



Trick and treating inspires a bedtime adventure

An evening spent trick-or-treating on the streets of East Finchley sparked a bedtime story that, ten years later, has become local author Matt W. Robinson's first rhyming picture book.

Rose's Halloween follows a little girl who ignores her mum's reminders to say thank you and finds herself whisked away to the mysterious Land of the Tangerine Sky. There, Halloween decorations come to life, and Rose must mend her manners before it's too late.

"I wrote the story when my children were very little," says Matt. "After we'd been out trick-or-treating, one of them asked for a made-up story at bedtime. I was shattered but somehow came up with the idea of the Halloween decorations coming to life, which I rather liked." The story's message grew out of another familiar part of the evening: repeatedly calling after his children to remind them to thank the neighbours handing out treats.

Over the following months, Matt developed his bedtime invention into a rhyming adventure he would read to his children each year. Now they are older, he has finally been able to bring it to a wider audience.

The story captures the excitement of Halloween while encouraging children to mind their Ps and Qs. It should serve parents well through bedtimes in October and help to reinforce good behaviours on the big night.

Families can preview the story at www.crillybooks.com/rose and download a free activity pack at www.crillybooks.com/rose/activitypack. The pack includes printable Two-Headed Troll masks, handy for anyone looking for a Halloween costume idea.



Halloween treat: Matt Robinson with his newly published children's book

Matt welcomes enquiries from local schools and venues about readings and book-signings at hello@crillybooks.com. Rose's Halloween is available on Amazon.

Paths to take when families stop talking

For families facing separation, communication is often at its most difficult. The day-to-day pressures of family life, together with decisions about children and money, can turn conversation into a source of conflict. Terrence Trainor, Family law partner at Keystone Law and East Finchley resident, explains the paths they can take.

If an East Finchley family needs assistance from the Family Court, Barnet is likely to be their local hearing venue, situated in St Mary's Court, Regents Park Road, Finchley Central, N3, where, as across the family justice system, delays can sometimes be substantial.

Families will not necessarily have the same judge throughout. Proceedings generally become more expensive the longer they continue.

Most importantly, once a dispute enters the courtroom, control passes to a judge who may reach a decision very

different from the outcome either person had hoped for. Family law has moved on. Separation does not have to begin with both sides "lawyering up" and preparing for court.

Legal proceedings can determine the issues in dispute, but they do not resolve the

underlying problems or improve communication, particularly where children are involved.

Mediation can be a powerful starting point. A mediator helps families discuss practical issues and explore whether they can reach their own agreement. An agreement reached by those involved is more likely to work than a decision imposed by someone else.

Family therapy also offers something different. It is not marriage counselling nor is it limited to couples trying to stay together. It gives families a supported space to work through difficulties, understand one another's perspectives and find better ways to communicate.

Every family and relationship is different; there is no single process that will suit everyone. Better communication may help separating families agree arrangements and have a greater say over the solutions that will shape their future. It may also help families explore whether separation is the right outcome at all.

Sometimes the most important first step is simply finding a better way to talk.

For more information on mediation, visit <https://resolution.org.uk>. For more information on family therapy, please visit <https://tavistockrelationships.org>.

A film everyone should see?

By David Melsome

This year's summer climate conditions both here and abroad have caused, and continue to cause, suffering to many. Whether it be floods, wildfires, water shortages, stunted plant growth on farms and allotments or just the extreme temperatures, the list is long and few can feel unaffected.

Many are asking what can be done to prevent this happening in future and a film soon to be screened at the Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley argues that we ought to be taking action now.

The People's Emergency Briefing is being shown numerous times countrywide to enable the public and decision makers to be more informed about the climate and nature crisis.

The Phoenix Cinema, in partnership with Barnet Friends of the Earth, Barnet Climate Action Group, Chipping Barnet Foodbank, East Finchley Town Team, GoodGym and Incredible

Edible Barnet, is putting on a free screening of the film on Wednesday 14 October 2026 at 6pm.

Lasting 50 minutes, it features footage from last November's National Emergency Briefing, which brought together leading UK experts in climate science, food security, health, economics, national security and nature.

The screening will be followed by a facilitated community discussion (ending by 8pm) about implications for our community and actions we can take. Tickets can be booked on the Phoenix Cinema website at www.phoenixcinema.co.uk



Footage from last November's National Emergency Briefing features in the film

Help to read

A charity that helps adults gain reading skills, confidence and independence is seeking more volunteers to join its team as literacy coaches.

Read Easy Haringey currently supports 28 reader-coach pairs across the borough but the need remains significant. Around 21,000 people in Haringey are estimated to have very low literacy skills or be unable to read confidently.

"Imagine not being able to read a hospital letter, a street sign or a note from your child's school," says Read Easy Haringey's volunteer Literacy Specialist, Gillian Lazar.

"When we work with readers, we see their confidence grow and their opportunities expand. The changes can be truly life-changing."

All Read Easy Haringey's work is delivered by trained volunteers, who meet their readers twice a week in local libraries and community venues. Find out more by searching 'Haringey' at readeasy.org.uk or email haringeypublicity@readeasy.org.uk

Voices in the crowd

What was it like to witness the life and teaching of Jesus from the edge of the crowd? How did people piece together the clues, before the narrative known from the Bible was established?

Fr Terry Tastard, chaplain to Nazareth House in East End Road, N2, and formerly parish priest at St Mary's Church on the High Road, has been asking these questions for a long time. In response he has written 25 fictional short stories. Each story is written in the first person with the range of characters including a midwife,

a physician, a religious expert, a spy, a bandit, an orphan and a waitress. Each story is followed by related gospel passages, and an explanation of the cultural setting drawn from research of scholars into the historical Jesus. The book is called *Voices from the Fringe: Asking who Jesus might be* and is available from Amazon.

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