



THE ARCHER

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We will accept neat handwritten copy but only if previously arranged with the newspaper.

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* Thanks to the anonymous reader who contacted *The Archer* regarding the Water company telephone number. We've checked with Lea Valley Water Ltd. and the number we publish is the correct emergency number. (The accounts department number is 0707 276111.)

Plain language drive to improve communications

CUT the jargon. Stick to the facts and make it simple and easy to understand. This is the message to all Barnet staff from Council leader Roy Shutz as the authority steps up its plain language campaign as part of the customer care drive.

"I want every letter - every piece of literature leaving the council to be targeted for close scrutiny to ensure that all written communications are clear, to the point and produced with the reader in mind," Cllr. Schutz told a meeting of the Policy and Resource Committee.

Cllr. Schutz is calling for all managers to look again at the language used in standard let-

ters, forms and leaflets to ensure they are free of jargon and easy to understand.

DOCUMENTS MONITORED

From now on there will be a plain language representative in every directorate to monitor all documents. There will also be pilot testing of all new letters and forms with residents and random sampling of all one-off correspondence.

The council is also considering setting up consumer panels to vet material for plain language before mass mailings.

Local government and official bodies generally have earned a reputation in the past for producing complicated, jargon-loaded

letters and forms which cause great difficulty for those faced with understanding them.

"I am determined to see that this is not the case in Barnet. It is our declared objective to continue to improve two-way communications with residents. This plain language initiative is an important step in this programme," added Cllr. Schutz.

Editors Note:

Hooray for Mr. Schutz!
At long last, our servants, the council staff, are going to talk to us, who pay their wages, in a language we can understand.

Does this mean that in the future we, the customers, will receive a Council Tax report in a form that most of us can get to grips with?

Does this also mean the end of being treated as idiots when we question their gobbledegook?

If any reader has had any interesting dealings with the council recently, please write to me at *The Archer*.

Future of pool depends on the public

continued from Front Page

the revised development plans are rejected during September's meeting, there is every chance that the pool could open next year.

The Archer has also learned that the Council had planned to open the pool this year but it was not re-opened because no provision was made in the budget plans for the current financial year. It does seem strange, therefore, that funds were made available towards the high costs of safety measures to keep the vandals out.

The Archer wants to see adequate provision made for both swimming and other all round family leisure activities without the considerable loss of open space.

The future of Finchley Pool, which includes the largest children's pool in Britain, once hailed as the pride of the borough,

depends on the actions of Barnet residents.

You might be interested to know that the residents of Haringey forced the council to re-open Park Road Open Air Swimming Pool which had been closed for several years - we can do the same here.

Editor's Appeal - what you can do

The team at *The Archer* wants to see adequate provision for both swimming and other family leisure activities without a big loss

of open space.

If you agree with us, then act now; it is your **last chance** to air your views.

You can air them in writing to any of the people or organisations below and go along to the meeting at the Hendon Town Hall on September 27 at 7 pm.

Cllr. John Hart, Chairman, Recreation Leisure and Arts Committee, 11 Mount View, London NW7 3HT

Cllr. Mary Phillips, Chairman, Central Area Planning Committee, 15 Chiddingfold, London N12

Cllr. John Tiplady, Chairman, Town & Planning Research Committee, 23 Finchley Park, London N12 9JS

Finchley Swimming Pool Preservation Society, 32 Long Lane, London N3.



Pool to be closed forever?

Photo by Julietta Wagman

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Church Lane pipe burst

Cathy Young reports:

HOMES and businesses in East Finchley were caught short after a burst pipe led to water supplies to the south of Church Lane being cut off for one day recently.

"We were lucky our boiler didn't blow up," said the assistant at H.R. Dry Cleaners, as he apologised for being unable to provide the usual "two hour service" advertised.

Further down the High Street people were speaking of having to buy bottled water to make tea and to wash in.

The publican of the Alexandra, a few yards away from the gushing pipe, was desperately clutching at straws as he asked 'The Archer' team at the scene, "Are you from the Water Board? I've got a pub to run and I can't do it without water!"

Help was at hand, however, and East Finchley was returned to normal by 3:00pm that day.

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