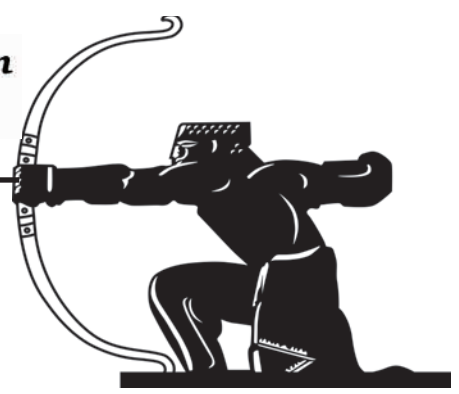




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The Archer

30 Local News is our Aim
30 years 1993-2023



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Delivered free to 10,000 homes and businesses across East Finchley

Questions over parking zone questionnaire

By John Lawrence

Questions have been raised about the public consultation that Barnet Council used to justify the implementation of a new controlled parking zone (CPZ) across a large section of East Finchley after it emerged that it was conducted by the same company that is paid to run all of Barnet's parking services.

Separately, residents and local business people who attended a public meeting on the CPZ last month were surprised to learn that the council approved the Monday to Friday 11am-3pm zone in the northern half of N2 despite 71% of respondents saying they opposed it. The questions come as Cllr Alan Schneiderman, cabinet member responsible for parking, told the same meeting that there would be a second public consultation should the council decide to revive the CPZ plans it halted in February following a flood of complaints. *Full meeting report on page 4.*

First questionnaire

It was in November 2021 that Barnet Council sent out its first questionnaire asking 2,700 homes and businesses residents whether they would support the introduction of parking restrictions in the large area bounded by the North Circular, East End Road and Creighton Avenue/Church Lane.

The Archer has learned that this consultation exercise was conducted by a company called Marston Holdings, who are contracted to provide the NSL parking enforcement service for the whole of Barnet, including the three CPZs already in place in East Finchley. Marston Holdings administers the parking control system and employs the traffic wardens we see on our streets. We asked Barnet Council whether, in the light of this, the public consultation could be seen as impartial. A spokesperson told us: "All decisions on CPZs are made by the council. The council is satisfied that the consultation methodology was

robust and objective, utilising a leading UK online surveying tool to analyse the responses."

Council calculations

The council confirmed that it had decided a slim majority of 51% of people could potentially benefit from the CPZ by adding together the 22% who positively supported it in the questionnaire with another 29% who reported some parking issues in their road, even though those two groups could have overlapped.

When we asked why they approved the new East Finchley CPZ when 71% of respondents to the questionnaire explicitly opposed it, the council spokesperson said: "Consultations are an extremely important part of the CPZ process. The type of parking issues raised and the nature of the comments received are also considered to determine which method of control would be most appropriate to help alleviate and address the issues and concerns raised." *"We've already said we don't want it", page 4.*



All stars: Host Pat Leacock joins all the performers in the East Finchley's Got Talent 2 show at the Phoenix Cinema last month. Photo by Mike Coles

Mind-reading and musical excellence

An impressive mind-reading act and a set of accomplished young musicians were all part of the line-up at the second East Finchley's Got Talent contest held at the Phoenix Cinema last month. Turn to page 3 for more pictures and a full report.

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- War memoir..... P10
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Lifesaver in the park

Cherry Tree Wood now has a defibrillator, fixed to the side of the Cherry Tree Café. By using a defibrillator before an ambulance arrives, you can significantly increase someone's chance of survival.

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood ask park users to take time to read the instructions or check out the advice on the St John's Ambulance website at www.sja.org.uk. No special training is needed to use it.



'Emergency use: The defibrillator at the Cherry Tree Café

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Copy deadlines - June: 10 May, July: 14 June, August: 12 July



Vacant plot: The land on the corner of the High Road and Church Lane is still empty and fenced off eight years after the former Esso petrol station was demolished.

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

East Finchley Festival Special

The famous East Finchley Festival is happening on **Sunday 23 June** and this month we are devoting our volunteer column exclusively to signing up volunteers who want to 'Be Part of It'. Have a look at the listings and see what takes your fancy. It's 'Just for One Day' and a fantastic way to support your community and get to know more about it.

East Finchley Festival is run entirely by volunteers, and needs dozens of helpers on the day. If you can spare an hour to help out on the afternoon it would be hugely appreciated!

- Selling raffle tickets (1 hour shifts)
- Set up and/or take down (no heavy lifting required)
- General stewarding (shifts available)
- Supervision of activity areas (sports, crafts, lego and laser tag). This can be done in shifts.
- Parade marshalls (1 hour)

We'd also love to hear from anyone who has a van who may be able to help us transport equipment to or from Cherry Tree Wood. Please visit eastfinchleyfestival.org/volunteer for more details or to sign up.

If you'd like your organisation to be included in this column and listed on the East Finchley community website, please complete the form at www.ILoveN2.co.uk/be-part-of-it.



PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet Council

238 High Road, N2

Details of conditions pursuant to planning permission.

55 Park Hall Road, N2

Roof extension, with one rear dormer window over main roof and one rear dormer over out-rigger roof. Three front facing roof lights

46 Abbots Gardens, N2

Roof extension with rear dormer window and new side gable window.

115 Abbots Gardens, N2

Single-storey rear extension. Depth 4.7m. Maximum height 3m and eaves height 3m, Fairacres, 164 East End Road, N2

Demolition of units in central and southern parts of existing building, and construction of new replacement self-contained dwellings to provide 36 residential units (Class C3). Altera-

tions to existing and retained front part of the building to provide three reconfigured self-contained residential units and the retention of one existing self-contained residential unit (Class C3). With other general refurbishment and alterations works, new landscaping, refuse store, car and cycle parking, sub-station and retaining existing accesses on East End Road and Pulham Avenue. Retention of St Anne's House (2 units) and general refurbishment and improvement works

37 Bancroft Avenue, N2

Single-storey rear extension following demolition of the existing conservatory.

Land adjacent to 290 Long Lane, N2

Erection of two-storey dwelling with rooms in the roof space. Associated refuse/recycling store.

Land worth millions is still a desolate wasteland eyesore

By Janet Maitland

There is still no sign of building work beginning on the vacant plot of land on the corner of the High Road and Church Lane, N2, despite planning permission being granted more than four years ago.

The land, formerly the site of an Esso petrol station, was purchased by Leopold Properties for just over £5million pounds in 2016 and, as previously reported in *The Archer*, plans were submitted for the construction of 20 flats in two blocks.

Barnet Council approved the plans in November 2019 with the statutory condition that building work should start within three years or permission would be rescinded. A few days before that deadline in November 2022, some rubbish was cleared away and a hole dug in one corner.

Legal criteria

Shortly after that, we contacted the council to check on progress and a spokesperson told us that all that was needed to retain permission was to "dig a trench or the like". After that it was "down to developers as to the speed at which the development is completed".

When the permission did not expire it seemed that some action taken by the developers had been defined as construction work and had therefore met the legal criteria. But when by last month not a single brick had been laid, we asked the council if the site had been inspected to check that construction work had started. It hadn't.

No implementation

We were told that the "council's Enforcement Team has not received any claims that works relating to the development have commenced or any correspondence from the applicant stating that they have implemented the permission. As such, there is no need for the Enforcement Team to inspect the site".

The council spokesperson

added that, "If a trench was located where the proposed foundations or service runs would subsequently go this could indeed be implementation but if a random hole is dug in the ground then the view would most likely be that this does not

this is a "relatively subjective assessment and a matter of fact and degree depending on circumstances".

The last time we contacted the agent for Leopold Properties was three years ago when he told us the company



Proposals: Designs approved in 2019 would have seen the construction of 20 flats in two blocks.

constitute implementation".

We were informed that a local planning authority does have the power to require landowners to "carry out works to improve land which is adversely affecting the amenity of an area" although

intended to implement the planning permission before it expired and he had no further comments. We will continue to check on the status of the development and report what we learn in future editions.

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All winners: Talent show performers, clockwise from top left, singer Darcey Batchelor, guitarist Eila Zecevic, guitarist Luke Neilson, Rubik's Cube expert Alexandros Leventelis, puppeteer Jake Eiseman-Renyard, drummer Reuben Freeman, and mindreader Fable Goodall with host Pat Leacock. Photos Mike Coles

Mind-reading, manual dexterity and musical excellence

By Diana Cormack

Many of the afternoon audience at the Phoenix on Sunday 21 April were new to the cinema. They had come for the second edition of the East Finchley's Got Talent show originally staged in last year's Town Team Arts and Music event.

Master of ceremonies, East Finchley Festival's Pat "Have Mercy" Leacock opened the show with his usual infectious enthusiasm. He reminded the audience how courageous it was of the participants to perform for them which, given that their ages ranged from ten to 13, with one exception, was certainly true.

However, their age belied their talent, as judges Kate Galston, Mike Hughes and Hilary Townley were soon to discover.

The show opened with ten-year-old Alexandros Leventelis' Rubik's Cube Challenge when he had everyone holding their breath as he confidently managed to solve the puzzle in no time, breaking his own record against a previous video of his screened behind him.

Another impressive ten-year-old was Fable Goodall, whose mind-reading act bodes well for future success. A third ten-year-old, Reuben Freeman, drummed along coolly and confidently to the Guns 'n Roses hit

Sweet Child of Mine. Cool 12-year-old guitarist Luke Neilson rivalled the dexterity of legendary artists like Chuck Berry, even playing the instrument from behind his head at times, whilst 12-year-old Darcey Batchelor was impressive singing a song from *Hamilton*.

Playing an acoustic guitar, 13-year-old Eila Zecevic's soulful rendition of a song she composed herself had the judges commenting that she would go far with the quality of her voice.

Ventriloquism meant that Jake Eiseman-Renyard had to throw his voice in order that Madge, his parrot puppet, could make comments in 'Look Who's Squawking', an amusing act about the chaos she brought

to Channel 6 TV news. All the participants were presented with a commemorative certificate and medal, including Pat Leacock, who put so much into this exciting show taking place.

A tasty slice of the silver screen

By Ruth Anders

You had to be quick to grab a slice of one of the scrumptious cakes entered for the second East Finchley Bake-Off competition at the Phoenix Cinema on Sunday 21 April.

Twelve months ago, then 10-year-old Essie Broomhall won the first Bake-Off competition with a magnificent cake inspired by the Phoenix itself, a carrot cake with vanilla and toffee popcorn cupcakes.

This year, to accompany the East Finchley's Got Talent competition taking place at the cinema, Essie was appointed one of the judges of the 2024 Bake-Off contest, alongside Phoenix manager Ewelina Sadlowska. Judging of course involved tasting each of the entries, no hardship for champion baker Essie!

This year's theme was 'The Silver Screen', aligning neatly with the competition venue. All the delicious cakes were avail-



Table of delights: Judges tuck into the entries for the East Finchley Bake Off at the Phoenix Cinema

able to taste during the interval of the talent show.

The winning cake, whose baker asked to remain anonymous, was inspired by a recent visit to Japan and a corresponding interest in the films of legendary film-maker Akira Kurosawa. The Seven Samurai cake boasted seven layers of Japanese flavours including cherry blossom cream, paste and frosting and decorations of nerikiri (a type of Japanese confection).

Earning the prize of an attractive cake stand, its mouth-watering taste was equalled by its spectacular appearance, and at the end of the talent show's interval not a crumb remained of the delicious cakes on offer.

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“We’ve already said we don’t want it”

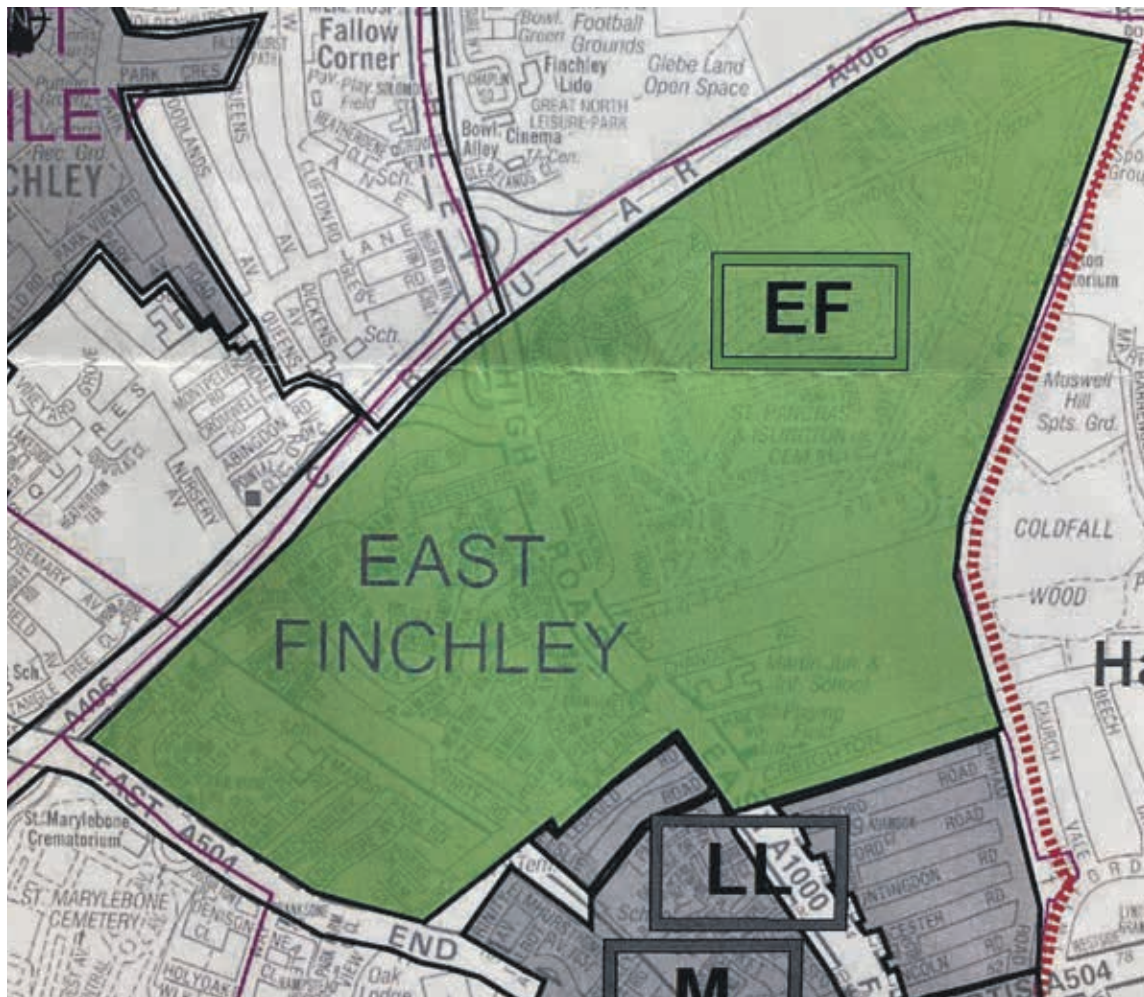
By John Lawrence

Barnet Council has promised to conduct a second public consultation before going ahead with any new 11am-3pm controlled parking zone (CPZ) across the top half of East Finchley following an angry backlash from residents and businesses that caused parking chiefs to postpone their original start date in February.

The promise was made by Councillor Alan Schneiderman, Barnet Council’s cabinet member for the environment and climate change, at a packed public meeting on the CPZ organised by East Finchley Town Team and attended by more than 70 people at the Constitutional Club in The Walks, N2, last month. “The commitment is that the original scheme will not go ahead at this time,” said Cllr Schneiderman. “If there are any new proposals there will be a full and proper consultation on them. We definitely want to work with the local community and we share the interests of everyone here.”

“We don’t want it”

But many at the meeting questioned how much notice the council would take of another consultation after seeing it give the CPZ the green light last year despite 71% of people who answered the first consultation in November 2021 saying they *didn’t* want it. Kate Brown, chair of the Town Team, said: “The clear feeling of the people at this meeting is that they do not want the scheme to be resurrected and just presented to people in another consultation form for them to fill out again.” Someone from the floor added: “Why do we need another consultation? We’ve already said we don’t want it in the first one.”



Blanket coverage: The area in green across the top half of East Finchley represents the postponed new parking zone

In that first consultation, the council claimed there was a slender majority of 51% of respondents who would benefit from the CPZ by taking the 22% who expressly supported it and adding another 29% who reported ‘parking issues’ of

some kind in their road, even though these may not have been solved by restricted parking hours. For instance, some at the meeting said it was the evening hours when their roads were crowded as residents arrived home, rather than during the day.

Money-making scheme?

The main justification for CPZs is that they remove overcrowding caused by commuters from outside the area taking up spaces during the working day. Three zones in the southern section of East Finchley closest to

the tube station already serve that purpose.

But the proposed new zone across the northern section is at least a 10-minute walk from any tube station and many residents in it say they are not crowded out by commuters. Several people at the meeting expressed the opinion that any new CPZ in this area would just be a money-making scheme for the council. Residents would be required to buy annual permits to park during the hours of 11am to 3pm from Monday to Friday.

Councillor Schneiderman answered the point by saying: “Any money the council raises from parking over and above the cost of the scheme has to be used on transport and roads. There are very tough legal restrictions around that.”

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

10 years ago: May 2014

There was local concern when price comparison website Moneysupermarket.com ranked East Finchley fifth overall in a list of UK postal districts where homes are most at risk of burglary. Subsequent investigation by *The Archer* revealed that, according to the Metropolitan Police, N2 was not even in their top 50 burglary hotspots in Greater London, let alone the whole country... a reassuring response.

15 years ago: May 2009

Finchley native and acclaimed film director Tom Hooper hosted a showing of his latest film *The Damned United* at the Phoenix Cinema. He also took part in a Q&A after the performance, which raised funds for the cinema’s centenary restoration project. The film starred Michael Sheen as Brian Clough in a fictionalised account of his 44-day tenure as manager of Leeds United football club.

23 years ago: May 2001

A local milkman’s float was attacked in Leslie Road with stones and bricks one morning. The windscreen of the cab was shattered and the driver suffered bruising and cuts requiring nine stitches. Two parked cars and a house also had windows broken. Police arrived very quickly and four local boys were arrested on suspicion of being the culprits.

What was said at the CPZ public meeting?

Here is a selection of the questions asked and the comments made by the residents and local business people who attended the Town Team’s public meeting about the postponed new East Finchley controlled parking zone (CPZ).

Roger Chapman, East Finchley Town Team: “There needs to be full and proper discussion of any future CPZ and co-operation from all sides to work through the issues. The impact on organisations, schools and businesses should be full assessed. And the same applies should the council be considering extending the hours of the parking zones already in place in East Finchley.”

Edward Butler, the Sylvester Road resident who organised a petition in protest at the way the original public consultation was conducted, which attracted 1,150 signatures: “I appreciate that the CPZ scheme has been paused for now. The council needs to communicate better and rebuild people’s trust. A consultation should put all the right information in front of people. Then they need to see the data from the results to check that it’s needed and is effective and that any parking hours are proportionate.”

Joss Woolf, Church Lane resident: “We must look after our local businesses. The Piccolo Villaggio restaurant, Jennie Mann flower shop and Emily’s hairdresser on the corner of Long Lane and Church Lane would all be badly affected if their customers couldn’t park during business hours.”

Brackenbury Road resident: “The CPZ will not solve the problem of bad parking. It’s after 5pm when residents are at home that we have issues. We see people parking on the double yellow lines at the East End Road end of our road. That needs to be enforced first before introducing more restrictions.”

Owner of Clichy Garage, King Street: “I run a small business where my staff have to commute in. We will have to shell out thousands of pounds on permits just for our staff to continue to work for us.”

Local resident: “We should be concerned about older and more vulnerable people. It will be harder for their carers to park

and visit them. These people often find it hard to navigate the council website or app to make payments so they are just going to get more and more isolated.”

Councillor Alan Schneiderman, Barnet Council cabinet member for the environment and climate change: “It has been the council’s policy since January 2021 to implement larger parking zones. The theory is that they prevent the incremental displacement that you get if you just keep pushing parking restrictions out road by road. But obviously the bigger zones bring the issue that there will be people in those zones who are not affected by parking issues at all and say they don’t need them. “We paused the implementation of the CPZ in East Finchley in recognition of the concern coming through from councillors and residents. Should we have a second consultation, I take the point that clearer communication is needed next time.”



What should happen next?

Should the proposed new East Finchley controlled parking zone be revised and opened to another public consultation or should it be scrapped altogether? Send us your views by emailing news@the-archer.co.uk



Cloud over tennis club as housing application is lodged

An application has been submitted to Haringey Council for the redevelopment of the site of Fortis Green Tennis Club, off Southern Road, N2.

As reported in previous editions of *The Archer*, the proposal is for five houses and a block of three flats to be built on part of the site while the rest remains a tennis club. The number of courts will be reduced from four to three.

The site is owned by Muswell Hill United Reformed Church and the case put forward

in the hope that a mutually acceptable site plan can be designed. The contents of the present planning application have not been pre-agreed with the club.

Members of the club, which has been on the site since the 1920s, say the loss of much of their green space to housing is particularly problematic, as it



Green and pleasant: Members see the Fortis Green Tennis Club as a hidden oasis

in the application is that the club is tired and the development is intended to save it and secure its future. However, the club itself does not agree with the proposals.

The club has been in talks with developers the Capstone Group for more than five years

impedes their social events and curtails children's activities on the lawns during coaching.

Local residents are arranging meetings to prepare their opposition to the proposals. The consultation period for the application (ref. HGY/2024/0871) ends on 10 May.



Red and whites: The Finchley U16s show their dominance on the pitch in a tight victory against Dings Crusaders from Bristol. Photo Andy Stone

Rugby girls make it to the final

Finchley Rugby Club's Under-16 Girls have reached the National Cup Final after a hard-fought win over Bristol's Dings Crusaders in front of a packed grandstand at

Imagine a future with a basic income

Last June, the Grange Big Local project team announced they would be piloting a Basic Income scheme in East Finchley, where unconditional payments of £1,600 per month for two years would be made to those selected to take part.

The aim is to assess the impact of the regular income on the participants' physical health, mental well-being, and on their work, education and life opportunities. East Finchley was one of two locations in the country chosen to run the pilot. While the project is still currently in its fundraising phase, Grange Big Local is inviting local people along to an event to

bring the idea of the basic income to life, exploring "what life could be like if everyone had enough". Tickets are free and there will be free pizza and childcare provided. It takes place at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, N2, on Monday 13 May from 6.30pm to 8pm. To secure your free ticket, visit Grange Big Local's Eventbrite page: <https://tinyurl.com/ImagineUBI>

Finchley's Summers Lane ground last month.

The two sides fought hard for the win and at half-time Finchley were 10-14 down. Bristol maintained their lead until the last four minutes of the game when Finchley scored a try to make the final score 22-21.

Finchley Rugby Club coach Chris Grilli said: "This was one of the most exciting and intense games hosted for many years. From the kick-off, Finchley pressured Dings into mistakes." Their victory took them on to the national final against Sandal RUFC at Worcester's Sixways Stadium, scheduled to take place on Sunday 28 April after this edition went to press.

One last hurrah at Black Gull

By Ruth Anders

Crowds of supporters and well-wishers crammed into the Black Gull Bookshop on the High Road at the end of March to enjoy generous quantities of wine and nibbles. A party yes, but one more like a wake than a celebration as the shop was winding down to closure after 16 successful years.

As we reported in February, the shop's new leaseholder Chris Masson was unable to come to an agreement with the landlord over the terms of his lease renewal and took the difficult decision to move out. Those present at the farewell and those unable to join them mourn the departure of Chris, plus previous leaseholder Chris Overfield, shop staff Brian and Robin, and this much-loved East Finchley institution.



Close the book: The farewell party at Black Gull. Photo Mike Coles



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East Finchley businesses back the reusable revolution

By Katie Johns

More than 20 businesses in East Finchley have pledged their commitment to reducing single-use plastics by joining the reusable revolution.

Shops, cafés and restaurants along the High Road are encouraging customers to bring their reusable food and drink containers to be filled as part of a campaign led by North London Waste Authority and Barnet Council.

The launch of 'Bring It, Barnet' comes after research conducted in September 2023 showed that 77.7% of residents across the borough want to reduce the amount of single-use plastic they use when buying food and drink products, and almost 80% understand that a lot of single-use plastic could be replaced with reusable alternatives.

Featuring real Barnet residents and business owners, the

campaign is encouraging more people living and working in the area to choose sustainable coffee cups, shopping bags, water bottles and food containers over disposable options.

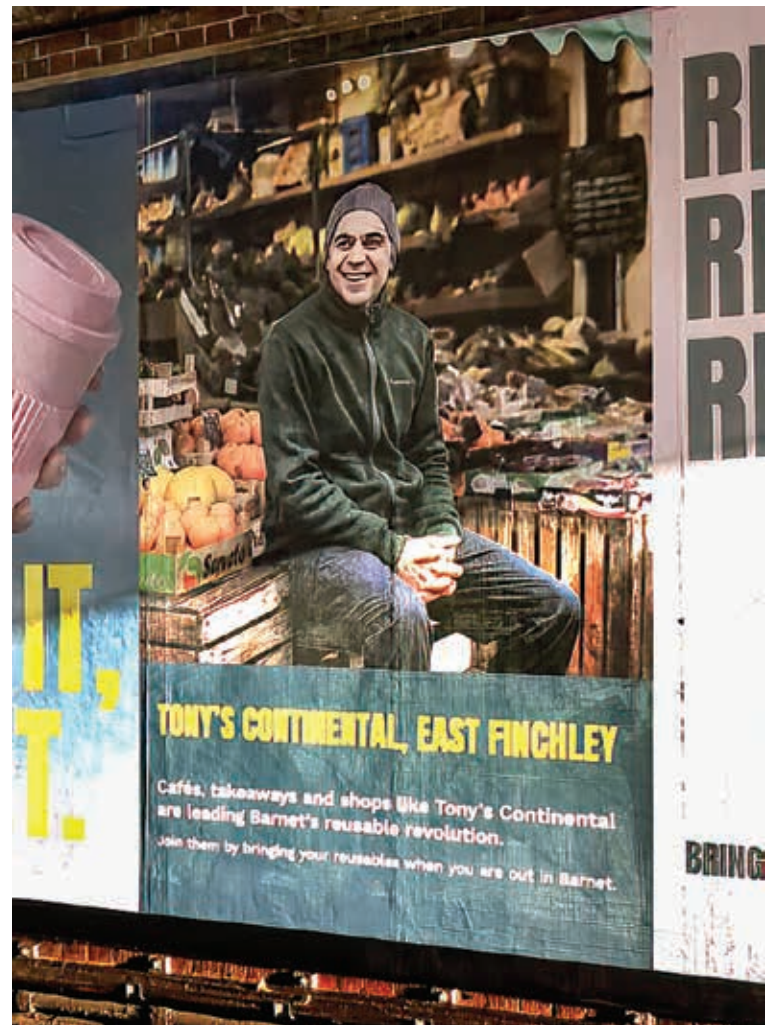
East Finchley and High Barnet were chosen as pilot areas as part of Barnet's target of becoming a Net Zero council by 2030 and a Net Zero borough no later than 2042, with the campaign set to roll out to north London's six other boroughs later this year.

Tony's Continental, a grocery store that features in the campaign, is one of 21 businesses currently displaying posters and window stickers showing support for 'Bring It, Barnet', which also appears on

billboards and bus stops in East Finchley.

Co-owner Chris Athanasiou said: "We're a small family business, and we feel like part of the community. Most of our customers bring their own bags or boxes for our loose fruit and veg, and we even offer a refill station for your olive oil! Reducing single-use plastic really is a community effort."

The 21 East Finchley businesses currently backing 'Bring It, Barnet' are: Amy's Housewares, Dan & Decarlo, 3R Express Mart, Patco News, Cherry Tree, N2 Food Centre, Josephines Flowers, Kokos Shoes and Repairs, Amici Deli, Coffee Bank London, Case Pepe, Pacey Newsagents, Cup of Joy, Egg and Bake, Tony's Continental, East Finchley Supermarket, RSPCA, Cootes Pharmacy, Bald Faced Stag, CW Andrew Pharmacy, and Campbell & Syme Coffee.



Poster boy: Chris Athanasiou, from Tony's Continental, in a tube station advertisement for the reusability campaign. Photo Mike Coles

Free entry art fair

Members of the HGS Art group are hosting their annual art fair in Hampstead Garden Suburb this month featuring paintings, photography, jewellery, sculptures, ceramics, prints and textiles by more than 20 local artists.

Entry is free to the fair which runs from 11am to 5pm on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 May at Fellowship House, 136a Wilfield Way, NW11. WIFinchley will be serving refreshments with proceeds going to local charities and there will be free art activities for children. Find out more at www.hgsart.co.uk



Where to donate your unwanted household items for recycling

- Batteries to EF Electricals and Sainsbury's, High Road
- Bicycle inner tubes to Bike & Run, High Road
- Cables and small electrical items to EF Electricals, High Road
- Crisp packets to Cherry Tree Café, Cherry Tree Wood
- Dental products (toothbrushes and heads) to Cavendish Dental Practice, East End Road
- Electrical cables to Everything Electrical, High Road
- Ink jet 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

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

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

Car thefts

Organised gangs from the UK and abroad are stealing high-end keyless vehicles. Over three nights in Barnet 15 vehicles were stolen and only two were recovered. An East Finchley resident had a Hyundai Kona stolen from Bedford Road, N2.

The Met are running operations to prevent these thefts and to gather intelligence, and there are a couple of things you can do to prevent your vehicle being taken.

Use a Faraday pouch to keep your vehicle fob in. Do consider spare fobs and keep these in a pouch too. A quick check when locking up at night to see your fob is protected is useful as nearly all of the vehicles were taken overnight, during the early morning hours.

A good old-style disk lock that fits over the steering wheel is a very effective deterrent. Or if you have a driveway, a locking bollard prevents thieves from moving your vehicle.

Darling buds of May



The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have been receiving lots of queries about the name of the lovely flowers that are populating the spot where the old pavilion used to stand.

They are called snakehead fritillaries and were planted by the Friends some years ago. They are a bulb which enjoys wet ground. These photos taken by local photography student Ruby Hart really illustrate the snakeskin pattern of their petals and explain the name.

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Benches that will transform into a stage in town square

By Mark Power

The March edition of *The Archer* revealed plans to transform the wide pavement outside Budgens and Amy's on the High Road into a new town square. Now East Finchley Town Team have been successful in their bid for Barnet Community Grant funds to support making a small temporary installation of experimental street furniture to test one aspect of the design during the London Festival of Architecture (LFA) this June.

The temporary 'Stagesettee', made of timber benches that can be put together to form a stage, will prototype some of the street furniture shown in the town square proposals.

Reflecting feedback from last year's LFA, where more than 50% of visitors said they

of the drawn town square proposals will be displayed in the Egg & Bake café on the High Road throughout June, where residents and visitors can also comment.

Scheme refinements will be made following this second round of LFA public consul-



All change: Concept designs of how benches could be turned into stages in the High Road. Sketches courtesy of Mark Power.

wanted improved planting, more trees, better seating and space for community events, the Stagesettee is made from green materials.

Benches will be positioned perpendicular to the road in the open area of pavement under the plane trees and will be enhanced with extra planting. For performances, they can be reconfigured as a small stage.

The installation, a collaboration between East Finchley architects MillsPower, furniture-maker Fruzi Karig, and local volunteers, will provoke different activities and stimulate further thinking on transforming this area into a genuine focus for public life and neighbourhood celebrations.

People will be encouraged to use the Stagesettee installation for games, picnics, storytelling, talks, plays, shows and music, and to record their experiences on social media, or postcards in the bench. Town Team will hold a community consultation event there on Saturday 22 June.

In parallel, an exhibition

tation before submission for planning in the autumn.

You can also find the drawings and details online at www.eastfinchley.london. If you have comments on them, email eftownteam@gmail.com.



Dancefloor days: Disco lovers of a certain age let loose at the Ann Owens Centre. Photo Age UK Barnet

Never too old to boogie all night

By Karen Williamson

Age UK Barnet's first disco for over 55s was a huge success. Everyone enjoyed a fantastic night of dancing and socialising at the Ann Owens Centre in East Finchley, proving that age is no barrier when it comes to having a good time on the dance floor.

The event was staged to celebrate Age Without Limits Action Day and, to make sure there was something for everyone, disco-goers got a chance to add their favourite tunes to the playlist on the way in.

"I love dancing and have been looking for something like this for ages," said 70-year-old Saj. "I absolutely loved the disco and it was just so great to see people having such a good time."

Some were a bit hesitant at first but once things got going, it was hard to keep everyone off

the dance floor. Leo, also 70, said: "To be perfectly honest, I wasn't looking forward to going but thoroughly enjoyed it after the initial 'wallflower' stage."

Raquel added: "I had a wonderful time and I even forgot my body aches and joint stiffness." One man with mobility issues said: "I love music and it's hard for me to go to gigs as I live in sheltered accommodation and find it more difficult to get out but this was brilliant. I had a seat and could still get up for the odd dance."

Age-friendly Barnet coordinator Pippa says: "We came up with the idea because the over-50s we speak to still want to go out, be sociable, listen to music and dance. That part of their life is not over. As we get older, we still want to do the things we used to do which is why Age UK Barnet aims to make this a regular event."

If you'd like to be added to the list for future discos at the centre in Oak Lane, N2, email agefriendly@ageukbarnet.org.uk or phone Pippa on 07379 331807.

Bowls is a young person's game

The youngest-ever champion at Muswell Hill Bowls Club has said the stereotype of the sport as an old person's game needs to be forgotten.

Billy Barker, 19, who joined the club in 2018, triumphed in the Championship Competition last year, making him the youngest ever winner of this internal club competition. Billy also won the handicap competition, making it a club double.

"The stereotype needs to be forgotten. I believe it stops younger people from even thinking of joining a bowls club in the first place," he said. "It's a tactical game and, once you get the hang of it, it's fun to take part in. It needs to become more multi-generational in the UK as it is open to anyone. In Australia it is very much a young person's game."

"I did get made fun of by my mates at the start when I started playing but once they watched me play and learned the game themselves they realised it was enjoyable and they ask to come

and play in the summer."

The club on Kings Eve, N10, is holding an open day on Monday 6 May, from 2pm to 6pm, and members of the public are invited to attend.

Billy, currently a student at Manchester Met University, is hoping to take his game further this year. "Being able to have my name engraved on the club champion board is exciting," he says. "I want hopefully to be able to retain my trophy this year, and have another go representing the county if the opportunity arises again as well as test myself in the Tudor Cup, the competition for club champions."



Numbers game: Billy Barker says bowls is a sport for all ages

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Pocket garden: Residents and volunteers at the environmental award presentation in Leopold Road

Green credentials award for neighbourhood garden

By Ruth Anders

Local residents and members of The Finchley Society and East Finchley Community Trust came together in early April to see the Leopold Road Neighbourhood Garden presented with an environmental award.

The Finchley Society's Environment & Transport committee supports the encouragement of green spaces, and it was easy to see why they had made the award to the neighbourhood project. The flower beds are bursting with beautiful plants, the small library, managed by librarian Valerie Teague, is thriving, and the seats beg you to take a breather there.

Mick Crick, Chairman of the Society, told *The Archer*: "It's lovely to see something that lifts the spirits and is the total opposite of the little nooks that attract cigarette ends and beer cans."

The garden's designer Edwina Roberts added, "I am very possessive about these flower beds! Living round the corner in Leopold Road it's

easy for me to check on them all the time and keep them tidy." Leopold Road resident Kathy Batten was delighted to accept the award from the Society's Peter Hale, before circulating chocolates. Barnet Council and its councillors, the Trust and the Society have all helped enable the transformation of what was once a derelict area through their financial support.

A place to put divisions aside

By Maxine Klein

We are living through a time of war, and conflict borne of mistrust and hatred of others. So it was heartwarming to attend an event a few weeks ago at which Jews, Muslims, Christians, asylum seekers from many countries, young people, older people and children all assembled to celebrate Iftar, the fast-breaking meal of Muslims in Ramadan, at Finchley Progressive Synagogue.

This event was designed to create awareness of Citizen UK's Room on the Bus campaign for free travel in Barnet for asylum seekers. The group hired a vintage bus that toured key areas and ended up in Barnet for the Iftar event.

The evening started with Rabbi Rebecca Birk saying a blessing and then welcoming guests from local synagogues, churches, schools, mosques, and other organisations. Two of the asylum seekers explained what the campaign was about and why

free transport is so essential.

There followed a delicious vegetarian meal at which the guests were encouraged to speak to people whom they did not know. Some did, others didn't, but it was nevertheless a very lively and joyous occasion.

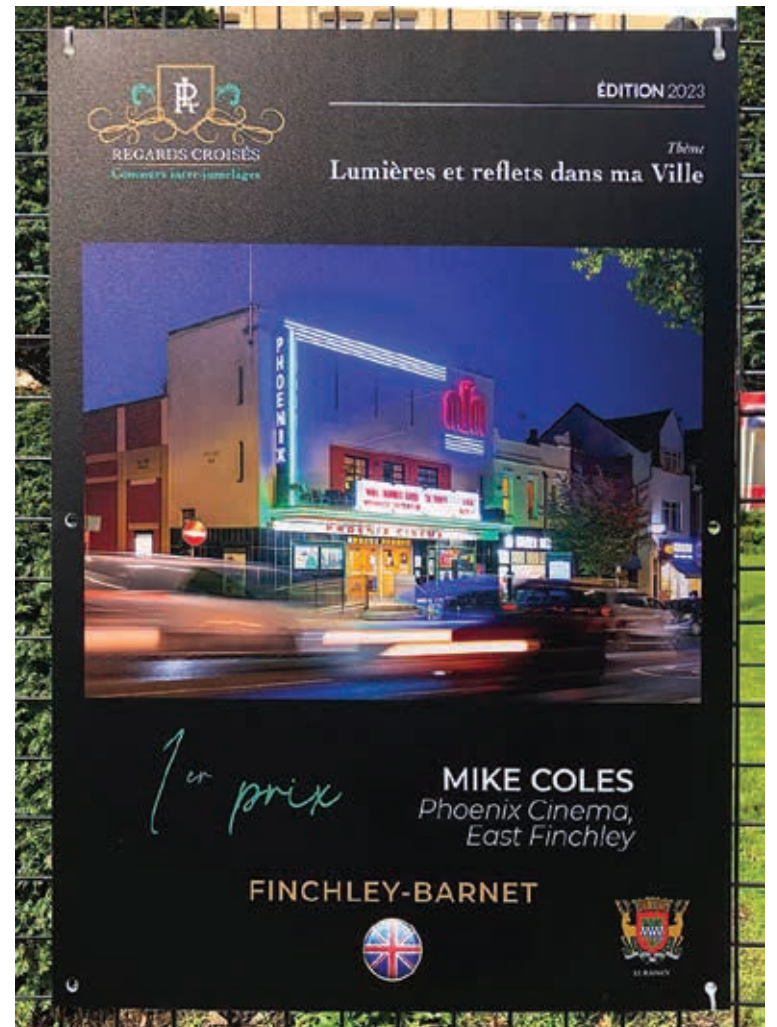


Breaking bread: People of all denominations and none enjoy the Iftar meal together. Photo courtesy Maxine Klein

Mike lights up the big screen

Congratulations to our photo editor Mike Coles, who won first place in a photo competition run by Barnet's twin town in France. Each year, Le Raincy invites residents of its twin towns, also including Caldas da Rainha in Portugal and Clusone in Italy, to send in their best work and this year the theme was 'Lights and Reflections in my City'.

This gave Mike the chance to send in one of his atmospheric shots of East Finchley's Phoenix Cinema illuminated in its wonderful neon colours with the headlights of traffic passing by on the High Road.



Neon frontage: Mike's winning shot of the Phoenix in the twin town competition

Calling all singles

Singles are being invited to come along to the East Finchley Constitutional Club in The Walks, N2, for a friendly evening with a chance to meet and talk with others.

"Many individuals try dating apps which can be daunting and sometimes impersonal, so we thought we would invite local single people to come along to the Club," said the organisers. "No games, no gimmicks, no pressure, just meeting and talking to other locals. This is open to anyone over 18, everyone is welcome." If you'd like to come along for the Singles Night on Saturday 18 May at 7.30pm, book your



space for £5 with a free drink on arrival by emailing efclub1@gmail.com. You'll receive payment details by reply.

Muswell Hill indoor sale

The next monthly Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale takes place on Saturday 25 May from 10am to 1pm at Hornsey Parish Church Hall, on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Rd, N10 3AH. Buses W7, W3 and 144 stop nearby. Admission is 50p and refreshments are available. For more information, contact 020 8368 8180.



Mercy dash: Runners head to Finchley Foodbank with their donations. Photo courtesy Paul Salman

Runners and walkers rendezvous at food bank

By Paul Salman, GoodGym run leader

What a turnout! More than 30 GoodGym enthusiasts rallied together for an evening of fitness and goodwill, all in support of the Finchley Foodbank. It was a sight to behold, with familiar faces as well as a plethora of new ones joining the cause.

Despite the cool breeze, the sun graced us with its presence, making our mission even more delightful. We gathered outside the iconic Phoenix Cinema, eager to embark on our journey but

not before a quick snapshot and some words of inspiration about the GoodGym spirit.

Who says it's all about running? Not us! Penny and Franky led an equally enthusiastic group of walkers, while Paul and Moya took the reins for the running squad. The runners dashed off first, blazing down the left-hand side of the High Road, while the walkers strolled along the right, all carrying their donations of food and essential household goods.

In a twist of fate, the walkers and runners reached the food bank at St Mary's Church Hall simultaneously. How's that for timing? Well, it turns out the runners had been making pit stops for some impromptu exercises.

Anna Maughan, the Finchley Foodbank manager, welcomed us with open arms and we wasted no time unloading our bounty of food donations. Join us when we do the same again on Tuesday 11 June, setting off from the Phoenix Cinema again at 6.45pm.

RICKY SAVAGE ... THE VOICE OF IRRESPONSIBILITY

This is my Waterloo

Here we go – the countdown to the camp fest that is Eurovision has begun, with 37 acts preparing to gather in Malmo and try to wow the jury with their latest attempt at sounding modern and contemporary. And it's 50 years since a bunch of Swedes turned up in Brighton out of the blue and turned pop music upside down – except they didn't.

Like all myths, the tales of ABBA arriving like a breath of fresh air are about as true as claims that the moon landings were created on a Hollywood backlot. It was all a lot weirder than that.

The four members of ABBA had been knocking around the Swedish music scene since the 1960s. They'd even entered the Swedish competition to pick their Eurovision entry in 1973 and came third. Besides they weren't even meant to be in Brighton, no one was. Luxembourg had won in 1973, but decided they didn't want to host it, so in stepped the BBC and it all came to Brighton.

ABBA had spent the previous year getting their act together and had decided that they wanted to be a worldwide sensation like The Beatles. They'd also watched too much *Top of The Pops* and decided that satin, platform boots and general glam-ness was the way to do it. I guess they were right about that, although it's a good job they didn't say anything about being influenced by The Sweet.

Anyone who watched the re-run of the 1974 Eurovision Final on TV will know just how different they were. Just about everything else was either some ballad or a catchy 'Ding, ding, bang, bang' slice of Euro folk pap. Olivia Newton-John was the British entry and appeared dressed in a cross between her mum's nightdress and a set of net curtains, singing about the Salvation Army. The young men who were the Israeli entry sang in Hebrew and dressed like a maths teacher trying to look trendy.

ABBA looked different, sounded different and seemed modern. And naturally the British jury gave them 'nul points'. Great start, folks, not noticing that this was going to be a worldwide hit.

Except funnily enough, for the next year you couldn't give ABBA away. They were just another one-hit wonder. It wasn't until *SOS* came out over a year later that they really began to make an impact. After that you couldn't avoid them and idiots said they were bigger than The Beatles. Although they split up in 1982, they didn't go away. There is *Mamma Mia* the musical, the film and the sequel, plus ABBA the museum, the avatars and the virtual reality. They are still everywhere and I blame Brighton. But they did have some damn good songs.

Musical siblings to star at St Jude's

Organisers of the annual Proms at St Jude's Festival in Hampstead Garden Suburb have announced that this year's season will run from 22 to 30 June and will feature concerts, literary talks, comedy, heritage walks and a family fun day.

Headlining this year are three members of the famous Kanneh-Mason family: siblings Sheku, Isata and Braimah. Their programme includes Schubert's famous *Trout Quintet*, performed with friends Edgar Francis and Toby Hughes.

Other concerts include an American celebration, featuring the *West Side Story Overture* and *Rhapsody in Blue*, A Tribute to Motown and A Night of Tango Passion. There are free concerts at lunchtime and a free Blue Grass and Folk gig.



Sibling harmony: The Kanneh-Mason family will be performing at this year's Proms at St Jude's

Guided walks include a geology tour in Highgate and Queens Woods (for non-specialists) and a look at the females represented in art at Kenwood House. And in a special bonus event on Friday 7 June, sought-after conductor Sir Antonio Pappano will be in conversation with broadcaster Ian Skelly about his long-anticipated memoir.

Public booking for all events opens on Monday 15 April. Full details can be found at www.promsatstjudes.org.uk.



A year in nature: One of the artworks by Denise Ballard-Wyllie that are on display in her solo exhibition

Changing of the seasons

Painter-printmaker Denise Ballard-Wyllie has a solo exhibition of lithographs, screen prints, wood engravings and digital archive prints running at St Bride's Foundation, off Fleet Street, in central London.

The works were all inspired by a two-year art residency at Chelsea Physic Garden, where she observed the changing of the seasons as it celebrated its centenary. Denise's exhibition runs until Friday 28 June. Find out more at www.denisewyllie.com

Music of charm

Finchley Symphony Orchestra with conductor Christopher Stark will this month give a concert featuring music from the 18th and 20th centuries.

The overture to Mozart's comic opera *Così fan tutte* will be a sparkling introduction followed by Haydn's charming London Symphony. Violinist Madeleine Pickering joins the orchestra to play Samuel Barber's Violin Concerto and there will be music from Malcolm Arnold, famous for his film scores for *Bridge on the River Kwai* and the original *St Trinian's* series.

The concert takes place at Trinity Church, Nether Street, North Finchley, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £18, concessions £15, under 18s £7 and you can save £1 per ticket by advance booking online at www.finchleysymphony.org.

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Creative team: Annlouise Butt and Isaac Bernier-Doyle at the Gatehouse in Highgate

New cast behind the scenes at thriving Gatehouse theatre

by Ruth Anders

The Upstairs at the Gatehouse theatre in Highgate was established in 1997 by John and Katie Plews, and when they stepped back last year, they wanted to ensure that their successful track record of innovative musical productions alongside plays and one-off performances would carry on.

Just over a year ago, the theatre's former manager Annlouise Butt and Isaac Bernier-Doyle took the reins by becoming joint Artistic Directors... and the venue's original vision is still thriving.

With its 122-seat auditorium, Upstairs at the Gatehouse is one of the biggest off-West End venues, its stage and dressing room areas being large enough to accommodate musicians. Annlouise and Isaac have a significant amount of theatre experience between them, alongside additional skills in musicianship, teaching and design.

All-rounders

Annlouise told *The Archer*: "Whilst each show brings in its own freelance stage management and creative teams, Isaac and I can both turn our hands to absolutely everything relating to the theatre." Isaac added: "We get no government funding and rely solely on our patrons. The job is 24/7, and whilst we have a full programme for the next year, we always have the flexibility to accommodate unexpected items. We also use the space for rehearsed readings and workshops to offer a facility for theatre experimentation and try-outs."

Annlouise told me about the theatre's challenging time during Covid: "We kept preparing to re-open, and then got shut down again," she said. "One production was even closed on the day of its dress rehearsal."

Now, however, they're back with a vengeance. The Gatehouse's recent production of the musical *In Clay* about artist Marie-Berthe Cazin typifies the ambition, the high professional standard and the innovative approach the artistic directors embrace. Not only was the piece top quality with a 15-minute

musical intro by the four-piece band, but the sizeable space next to the auditorium was re-fashioned to house a stunning exhibition of contemporary ceramics by more than 20 women artists, providing the perfect complement to the show.

For more information about the upcoming productions at this exciting and revitalised venue see www.upstairsatthegatehouse.com

In her father's footsteps

By Lynn Winton

Anne Nicholls, who has lived in Durham Road, N2 for nearly 40 years, is no stranger to the written word, having produced hundreds of articles during her long career as an education correspondent for newspapers such as *The Guardian*. But her latest oeuvre is one from the heart, tracing some of her own family history, and adding her own commentary.

It is a memoir about the experiences of her father Kenneth Hulbert, a doctor during World War II. She travelled in his footsteps, basing her journey on entries from his own diaries, where his surgical skills took him from treating wounded pilots during the Battle of Britain to working on an ambulance train in Sudan, riots in Poona, Japanese bombing raids during the Bengal famine and treating casualties from the Burma campaign of 1944.

Historian Sir Anthony Seldon wrote that the book is "highly original and absorbing" and another reviewer noted that



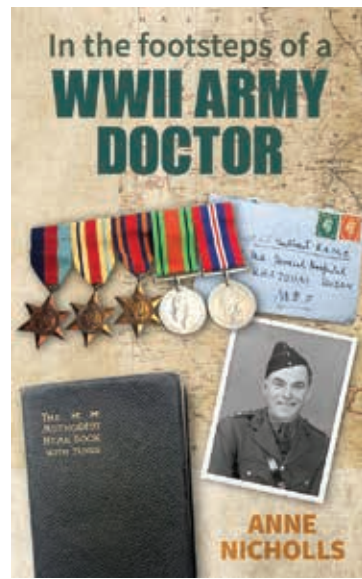
Memoir: Anne Nicholls with her book about her father's life as a war medic

it's "a fascinating read and a reminder to later generations of the sacrifices made by their predecessors".

Post-war, Kenneth married and had a family. Anne told me she had an idyllic upbringing. "He was the most wonderful

man one could have as a father, even though he was quite strict," she said.

The book's title is *In the Footsteps of a WWII Army Doctor* and is available now in paperback or on Kindle, from Amazon.



Movement and martial art from Brazil

By David Melsome

Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian martial art and game that blends elements of dance, acrobatics, music and spirituality... and it has come to Strawberry Vale in East Finchley.

Classes have been started at the Green Man Community Centre for adults and children interested in taking up this physical activity. Parents can even train with their kids.

They're being run by Matt Gidaszewski, known by his Capoeira nickname of Matt Gato. He took it up in his early teens and trained for 10 years in Brazil, where he joined in workshops in schools for underprivileged children and special events for disabled people. He also helped to found a national Capoeira group in Poland.

Matt says the classes provide a full-body workout as they are all about dynamic movements, agility and balance, set to traditional music with an element of martial art. They run on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8pm to 9pm with private classes also available. Find out more at www.capoeira-cppa.com



Capoeira coach: Matt Gato



Vital supplies: Driving Aid to Ukraine volunteers load another lorry destined for the war zone

Two years on from the Russian invasion

By Lynn Winton

Two years ago Michael Byrne was so affected by watching the Russian invasion of Ukraine unfold that he vowed not to sit idly by.

Using his contacts as a former director of NHS services, he had within days amassed a truckload of vital humanitarian aid that he drove to the Polish border, from where it was delivered to bombed-out cities and towns in dire need of medicine, clothing and essential items like baby food and nappies.

This was the start of Driving Aid to Ukraine which has now made 24 delivery missions, all organised by Michael from his home in Lynmouth Road, N2. Readers of *The Archer* have supported the project from the outset, offering goods and funding.

I asked Michael for an update. "We have moved 300 tons of aid since we began two years ago," he told me. "We have just delivered 56 new hos-

pital beds to Kyiv and Kharkiv, and we now have access to four routes directly into Ukraine."

Michael's biggest challenge now is the overwhelming demand and requests to move more urgent aid. I asked Michael how readers can help. "As well as continuing to donate, we really need someone who has expertise in building philanthropic relationships or has corporate connections. With that kind of support, we can continue to make a positive impact on the lives of those in need in Ukraine."

If you are inspired to offer Michael a helping hand, his number is 07791 912389. He is also continuing to collect medical aids such as crutches and wheelchairs. Donations can be made by visiting drivingaid-toukraine.org.



Urban haven: Tracey Marshall's garden in Princes Avenue, Muswell Hill, is beautifully designed

Designer garden is ready for its debut

By Lynn Winton

An eye-catching garden at 26 Princes Avenue in Muswell Hill will be making its debut appearance this month as part of the National Garden Scheme's open gardens, and it has a wealth of ideas for those looking for transformative results.

Owner Tracey Marshall commissioned renowned garden designer Shelley Hugh-Jones and local landscapers Nordland. "When our daughters left home for uni in 2022 we decided to completely revamp the garden," said Tracey.

"Shelley prepared the detailed drawings and Nordland brought them to life. It's still very much a work in progress. However we are thrilled with every aspect and it's been a real treat watching it change throughout the year."

My sneak preview revealed a pretty woodland area at the bottom of the garden softening the new garden rooms, and plenty of large trees and shrubs, including glorious amelanchiers, around the new outdoor lounging and dining areas.

Tracey is combining her garden open day with John and

Patsy Bailey's at no.17, who we featured last year. Their more established garden will host their perennially popular homemade teas, with their daughter Imogen once again taking on the Herculean task of baking at least 16 different types of cake, including gluten free and vegan ones, and there will be live music in the afternoon from The Secret Life Sax Quartet. Patsy and John will also have a good stock of plants for sale, some of which transformed my own beds last year, especially their speciality hostas.

Opening day for both gardens at 17 and 26 Princes Avenue, N10 3LS, is Sunday 19 May from 12 to 6pm. One £6 entry fee covers both and your visit will provide critical support for nursing and health charities. Find out more at ngs.org.uk

Dominic's garden provides his inspiration for Suburb project

By Ruth Anders

Dominic Rose and his family moved to Hampstead Garden Suburb from Kentish Town four years ago, and since then his new garden has developed an inspiring life of its own.

"This garden was very different when we inherited it," explained Dominic, as he showed me the beds, terrace, raised lawn and variety of plants he has introduced. "My two young sons and I have also given a lot of attention to encouraging wildlife."

Dominic's background in e-commerce is partly why Sarah Raven Kitchen and Gardens Ltd appointed him as their chairman last year. From there, it seemed like a natural progression for Dominic to develop the Suburb's initiative to create Britain's Biggest Living Garden, as we first reported last month.

Dominic's portfolio of professional advisory roles gives him the flexibility to dedicate time to this passion for transforming areas of the Suburb, where almost 5,000 gardens are bordered strictly by hedges.

Flagship project

He told *The Archer*: "The area provides the perfect opportunity to create a flagship project that will demonstrate how a community can make a difference if its members act together." His friend Stephen Head, founder of Wildlife Gardening Forum, has commented that "A demonstration project at this scale could have real national impact."



Garden suburb: Dominic Rose in his own back yard, which he has made wildlife-friendly

Dominic added: "While our nucleus area is a somewhat privileged one, our wider catchment provides the chance to involve the broader community through local schools such as Brookland where the demographic is more diverse."

Kids' gardening

Dominic has already set up a kids' gardening club, so far signing up 40 children aged from three to 13. His ambitions for the wider initiative include developing two or three areas to create community wildlife

gardens, one of which will be at St Jude's Church, with the support of Priest in Charge Revd Emily Kolltveit.

He has also circulated a comprehensive survey to residents to baseline wildlife features across the Suburb and to attract participants and volunteers. Whilst the survey is geared towards Suburb residents, anyone can sign up via Dominic's website to help or find out more. For further details, see www.britainsbiggestlivinggarden.org

John Dacam, August 1954 – March 2024: an appreciation of an Archer original

By David Hobbs, former editor of *The Archer*

It is true to say that it is often the sub-editor, rather than the editor, who creates the style of a newspaper and that was certainly true of *The Archer's* chief sub-editor John Dacam, who has died suddenly aged 69.

Part of the team from almost the beginning in 1993, John brought an unerring eye for detail, coupled with an innate ability to bring out the important points of any story and to write sharp and witty headlines. This meant that the finished paper, although the paper was run by volunteers with little knowledge of publishing, was every bit as professional as anything the other, commercial, local newspapers could provide.

The eldest of three children of a serving naval officer, John grew up in Petersfield in Hampshire where he attended Churcher's College. After leaving school he studied business at Farnborough Technical College, then moved to London to work as a commodity broker. He subsequently worked for the London Stock Exchange as a trainer. His job was training LSE personnel on the use of a new share trading system. However, the project was eventually shelved in 1993.

It was during this time that John moved to East Finchley from Buckhurst Hill, where



Original team member: John Dacam was a long-serving sub-editor with *The Archer*

he had previously been living with his then wife, Brenda, and became good friends with *Archer* founder member Kevin Finn, whom he met in Welch's Ale House.

Recruited to *The Archer* team by Kevin, John devoted much of his time to ensuring that the paper met the highest standards. Working under the first three editors, Kevin, Paul Savill and myself he became an essential part of the team as the paper established itself. When I was editor,

I knew that he was always someone I could rely on.

John explored many new ventures during his time in East Finchley. One notable one was the restaurant business he set up in Welch's with Kevin Finn, under the name Fat and Finn. Despite praise for the quality of the food and positive reviews in *The Guardian*, John's insistence on using only the finest ingredients didn't leave much room for profit and the business closed after 10 months.

John continued as the *Archer's* sub-editor and advertising manager until 2001, when he fulfilled a long-held ambition and enrolled to do a history degree at Hull University. The academic life suited him and he stayed to complete a Masters and a doctorate, before going on to work at the university.

He did not lose touch with his friends in East Finchley, regularly coming down to visit Kevin and his family. Kevin described John as being "warm funny and highly intelligent, someone who I was proud to call a friend".

All Saints' East Finchley
United Methodist Church of England

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

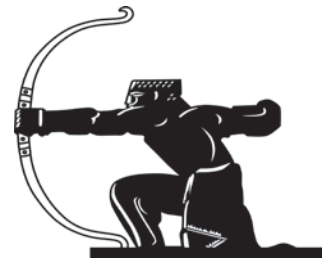
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Arrival: The parade, seen here coming into the festival in 2005, was always a popular part of the festival with schools, youth groups and families all taking part



Tradition: Parade floats make their way down the High Road past the end of Huntingdon Road for the 1974 festival

Festival 2024: the High Road parade is back!

By Alys Wainwright

East Finchley Festival celebrates its 50th anniversary this summer and to mark the milestone organisers are bringing back the tradition of the High Road parade. They're calling on everyone in East Finchley to slide into some flares or pop on some disco gear as part of a 1970s fancy dress theme that harks back to the free festival's early years.



Join the parade: Everyone is welcome to take part in the East Finchley Festival parade on its route along the pavement from Martin School to Cherry Tree Wood

On Sunday 23 June, the parade will take place along the High Road, starting outside Martin School in Plane Tree Walk and finishing in front of the main stage in Cherry Tree Wood for the start of the festival at 12pm. There will be a prize for the best fancy dress.

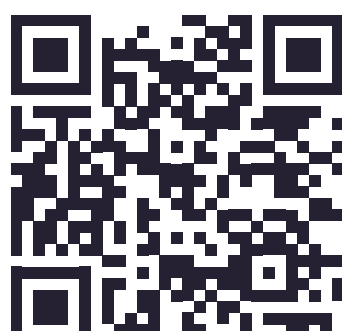
Schools, local organisations, friends and families all used to take part in the parade, which was a tradition of the festival for decades before fading away about 10 years ago, because Barnet Council would not agree to the closure of the High Road.

Now it's back for 2024, but will be on the pavement, and the event's volunteer organisers are appealing for everyone

to have fun by taking part or by helping to ensure the parade runs smoothly.

Gather a group

Mike Hughes, of the East Finchley Festival CIC, said: "We need groups from local schools along with representatives from local sports clubs, pubs and other organisations to take part. Are you able to



help with gathering a group from your school or club or wherever to participate? If so get in touch and we fill you in with all the details. "We also need volunteers to help steward the parade route."

Details on how to participate and volunteer can be found at eastfinchleyfestival.org/parade or scan the QR code (right).

The Festival also needs volunteers to help out on the day as stewards and on the raffle points. For more information out more on how volunteer at this year's festival check out Be Part of It on page 2 of this newspaper or register your interest at eastfinchleyfestival.org/volunteer

Choral concert

Finchley Chamber Choir's next concert featuring choral songs of the British Isles is on Saturday 11 May at 7.30pm, at Trinity Church, Nether Street, North Finchley N12 7NN.

In addition to well-known composers such as Vaughan Williams and Britten, the programme includes a set of folk song arrangements by the choir's own Richard

Cox. Tickets at £18 full price, £15 concessions (including students and over-60s), and £8 under-18s are available from www.fcchoir.co.uk, or on the door.

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