



Then and now: The unloved equipment and dark surface of the former playground has been replaced with a carefully designed green space with swings and climbing frames made from natural materials. Photos Mike Coles

A new space for all ages

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So after years of crumbling equipment set into an inhospitable hard surface, what do we have now at the new playground in Market Place? A space for all ages, incorporating a play park where children can use all their imagination and energy, with plenty of room for adults too. There are picnic tables, a giant hammock, tree trunk and bench seating, swings, a slide, a climbing frame, a giant sand pit, and a multi-use table for table tennis or whatever other use one can dream up, all set on new grass and surrounded by richly planted beds that will soon be joined by 20 more trees and hedgerow borders.

Kathy Batten, drawing on her long career as an early years teacher in Barnet, explained: "The equipment, all made from sustainable materials, is not run of the mill, but specially designed by play experts so that children are encouraged to spin, jump, swing, climb, slide, and dig.

"With open entry points to the meandering path, people are encouraged off the pavement and into the park to simply traverse, bring their lunch to one of the picnic tables or simply enjoy the biodiverse environment."

Roger Chapman, a committed environmentalist, summed up the result "So what we are looking at is a 'grey to green' scheme, where we have turned an unsustainable place into a natural space that is much more

adaptable to climate change. And it's no longer just a playground, it's about creating a park for all ages for people to come and enjoy."

If you would like to get involved in the future of Market Place Playground there are two avenues: both Kathy and Roger are trustees at eastfinchleytrust@gmail.com, the charity which has many local initiatives under its wing including the park, or you can contact Samantha and her fellow members of the Friends group at friendsofmarketplace@gmail.com



Driving Aid to Ukraine

In last month's issue, we published an incorrect telephone number for Nicola Cousins, who collects goods for East Finchley-based charity Driving Aid to Ukraine.

If you have items to donate for their 27th transport to Ukraine, please contact Nicola on 07762 096511. The diverse list of current goods being taken, including mobility aids, radios and children's stationery, can be found at drivingaidtoure.org

The Archer needs you

Do you have experience of using Adobe InDesign for page layouts? The Archer is looking for someone to take over the voluntary role of production editor, creating our pages and getting them ready for printing.

This is an essential part of our publication process that usually takes around five to 10 hours each month. For more details, please contact John Lawrence on email: news@the-archer.co.uk. Thank you.

Business networking

A new business networking group has been set up in East Finchley and Muswell Hill and new members are being welcomed to meet on the first Tuesday of every month at the Clissold Arms, Fortis Green, N2.

The first meeting of the Muswell Hill & East Finchley Business Networking group last month attracted 13 attendees and membership has since grown to over 60. Organiser Leigh Brown said: "It seems that there's a real appetite there now for business owners to get together with like-minded locals." It's a not-for-profit group and the next meetings are on Tuesday 1 October, Tuesday 5 November and Tuesday 3 December, at the Clissold Arms from 7pm to 9pm. Message Leigh on 07940 464921 to join the Whatsapp group and find out more.



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

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