



Be part of the conversation on Universal Basic Income

By Tamsin Curror

East Finchley residents have an opportunity to take part in sessions in late November exploring how Universal Basic Income (UBI) might work in practice.

UBI would provide every citizen with regular, unconditional monthly payments and the N2-based Grange Big Local (GBL) project has been exploring this idea since 2023 as a potential response to problems in the current benefits system.

A pilot study with Northumbria University proposed giving 15 local residents £1,600 per month for two years. Through door-to-door conversations and focus groups, GBL has already documented how the current benefits system affects local people, from five-week waits for Universal Credit leaving people without food, to workers trapped in low-paid jobs because taking better-paid work would mean losing housing support.

James Masters, chair of GBL,

said: "A UBI pilot would provide real insight into the problems and poverty traps the welfare system can create. It's so important that people who have lived-experience of this are part of the discussion about how it should be changed." To find out more about taking part in the panels, which are funded by the National Institute for Health Research, sign up for the GBL newsletter at www.grangebiglocal.org.uk

This opportunity comes as the London Assembly publishes a report examining UBI. The Economy, Culture and Skills Committee's report, titled 'Universal Basic Income in London: A Review', draws on evidence from various experts, including testimony from East Finchley residents gathered during a visit arranged by GBL.

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

**10 years ago:
November 2015**

Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson officially opened the Archer Academy's new Stanley Road campus, and three Year 7 students reported on the event for this newspaper. After cutting the rope during the ceremony, Tanni answered questions from students. She then addressed the whole school with stories of her own early life and schooldays, highlighting her initial ambition to be a lawyer.

**15 years ago:
November 2010**

After several years of planning and consultation by Haringey Council, new play facilities were finally opened on Muswell Hill Playing Fields. The project was mainly funded by Wimpey Homes and Playbuilder, and nearby facilities also included a skate park and multi-use games area.

**25 years ago:
November 2000**

The Phoenix, believed to be the oldest working cinema in Britain, was granted Grade II listed status by English Heritage. This gave the venue the same architectural status as Finchley's Stephens House in East End Road. The possibility of being listed had been under discussion for some time, and this award highlighted the part the Phoenix played in the history of British cinema.

Coffee and cakes

The new sixth form at Oak Lodge special school in Heath View, N2 started the academic year by holding a MacMillan coffee morning on Friday 26 September.

Class P4 and the Community Room were filled with an impressive array of delicious looking cakes. Colourful iced creations, tempting chocolate items and tasteful plainer pieces had been made by the students and staff in school and at home.

As well as serving these to their visitors, smiling sixth formers politely waited at table, carrying coffee and tea to them. The event in aid of MacMillan Cancer Support raised well over its target of £250, with a final total of £350.



Oak Lodge students with cakes

In remembrance

Finchley Chamber Choir is staging a programme of works to mark Remembrance weekend. Duruflé's Requiem will be accompanied by Tavener's Song for Athene, MacMillan's O Radiant Dawn and other pieces. The concert takes place at Trinity Church, Nether Street, N12, on Saturday 15 November at 7.30pm. Discounted tickets at £18 are available from www.fcchoir.co.uk, with full price tickets on the door.



Super-charged: Tanuja Pandit, CEO of Power Up North London, and Finchley Foodbank Treasurer Helen Doran

Energy advice at the food bank

By Ann Campbell

Finchley Foodbank has teamed up with volunteer-led Power Up North London partner to provide free energy advice to people in need in Barnet.

The food bank runs twice weekly sessions at St Mary's Church in East Finchley for individuals and families experiencing food poverty. These sessions will now be enhanced with advice on energy bills and tariffs, changing suppliers and accessing discounts.

Free energy-saving items will also be available, including LED bulbs, radiator foils and draught-proofing kits, plus

simple, practical tips to reduce energy costs and stay warm.

The partnership launched at the beginning of September, and runs through the winter, with support from Barnet Council's Community Energy Fund.

Paul Woodward, Chair of Trustees for Finchley Foodbank said: "This collaboration comes at a critical time, as the weather gets colder and people start to

struggle with the costs of keeping warm and dry." Tanuja Pandit, CEO at Power Up North London, said "Working in partnership with a well-established organisation, like Finchley Foodbank, means we can make a real impact together on tackling fuel poverty in Barnet."

Find out more at www.finchleyfoodbank.org.uk

A carer who is part of the family

By Lynn Winton

A carer who has used her training to provide vital services to many people with disabilities in East Finchley has received a Department of Health Chief Nurse Adult Social Care Gold Award for her dedication to her patients.

Marcia Williams, who works for the Practical Care Agency, commutes here from her home in Goodmayes, Essex, six times a week. I spoke to East Finchley resident Jennifer Pearl who has been assisted by Marcia for seven years. She told me:

"Marcia has never missed a day and is never even late. I know it's her as my doorbell rings on the dot of 7.30am, and she always has a smile. Nothing is ever too much trouble. She keeps me well and she's become part of our family."



Family friend: Jennifer Pearl with nursing award recipient Marcia Williams