass that runs along the edge of the playground field, between the school and East Finchley Library.

When the mast was originally proposed at the end of 2020, there were 213 public comments lodged, 209 of them raising objections. School governors, parents and The Finchley Society all said next to a primary school was the wrong site for a phone mast.

In February, Barnet Council turned down the proposal but the phone company has taken it to appeal and now the new closing date for public comments is Thursday 7 October.

## School’s and council’s concerns

Mez Raja, a parent governor at Martin Primary, said the school was urgently considering how to engage with the appeal. “Although the school is not against 5G technology itself, it seems to us that there should be more appropriate sites to situate the mast,” he said.

The school’s formal objec-

tions cite the unknown health impacts on children and adults of telecoms masts, the aesthetic impact of a large structure to the school’s surroundings, and the fact that the mobile 5G technology would bring no benefit to the school, which uses cables in the ground.

One of the reasons Barnet Council turned down the original application is that the proposed mast site is very narrow and therefore the mast and its cabinets could present obstructions to pedestrians on the pavement.

## Case for phone mast site

For its part, Hutchison said high-speed mobile connectivity was “the lifeblood of a community... providing access to vital services and improving communications, with associated commercial benefits for local businesses, enabling e-commerce and working from home”. It said the height of the mast had been kept to a minimum and it would be sited amongst existing trees to minimise its visual impact.

Anyone wishing to make a comment about the appeal can do so by 7 October online at <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/> by entering case number 3271788.

# Prescription costs campaign goes on

Age UK have sent out “a massive thank you” to everyone who responded to the Government’s consultation on prescription charges for 60-65s in England. They say: “Over 39,000 of you responded. We’ve made sure our voices have been heard, loud and clear. Age UK and 23 other organisations have also written directly to the Health Secretary, urging him to rethink this potentially disastrous proposal.”

Whatever the outcome, people who receive certain benefits or with certain medical conditions will still get free prescriptions.

There are some options to help with costs related to this proposal. To check if you are entitled to any financial support, please call the Age UK Advice Line on 0800 169 65 65 or NHS Help with Health Costs helpline: 0300 330 1343. More links to assistance are on [www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns).



Jump for joy: A bulldog has some fun at the All Dogs Matter show. Photo Paul Abrahams / Ginger Pet Photography

# The bulldog and the bubbles

By John Lawrence

Sometimes you’ve just got to jump to it, and this bulldog certainly did that chasing some bubbles at the All Dogs Matter dog show in Highgate Wood on Sunday 12 September.

Dozens of canine pals turned out to enter for rosettes or just to watch from the sidelines, many of them rescue dogs who found their families thanks to the East Finchley charity’s work. All of them mixed happily and were on their best behaviour throughout, seeming to enjoy the company of so many other dogs. There wasn’t even much barking. The event was hosted by actor Michelle Collins, who kept the judges on their toes and chatted to owners as they paraded round the ring with their pooches. All Dogs Matter is based in Aylmer Parade, N2, and has been working for years to rescue and rehome animals. Last year alone, the organisation rehomed 300



All smiles: One dog photobombs another’s portrait shot at the show. Photo Paul Abrahams / Ginger Pet Photography

dogs with new owners. Its annual dog show, which they were unable to hold last year,

is a crucial event for raising much-needed funds as well as awareness about their work.

# Groceries to go

The former HSS Hire shop on the High Road, N2, near the junction with Creighton Avenue, has been turned into a distribution point for the new 24-hour online shopping service Zapp.

The large property is now full of shelving containing a range of essential household items which the service claims it can deliver to local addresses within minutes, using a fleet of all-electric bikes and mopeds.

London-based startup, Zapp, has a number of dark stores across central London and employs its riders directly. Their emphasis is on urgent needs and impulse purchases and their stock includes everything from snacks to over the counter medicines.

Find out more at [tryzapp.com](http://tryzapp.com)

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# N2United reunited

East Finchley’s community and business network celebrates its 5th birthday in October and is bouncing back with its first in-person meeting in over a year.

The free networking meeting is open to all local residents, businesses, traders and community groups and will take place at East Finchley Constitutional Club, The Walks, at 7.45 pm on Thursday 14th October.

See [www.N2United.co.uk](http://www.N2United.co.uk) for details of how to join.

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