

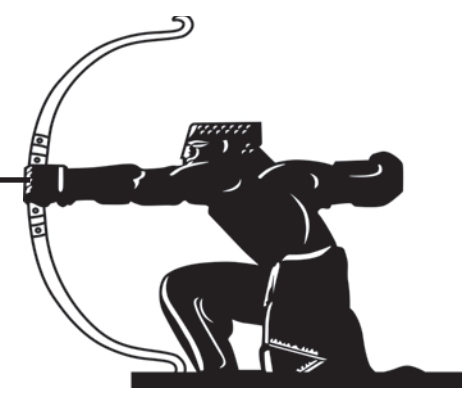


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The Archer

Local News is our Aim



December 2022 No. 344

A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.

Strawberry Vale residents fear heat cost hike

By John Lawrence

Residents on the Strawberry Vale estate in East Finchley fear a massive rise in the cost of their heating and hot water under plans to install heat meters in every home.

Currently, the estate has a communal gas-powered heating system where annual charges are controlled by the Peabody housing association and made according to property size. Electricity charges are additional.

Now, Peabody is being required by law to install heat meters in each home and they are handing over the responsibility for installation and charging to a commercial subcontractor. Residents say that the additional management fees involved will make their bills soar by as much as 180%.

The residents say they are not opposed to paying for what they use but they are concerned that the future prices they pay will be unregulated as the energy price cap does not currently apply to communal heating systems. A petition showed 98% were opposed to

the new charging scheme.

Cost mark-up suspected

Laurence Williamson, of the Strawberry Vale Residents Association, said: "The proposed tripling of charges is not related to the general increase in energy prices in any way. It will be caused by Peabody and the subcontractor marking up the cost of the gas used. This extra charge will go to the subcontractor and a significant amount will go to Peabody as a management fee even though they are passing almost all work over to a subcontractor."

Meters postponed

The residents have had some respite after Peabody agreed to postpone the installation of meters until spring 2023 to gather more information and to ensure the current heating network on the estate is operating efficiently. **Continued on p2.**

Merry Christmas and a Happy and Greener New Year



The Archer

Local News is our Aim

Archie's on the fizz for the festive season

Everyone on *The Archer* team sends their best wishes for the festive season and the New Year to all our readers, contributors, advertisers and deliverers, who have

supported us throughout 2022. *The Archer* would not exist without you in the community telling us your news, without the many local businesses who advertise on our pages, thereby helping us to cover our printing costs, and without the dedication of dozens of deliverers who go out every month in all weathers to make sure the newspaper reaches almost 10,000 homes and businesses in every corner of N2. Thank you to each and every one.

And as our 2022 card designed by Mike Coles declares, we wish the whole of East Finchley a happy and eco-friendly holiday season and a prosperous and healthy 12 months ahead.



Archer reader: Cherry Tree Café customer Lois Burgess

P-p-pick up a paper

You can now keep up with all the news in East Finchley while enjoying the new winter menu at the Cherry Tree Wood Café. We have a new rack next to the serving hatch where you can borrow a copy of *The Archer* to take to your table, or take it home with you.

Sharon and Sharon, who run the café, now have a drinks licence allowing them to serve wines, beer and spirits, and their new menu is full of soups, baguettes and other winter warmers. Follow them on Instagram @cherrytree-woodscafe.

The Archer along the High Road include the tube station, the foyer of the Phoenix Cinema, East Finchley Library, Sainsbury's, Pacey's newsagents, Ella Food Centre on the corner of Creighton Avenue, and Long Lane Supermarket in Long Lane. Thanks to everyone who stocks it for us.

Other spots for picking up

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Thank you to The East Finchley Constitutional Club 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 – **January:** 16 December
February: 13 January, **March:** 10 February

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council 30 Deansway, N2

Removal of existing canopy structure, including staircase, and replacement with new canopy structure. Retention of alterations and extension to lower ground floor level. Access stairs from ground and lower ground floor level to garden. Glazed screening at upper ground floor level.

188 East End Road, N2

Part single, part two-storey side and rear extension, following demolition of garage. Demolition of side chimney stack. Replacement of existing windows. New front porch.

32 Gurney Drive, N2

Conversion of garage into habitable space, inserting windows and doors to replace garage doors. Replacement front door. New front bin store and hedge. Vehicular charging point. Alteration to side gate location. Re-paving with Indian sandstone. Single-storey rear bay extension and infill of ground floor corner loggia. New rear access steps to rear garden. Changes to fenestration. Rear air conditioning unit. Roof extension involving side and rear dormer window. Removal of chimney breasts. Internal alterations.

2 Hawthorne Dene, Strawberry Vale, N2

Alterations to front and side boundary wall, including new gates with associated vehicular and pedestrian access. Alterations to hard and soft landscaping, including new vehicle hard standing to provide off-street

parking.

30 Heath View, N2

Single-storey rear extension. New front porch.

78 Hertford Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension.

52 High Road, N2

Conversion of mezzanine level cafe into screening room, involving enclosure with acoustic insulation walls, stepped terraces and seating.

87 Huntingdon Road, N2

Roof extension involving rear dormer to outrigger and new side gable window.

60 Leopold Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension

5 Flaxman Villas, Manor Park Road, N2
Changes to flat roof of rear extension, including raising height of roof and insertion of flat rooflights.

11 New Oak Road, N2

Conversion of two self-contained flats into single family dwelling.

14 Richmond Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with new terrace area.

11 Sylvester Road, N2

Single-storey side infill extension.

Haringey Council

23 Bancroft Avenue, N2

Fast Track Certificate of Lawfulness for 4m rear extension to ground floor of detached property. Two hip-to-gable loft extensions to either side and a rear dormer.

24 Eastern Road, N2

Non-material amendment to planning permission. Zinc pitched roof sheeting for side extension to be replaced by natural slate roof. Zinc cladding to front elevation gable end to be replaced with white painted render finish with aluminium coping.

10 Ringwood Avenue, N2

Single-storey extension extending beyond rear wall of original house by 8m; maximum height 3.5m, eaves height 3m.



Landscape artist: Judith Devons working on the mural in the Leopold Road community garden. Photo Mike Coles

Brickwork gets a splash of colour to brighten community garden

A run-down area where The Walks crosses Leopold Road is being transformed into a smart community garden by local people working in conjunction with Barnet Council. Here, residents **Kathy Batten** and **Edwina Roberts** tell us how the project is going.

Our 'diggers group' of up to 20 local residents continued to weed and clear the existing beds throughout the early part of this year. Getting the pyracantha out was a mammoth effort. The council repaired the brick walls and put in new top soil and a new lamppost has been added.

Working with local East Finchley Open Artists we commissioned Judith Devons to paint a mural. This evolved and changed on a daily basis as the constant stream of passers-by gave Judith immediate feedback.

Interactive art

"What was going to be an archway became two trees with overlapping branches," said Judith. "A girl sitting under one of the trees came, disappeared and returned. A moon came and went. Passers-by tried to 'spot the difference' as a cat, a fox, a lamb and three birds arrived... and stayed.

"Above all, my constant pleasure was witnessing the surprise and delight of everyone passing by: mothers with toddlers, school children appreciating a huge expanse of outdoor

colour and creativity, people rushing to appointments but still turning to give me the thumbs up, and stopping to tell me how much the colours and foliage brightened up their day. Let's hope we can continue to paint murals all over town."

Thanks and plans

We are now waiting for two new benches, a new bin and an information board to be delivered and installed. One bench is to be sponsored by East Finchley Community

Trust. We are very grateful to our local councillor Arjun Mittra without whom it would not have happened.

We hope to have many small community events in our new neighbourhood garden. Do come along and have a look. The planting is not yet finished, and we hope it will be a wonderful display in the spring when the bulbs emerge. Follow the project on Instagram @leopoldneighbourhoodn2 and see more of Judith's work at www.judithdevons.com

Strawberry Vale residents fear heat costs rise

Continued from page 1

Strawberry Vale was built in the 1980s with 268 flats and houses. Some residents moved there when the estate was new and are now in their 80s. Some families live in severely overcrowded conditions.

Peabody statement

Peabody told *The Archer* that the claim that gas costs will rise by 180% was incorrect and they would not be making any profit from the changeover to heat meters. The housing association said it will continue to set the prices for the heat tariff based on the cost of energy, the system efficiency, and the costs of the heat metering provider.

A Peabody spokesperson said: "We have paused the

installation of heat meters at the estate to alleviate our residents' concerns. We will be gathering heat usage data from sites internally and where possible externally to quantify the impact on these residents.

"We will be engaging with our residents in the coming months to explain how the system will work and the changes so that we can deliver a scheme that will be of benefit to our residents."

They added that the association operates an energy advice service and financial inclusion teams to help people who are struggling to pay their energy bills.

Tree lighting

A reminder that lighting the East Finchley Christmas tree takes place outside Budgens on the High Road on Saturday 3 December at 5pm.

Everyone is invited to come along for carol singing with music from Fixation Academy and Brookland School Choir. A new tree and refreshments including mulled wine and mince pies are being provided by Budgens.

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Playground group swings into action with £150,000 boost

By Samantha Haycock

The parents and residents spearheading the project to redesign the neglected Market Place Playground have been awarded £100,000 funding from Barnet Council. Their successful bid comes soon after they won another £50,000 from Barnet's Greenspaces team over the summer.

With a previous council grant of £30,000 and other contributions already secured, the Friends of Market Place Playground have now raised £220,000 and are over half way towards funding a natural play space on the current tarmac site.

In a tough climate for fundraising, they are hard at work on bids to deliver the balance. They say any support from the talented and resourceful residents of East Finchley is welcome.

Council commitment

Their latest funding bid was backed at an East Area Committee meeting in October by Councillor Arjun Mittra who, along with his East Finchley colleagues Alison Moore and Claire Farrier, has been a strong supporter of improving the playground for the benefit of the whole community.

In a positive sign of council commitment, a project manager from the Greenspaces team has

been appointed to support the development and tender process for the site off Park Road and close to Holy Trinity Primary School.

And Barnet's environment chair Councillor Alan Schneiderman visited the playground in September to learn how the new design will provide much-needed green space and help address environmental challenges with shading, planting and drainage.

The Friends' chair Kathy Batten says: "It's hugely gratifying to see Barnet Council's support for this project accelerate as they realise the benefits of making Market Place a flagship community space."

View the plans

Landscape designer Aileen Shackell has been busy preparing to submit a detailed design for planning permission before the end of the year. You can view the latest version at the website friendsofmarketplace.org.uk



Which one first? Gus Hully and his collection of beers

Week-long protest at McDonald's

Campaigners representing several different activist groups gathered to protest outside McDonald's European headquarters in East Finchley each day for a week from Monday 31 October. They included representatives from Extinction Rebellion, Plastics Rebellion, Amazon Rebellion, Haringey Tree Protectors and Stop the Edmonton Incinerator.

Protesting against the farming and environmental practices of the company, they handed out leaflets to the passing public as well as displaying banners, making speeches and singing songs. However, they were not able to get close to the building next to the tube station as the entrance had been fenced off and security guards were in position, along with a police presence.

It appears that they had intended to hand deliver a letter to the UK Chief Executive Officer of the company. This proved not to be possible, but the protesters were told that the letter would be



Fenced off: Protesters outside the McDonalds headquarters near the tube station.

handed over.

On Saturday 5 Novem-

ber, the protesters moved to McDonald's Green Lanes, Haringay, to demonstrate their feelings about the company's alleged activities. These included a reference back to the felling of 11 mature trees outside the branch and the laying of plastic grass in their place last summer. *The Archer* contacted McDonald's for comment.

Football fan scores beer bingo full house

By John Lawrence

When the World Cup comes around, some football fans collect stickers or flags. Gus Hully has gone his own way by getting his hands on a beer from all 32 nations taking part.

Gus, who lives on Aylmer Road, N2, has had to be pretty inventive to complete the set. Twenty or so countries were easy to get from shops, bars and restaurants around London, like a Ghana beer from Asafo Restaurant in Brixton and a non-alcoholic Iranian beer from one of the many Middle Eastern shops in Finchley Central. But then Gus had to get creative.

"I had to trade with a Belgian to get a bottle from Cameroon and with a German for a bottle from Costa Rica," he said. "I ordered a Tunisian beer from a French online store to via that same guy in Germany as the store wouldn't ship to the UK because of Brexit.

"I needed a friend from

Barcelona to help me out with Ecuador and Uruguay, a friend of a friend living in Doha for a non-alcoholic beer from Qatar and I had to message a Russian guy from Italy who was on holiday in Senegal to see if he would bring me one back from his travels."

Approval world-wide and at home

Gus, who works as a senior analyst for The Official Chart Company compiling the top 40 singles and albums charts, first attempted his beer challenge for the 2014 World Cup but only got 23 out of the 32. He's had more success since and this year his complete collection has won more than 100,000 likes on Twitter and been reported in Spain, Greece, Ghana and Brazil.

Gus happily admits it's a "stupid project" but says his wife Melanie is totally on board with it, luckily, "as she gets to drink a load of beer for free".

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Warm spaces open to help residents save energy costs

By John Lawrence

A number of so-called 'warm spaces' are springing up around the area to give people a place to go during the cold winter months to save on their heating bills at home.

East Finchley Library in the High Road has free access six days a week. Staffed hours are Monday from 9am to 12.30pm, Wednesday from 2pm to 8pm, Thursday from 2pm to 5pm, Saturday from 9am to 12.30pm. Self-service hours are more extensive once you have registered as a user.

On Monday afternoons from 2pm to 4pm, Age UK Barnet welcomes people to the **Ann Owens Centre** in Oak Lane, N2, for tea and coffee and a chance to chat, read or relax. Scrabble and other games are available and volunteers are on hand to help visitors get to grips with their phones and laptops.

A short journey down the Archway Road on the 263 bus, the **Jacksons Lane Arts Centre** opens its doors between 10am and 10pm Monday to Saturday, and 10am to 6pm on Sundays, for anyone who wants to walk in and enjoy the warm space. There is no need to spend any money there.

Call for warmth

Meanwhile, Barnet Council has launched a Warm Spaces scheme appealing for more local social enterprises, faith organisations and businesses that have free space to sign up and help people stay warm.

To support the scheme, the council has launched two grants



Warm welcome: Jacksons Lane Arts Centre

that not-for-profit groups can apply for. The funding is to open spaces, provide free activities and partner with local businesses to provide warm hubs.

Barnet Council Leader, Cllr Barry Rawlings, said: "As well as keeping out the cold, it's a

good way to help people avoid loneliness and involve them with their community."

To learn more about these grants and the warm spaces scheme visit barnet.gov.uk and search 'warm spaces', or contact warmspaces@barnet.gov.uk

Cost of living advice

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet Libraries have issued a book list of recommended titles to help deal with the rising cost of living. The books cover a range of themes including housing rights, making and saving money, frugal eating, growing your own vegetables, DIY, and cheap ways to make repairs at home.

Look out, too, for the Cost of Living eBook Collection. There are eBooks on money matters, zero waste, cooking on a budget, crafting, upcycling, repurposing, and much more,

which are all free to borrow on your library card. If you are not yet a member and want to join Barnet Libraries you can do so online at www.barnet.gov.uk.

Ten ways to keep warm through the winter

By David Melsome

Everyone is worried about their gas and electricity bills rocketing this winter, despite measures announced by the Government to cap prices. Here are ten of the best tips we could find to help



Do wrap up: Archie Image Mike Coles

you keep your energy costs as low as possible, plus some specific advice from Age UK and other charities about special payments you could receive to see you through the worst.

Switch off

Switch appliances off at the wall when not in use rather than leaving them on standby. This could save you £50 a year. Don't turn off your fridge or freezer, to protect your food. Turn lights off when you leave a room, but not at the expense of your safety. Keep stairs and other areas well lit to reduce the risk of falling.

Cook clever

Learn to love your microwave and consider buying a slow cooker and air fryer (each available for around £30-70). These appliances cook nearly everything you need and are much cheaper than running a main oven, grill or hob. There are plenty of cheap recipe books and meal ideas online to get you started. Cook in batches so that you only have to re-heat for some meals. Only boil as much water as you need in your kettle.

Temper your temperatures

Turn down your thermostat by a degree or two and heat just the rooms you use most. Keep radiators and heaters clear so hot air can circulate. For unused rooms, like a spare bedroom, turn off the radiators and close the doors.

Wash wisely

Wash clothes at 30°C in your machine to use around 40% less electricity over a year than washing at higher temperatures. Wash clothes less often and always use a full wash. Only run your dishwasher when you have a full load.

Ditch the dryer

Avoid using your tumble dryer. They can cost around £1.50 for a single cycle. Air drying clothes is free. Open a window if possible to avoid condensation.

Shower quickly

Keeping your shower time to four minutes could save a typical household in the region of £70 a year. Baths obviously use more water but having a hot soak once in a while won't make a major difference. And for those who remember the advice of the 1970s, you can always bath with a friend.

Tackle draughts

Check your windows and under your doors to block off any draughts that drain away heat. Draught excluder strips are relatively affordable and easily fitted. Tuck curtains behind radiators to minimise heat loss.

Dust your fridge

Dust on the coils at the back of your fridge could use 25% more energy in getting it down to the right temperature, according to Which? adding £45 a year to your bills. Also set your fridge's temperature in the 3C to 5C range, still plenty cool enough to keep everything fresh.

Use someone else's energy

Warm Hubs are springing up in some parts of the UK; they're community buildings where larger numbers of people can spend time, rather than using energy at home. There are no official hubs in N2 but East Finchley Library in the High Road has free access six days a week. Staffed hours are Monday from 9am to 12.30pm, Wednesday from 2pm to 8pm, Thursday from 2pm to 5pm, Saturday from 9am to 12.30pm. Self-service hours are more extensive once you have registered as a user.

Bigger stuff

More expensive projects that will cut your bills in the long term include replacing old windows with new double glazing and making sure any loft spaces are insulated. If you have suitable brickwork, cavity wall insulation will make a difference too. If not, it's now possible to buy insulating panels to fit to the outside of your property, which can be cut and painted.

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Push to avoid traffic congestion as construction plans clash

By Janet Maitland

Plans are taking shape to reduce the impact of construction traffic while a large number of new homes are built simultaneously across three separate sites in a small patch of East Finchley, but many issues remain.

All developers are required to take steps to avoid traffic chaos but coordination is especially needed in this case as the three sites have two different landowners.

As we reported last month, one development is of two

blocks with a total of 20 flats on land owned by Leopold Properties on the corner of the High Road and Church Lane, opposite Martin Primary School. The other two blocks are nearby on the Grange estate, managed by Barnet Homes. One block of eight flats will be on Central Avenue and the other next to the High Road.

Communication with residents

Barnet Homes have written to Grange residents informing them that "construction logistics have not yet been confirmed" and that as soon as a contractor is appointed in the new year, they will "work jointly with the council's Highways department to review the options, aiming to minimise the impact on congested roads".

Residents will also be invited to meet the contractors and ask questions. Before work begins, a construction management plan including details of how vehicles will access the Grange sites and when deliveries are to be made will be submitted to the council for approval.

The approved construction management plan for the Leopold Properties site refers to establishing a 'liaison group' with 'close neighbours and those who would be affected by the construction'.

Vehicle access problems

Identifying alternative ways to access the Grange sites is a critical issue, as there is currently just one vehicle entrance into the estate, accessed from roads which residents say are, in effect, single lane because cars park on both sides of the street. Two of these access roads run off narrow, one-way Church Lane, near where a new entrance into the Leopold Properties building site will be created for their construction vehicles.

Leopold Properties estimate that construction will take about two years, with a peak delivery period next spring. Building on the Grange should start next spring and will take about a year.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago:
December 2012

We received confirmation that the new Archer Academy secondary school would open in the Arts Institute building off The Bishops Avenue, behind East Finchley tube station. Our article also introduced the school's headteacher Mike Quigley, who subsequently saw it through its first two years of operation.

15 years ago:
December 2007

A serious accident involving a lorry and a bicycle at the High Road end of Creighton Avenue again highlighted local concerns about this junction. Campaigners for improved safety measures had long dubbed it "Danger Corner" because the shallow pavement curve allowed traffic to turn the corner at relatively high speed. Several more years elapsed before a pedestrian crossing and safety barriers were eventually installed at the junction.

23 years ago:
December 1999

Our final edition of the last millennium reported on concerns around the proposed Controlled Parking Zone scheme, which is now a fixture of life in East Finchley. Local businesses in particular objected to the cost of their parking permits, then £125 per annum, compared with £20 for residents. Corresponding prices now are dependent on emissions/engine size and vary from £15 to £182.25 for resident permits and £200 to £787.50 for business vehicles.



Reggae on: Levi Roots entertains at the event marking Black History Month. Photo Age UK Barnet

Levi adds spice to celebration

Celebrity chef and musician Levi Roots joined a special event at Age UK in East Finchley to celebrate Black history and culture. Levi is a familiar face at the charity's base in Oak Lane, N2, having visited the men's cookery class there in 2018, showing them how to make his famous jerk chicken.

As part of the celebrations, Levi talked to the senior people there about his fond memories of growing up in Jamaica and his experiences of moving to London, including how tough it was at times. He also talked about how his life changed since appearing on the BBC's *Dragon's Den* with his Reggae Reggae sauce.

Other festivities at the event included a lively steel pan orchestra, a cookery demonstration and taster and spoken word poetry. Councillor Linda Lusingu also shared her touching story of how she overcame prejudice after coming to London from Tanzania as a child.

Levi said afterwards: "It was fantastic to be back at Age UK Barnet, celebrating Black history, culture and music, and it was an inspiring day. It's really important that we draw on our heritage and celebrate being ourselves. Coming together for events like these is vital in helping to tackle loneliness and in helping older people to feel part of something."

Joyce, who brought her dad to the event, said: "My dad has loved today, especially Levi's talk. He started crying when Levi spoke about growing up in Jamaica, as it brought back memories of his own life in

Jamaica before he came to England."

Age UK Barnet services manager Jenny Jean-Charles said: "We were so blessed to have Levi spend so much time with us, mingling with everyone, signing autographs and having his photo taken with so many people. And his personal story totally captivated the audience."

"Our event highlighted just how crucial it is to bring older people in local communities from all different backgrounds together, helping to make a huge difference to older people who may feel isolated and alone."

High Road Live event

After a successful sustainability day held on the High Road in September, the East Finchley Town Team is getting ready for their next major event. Scheduled for the weekend of January 28-29, it will be a music and arts event entitled High Road Live.

Planned for the entertainment line-up are bands, singers, open mic sessions, karaoke, choirs, dance, poetry, graffiti art, drumming, themed quizzes and jazz.

The Phoenix Cinema will host an East Finchley's Got Talent competition. With the inevitable interest in this, don't delay in contacting the organisers if you'd like to take part. An email to EFGotTalent@gmail.com should include your name/s and talent details. Let them know by Friday 16 December at the latest.

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Active fundraiser: Gemma Barlow gets the crowd moving at a previous dance event



ECO-FRIENDLY EAST FINCHLEY

Recycling: What a difference a year makes

By Emma Frampton

It was about a year ago when my neighbour and early member of Bin There Donate That, Isabella, suggested that I just go for it and launch the scheme that we both hoped would help reduce rubbish and unwanted stuff in East Finchley. The first article for *The Archer* was penned and we began.

Successes

The full list of what can be dropped where is in the box below and via the QR code on signs in East Finchley shop windows. Some of these shops, such as EF Electrical and Everything Electrical, were already recycling. However, one aim of Bin There is to let you know what initiatives are out there. Special mentions do need to go to Amy's, whose manager Dominique has embraced the concept and works with us to grow it; and to the team at Oakdale Pharmacy, our first shop, who have taken thousands of used tablet blister packs on our behalf. In case you were wondering, none of the shops or staff gets any financial incentive to collect for us. They help because they want to.



Unsuccesses

Sadly we are going to stop collecting plant pots and jam jars for reuse. I had really hoped to find a couple of small organisations who plant seeds and make jam to sell at festivals etc. However, despite several attempts, this has not worked. For now, please DO NOT donate any more plant pots or jam jars. This is not to say we cannot reinstate if we find suitable groups in the future.

The team

Since starting Bin There, there have been several people who have come and gone, but there is a constant small group of us. Every one of them is vital and so appreciated. They give their time, skills, petrol costs and knowledge free of charge. I cannot thank them enough for having faith in the project, and me.

Christmas reminder

If you are not reusing your Christmas paper and decorations, please take them to Amy's. The Children's Scrapstore will take the lot, even the ripped and broken bits. And please consider one of your New Year's Resolutions to be volunteering with Bin There, Donate That. Merry Christmas!

What and where to donate

- Batteries to EF Electricals and Sainsbury's, High Road
- Bicycle inner tubes to Bike & Run, High Road
- Blister packs to Oakdale Pharmacy, High Road, and Links Pharmacy, East End Road
- Bras to Aliya J Boutique, High Road
- Crisp packets to Cherry Tree Café, Cherry Tree Wood
- Electrical items including cables, broken appliances, bulbs and batteries to Everything Electrical and EF Electrical, High Road
- Food tubs (clear plastic takeaway containers, 17.5cm x 12cm x 5.5cm), washed, for reuse in the N2 Food Project to the Phoenix Cinema or Amy's, High Road
- Inkjet cartridges to UOE, High Road
- Lightbulbs to Amy's or EF Electricals, High Road
- Make-up to Oakdale Pharmacy, High Road
- Paper, cork, ribbon, foil, wood off-cuts, buttons, stationery, sequins, carpet samples to Amy's, High Road
- Spectacles to Stewart Duncan Opticians and David Hillel Opticians, High Road
- Toothbrushes and toothbrush heads to Cavendish House Dental Practice, East End Road

Dance in December for Ukraine

By Lynn Winton

Fitness and dance trainer Gemma Barlow has an infectious energy and joie de vivre that permeates everything she sets her mind to. She trains private clients and holds a host of classes locally and online, including a popular Saturday morning Zumba at Martin Primary School, as well as ballet, jazz, Pilates and general toning and cardio fitness.

Spending so much time in the gyms, homes and cafés of East Finchley, it was inevitable that she would eventually pick up a copy of *The Archer* and there she read about Michael Byrne and his Driving Aid to Ukraine project, delivering vital aid to border points, then tracking its successful distribution in bombed towns and children's centres.

Fitness and fundraising

Gemma had already been looking for a way to use her skills and energy to help the Ukrainian people and told me all about her plan for a special dance and fitness fundraiser.

"I've got together a group of top class instructors for a festive fitness fundraiser, Unite

for Ukraine, on Saturday 10 December from 11am to 1pm at Fortismere School's South Hall on Tetherdown, Muswell Hill," she said. Her two hours of festive dance fitness and Zumba will finish with a chilled yoga stretch flow led by Jane Wrafter of JCW Fitness.

How it works

The suggested donation is £20 (£10 for accompanied children 8-16) and 100% of the proceeds will go straight to drivingaidtoulkraine.org for their next trip.

"I'm aiming to raise enough money to cover the fuel and hire costs for a huge lorry load of donated winter clothes for displaced people who are freezing," said Gemma.

Booking is essential: the QR code above will take you to a secure payment page and you will receive an email confirmation from Gemma. Or search 'Unite for Ukraine' on crowdfunder.co.uk. Any queries can be sent to gemmabfitness@hotmail.com or call Lynn on 07973 432086.



Favourites: Father and daughter Dave Gardner and Samantha Alderino at the race night

Place your bets, please

East Finchley Constitutional Club hosted a lively Night at the Races in October and their evening of light-hearted betting raised an impressive £2,700 for the University College London Hospital Cancer Fund.

Members and their guests could place money on horses in filmed races, with half their stake going to the charity and half helping to pay for the prizes on the night. The evening was organised by Dave and Elizabeth Gardner with Bill and Therese Harrigan providing the race commentaries and running the Tote.

Club member Sally Heathcote said: "The charity is very close to members at the EFCC who work tirelessly to support those with cancer and their families. Everyone had a fantastic night raising money, enjoying the buffet and a few drinks from the bar. It was not a quiet evening!" The club has thanked all the local businesses who supported the evening by donating prizes: The Nail Studio, Maddens Bar, Table Du Marche, Bangkok Lounge, Amy's, Poseidon restaurant, Gus hairdressers, Tony's Continental, Chin Massage, Oakdale Pharmacy, Methin & Sam hairdressers, Purple Ladies hairdressers, Lin Yang Chinese Medical, Meze Meze and Lyn at Doctor's Surgery.

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Underpass project wins cash and council backing

By John Lawrence

The team bidding to improve the safety and appearance of the pedestrian underpass beneath the Northern line between Manor Park Road and Trinity Road in East Finchley has won the support of Barnet Council for the project.

Grange Big Local (GBL) and their team of volunteers received a commitment from the council to work with them on the regeneration project, along with an allocation of £10,000 to fund a dedicated project manager to oversee the work within the council.

This was a vital step in making the project happen and comes after six years of road-blocks and delays. It also enables GBL to unlock some of its own lottery funds for the work, as part of its plans to improve life for residents in this area of N2.

Looking ahead

Once the council has engaged with GBL on the project, which they now should have the staff-time to do, GBL has been invited to go back to the January East Area Committee with a formal bid for more funding.

Mariella Hill, from the GBL team, said: "This result now means that different stakeholders and parts of the project can be brought together to transform the underpass into a pleasant place to walk through. Grange Big Local then looks forward to engaging residents on artwork

and planting projects.

"We would like to thank Councillors Arjun Mittra and Claire Farrier for their support on the project as well as Danny Rich, Chair of the East Area Committee, who came to visit the underpass and recognised that there clearly needs to be work done on the drainage, lighting and surfacing."

GBL and East Finchley-based Mills Power Architect will be bringing the project to life. If you are interested in helping with artwork in the underpass, email GBL on info@grangebiglocal.org



Good friends: Christina Michael looking after long-term customer Audrey Carrol. Photo Mike Coles

Salon's half century in the chair

By Diana Cormack

There has been a hairdressing business at 36 Aylmer Parade, N2, for more than 60 years and Christina Michael is proud to say that she has been running hers for fifty of them. In 1972, at the suggestion of her husband, she took on the existing salon and named it Christina's Hair and Beauty Salon.

She took on the staff too until they parted company during the 1970s' three-day week. The business survived those tough economic times as well as the recent pandemic.

Over the years, the salon has witnessed many changes, not just in beauty treatments. With different hair styles and fashions, perms and hair rollers have given way to more relaxed, less time consuming styles and colouring has taken on a new dimension.

These days it's natural-looking hair colours that are popular with her regular clientele, many of whom have been with her for a number of years, as has her staff. Audrey Carrol, of East Finchley, has been going there for 31 years.

Clients are friends
"Our clients have become

our friends," Christina told *The Archer*. "We share each other's special occasions and celebrations." There certainly was a friendly, welcoming atmosphere in the salon, perhaps helped by the spread of delicious food and drink provided to celebrate the salon's half century.

Christina sent out a big thank you to those who have supported her over the years. Asked about her plans for the future, she was adamant that she loves her job so much that she is not contemplating retirement and hopes to continue working until she reaches 100!

Christina's is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm and on Saturday from 8am to 2pm. Telephone the salon on 020 8340 4002.

Tennis on the table

By Diana Cormack

Recent reports on the benefits of table tennis say it helps to keep your brain sharp, improves your reflexes as well as your hand-eye coordination and burns calories whilst being easy on the joints.

East Finchley Table Tennis Club has been running for a number of years and meets twice a week in the Green Man Centre, Strawberry Vale. There are three tables and plenty of bats and balls, provided at a cost of £5 per session or £20 for five sessions. Parking is

available and the Green Man is close to the 263 bus route.

The club is open on Tuesdays from 2.15pm to 3.45pm and on Thursdays from 10.15am to 11.45am. For further details contact Mike on 07815 970 475 or just turn up on the day.

These boots were made for tweeting

By David Melsome

When Chris Stavrou, who runs the KOKOS shoe repair shop in the High Road, N2, opened his laptop one Tuesday morning in early November and found more than 50 new emails waiting for him, he immediately shut it and went to make a cup of coffee. Then he saw his WhatsApp had exploded with countless notifications and soon realised that one of his team's shoe repairs had gone viral on Twitter, with more than 10,500 likes and almost 300 retweets.

The original post was from a customer called Suddi Raval who was so delighted with the way KOKOS had brought his favourite footwear back to life that he shared before and after photos with the world.

Off the back of this tweet, people had found the shop's Instagram, where team member Cristina posts many of their other resoling challenges, and were



Sole survivor: The image from KOKOS customer Suddi Raval that got all the attention

getting in touch in their droves.

Chris said: "Email after email was from someone as passionate as all of us at KOKOS about giving their shoes a new lease of life, rather than throwing them away and buying another pair.

"A gentleman from Wales has already planned his visit during his upcoming trip to London, and is deciding whether to have his favourite brogues resoled with traditional leather or with an eye-catching colourful rubber sole."

Chris said there had been a noticeable shift in society's

awareness of the negative environmental impact of our throw-away culture, and the more that can be fixed, the better in the long run. He added: "We're hoping to play our part, one pair of shoes at a time."

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Long way round: Martin Primary School children on their circuit of East Finchley Allotments. Photo John Lawrence

School pupils stage a mass walk-out

All 677 youngsters at Martin Primary School enjoyed some time out of the classroom last month when they embarked on a sponsored walk of the neighbouring allotments to raise money for Finchley Foodbank.

Each class set out in turn to walk the 1km of paths around the East Finchley Allotments site, spotting wildlife along the way, and learning about the fruit and vegetables growing on the plots.

This was the second time

the school had walked out en masse. Last year, the classes did the same in aid of Ukraine.

Headteacher Ziz Chaters said: "Parents and families always give us so much support and this year we're delighted that they've helped us raise almost £2,700 for the food bank, which needs all the money it can get."

The event lasted all morning on Tuesday 8 November, with each class taking around 15 minutes to complete a circuit. There was plenty of time for debate about the virtues of vegetables along the way. "I like cabbage," said one six-year-old boy. "I don't," said his friend, pulling a face.

School fair

Holy Trinity Primary School in Eagans Close, N2, is hosting its Winter Fair on Saturday 10 December from 12pm to 3pm, with Santa's grotto, a bouncy castle, face painting, a photo booth, tombola, arts & crafts, cakes and hot food. Everyone is welcome.



Fresh air: Holy Trinity pupils enjoy some outdoor learning



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or text 07836 284538 for up to date timings.



Wrap up for some outdoor learning

Holy Trinity Primary School in Eagans Close, N2, gave parents a taste of its popular Early Years Forest School at the end of last month, with Ilga Mezatuca leading pupils in a spot of outdoor learning. Families exploring nursery and reception options for their children can join tours of Holy Trinity until Wednesday 11 January. For more details visit www.holytrinityschool.org/Admissions/School-Tours

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton of N2United

Finchley Foodbank supports hundreds of people every week and demand has increased dramatically. A crucial element is the volunteering team. Roles range from receiving deliveries and sorting food donations to restocking shelves and staffing Tuesday and Saturday sessions. If this could be you, email finchleyfoodbank@gmail.com.

Proms at St Jude's in Hampstead Garden Suburb needs enthusiastic and capable volunteers to join committees working year round to put on the festival. Whether it's education, fund-raising, music planning, social media, catering or logistics, they'll try to match you with the kind of task you would be happy to undertake, whatever time commitment you can offer. Find out more at

www.promsatstjudes.org.uk/volunteering.

Driving Aid to Ukraine is a new non-profit organisation based in N2 and started by local resident Michael Byrne, who delivers lorries of humanitarian aid to the Ukrainian conflict zones via border transfer points. They require all kinds of volunteers. Please get in touch with Michael at 07791 912389 or drivingaidtoulkraine.org

Could you spare an hour or so a week to make a real difference to an older isolated person? **Age UK Barnet** is looking for befrienders to offer friendly chats, support and companionship. The charity also needs walking buddies to help older people to get out and about. Just a couple of hours a week of your time could make a big difference to an older person in East Finchley. As a thank you, volunteers receive a free day pass from The Muswell Hill Gym where you can spend a day using all the facilities. Please contact volunteer manager Lisa on 020 8432 1422 or email lisa.robbins@ageukbarnet.org.uk

The Archer, your very own newspaper, needs you, ideally in the first part of each month, to help deliver the paper to readers. We are particularly looking for people to cover Prospect Ring, Brownswell Road, Tarling Road and Borrowdale Close, all in N2. Most rounds take 30-40 minutes. Papers are brought to your door and you can deliver at a time to suit you. Please contact news@the-archer.co.uk. Thank you.



N2United is East Finchley's Community and Business Network. If you wish to be included in this column please send details to N2United@ILoveN2.co.uk Max 60 words please.



Inspiration: Barnet Mayor Councillor Alison Moore and guest speaker Charlie Walker

Tales of ambition and perseverance

The Archer Academy in East Finchley celebrated the successes and achievements of its students at the school's annual prizegiving ceremony on Thursday 20th October.

Several hundred guests, including Mayor of Barnet Councillor Alison Moore, attended to acknowledge 150 young people who had exceeded expectations in a variety of ways: academically, pastorally, and in their contributions to wider school life.

Guest speaker was explorer and writer Charlie Walker, who talked about his adventures to remote parts of the world and told stories of ambition, determination and perseverance.

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



New faces and a new look at historic pub

By John Lawrence

One of East Finchley's oldest pubs has reopened its doors after an extensive refurbishment and a change of landlord. Following the departure of much-loved former manager Patrick O'Shaughnessy, The Windsor Castle, located on The Walks, is now being run by Arina Piskunova and Eamonn England.

The pub was closed for several weeks while it was repainted outside and totally refashioned inside. Drinks are being served and, as soon as they can find the right chef, Arina and Eamonn say they will open the new kitchen to serve classic seasonal British food. A kitchen garden is also under development to grow seasonal vegetables and herbs for the menu.

Arina and Eamonn, who between them have more than 30 years' experience in customer services and hospitality,

say the Windsor is a "hidden gem in the back streets of East Finchley" and they want to make it a destination venue for people from all around N2 and further afield. A quiz night will be returning soon.

There has been a beer house on the site of the Windsor Castle since the late 1700s, close to what was the Old Drovers' Road, one of the toll-free back roads of the district. Cattle, sheep and pigs went past it to the weekly pig market at Market Place, or onwards into London.



Cheers: Eamonn England and Arina Piskunova behind the new bar at the Windsor Castle. Photo John Lawrence

Pumpkin party in the wood

Everyone got into the spirit by dressing up for the Halloween bash at the Cherry Tree Café in Cherry Tree Wood, which ran through the late afternoon on Monday 31 October as a pre-trick or treating party. There was warming food and drink on offer and a smoke machine to add to the spooky atmosphere.



Partygoer in Cherry Tree Wood. Photo Mike Coles.

Tragi-comedy from The Guild Players

The Guild Players, Finchley's amateur dramatic group, have been entertaining us since 1946 and their latest production is a modern tragi-comedy called *Invincible*.

The play, written by Torben Betts, is about a middle-class couple who move from London to the north in the summer of 2012 for a simpler life amongst 'real people'. When their neighbours turn out to be really football-mad, a culture clash ensues and events take a darker turn.

The company gives an age guidance of 12 plus. Performances are at 7.30pm on Thurs-

day 8, Friday 9 and Saturday 10 December at Finchley Methodist Church Hall, Ballards Lane, N3 1NB. Advance booking is recommended. Tickets are £10 and can be purchased online at: www.ticketsource.co.uk/theguildplayers. Subject to capacity, some tickets may be available to purchase on the door. For box office enquiries call 07938 232 027. Details also available at www.guildplayers.org.uk



Sell out: East Finchley-themed prints

Christmas N2-style

If you missed the winter gift market outside Bottles'n'Jars last month, fear not! HR Events and the East Finchley Festival team are bringing another local makers' market to East Finchley, this time at the Bald Faced Stag on 10 December.

Once again there'll be a selection of artisan makers and crafters selling gifts, including glass light catchers, handmade candles and melts, textiles, knitwear, jewellery, prints and homewares. The East Finchley-themed prints and posters which proved so popular at the winter market that they sold out, will be back.

Brass band and festive fun
There'll be a barbecue and mulled wine, brass band and carols in the garden, plus festive facepainting inside the pub.

East Finchley Christmas Fair will take place from 12-6pm on Saturday 10 December in the car park of the Bald Faced Stag and entry is free. For more information see www.ILoveN2.co.uk/christmas-fair.

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RICKY SAVAGE ...

"THE VOICE OF SOCIAL IRRESPONSIBILITY"

Who's No 1? Who cares?

Yes, folks, it's that time of year when in the grubby world of pop music everyone turns their attention to the Christmas number one. This always used to be the big one and usually the biggest selling single of the year.

All, well almost all, the greats have been there. The Beatles topped the Christmas chart three years in a row in the 60s, Queen managed it twice in 1975 and 1991 with *Bohemian Rhapsody* and Pink Floyd were proudly unfestive with *Another Brick in the Wall* in 1979.

There's been plenty of dross too from Bob The Builder and Benny Hill. And sometimes the great songs only made it to number two, songs like Petula Clark's *Downtown*, Wham's *Last Christmas* and The Pogues and Kirsty MacColl's *Fairy Tale of New York*.

But this was when the charts mattered, when you bought records on pieces of black plastic from your local record store or WH Smiths and played them to death in your bedroom. Back then the stores listed the Top 20 on big posters in the window. Back then you were judged by your record collection. So where did it all go wrong and when did we stop caring about the Christmas number one?

It's a cop out to blame streaming or say that there is too much choice; it's more than that. Since 2002 and the arrival of The X Factor and the manufactured output of Simon Cowell you could guess what was coming next. The last talent show winner would release a cover and it would top the charts at Christmas. And that wasn't the worst of it. The last four years have seen Ladbaby's songs about sausage rolls at number one, for goodness sake.

No one cares about the charts anymore because they don't have to. They can choose to listen to whatever they want, whenever they want, by streaming it in the comfort of their bedroom. Shame really, because today's contenders like Ed Sheeran and Taylor Swift are never going to fill a dancefloor at a Christmas party like Slade's *Merry Christmas Everybody* has done every year since 1973. Like Noddy said: "It's Christmaaaaaaas."



Stories to tell: The young filmmakers who took part in the Reel Lives project

Reel lives of young people in care

By David Melsome

The Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley was the venue for the screening of a new short film showcasing the talents, thoughts and feelings of six young people with experience of the care system.

Created as part of charity Live Unlimited's Reel Lives project, it encouraged the group, all aged 15 to 25, to learn new film-making skills and to be the narrators of their own stories.

Jasmine, 15, who took part in the project, said: "I really loved my experience, it was amazing. I think it boosted my confidence, being in front of the cameras. Through the film we were able to tell our stories so other people in the same situation do not feel alone."

Sue Cocker, project manager for Live Unlimited said: "The young people approached the film making process with such openness and honesty, with each person's story as individual and

unique as they are."

Their film, which was funded by Barnet's Community Innovation Fund, is available to view on Live Unlimited's website www.liveunlimited.org.uk and is well worth a watch.

Age UK carols

Age UK is hosting a Christmas carol concert at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2, on Monday 12 December from 3pm to 4.30pm, with festive singing, music and mince pies. To book, contact teresa.gallagher@ageukbarnet.org.uk or phone her on 07502 989 403.

Choir's 40th

Alyth Choral Society, which is celebrating its 40th year, gives its members the opportunity to perform the great oratorios, many of which are based on biblical tradition, alongside Jewish music, works by prominent British composers and songs from stage and screen.

This year, the choir gave two performances: one in spring to celebrate the late Queen's Diamond Jubilee with songs from around the British Isles, and a summer concert featuring Handel's *Jephtha*. Their year will finish with Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and Whitacre's *Five Hebrew Love Songs* in a performance at their home base in the North Western Reform Synagogue in Alyth Gardens, NW11, on Sunday 11 December.

The society was founded in 1982 to mark the 50th anniversary of the Synagogue. To celebrate the choir's 40th anniversary, there will be a performance of Haydn's masterpiece *The Creation* in July next year.

The choir rehearses for two hours each Tuesday evening in term time and new members are welcome. Find out more at www.alythchoralsociety.org

Gifts galore

Tarling Road YMCA is holding its Christmas Fair on Sunday 4 December from 1pm to 5pm at the Tarling Road Community Centre in Fallows Close, N2. Enjoy face painting, mince pies, a tombola and plenty of ideas for Christmas presents.

What's On at the Phoenix in December

By Zalan Pall, general manager



An apocalyptic drama, a biopic, plenty of Christmas films, classics and an exciting drag event are all to be enjoyed at the Phoenix Cinema in December.

At once hilarious and horrifying, lyrical and absurd, ordinary and apocalyptic, Noah Baumach's *White Noise* from Friday 9 December dramatises a contemporary American family's attempts to deal with the mundane conflicts of everyday life.

Charlotte, also from Friday 9 December, is an animated drama that tells the true story of Charlotte Salomon, a young German-Jewish painter who comes of age in Berlin on the eve of the Second World War.

Barnet's Premiere Drag family That's Drag invite you along on Wednesday 14 December because 'fetch' is gonna happen as the annual *Mean Girls Drag-a-Long* comes to the Phoenix followed by an after-party.

We're excited to announce a bunch of Christmas-themed films including *Gremlins*, *Home Alone*, *The Grinch*, *Arthur Christmas*, *Die Hard*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, and *The Holiday*.

Sunday 18 December sees Ingmar Bergman's *Fanny and Alexander* as the next entry in our classic season. We start the new year with *Queen of Spades* from 8 January, a 1949 British fantasy-horror film based on the 1834 short story of the same name by Alexander Pushkin.

We also have an exciting New Year's Eve music event, a screening of the *Berliner Philharmoniker NYE concert* on Saturday 31 December. Find our full programme at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or drop into our foyer any time.

How absurd

The AB Drama company are bringing their Evening of Conceptual Absurdity back to Finchley Youth Theatre in the High Road, N2, on Sunday 8 January.

Company member Martin Szalla says: "In 2018 and 2019 AB Drama performed similar shows at the same venue. The best ever absurdist actor, Boris Johnson, took over in 2019. Now, as the absurd Downing Street shows have lost some of their top performers, AB Drama are here to fill the gap, performing their experimental, strange, absurd fringy stuff."

The core of AB Drama are Martin and his sons Iulian and Lionel, who lived in East Finchley in those years, Peter McCarthy and Dante Lee Harris. They will be accompanied by local actors and friends. For more details, visit abdrama.net



Absurdist: Martin Szalla

Author's wish come true

Finchley author Adrienne Conway has published a new novel called *The Rejuvenation of Maggie Marks*, about a 57-year-old woman who gets a second chance at life after one day waking up 22 years younger.

Adrienne, a former actress who became a successful TV scriptwriter, had the idea for her novel after moving to Spain and living there for 12 years. Now back in Finchley, her book is published on Amazon. Adrienne said: "I am told over and over again how relatable it is, that no one writes for the older woman, or how they feel about ageing, and how happy they are to live the fantasy world of my character and her journey."



Right: Novelist: Adrienne Conway

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Sunday 18th December

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**Saturday 24th December
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10.00 am Sung Mass of the Day

For more details, contact:

Fr Ian Chandler
020 8883 9315

or check our website:
www.allsaints-eastfinchley.org.uk



Letters



Two sides: The front and back of the new hoarding

Advertising eyesore

Dear Editor,

Is there anybody out there who isn't appalled by the unwanted advertising excrescence causing a visual and physical obstruction outside Iceland?

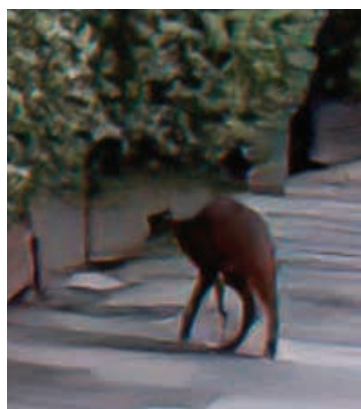
My understanding is that planning permission was given by the London Borough of Barnet for four in our locality, although no income is derived from them for the borough.

It is hard to comprehend the mindset of people who have no compunction about inflicting such eyesores on people. Surely the planners could have stipulated it was sited where it wasn't physically blocking the way, especially as we do have a wide pavement along there which is used for community activities.

There is apparently nothing we the people can do about this, but I have wondered about a bit of direct action such as chaining or glueing myself to it, but don't want to waste the precious time of our depleted police resources.

So are we already just used to having it there, like so many other eyesores inflicted on us, or is there a will to make our feelings heard by those with power over us?

Harriet Copperman,
Address supplied.



Spotted: Market Place muntjac

Muntjac on the fairways

Dear Editor,

You asked for other sightings of muntjac in our area (*The Archer*, November 2022). I am a member of Finchley Golf Club, situated off Frith Lane in Mill Hill East. We are regularly visited by a muntjac, and in the past sometimes two.

We have several wooded areas around the golf course and the muntjac are generally seen crossing the fairways from one copse to another. One of our copses has a natural pond and this is probably why the muntjac like our environment.

Sally Field,
Aylmer Road, N2.

Useful obstacle

Dear Editor,

The sudden arrival of a huge digital advertising hoarding in the middle of the pavement outside Iceland gives us all one more obstacle to step around as we walk down the High Road.

Of course it is redeemed in part by having a very useful defibrillator unit on the opposite side to the advertising screen. I know from personal experience how important a defibrillator can be in saving someone's life in an emergency.

It's just a shame that the price of having one on hand is that it must be backed by a massive advertising obstruction. Why can't it be placed on a prominent wall out of everyone's way, like the one outside the entrance to the Green Man Community Centre on Strawberry Vale?

Of course it would cost money to install. Perhaps that is just the kind of thing that the East Finchley Town Team could work towards?

Douglas Root,
Great North Road, N2.



Lovely plumage: Cappuccino?

Pigeon fancier

Dear Editor,

If you regularly walk along the High Road past Cootes Pharmacy you may well have seen this beautiful coffee and white pigeon. He has been a constant presence all this year, mainly centred around the large plane tree outside the chemist, and has become quite tame and friendly.

I have seen many people stop to admire him and some, like me, have even taken photographs as his colouring is so unusual.

In my mind he is "Cappuccino", a name which suits his colouring, and it always lifts my spirits when I see him parading up and down as I walk by. Do look out for him, he's well worth seeing!

Jane Marsh,
Address supplied

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

Thanks for your help

Dear Editor,

May I please thank two special but anonymous ladies via *The Archer*? Recently I had a bad fall at East Finchley Station forecourt and lay on the ground. Meanwhile my frightened dog was wandering around as I had lost grip of his lead. These two swiftly approached offering their help and carefully up-ended me.

A few minutes later one of them returned and offered to drive me home, which I gratefully declined. She added: "I'm a cab driver but I won't charge you." What generosity and thoughtfulness; sadly somewhat rare these days.

Name and address supplied.



New release: Charlotte Besley

New single from singer Charlotte

East Finchley-based musician Charlotte Besley has released a new single, building on the country music roots of her previous work but also drawing in the sound of the Hammond organ played by pianist Lemos.

Guitarist and singer Charlotte has performed at the East Finchley Festival and in gigs across London. Her new single, called *You Found Me*, is available to stream on Spotify and you can follow her on Instagram @cbesleysings

Bible left on bus

By Diana Cormack
A local grandmother is trying to find the owner of a Bible found in mid-October. She is convinced that the black Bible is special to someone due to the fond messages written inside it. They are dedicated to Michael, who is addressed as a 'good bro' and 'loving bruv' amongst other tributes.

The Bible was found by her 16-year-old grandson on a 125 bus and she is hoping someone reading *The Archer* may be able to help reunite it with its owner. If you have any information please leave a message and contact details on our free voicemail 0800 612 0748 or email news@the-archer.co.uk

Trailblazers in East Finchley

By Chris Stavrou, N2United

November's meeting of business and community network N2United was the last one of the year but everyone is welcome to join us on Thursday 8 December for the N2United Christmas Cracker at the Bald Faced Stag pub in the High Road.

At November's meeting at the East Finchley Constitutional Club we heard from Samantha Haycock on plans to turn the Market Place Play-ground into a flagship park. Emma Frampton, of Bin There Donate That, updated us on the strides that the recycling and reuse project has made in its first year, and Mike, who volunteers for Grange Big Local, spoke about a micro-pilot in the GBL area for a Universal Basic Income scheme.

To keep up to date with more local goings on, check the community calendar at www.ILoveN2.co.uk/N2United and if you would like to get involved further or just get to know other locals who care about N2, there will be more meetings in 2023.

Willow workshop

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood are holding a festive workshop in the wood making willow decorations for the festive season on Sunday 11 December between 11am and 12.30pm. Meet near the café.

Everyone is also welcome to the Friends' AGM on Monday 16 January at 7.30pm in the Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery, Park House, next to the High Road entrance to the wood. For any further information the Friends can be contacted on email friendsofcherrytreewood@gmail.com

Poetry reading

The Black Gull Bookshop in the High Road, N2, will host a reading of early German poetry and poems by Karl Marx on Monday 2 January from 6pm to 7pm.

University of East Anglia professor Dr. Philip Wilson will be reading from his translations of both sets of works. The event is free and open to all, with refreshments available. Book your place through tierney-helen63@gmail.com

Carols for the food bank

Carol singers will be out and about along the High Road in East Finchley on Thursday 15 December between 6pm and 7pm to raise money for Finchley Foodbank.

Last year their Christmas Singalong raised over £200 in just over an hour thanks to the generosity of passers-by, and pub customers at the Old White Lion, Bald Faced Stag, Gertie Brown's and Maddens.

This year the need is even greater as the food bank is now

open twice a week to help individuals and families in need.

Carols organiser Helen Tierney said: "Anyone who wishes to join us is very welcome and if you see the singers out and about on the 15th please give generously, cash or card welcome, for this fantastic local cause."



Twelve months on the pasture

The volunteers at Long Lane Pasture have once again produced a calendar showing sweeping views and close-ups of stunning wildlife seen on the two-acre nature reserve opposite Finchley Fire Station in Long Lane, N3. Their 2023 calendar costs £5 and is available from Long Lane Pasture any Saturday morning 10am to noon, or by contacting Donald Lyven on 07727 748209.

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Carol Service on 17th December @ 5:00 pm
Christmas Midnight Mass 24th December @ 11:30 pm
Christmas Day Family Service 25th December @ 10:00 am

For more information please contact us via our website:
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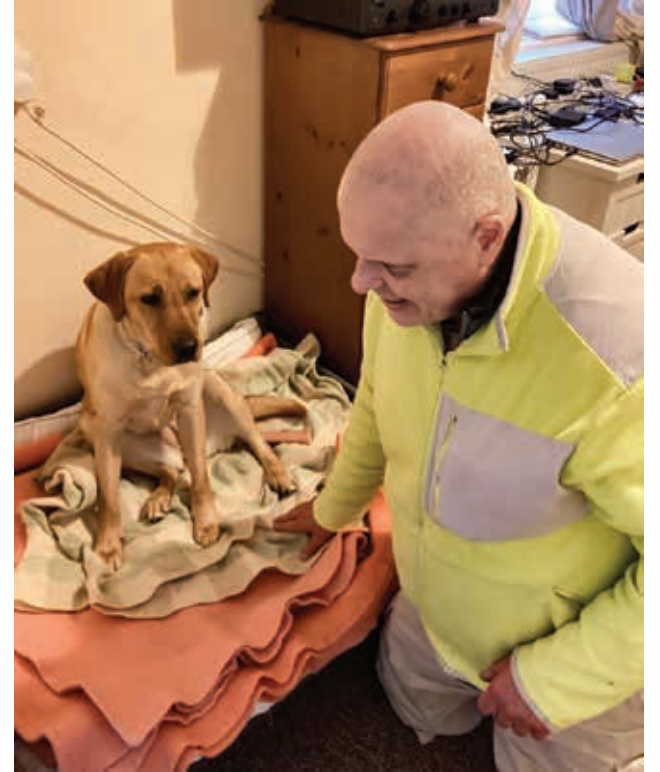
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A new pair of eyes at long last for Stephen



Bonding: Stephen and his new guide dog Xena get to know each other out and about in Michigan and back at the accommodation arranged by the Leader Dogs charity

By Lynn Winton

A year has gone by since we wrote about N2 resident Stephen Steppens and his long wait for a new guide dog. Stephen, blind since birth, is well known amongst Fortis Green locals, often spotted during his frequent visits to his gym or on the way to St James’s Church, Muswell Hill, which he attends regularly.

An adventurous traveller, used to going much further afield, he was frustrated to find his daily outings beyond the local area reduced without a guide dog to give him the confidence to explore the country. It was a year since his black labrador Owen had been retired and Stephen was back on the waiting list at Guide Dogs UK.

Another year passed but we are delighted to report that, finally, Stephen has a wonderful, newly-trained guide dog called Xena, all the way from Michigan in the US, thanks to a groundbreaking arrangement between Guide Dogs UK and an American charity called Leader Dogs.

Stephen’s story

“After waiting over two years for a guide dog, I received information about this partnership. Four people on the waiting list would be selected as four dogs were being trained. I wasn’t even that daunted about travelling to Michigan. I was so desperate I’d have gone anywhere.

“Things moved quickly, I successfully applied for a place. I had to send videos to demonstrate I was out and about. It’s very important that the guide dogs are given to active people otherwise they wouldn’t make use of their valuable training.

“As always, Natalie Blanks, manager of The Muswell Hill Club, helped me with my passport, visa and all the

forms. Then it was all systems go. I flew to Michigan with the three other successful applicants, accompanied by two case workers from Guide Dogs UK. We stayed for three weeks in specially adapted accommodation at Leader Dogs.

“Xena was the perfect dog for me. We bonded immediately. The three weeks training together was very intense. Then we flew home together, with her curled up like a doughnut on the seat next to me.

“I’m continuing the training five times a week from home. We’re just about to embark on our first supervised tube journey together. Soon we’ll be fully qualified and the world is once again full of possibilities.”

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Time rolls by for the Monday Club

By Diana Cormack

East Finchley’s youth club The Monday Club has celebrated its 17th birthday. It was launched on 31 October 2005, which founder Maureen Clemetson recalls was a foggy night. She and her assistant Maureen Antoinette doubted whether many teenagers would make it to the High Road Methodist Church hall for the first meeting (Halloween was not such a huge event then).

Gradually teenagers began to appear as the evening wore on, forming what Maureen calls her ‘first generation’ of youth club members, mostly from the Grange Estate and Strawberry Vale. With her passion for providing something for young people to do locally, she is now on her ‘third generation’ of youngsters with meetings currently held at the Tarling Road community hub.

Seventeen years on, past

and present club members from each generation, some of whom are parents of present day members, celebrated together. They joined in the fun at a family skate session at Roller Nation, Tottenham. Maureen was delighted at the turn out and commented that the first generation loved it just as much as the younger ones. The youth club welcomes any parents who want to participate in their trips and celebrations



Anniversary: Monday Club youngsters enjoy the party

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