



**SAFER
NEIGHBOURHOODS**
LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

How to report a crime

- Call **999** in an emergency when there is a danger to life or a crime is in progress
- Call **101** for non-emergencies, if your property has been stolen or damaged, you wish to report drug dealing or a minor traffic accident, and for general police enquiries
- Report crime to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team by email to eastfinchley.snt@met.police.uk gardensuburb.snt@met.police.uk or fortisgreen.snt@met.police.uk

Find full contact details for the local SNTs at iloven2.co.uk/local-government-and-policing

- Stay anonymous and report information to Crimestoppers on **0800 555111**

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago:

August 2014

Gardening legend Alan Titchmarsh visited East Finchley for the filming of an episode of his gardening programme *Love your Garden*. It featured the home in Summerlee Avenue of garden designer Ana Sanchez-Martin. Alan was filmed walking up and down the road looking at residents' front gardens before exploring Ana's plot in more detail.

15 years ago:

August 2009

Long Lane Pasture was officially opened in beautiful weather after an 11-year struggle by volunteers to preserve it for the benefit of the local community. The site is a remnant of historic Finchley Common and is now a valued wildlife refuge, with ponds and bird feeding stations, accessible paths and a seating area.

23 years ago:

August 2001

A fight involving criminal damage and assault shook the local community. Residents were further shocked by police and emergency services failing to attend the scenes despite 14 calls being made to 999. An initial incident in Lankaster Gardens flared up again in Bedford Road, resulting in the abandonment of a damaged vehicle left blocking the pavement. It took several days and many more phone calls to get the car removed.

Inside the *other* Black Gull Bookshop



Browse and buy: The bright and airy interior and the colourful street frontage of the Black Gull Bookshop in St Leonards-on-Sea

Many people in East Finchley were saddened to lose the Black Gull Bookshop in the High Road, which closed earlier this year. Owner Chris Overfield runs a sister shop in St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, and it was there that **Almar Hafidason** and his family went while on holiday to get their literary fix, as he recalls.

The Black Gull bookshop was a major cultural source of pride for East Finchley. Every time one would read an article in the media on the wonders of living in Muswell Hill or Crouch End (with the lack of a Tube station being a mysterious virtue), there would be the quiet satisfaction of knowing that we had our Black Gull.



Seaside special: Almar and Emilia set aside time for a trip to St Leonards during a family holiday to visit the bookshop

It wasn't just a good bookshop, it was a renowned institution for books. In the months preceding the closure I found myself quietly emptying the place of Robert B Parker books, having discovered a rich seam

of these hard-bitten crime thrillers that I'd never seen in a Waterstones.

On two of those visits I overheard someone who had travelled up from Devon to visit the shop and another who

had come from Germany. "I've opened my own bookshop in Germany," he explained. I never did see exactly the curious look that met that remark but sustaining any second-hand book shop is clearly hard work and we were lucky to have the Black Gull as long as we did.

As it turned out, the Black Gull stayed a little longer with my family because my daughter Emilia wanted to see the Black Gull in St Leonards-on-Sea. It's a handsome seaside town, somewhat faded and not always immediately apparent how lovely it is, until you start scratching the surface and discovering some lovely shops, cafés and assorted oddities. Perhaps it's what an East Finchley by the Sea might be like?

Nestling appropriately on London Road, one of the main thoroughfares leading up from the seafront, it was surreal to walk into another Black Gull, because you start recognising props and books you pondered over but never quite got round to buying in East Finchley. It's

bright, airy and has a lightness that our Black Gull never had but it's unmistakably a home from home. The sign above the door is another hand-painted beauty, the bookmarks are quirky, the welcome warm and the desire to stay and soak in the atmosphere, is strong.

It's sad that our Black Gull has taken flight but reassuring to know that, thanks to our Tube connection direct to Charing Cross, you can catch a train from there right to St Leonards and see our old friend looking quite handsome by the sea.

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