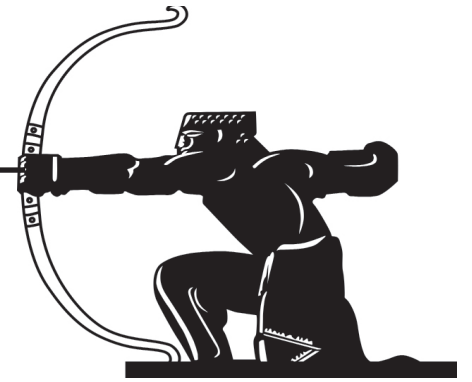


The Archer

Local News is our Aim



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



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East Finchley's massively popular Community Festival filled Cherry Tree Wood on one of the hottest days of the year so far. Crowds turned out in the June heatwave to enjoy the afternoon of entertainment and family fun. Turn to page 6 for more fabulous photos from our photographer Mike Coles.

Turn to Page 6

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Ghost homes still haunt East Finchley wasteland years on



The former petrol station site on the High Road is still awaiting development. Photo Mike Coles

By Janet Maitland

A staggering 287,000 potential new homes with planning permission in London have yet to be built. Twenty one of these 'ghost homes' are in East Finchley, on what has become an ugly wasteland between Church Lane and Leopold Road. Planning permission was given almost seven years ago, but not a single brick has been laid.

We asked site owners Leopold Properties (East Finchley) when they planned to start. A spokesperson told us they were "looking forward to developing the site as soon as market conditions allow".

Given the urgent need for housing and the scale of the problem of developers not developing, a government announcement that a Delayed Homes Penalty is to be introduced was long overdue. "We will leave no stone unturned to get spades in the ground," said Chancellor Rachel Reeves a few months ago. Unfortunately, the penalty will not apply to existing unused permissions only new ones, so her

announcement will have no impact on East Finchley's wasteland.

Barnet Council's powers to act seem to be limited. It can revoke planning permission, but a council spokesperson told us that this is an "exceptional measure and only used in limited circumstances which don't apply in this case". The council could also serve a completion notice, but they don't plan to do so as it doesn't compel the builder to actually build.

Similar constraints on the council extend to the wasteland's depressing appearance. "It is private land and we have limited powers to enforce, but we will be speaking to the

landowners to see if they can clear it. We recognise it is an eyesore," said the council spokesperson.

The Archer asked landowners Leopold Properties if they could clean up the site and they made a good start in mid-May, getting rid of the undergrowth, litter and much of the junk. Local residents have got in touch with us to say they are keen to volunteer to tackle the graffiti and finish the job.

The spokesperson for the council said they had not yet made contact with Leopold Properties as planned but their teams would be "happy to be involved, if directed by the landowner".

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Barnet

Mercian Lodge, Ephgrave Lodge And Witcomb Lodge, 68 Lankaster Gardens, N2

External wall remediation. Installation of vertical cavity barriers and replacement of EPS insulation. Ref: 26/2200/192

36 Huntingdon Road, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension with glazed side roof with one roof light following demolition of the existing conservatory. Replacement of front window to match existing. Ref: 26/2184/HSE

456 Long Lane, N2

Single-storey side and rear extension. Ref: 26/2154/HSE

31 Leopold Road, N2

Single-storey rear extension with pitched roof. Ref: 26/2136/HSE

Archer Academy, Eagabs Close N2

Submission of details of condition 10 (Cycle Parking) 11 (Refuse and Recycling) pursuant to planning

25/0320/FUL dated 31/07/2025. Ref. No: 26/2042/CON

94 Leslie Road, N2

Erection of a rear outbuilding.

Ref: 26/2024/FUL

43 Neale Close, N2

Single-storey rear extension following demolition of the existing extension. Ref: 26/1916/FUL

4-5 King Street, N2

Removal of condition 5 (Parking space) pursuant to planning permission 21/0953/FUL dated 22/02/2021 for "Construction of a new roof including increase in ridge height with gable roof feature to front and rear elevations together with two dormer windows to rear elevation and one Velux window to front elevation to facilitate creation of one self-contained flat with associated parking space, bin store and cycle storage. Alteration to existing front fenestration with provision of Juliet balconies and front porch. Ref: 26/1887/S73

17 Trinity Road, N2

Roof extension involving rear

dormer with Juliet balcony and one roof light, outrigger dormer, and three front-facing roof lights. (amended). Ref: 26/1851/192

Haringey

13 Aylmer Road, N2, N2

Retention of roof alterations to existing single storey rear extension pitched to flat roof and replacement of all windows with white aluminum double glazing. Ref: HGY/2026/1589

6A Denmark Terrace Fortis Green, N2

Demolition of existing building and structures on site and the erection of a three storey plus basement building, comprising four residential units and 50 sqm of commercial floorspace on the ground floor, with landscaping, cycle storage and bin storage. Ref: HGY/2026/1355

23 Ringwood Avenue, N2

Roof and rear dormer extension; 2 no. front rooflights. Ref: HGY/2026/1466

BE PART OF IT Volunteers wanted

Compiled by Lynn Winton

Join the team at the new **Finchley Free Legal Advice Centre**. This new community-led initiative is providing free legal advice to residents who are most in need. If you have a legal background and can spare two hours a month, your experience could make a profound impact on someone's life. They are particularly looking for lawyers with experience in immigration, housing, benefits, crime and family. The new Advice Centre will rotate to different venues in the constituency every other weekend. Find out more by emailing sarah.sackman.mp@parliament.uk.

Dovetail DaCapo is a friendly place where asylum-seekers and refugees meet to make music together on **Saturdays from 2pm to 3.30pm at Wren Academy, N12 9HB**. The music is followed by a shared vegetarian meal. If you are interested in joining its rota of volunteers who prepare the meal (heating up soup, putting out bread, hummus, fruit, etc), they'd love to hear from you. They are also interested to hear from volunteers who would like to help in other ways. Email: jam@dacapo.co.uk

224 North London Air Scouts (N6) are looking for adult volunteers to help run fun weekly sessions for young people. No experience needed, full training provided. Flexible roles to suit your availability. Even a couple of hours a week makes a real difference. Interested? Get in touch at del@224.org.uk

Finchley Foodbank is looking for a new kind of volunteer to help people with all things digital, such as searching the internet, sending emails and booking appointments. You will signpost people to help with the cost of living, employment, housing etc. You will need to be available for food bank sessions on **Tuesdays and/or Saturdays between 11.30am and 2pm twice a month**. To find out more about becoming a digital champion volunteer email: hello@finchleyfoodbank.org.uk

Youth communications charity **Exposure**, based in Muswell Hill, is looking for two new trustees, people who share a genuine commitment to young people and can bring expertise in fundraising, digital media, finance, charity governance or equality and inclusion. The role will entail four or five trustee meetings a year, with hybrid options available. To find out more, contact: info@exposure.org.uk

Do you enjoy swimming? **WeSwim** is a London-based charity that creates safe, welcoming spaces where disabled adults can swim with the support of volunteers 1:1 in the water. They are looking for volunteers who are keen to make a difference by working with the disability community in Crouch End, giving just a few hours a month. No swim teaching/coaching qualifications required, although being comfortable in the water is a must. Contact harriet@weswim.club for more information.

Highgate Newtown Community Partners is a vibrant charity dedicated to enriching lives and fostering a strong sense of community in North London. Its new Community Centre in Archway is at the heart of this work and they are looking for volunteers to support the Community Cafe which will be providing affordable meals. If you have a few hours to spare and can help serve customers, but most importantly provide a warm and welcoming environment, please email info@hncp.org.uk.

If you'd like your organisation to be included in this column please email news@the-archer.co.uk



A royal walkabout... garden to garden

By Gail Norcliffe

Prize-winning N2 gardeners had the honour of a royal visit on Tuesday 23 June when the Duke of Edinburgh explored three local gardens, meeting locals en route in a walk around the East Finchley Village area.

The afternoon visit included Caroline and David Broome's back garden in Church Lane, the Leopold Road Community Garden and the Hampstead Garden Suburb's Kids' Gardening Club.

As the London Gardens Society's Patron, the Duke knew about East Finchley successes in the All London Championships, as reported in The Archer in December 2025, and was keen to see them in person.

The royal visitor started at the Kids' Gardening Club where he planted a tree and chatted with younger gardeners. He then travelled over to the Broomes' back garden, a five-time All London winner in the championships, where he unsurprisingly asked for a private tour.

Caroline and David were delighted. "We couldn't have been prouder that the Duke of Edinburgh wanted to see our



Royal seat: The Duke with, from left, Councillor Alison Moore, Edwina Roberts and Kathy Batten in the Leopold Road Community Garden. Photo Mike Coles



Onlookers: The royal visit drew a crowd to the community garden. Photo Mike Coles

garden," said Caroline. "He was incredibly interested in what we have done and very knowledgeable about plants.

It was a relaxed occasion and he immediately put us at our ease. Having the Duke visit our home and garden felt somewhat unreal but it's a memory we'll treasure."

The Duke next walked up Church Lane, greeting groups of neighbours and stopping at Holy Trinity Church to say hello to vicar Marius Mirt. After admiring displays in Jennie Mann the florist, the Duke called at the Windsor Castle pub in The Walks, meeting landlords Eamonn England and Arina Piskunova, recent winners of the UK's best landlords title from the British Institute of Innkeeping.

Then a stroll further along The Walks led the royal visitor to his final stop, the Leopold Road Community Garden. There he was met by Kathy Batten and Edwina Roberts, leaders of the garden project, their team of diggers and supporter Councillor Alison Moore.



Garden talk: The Duke chats to Kathy Batten. Photo Mike Coles



The royal visit drew a crowd to the community garden. Photo Mike Coles

Dignitaries from Barnet Council and the world of gardening also enjoyed the special space looking glorious in sweltering June sunshine.

Locals and passers-by gathered round to watch as the Duke sat with Kathy, Edwina and Alison, eager to find out more about the garden and its place in the community.

Kathy and Edwina were thrilled about the visit. They told us: "The Duke was extremely complimentary about our neighbourhood garden, how it has helped bring people together in its development and maintenance, and the many ways it is used. It was fantastic that he wanted to see it and the afternoon was a wonderful success."

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Brothers found guilty of 1984 murder of Anthony Littler

By David Melsome

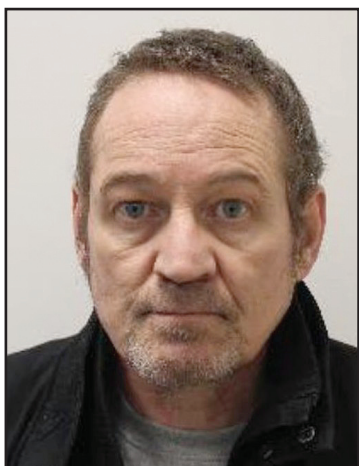
Two brothers have been convicted of the murder of civil servant Anthony Littler close to East Finchley station after detectives re-opened an investigation almost 40 years after the killing.

Michael Stewart, 57, of Station Road, EN5, and Anthony Stewart, 60, of Old Farm Road, N2, were convicted following a trial at the Old Bailey. Mr Littler, aged 45, was found dead in an alleyway leading from the station to East End Road on 1 May 1984.

In 2022, homicide detectives reviewing the case concluded that a new investigation could help lead them to the killers. They found that in 2013 Daniel Stewart, who was only 10 years old at the time of the attack, had come forward to police to say that in 1984 his older brother Michael had told him he had “robbed a bloke and he died”.

Anthony had confessed to the same thing eight or nine years later. Daniel, out of family loyalties, never disclosed to anyone what he had been told until decades later, when he made the decision to speak out.

Another person had also come forward in 2015, telling police that Michael had admitted the murder, bragging that he and his brother would frequently beat people up and that on one occasion a man had died.



Guilty: Michael Stewart

Unlike with the majority of today's cases, there was no forensic evidence, CCTV or phone data to help officers solve the crime. Instead they had to turn to more old-fashioned policing methods, including trawling through thousands of historic paper documents to check every lead had been followed, and spending hundreds of hours locating and speaking



Guilty: Anthony Stewart

to neighbours, former partners, friends and employers of the main suspects.

After a number of years building the case, officers presented their findings to the Crown Prosecution Service in 2025, who agreed there was enough evidence to charge Michael and Anthony Stewart.

Detective Chief Inspector Neil John, who led the investigation, said: “Anthony’s life was suddenly cut short when he was killed in a brutal attack by two teenagers who we now know had a clear propensity for the most sickening kind of violence.

“They targeted Anthony because he was alone, defenceless and walking down a dark alley in which they knew no-one would see them carrying out their horrendous assault. They lay in wait for someone to cross their path and tragically for Anthony, he became their unsuspecting victim.

“We know Anthony’s murder has continued to cause his family pain all these years later, and we are pleased that they now know who was responsible for his death.

“We also want to pay tribute to those who came forward to provide information on the events of that night, as well as giving vital evidence in court. Without them, this verdict would not have been possible.”

During police interviews, both men repeatedly denied any involvement in Mr Littler’s death and chose not to give evidence at their trial. They are due to be sentenced on Friday 10 July.

Windsor couple come out winners



Best in the land: Arina and Eamonn collect their national award

Congratulations to Arina Piskunova and Eamonn England who have won the title of Licensees of the Year 2026 for their stewardship of the Windsor Castle pub in The Walks, N2.

The pair were chosen as winners after a demanding qualification process and a final day of judging by the British Institute of Innkeeping.

We heard the news just as we went to press and hope to talk to Arina and Eamonn in more detail for our next edition.

“I was chased down the High Road by skinheads”

By Julia Lawrence

The trial and conviction of two brothers for the 1984 murder of Anthony Littler brought many things into sharp focus, much of it uncomfortable. No one can doubt that East Finchley, like the rest of the country, was a very different place 42 years ago.

Michael and Anthony Stewart, who were aged 15 and 18 at the time, were found guilty of bludgeoning Mr Littler to death, as he walked home from the tube station. The case brought back disturbing memories for Darryl Telles, a local government officer, who grew up in East Finchley, and lived in Leopold Road at the time.

Darryl, now 62, came to the UK as a small boy, part of the mass exodus of Asians from Kenya in the 1970s. Life was hard, he says, particularly for teenagers, like him, who stood out not only due to the colour of his skin, but also because of his sexuality. “There were a number of gangs in the area,” he remembers. “I was chased down the High Road by skinheads.”

While the prosecution at the Old Bailey trial stressed that Mr Littler was attacked at random, the jury heard the Stewart brothers were part of a gang who used to go ‘queer bashing’ in the area.

A month before Mr Littler’s

murder, Darryl was home from university for the Easter holi days. He still wasn’t ‘out’ (homosexuality was illegal for under 21s in 1984) and used to visit a meeting spot for gay men, near the North Circular.

“One night I was up there, and we were attacked by a man with a baseball bat. I literally ran for my life,” he recalls. “But when I reported it to police, they couldn’t have been less interested. All they wanted to know was what I was doing there and how old I was.”

When the case was reopened into the murder of Mr Littler in 2022, Darryl contacted police again and they took his statement. He says: “They were really good and actually apologised for how I was treated in 1984.

“While I don’t know if it was the same gang who attacked Mr Littler, I do know there are undoubtedly a lot of people out there who haven’t been brought to justice. How many other attacks went unreported?”

From The Archer archives...

By Jane Marsh

**10 years ago:
July 2016**

We reported on a planning application for eight new homes on the site of the former Esso garage on the corner of Church Lane and the High Road, N2. The plans included 12 parking spaces to service the houses and allowed for access to a privately owned alleyway between houses in Leopold Road and Church Lane via a road through the centre of the site. Ten years later the site is still undeveloped and derelict, a blot on the East Finchley landscape.

**15 years ago:
July 2011**

Barnet Council backed down over its proposal for a huge increase in allotment rents in the face of a legal challenge from angry plot holders. The proposed increases, from £59 to £170 for Barnet residents and £340 for non-residents, were considered to be unjustifiable by the local Allotment Holders Society, and likely to price some plot holders off their allotments. Their perseverance resulted in a rethink by the Council.

**25 years ago:
July 2001**

London RSPCA gave a local dog a top award after she saved her owners from a house fire in East Finchley. Trine, an 18-month-old King Charles spaniel, had alerted her owners Robin and Kirsten Chapman to the fire at their home in Eastern Road the previous December. Trine received the RSPCA animal medallion for vigilance, a fitting reward for her alertness and prompt action in the face of danger.



Petition to save protected trees threatened by housing plan

By Lynn Winton

Seven magnificent and ancient trees, all with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), are going to be destroyed unless East Finchley residents mobilise themselves to protect them. This is the stark warning delivered by Roger Chapman, chair of the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, who is urging residents to sign his petition.

Standing tall opposite East Finchley Station, they frame the frontage of the Park House site, formerly the home of Monkey Puzzle Nursery, which is now earmarked for demolition to make way for a private housing development. The plans include the removal of the protected trees and the green space to allow for 75 homes and a new nursery.

New homes and nature can co-exist. If you agree, please sign the petition."

Another campaigner added: "It has long been scientifically proven that trees make a huge improvement to urban areas, creating urban cooling, biodiversity, air quality, beauty, all contributing to the wellbeing of living in East Finchley for generations to come."

You can access the petition by using the QR code in this article or by visiting change.org and searching 'Save East Finchley Trees'.



Under threat: Campaigner are calling for the tree preservation orders to be respected

Roger explained: "We support redevelopment in principle, but all we are asking is to build responsibly, protect the existing green space, retain the protected trees and work with the community.

However, the current proposals indicate excessive building height and density, including a nine-storey element. "East Finchley needs new homes but not at the expense of irreplaceable mature trees, public greenery and local character.



Save the Trees and Green Space at Park House, East Finchley. Sign the Petition

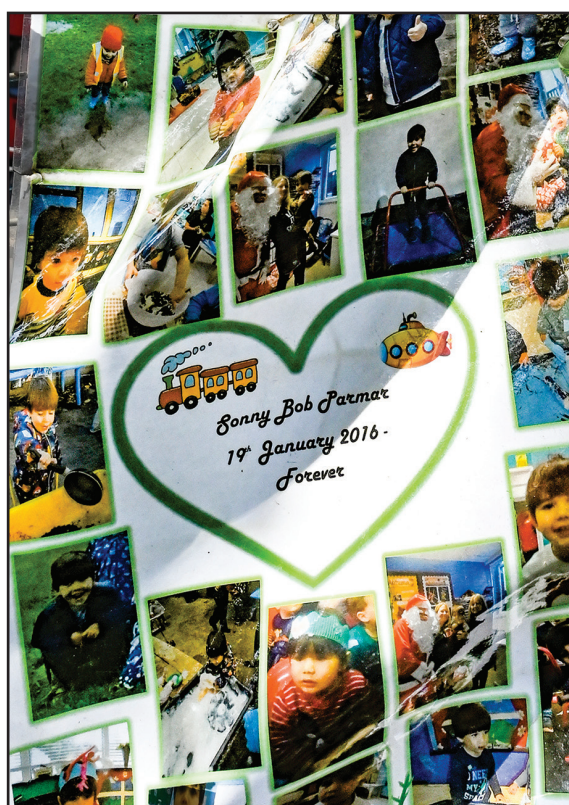
Use the QR code link above



Sign up: Use this QR code to find the petition

Tell us the news

Have you got a news story or an interesting photo for us? Our readers are our eyes and ears, and we are always pleased to hear what is going on in East Finchley. Tips, ideas and stories, large or small, are very welcome. Please email news@the-archer.co.uk or leave a message on our free phone line 0800 612 0748. Thank you



Friendship tree: Fiona and Kishen Parmar with photos of their son Sonny who died in a road accident in 2019

Parents' plea for Sonny's tree in nursery playground

By Lynn Winton

Amongst the seven majestic trees at risk from the Park House redevelopment plan stands one very special, small crab apple tree, which also has a Tree Preservation Order, but for very different reasons.

This is Sonny's Friendship Tree, planted in the playground of the former Monkey Puzzle Nursery, to remember three-year-old pupil Sonny Parmar, who was killed in a road accident on East End Road, N2, in 2019. Every year since his death, his parents Fiona and Kishen along

with family and friends come to mark his birthday at the tree, which is adorned with messages and photos of Sonny. The thought of the tree being removed is a very painful one for both of them. They support Roger Chapman and hope his petition will get more signatures.

"Sonny's Friendship tree was where all the nursery children would come and sit down around it at special times to

remember loved ones and people they cared about," says Fiona. "When we saw the plans for the development, our first thoughts were that Sonny's tree may not be safe, and now we know that the developers have said a TPO will not save it. "We've been in touch with Barnet Councillors and our MP Sarah Sackman, we've tried everyone we can think of, and we've made sure they all know how we feel about it."

Fortismere festival



Families from across the area are being invited to enjoy an afternoon of entertainment, music and community spirit at the Fortismere Summer Festival at Fortismere School, Twyford Avenue, N10, on Sunday 5 July, from midday until 5pm

Visitors can look forward to fairground rides, live music throughout the afternoon, a wide variety of stalls, a fun dog show, a display of classic cars, and an excellent selection of food and drink. A spokesperson for the organisers Friends of Fortismere said: "Every pound raised goes back into enriching the experience of all students at the school." The event is open to the entire community, not just Fortismere families. All under-18s can attend free of charge.

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Festival fun in the heat and sun

“This is my first time here, it’s amazing” and *“It’s like everybody in East Finchley is here”* – just two of the reactions from visitors to the hugely successful Community Festival that filled Cherry Tree Wood on Sunday 21 June.

With temperatures nudging 29C and close to unbroken sunshine for the whole day, it was the perfect day to be outside enjoying the entertainment on two stages, family activities, community stalls, creators’ market and all kinds of food and drink.

BBC newsreader Reeta Chakrabarti got proceedings underway at 12pm as the festival parade arrived on the field after making their way down the High Road from Martin School.

Thousands of visitors came by during the course of the afternoon, bumping into friends and soaking up the vibrant atmosphere that filled every corner of the park. And the slightly cooler spots in the shaded areas under the trees on all sides were fully occupied for picnics and family gatherings well into the early evening.

This annual highlight in the East Finchley social calendar has been running for more than 50 years but it can’t happen each June without the hours of hard work that are put in all year by the team of volunteers who organise it so brilliantly and fundraise tirelessly to keep it a free event for everyone.

And not forgetting the dozens more volunteers who lend a hand setting up and on the day to make sure everything runs smoothly.

A huge THANK YOU from all of us to everyone involved!



Festival photos by Mike Coles



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

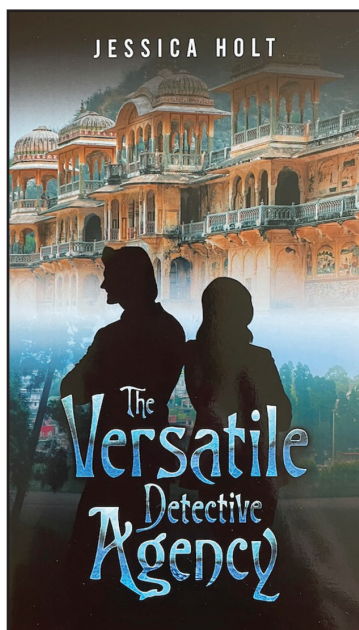
The Versatile Detective Agency is the third book by East Finchley author Jessica Holt and is as eventful and dramatic as you would hope and expect from a retired drama teacher.

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!

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Farewell to Arjun and Claire as East Finchley councillors

By Gail Norcliffe

Recently retired East Finchley councillor Arjun Mitra is not putting his feet up just yet. Apart from giving a detailed handover to his successors, Arjun's advice is being sought by new councillors across London on the matters arriving in their in-boxes.

First elected in 2012 aged 25, Arjun served as our councillor for 14 years. His first years were spent in opposition and he developed expertise in scrutinising contracts. When Barnet became a Labour Council, Arjun acquired new responsibilities and took forward various initiatives in East Finchley. He stresses that his "main focus was on things people could see".

The Archer has previously covered Arjun's obsession with pothole repairs, and resurfacing of the High Road and East End Road happened partly thanks to his campaigning.

Better road safety was another personal passion and Arjun is proud of the crossing constructed near the Market Place junction with East End Road. Arjun especially valued working with community groups on projects including improving outdoor spaces and gardens, such as the Leopold Road Community Garden and planters on Church Lane. He also helped the Phoenix Cinema's fundraising for its redevelopment project. A well-known figure in East Finchley, Arjun's colleagues complained that walking with him along the High Road could be a nightmare because he was frequently asked by passers-by for help with problems and casework. As a lifelong council tenant himself, Arjun was particularly keen to champion the northern end of East Finchley and to ensure all constituents had a voice.

In stepping down as councillor,



Years of service: Former councillors Claire Farrier and Arjun Mitra. Photo Steve Carr

Arjun is left with positive feelings about his period in office, expressing "A huge thank you to all constituents. It's been a wonderful honour to represent the place I've lived my whole life and I've loved serving the borough. I have worked with lots of fantastic people and I have so many great memories."

Also retiring is Claire Farrier, an East Finchley councillor since 2018, who previously represented Burnt Oak. Long-standing East Finchley councillor Alison Moore paid tribute to Claire's fantastic contribution, ranging from planning and licensing to being an Oak Lodge School governor, and efforts to kickstart the Market Place playground development.

Joining Alison to replace Arjun and Claire as our other two councillors, are newcomers Ajith Menon and Katy Minshall. We hope to talk to Ajith and Katy and introduce them in more detail in future editions.

Music for humanity's place beyond

Finchley Symphony Orchestra and Finchley Chamber Choir come together again with conductor Christopher Stark for the final concert of their seasons this month. The programme explores humanity's place in the world – its beauty, its uncertainty and its longing for something beyond.

Dvorak's Symphony No.8, Brahms' Song of Destiny, sometimes called the 'Little Requiem', two short pieces by Mendelssohn for unaccompanied choir, and Vaughan Williams' first major choral work make up the programme.

All of this music can be enjoyed at Trinity Church, Nether Street, North Finchley, on Saturday 4 July starting at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £18, £15 for under 26 and over 60, £2 for under 18. You can save £1 per ticket by booking online in advance at www.finchleysymphony.org



Future foyer: Middlesex University design students display some of their ideas for revamping the box office area of the Phoenix Cinema. Photo Mike Coles

Phoenix design competition has show of early concepts

By Ruth Anders

Following the preview report in our last edition, on Tuesday 9 June design students from Middlesex University gathered in the Phoenix Cinema main auditorium once again to present their proposals for a redesign of the venue's foyer.

Members of four separate groups had collaborated to develop very different concepts which they explained to an audience of Phoenix staff, Trustees and representatives from East Finchley Town Team.

The cinema's Executive Director Kathryn Smith introduced the event, announcing that 'Phoenix Rising' would be

the name of the new fundraising campaign that is aiming to make the redesign project a reality.

Images from the four concepts will be displayed in the Phoenix foyer and the winning ideas will be revealed as soon as possible.

Phoenix Trustee Steve Smith told The Archer: "We are thrilled that this project is starting to bear fruit and it's

wonderful to see the results of these students' hard work and creativity. Now we have some concrete visual ideas to inform our refurbishment mission and all we need to do is raise the money to get the work done."

Further updates will be reported in The Archer in due course. For more information visit www.phoenixcinema.co.uk

Seating and trees planned for town square

By Kate Brown, East Finchley Town Team



The new town square hosted its first community event in May. Photo Mike Coles

As reported in last month's Archer, East Finchley Town Team were pleased that an impressive number of people turned out for an event in the new town square performance space outside Budgens and Amy's on the High Road. However, the spell of extremely hot weather in May underlined the need to press on with other elements that local people want to see in the space.

Town Team are pleased to report that sponsorship for two more street trees has been submitted via the Trees for Streets scheme with a request to the tree officer for two trees which would be suitable for offering some shade

and reducing the 'heat island' effect in built-up areas. These trees would be part of the autumn-winter tree planting in N2. Plans are also underway to return the temporary wide bench which featured on the

High Road during the London Festival of Architecture event two years ago. Its permanent position is now at Martins School further up the High Road, but it could return to the main shopping area for the summer.

Funding is being sought to have more permanent seating in the square as part of the initiative to work with the council. The petition to Barnet Council calling on it to work with the community to deliver a greener, better town square can still be signed at <https://c.org/2QbctgnDPd>

The next planned event for the town square will be a Finchley Pollinators stall on Saturday 4th July from 11am until 3pm which will provide all sorts of advice and tips about improving local biodiversity. Meanwhile Town Team are planning August Bank holiday entertainment in the square for Saturday 29 August.



Traditional Italian family feel lives on at delicatessen

By Ruth Anders

Sipping a cappuccino in Amici Delicatessen, listening to the lively Italian repartee and gazing at the salami and sundried tomatoes, is like being transported from the High Road, N2, to Italy. Customers know charismatic owner Maurizio Businaro well, but after 31 years at the East Finchley landmark and some serious health issues, no-one could blame him for wanting to reduce his workload.

Regulars were concerned that the popular shop might change, but they need not worry. A smiling Maurizio introduced me to the new young owners Oscar and Gianmaria Marzola, who have already taken over with a warmth and charm only Italians can deliver.



Good friends: Maurizio Businaro, centre, with his young successors at Amici Delicatessen, Gianmaria and Oscar. Photo Mike Coles shop.

Maurizio began by training at the Grand Hotel Rimini and moved to London in 1976 to work at the Savoy. Taking on Amici Delicatessen in 1995 he built up a loyal following and still carried on after undergoing a kidney transplant 15 years ago.

"I was so grateful to Barnet Hospital that I hosted a concert at the Phoenix Cinema to raise almost £2,000 for their renal department," he added. At the beginning of this year, he had a pacemaker fitted and it was "Time for a quieter life, but where would I find the right people to take over?" Serendipity stepped in when the two brothers appeared and a deal was struck. Gianmaria, who was formerly a senior head chef at Franco Manca, could scarcely contain his excitement about the new challenge. "I have spent so much time in this shop over the years," he explained. "I always said I wanted to run it!"

He and Oscar, previously a bar manager at The Ivy in Covent Garden, are from Ferrara in northern Italy. After running a peripatetic pizza van touring markets in London and the Home Counties, they decided they wanted to run a

"Amici Delicatessen is far more than a business, it's a heritage," said Gianmaria, adding, "I came over here when I was 18 to join my brother. I planned to stay for six months, but I stayed forever." "And we just love this area," said Oscar.

The brothers are determined to maintain Maurizio's high standards and friendly environment. They added that their 93-year-old grandfather, "our Nonno", told them that his dream is "to see you guys make it".

Maurizio will continue to run his antique shop in Crouch End and will doubtless drop by to check on Amici. When I last visited, the boys' mother Lucia, over from Italy, was busy washing dishes in the background to support what is clearly going to be a very successful family affair.

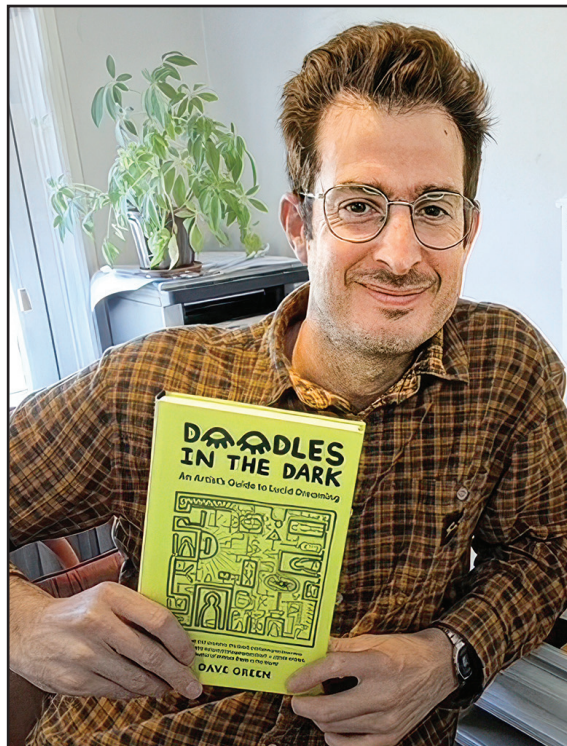
Nature spotting in Cherry Tree Wood

By Diana Cormack

Did you know that everything shown in these pictures can be seen in Cherry Tree Wood right here in East Finchley? Youngsters attending the monthly nature club there were able to explore the area and tick off the ones they spotted.

There was a trick question although many were sure they'd seen a wood anemone in bloom! The enthusiastic group gathered in the nature circle next to the playground to talk and learn more about what they had seen. Organised by the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, the club

meets on the first Sunday of the month from 2-3 pm. It is a free event for eight-year-olds and under, who must be with an adult. There is a new topic every time. Just turn up on **Sunday 5 July, Sunday 2 August, Sunday 6 September or Sunday 4 October.**



Creative sleep: Dave Green has written about the technique of lucid dreaming which he turns into art, right

Doodles in the dark

By Gail Norcliffe

Lucid dreaming was a new concept to me before I talked to local artist and author Dave Green. His new book *Doodles in the Dark: An Artist's Guide to Lucid Dreaming* covers the art, science and how-to of lucid dreaming.

According to Dave, lucid dreaming is a state of being aware that you are having a dream when you are dreaming. This is something Dave has been able to do since he was young, which he describes as spontaneous lucid dreaming.

However, lucid dreaming can also be learned through applying various techniques. When lucid dreaming it is possible to exert some choice over what you are dreaming and what happens next, thus consciously exploring and interacting with the dream. Unsurprisingly, there is considerable scientific interest in

lucid dreaming, with a lot of information available through organisations such as The Sleep Foundation, which details techniques and also some of the risks.

Dave has taken things to a new level with his practice of creating drawings while lucid dreaming. This is not about drawing while asleep nor about trying to depict a dream in a picture but instead recreating the art from a dream on waking.

He explains: "To create art in my dream, I first have to find a pen and paper within my dream while I'm asleep. Once I have drawn something, I need

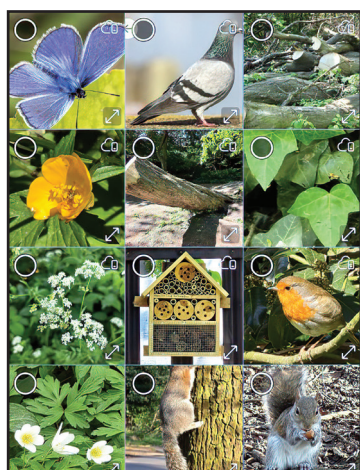
to study it to be able to remember. When I wake up, I will then quickly make a copy of my lucid dream drawing. The art tends to be bold patterns and may contain numbers and letters, but it's always interesting."

As well as his art, Dave sometimes finds that others in his dream also create pictures, but he does say that the other characters' drawings are very much in his own style.

Dave will be talking about his book at **Camden Arts Centre** on the afternoon of **Saturday 4 July** as part of a programme curated by Susan Finlay.

Summer Fair

Bishop Douglass High School in Hamilton Road, N2, is hosting its Summer Fair on **Tuesday 14 July from 3pm to 5pm**. All are welcome to enjoy sports activities, Sponge the Teacher, a bake-off, face-painting, food and games. Tickets will be sold for £2 per family.



The Nature Club's tick sheet for Cherry Tree Wood

Have you tried our new puzzle Re-griddable yet?

Re-Griddable is a twist on the free daily online game grid-dable.co.uk created by two East Finchley residents, Stuart Miller and Matt Robinson. There may be more than one solution to each Re-Griddable but there is definitely at least one, which comes from a maximum scoring game of Griddable.

If you get stuck the official Griddable word-checker may help (griddable.co.uk/word-checker).

If you like playing Griddable online, why not join the East Finchley Leaderboard? Go to Groups on the site and use code **BUJRM4**.

Re-Griddable
No.5
Place the letters to create eight four-letter words — four left-to-right and four downwards.

A E E G H N O R

C			W
	A	V	
		E	D
P			S

Turn to page 11 for this month's solution



Review: Night Light

Upstairs at The Gatehouse, Highgate Village

By Jessica Holt

This one-hour play written by Tom Chandler and Maeve O’Haire is funny, thought provoking and thoroughly entertaining. On entering the theatre, the musical soundtrack puts the audience in a happy frame of mind despite the set displaying a run down, untidy studio flat falling apart at the seams.

When we meet the characters, they too appear to be falling apart at the seams. Rian, played by Jack McLaughlin, works nine to five at a call centre and appears to be content. His childhood friend and flatmate Robyn, played by Maeve O’Haire, is ambitious to become a cheerleader and is anything but content. The source of this becomes clear later in the play and is neatly symbolised by her attachment to her childhood night light.

The third character sharing the accommodation is Randy, the writer played by Tom Inman whose creativity has taken a turn for the worse until Rian tells him to “write about what he knows.”

Into the mix comes Laura played by Lydia Hopgood, Rian’s girlfriend and someone who has made good use of her wealthy upbringing which is in stark contrast to the Irish friends. She loves Rian and though he loves her back he questions his readiness for marriage. There are some familiar themes such as unrequited love, living on the breadline and social mobility, all of which are



Thoroughly entertaining: The cast of Night Light

explored through comedy.

The actors bring a real freshness to these issues through skilful delivery of dialogue combined with some comic movements and moments. The set at times becomes a character, the door that doesn’t open or shut properly, the fridge that gets stuffed with empty pizza boxes, the bed which supposedly sleeps three people and that night light which changes colour throughout the play.

There is much left unsaid in this one-hour show, leaving the audience rather up in the air and wondering whether more is coming: a second act perhaps? Whatever the company known as Giggle Riot Theatre decides, this production has a great future ahead.

Review: Marilyn – The Woman Behind the Icon

Upstairs at the Gatehouse, Highgate Village

By Jessica Holt

There have been several musicals about the icon that was Marilyn Monroe and this latest is marking the centenary of her birth. Written and directed by Andrea Milton-Furlotti and Laura Shipler Chico, this production succeeds in covering an extensive and controversial life in a pacy 70 minutes.

The director ‘seeks to tell Marilyn’s story with honesty’ and in this she is very successful. The audience is constantly reminded of the stark contrast between her public and private persona, and the pain this causes her and her loved ones.

Phil Newman, the set and costume designer, focusses our minds with a white dressing room where the ghost of Marilyn resides and observes her own life story. Played serenely by Donna King dressed in white silk night attire, she watches her younger self Norma Jean played by Alice Mayer as she struggles through failed marriages, addiction and time in a sanatorium.

However, at its core is Marilyn’s struggle to be taken seriously both as an actress and a human being. There are some very hard-hitting scenes that explore her troubled life such

as her wedding night with Joe Dimaggio played by Jamie Withers when she cannot convince him to separate her public life from her future with him. There are some moving scenes between her Aunt Ida played by Katherine Alpen and Marilyn’s mother played by Andrea Milton-Furlotti. Sadly, for Norma Jean they fail to support her through no fault of their own, with her mother suffering from mental health issues and her aunt dying from cancer.

Though a tragic tale this production is filled with fun and humour provided by a live piano and some memorable songs which lifts the production from its sombre themes. I would have liked to see some scenes developed further, for example, there is only a snippet of Marilyn singing “Happy Birthday Mr President” and



Natural wonder: Just one of the results of artist Laura Fox’s collaboration with children and teenagers

A collaboration between children and nature

Wrapped in Leaves and Laughter was an exhibition that brought together photographs, installation, drawings and printmaking in the East Court at Alexandra Palace at the start of last month.

The work, by East Finchley artist Laura Fox, mapped the interaction and experience of children immersed in nature and was made from an ongoing collaboration with children and teenagers from local schools, working in the Outdoor Learning Space in the grounds of Alexandra Park.

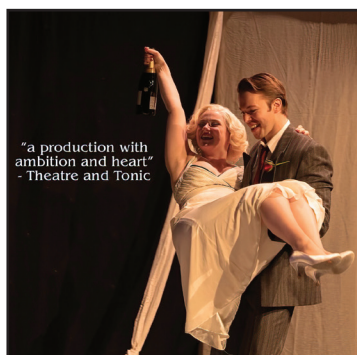
Often classes or small groups come regularly to the site, either weekly or half-termly, giving students the opportunity to witness seasonal

changes and forge a sense of stewardship and responsibility for the rich biodiversity. The exhibition celebrated these partnerships and the inspiration that Laura drew from the young people.

There was an opportunity for visitors to create their own work during the exhibition as they could draw with whittled charcoal pencils that had been made by teenagers, paint with clay that was recently dug from the ground by primary

school children and explore ideas around what shape and form a nest might take.

Laura also runs creative outdoor learning projects at the Archer Academy in East Finchley and with primary schools at Long Lane Pasture, near Finchley Fire Station, along with monthly mindfulness drawing sessions for adults in Coldfall Woods. For more information visit laurafox-artist.com



Tragedy and humour: The production delves into the Marilyn story

Arthur Miller, her famous playwright husband, is hardly mentioned. Marilyn’s connection to the mob is not explored and her politics and intellect are only hinted at but this remains an enjoyable and meaningful piece of theatre with huge potential for evolving into something much bigger.



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Letters

Housing dilemma

Dear Editor,

With the recent approval by the Mayor of London's office of the proposed Great North Leisure Park against the wishes of Barnet's planning committee who voted 8-1 against, I'm rather baffled by both the council and our MP's response.

We have more than 4,000 people on the waiting list for social housing in Barnet, with so many more in our lovely borough unable to move out of their parents' houses or get on the property ladder due to a lack of supply and such high demand.

The Great North Leisure Park development consists of 1,485 new homes, a supermarket, green space and a new leisure centre/lido to be built on the land currently occupied by a large single-storey car park and the Hollywood Bowl/Vue.

Between 23-25% of the homes in the development will be 'affordable', above the aver

age in London. Yes, there are downsides, new residents bring more pressure on local services (buses, police, GPs, schools etc) but they also bring more council tax, more business rates, and, importantly, mandated S106 payments from the developer which fund these new services.

We constantly hear about the housing crisis from our councillors and MPs, who simultaneously often aren't brave enough to stand up for or debate the nuances of these developments out of fear of upsetting vocal opponents (50% are in support of new housing, per latest YouGov polling). Go just 25 minutes north of the site and you're in the Green Belt, where the opposition is just as vociferous by a minority. There seems to simply be nowhere new housing doesn't encounter NIMBYism, a seemingly quintessential human trait. In a world that seems so divided, what are we to do?



High rise: How the leisure park housing development could look

Robin (surname supplied)
Long Lane, N2

Fly-tipping mess

Dear Editor,

A number of years ago, local residents turned a small plot on Tarling Road into a garden, with the help of lottery funding. For decades, it had been used as a dumping ground for old mattresses, chairs, tables, etc.



Another mess: A torn-apart rubbish bag in Tarling Road

However, a local resident keeps leaving black bags filled with household rubbish there. These are often opened, perhaps by a fox looking for food, leaving a big mess of newspapers and food. This is fly tipping. Barnet Council rules state that the illegal dumping of waste carries a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £500

for a first offence and £600 for subsequent offences. The council operates a strict zero-tolerance policy against environmental crimes, deploying expanded CCTV networks and mobile patrols to catch offenders in the act. Local residents around the Tarling Road plot

are now looking out for a person carrying a black bin bag who may be fly tipping. CCTV is in operation covering this garden and Barnet Council will be notified of anyone found leaving bags of rubbish.

Iayn G Clark,
Address supplied

Make your beds

Dear Editor,

The flowerbeds outside the McDonald's HQ in East Finchley are in a really poor state. The extended section nearest the Tube station has remained unplanted since the steps were removed. Litter is everywhere.



Bare earth: The flowerbeds on the High Road. Photo Mike Coles

Junction visibility is fine

Dear Editor,

I lived in Ossulton Way from 1965 to 1992 and still use the junction a few times a week. I rode a bike on it from the age of nine, followed by a motorbike and a car. I can't remember a single accident at the bottom of the road and it has always been a perfectly ordinary crossroads with lights.

Having seen your two recent pictures of carnage (The Archer, May 2026), the only reason I can suggest is that if people insist on buying military-style vehicles maybe they are too large to control on urban roads as that is not what they are designed for.

Knowing the junction for over 60 years I can think of no other reasons as visibility there is perfectly adequate in all four directions.



Danger spot? A car is left straddling a barrier after an accident at the Ossulton Way junction with the A1

David Howard
Winston Avenue, NW9

Altogether it's becoming a depressing sight for visitors walking up the High Road. Come on, Maccy D's, with UK turnover of £1.8 billion, surely you can afford a gardener?

David Brindle
Durham Road, N2

Big and ugly

Dear Editor,

The East Finchley Allotments mangelwurzel contest has begun, with all free seeds passed out and the rules explained to tenants. The winner who has grown the largest and the ugliest produce will be determined in the autumn by three judges.

The mangelwurzel is a largely forgotten heirloom vegetable halfway between a sugar



Thing of beauty: A full-grown mangelwurzel

beet and beetroot, which some say looks like Harry Potter's mandrakes. It is delicious mashed, roasted or pickled, and is sweeter and less earthy than a beetroot.

It can sit for a long time in the garden and provide abundant greens. The contest is well underway and pictured is a plant on site 'finding its roots' and heading towards splendid growth with confidence.

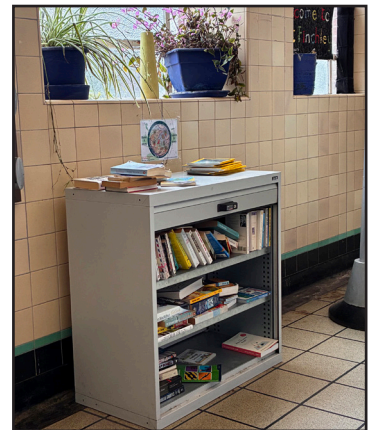
Film the book thieves

Dear Editor,

I was interested but saddened to read Jacky Wood's letter concerning the East Finchley Station book exchange (The Archer, June 2026), as we have had the same experience at our Leopold Road library, which often appeared empty.

On two occasions a man with a suitcase was seen scooping up all our books. The second time he was challenged and also videoed by two neighbours who pointed out that we ask people to take no more than two books at a time.

He was undaunted, replying (probably off the cuff) that he needed them for a library which he ran himself. However I do not believe he has returned, so perhaps a video is the answer.



Borrow not steal: The station bookcase

Valerie Teague
Leopold Road, N2



A young plant starting to thrive

Mary Poulter
East Finchley Allotments

Re-Griddable solution from page 9

Across:

- CROW
- HAVE
- AGED
- PENS

Down:

- CHAP
- RAGE
- OVEN
- WEDS

Send your letters to: news@the-archer.co.uk

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be

withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.



Where East Finchley gets its news

By Margaret Crockett

Thirty-three years after its first edition, The Archer newspaper is still a cornerstone of the East Finchley community, publishing 12 pages of news every month. In this age of social media misinformation and the decline of local journalism, how does it survive?

It is hard to quantify the reasons The Archer has been part of the East Finchley community for so long. The evidence is found in its longevity, the commitment and work of a large team of volunteers and in the messages of support from its readership.

For example there are signs on some letterboxes in N2 reading “No free newspapers... except The Archer” and the guest book from the newspaper’s 25th anniversary party in 2018 carried comments such as “My customers look forward to their Archer to know what is going on in East Finchley” and “Really proud of our local paper, gives our community a heart”.

Speaking to Diana Cormack, who joined the Archer team in 1996, one gets a feel for the history. Diana remembers that, in the beginning, writers used pseudonyms to give the impression of a wider pool of reporters and there was a typist working from hand-written articles. These typed articles were then cut up and stuck into columns on pages alongside black-and-white photographs, before being sent off to be printed. The paper has evolved hugely over the years, not least in being full colour and being produced with the latest digital software.

John Lawrence, editor for 20 years, says another of the biggest changes is that many more contributions come directly from readers.

Early on the team relied on word of mouth and their own local knowledge to report on N2 affairs. Now email and social media make it so much easier for readers to get in touch directly. Reluctant at the beginning, readers are now much happier to write their own articles.

All contributions are welcome and are considered carefully, within the paper’s longstanding declaration of being “non-religious and non-political”. The editorial team maintains the writer’s voice as much as possible as this adds character and variety to the newspaper and ensures its truly hyper-local flavour. Production and distribution is an efficient operation. The editorial team meets at the beginning of each

month to discuss what’s happening in East Finchley and what is likely to be important to readers. Then about 12 regular writers submit their articles in time for the mid-month deadline. Submissions, including those from readers, are checked and formatted by the copy editor and double-checked by two sub-editors.

Photo editor Mike Coles processes all photo contributions to ensure they look good on the printed page. Towards the end of the month, the production editor Nadia Savvoulou creates the edition and skilfully fits everything onto 12 pages... rarely an easy task.

Sharmans in Peterborough prints The Archer on recycled paper on the first Tuesday of each month and sends the papers to the distribution team in East Finchley. The print run is about 10,500 copies, explains Toni Morgan, who masterminds distribution supported by Jane and David Marsh. The Marshes collate the papers into individual rounds, anything from 40 to 200 copies covering every road and block of flats in East Finchley, which are then delivered by around 80 people. And it is these volunteers who deliver the paper in all weathers every month who are perhaps the most crucial and dedicated aspect of the whole operation. Month after month, they ensure The Archer reaches its readers.

Barnet Council, the Police, the Library Archives and the Finchley Society also receive copies. Any spares are distributed to venues where readers can collect them, including the community bookcase in East Finchley station and the foyer of the Phoenix Cinema. A crucial element in the success of The Archer is its not-for-profit financial model. None of the team of about 100 volunteers receives any payment. And as a free newspaper The Archer relies solely on advertising revenue to cover its costs.

Ninety per cent of its expenditure goes on printing. Other costs include hosting the online presence at www.the-archer.co.uk, funding a freephone 0800 number for readers to leave messages, plus paying for insurance, the



Wide reach: Just some of the volunteers who deliver The Archer to 10,000 homes and businesses in East Finchley every month. Photo Mike Coles

accounting system, postage, stationery and the team’s stall at the annual East Finchley Community Festival. Businesses in East Finchley and the surrounding area obviously value the opportunity to expose their products and services to the 10,000 homes and organisations that receive the newspaper each month. Advertising revenue fluctuates but the aim is to break even or make a small surplus. This wasn’t easy in the paper’s early days when some volunteers had to dip into their own pockets to keep the operation afloat but it has been achieved for most of the paper’s history, although revenues took a serious hit as advertisers struggled to survive during the Covid pandemic of 2020-2022.

But it was in those pandemic years that The Archer proved how crucial hyper-local news can be to any community. As Covid broke out and kept everyone at home, the newspaper carried on publishing to keep everyone connected and made a point of carrying important information about local shopping services, medical updates and general advice to help people through the lockdowns. In its time, The Archer has also reported on scores of local campaigns by residents who were lobbying for improved facilities in N2, such as the recently-opened Market Place Playground, or against unwanted developments such as disproportionate rises in street parking fees.

Social media and online news can be all-consuming but, as a printed newspaper, The Archer is thoroughly democratic in that

it provides local news to every household in the area regardless of income or access to mobile phones and the online world. It comes directly to the door for free, giving everyone a chance to keep up with East Finchley

news. “The Archer is here to keep our readers informed,” says editor John Lawrence, on behalf of the whole team. “The vision is to keep carrying the banner for local news long into the future.”

Wagner classics

North London Symphony Orchestra (NLSO) is preparing for its next concert on Saturday 11 July at 7.30pm at St James’ Church, Muswell Hill, when it will present an all-Wagner programme under the guidance of its conductor Robert Max.

The concert starts with the Overture to The Flying Dutchman before the orchestra joins with the internationally-renowned soprano Rachel Nicholls to perform the beautiful Prelude and Liebestod from Tristan and Isolde. Completing the programme, NLSO joins with Rachel Nicholls again to

present highlights from Götterdämmerung, which is the final part of Wagner’s epic Ring cycle. These highlights include Siegfried’s Rhine Journey, Hagen’s Watch, Siegfried’s Death & Funeral Music, and Brunnhilde’s Immolation. Tickets are available online via the NLSO website www.nlso.org.uk or on the door.



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