



Probe into pipes causing pollution on allotment site

By Margaret Crockett

Thames Water is about to begin a project to investigate waste pipes in the roads where the surface water drains into the East Finchley Allotment streams.

Ben Nathan, Volunteer Water Quality Lead at the allotments off Plane Tree Walk, N2, has been monitoring the quality of the water in the site's two watercourses. The findings provide evidence that raw sewage is draining directly into the streams.

As previously reported in The Archer, campaigners have been working for years to persuade the water utility company to take action but, thanks to Ben and other activists, there is now a better dialogue. The third stakeholder, Barnet's environmental enforcement team, together with allotment holders and Thames Water, met

on site in April. If the findings of Thames Water's project identify that properties in nearby roads with misconnections - dirt pipes connected to the surface drains rather than the sewage system - are responsible for the pollution levels, then it will be Barnet's responsibility to enforce remedial work by the property owners. Ben says: "East Finchley Allotments is a vital green space for many local people in north London, and yet the two streams that flow through it are heavily polluted by untreated human waste released from nearby homes. For decades Thames Water,



Toxic: A tester, left, examines a sample of water taken from one of the polluted brooks on the East Finchley Allotments site, right. Photos Ben Nathan

which has the power to investigate which buildings the waste is coming from, and Barnet Council, which can enforce change, have failed to tackle the problem. We must hold both to account. This failure of coordination is a London-wide problem that destroys biodiversity and harms community wellbeing.

We deserve clean rivers." Following her own meeting with allotment holders, local MP Sarah Sackman has launched her own campaign to clean up the streams on East Finchley Allotments. She states: "The pollution running through East Finchley allotments is unacceptable and it must end, Plot holders deserve clean and safe

waterways. Residents have been repeatedly ignored by Thames Water and we must hold them to account so everyone in our community can make the most of this much loved green space." Sarah also recently met with Emma Hardy, Minister for Water, to raise the issue at the highest level of Government.

Intriguing story of spies in India

By Maxine Klein

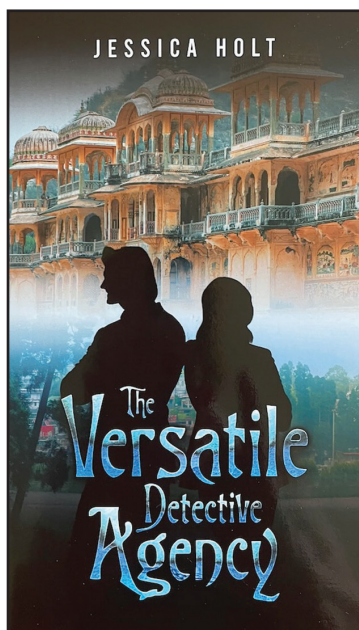
The Versatile Detective Agency is the third book by East Finchley author Jessica Holt and is as eventful and dramatic as you would hope and expect from a retired drama teacher.

Jessica Holt, also The Archer's theatre reviewer, says that she does not know when she starts her novel how it will end. She lets the plot develop organically as the characters create the story: a reflection of her drama background where the characters control the narrative.

This latest story is set in India in the early 1980s and features Max and Natalie, the two spies from her previous novel Travelling with Spies. They have been invited to investigate a supposed case of embezzlement. This turns into a murder investigation involving, amongst others, Manu, a corrupt policeman, Avi, an aspiring Bollywood star, Sabir, the businessman and his wife Heena and a notorious gangster, Hadji, who wants to leave his profession and become a Bollywood producer.

I found this novel intriguing. Full of unexpected twists and turns, it has a strong plot with many interesting characters whose lives interweave in unexpected ways. Being set in India gives it an extra dimension as we never know what to expect from people whose culture and expectations are different from our European norms.

Jessica says that she is drawn to crime stories as they have the potential for drama. She enjoys creating different characters and includes, in this novel, a long intriguing 'cast list', letting them play out their hopes and desires in dramatic and sometimes violent situations. I found it a very enjoyable page-turner that had me gripped right to the end.



Out now: Jessica's new novel is a thriller

Chatty Bench installed to combat loneliness

One in seven people suffer from chronic loneliness, but two community groups have come together to help by installing a Chatty Bench at the Tarling Road Community Centre in East Finchley

The project was pioneered by the employment advisor team at BOOST Jobs Plus, who offer job hunting support to those living on or close to the Grange Estate, in collaboration with the creative talents of an up-and-coming artist found by the Art

Art Against Knives charity. Project manager Andrew Potter said: "The intention behind something like the Chatty Bench is to create small pockets of hope for the locals of East Finchley.

So, if you're out and about and see someone sat on the bench, sit with them and have a chat. You never know how much you could improve someone's day."



Chatty Bench in the Tarling Road Community Centre

A beautiful game

By Diana Cormack

Not a lot of people know about the Homeless World Cup (HWC). This annual, international street soccer tournament uses the power of football to tackle homelessness and social isolation.

Started in 2001, it has the backing and support of FIFA, with fast-paced 14-minute matches played on small pitches for both men and women. Over 75 countries participate, though Wales is the only home country to have hosted the event.

During the week the World Cup kicked off last month, Channel 5 showed the comedy-drama film The Beautiful Game, starring Bill Nighy as the manager of England's HWC team. One short, sad scene showed a troubled player knocking at a front door and being refused a bed for the night by his mother. This was filmed in Cherry Tree Road, East Finchley, (see The Archer, November 2021 page 6) with a large number of people involved over many hours. Blink and you've missed it, but I suppose we could claim that East Finchley has played some part in the beautiful game!

KIM Kids In Motion
NURSERY AND EARLY YEARS ACADEMY

We work with Qualified P.E Teachers as well as Qualified Childcare Practitioners

Childcare from 3 Months to 5 Years old

Are you working parent? You could be eligible for up to 30hr childcare from 9 months old... We are open for 51 weeks a year!

NO JOINING FEE + £200 IN CREDIT TO REDEEM
Offer ends 31st July

We Explore, Learn and Grow in Motion

www.kidsinmotion.co.uk 020 3524 6415 Red Lion Hill N2 8ED