



Long-serving volunteer team replaced by paid panel

By Diana Cormack

A group of volunteers who were active in Barnet for over 30 years helping people in interviews with the police has now been phased out.

Few people were aware of Appropriate Adults (AA) and their role until a programme about the notorious serial killers Fred and Rose West was shown on television, in which a female AA featured. The role was shown again last month in a Netflix production on the same topic.

AAs can be spotted in many documentaries and crime dramas alongside suspects who are being interviewed by the police.

Safeguarding

The National Appropriate Adult Network describes them as “being responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of a child or vulnerable adult (includes autism, learning difficulties, mental illness) who is either detained by police or is interviewed under caution voluntarily”. The role was created alongside the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

When the scheme started in Barnet in 1994 it originally included juveniles, but in 2001 a

grant enabled the Youth Offending Team to set up a new panel with paid workers, leaving vulnerable adults to the voluntary AA team.

When an AA is needed, they are called by a police officer and given a time to attend the police station, where they can spend many hours in their supportive role. A legal representative may also be present throughout the procedure.

Paid provision

An East Finchley resident who was a member of the Barnet AA panel told The Archer that all AA provision for vulnerable adults within the Metropolitan Police Service is now managed by a contract held by the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime.

A new service with funding of £5.4million will ensure that vulnerable adults across London have quick access to an independent appropriate adult to support them when in contact with the police.



Full of life: A youngster enjoys the ball pond therapy at the CPotential centre in Muswell Hill

Early years treatment under pressure from spending cuts

A local charity is raising the alarm about vital specialist services for children with disabilities being under unprecedented strain due to chronic underfunding.

CPotential, based in Muswell Hill, has launched the Ticking Clocks Appeal to raise funds to ensure children with cerebral palsy, global developmental delay, and acquired brain injury can access the therapy they need.

“More and more charities are being forced to close due to financial challenges,” said CPotential CEO Brett Parker. “What’s most alarming is the risk that children with disabilities are being forgotten. Families already face dwindling resources and declining funding. Now, with proposed cuts

to disability benefits and assessment reforms, they’re being pushed even further to the margins.”

Growing demand

In the last five years, CPotential has grown from a small service supporting 36 children annually to a hub helping more than 400 children each year. Demand continues to surge, but funding has not kept pace, it says.

Scientific research says that early intervention is key to improving mobility, confidence, and independence for

children with neurological conditions. The brain is at its most adaptable in early childhood, meaning timely access to specialist therapy can change a child’s future.

The Ticking Clocks Appeal invites businesses, schools and individuals to fundraise, donate, and take part in time-themed challenges to help keep CPotential’s specialist services open for families in need.

For more information and to get involved, visit cpotential.org.uk or email Johanna Vigilante at jvigilante@cpotential.org.uk or call 020 8444 7242.

In celebration of VE Day

Residents from Strawberry Vale, N2, and the wider community came together on the May Bank Holiday Monday for an afternoon of VE Day celebrations, hosted by The Green Man Management Group. The event featured a vintage afternoon tea and an old-fashioned sing-a-long.

And on the previous day, residents of Elmfield Road, N2, got together to celebrate the 80th anniversary with home-made food, games and music under the sunshine in a car-free street.



Time to remember: Councillor Alison Moore, right, joins guests at the Strawberry Vale VE Day party

Green Man activities

With reference to our article last month ‘Activities for Everyone at the Green Man Centre’, we have been asked to point out that Hope North London is a charity not a church group. It runs activities for the whole community.

Also, the Green Man works with Peabody’s community team, rather than its estate managers, on the upkeep of the community centre (not the estate). We are happy to set the record straight.

Women’s rugby makes comeback

By Andy Stone

Finchley Rugby Club has been celebrating its 100th anniversary year since January. Both the 1st and 2nd XV have had very successful seasons, with sides fighting for promotion and finishing third and second respectively, and a senior women’s side has been re-established after 40 years.

In January, scores of Junior players aged from 6-16 provided the guard of honour and flagbearers at Saracens’ first Premiership fixture of 2025 against Bristol Bears.

In February, it was the adult’s turn. Finchley were invited to hold the flags and banners in the pitch at Allianz stadium Twickenham whilst the anthems were played before England’s thrilling victory over France in the Men’s Six Nations.

There was also the fantastic news that Lily Pereira Dos Santos, a member of Finchley’s Girls U18 side, had been selected for the England U18 Six Nations squad. She then scored in her first game against Italy. Lily received her cap from the RFU’s President elect, former Finchley and England women’s player, Deborah Griffin.

The centenary celebrations are only half-way through, so come along next season to play



Star player: Lily Pereira Dos Santos, right, receives her England cap from RFU President elect Deborah Griffin

or watch, or come and meet us at the East Finchley Festival on 22 June – say hello, pass the ball or try out a tackle-bag.