



Fare Enough?

By Daphne Chamberlain
A few months ago, I got on a 263 bus to go to Archway, ready to pay a 70p fare. I handed the driver a pound coin, and he handed it back. "Don't expect me to give you change for that, do you?" he said.

Well, yes, actually I did. After all, the change was only 30p. So much for expectations. The bus had reached Archway before I got it.

A week later, I got on a 263 at the same time, same place - with the same driver. This time, I handed him exactly 70p, counted out in silver and bronze. "What do I want all this change for?" he said.

I was annoyed, told him I was annoyed, meant to investigate the bus company's policy, but semi-forgot about it - as you do. What reminded me was a report in another paper about a passenger who was apparently told to leave her 234 bus for tendering 10p of her 70p fare in coppers, although the legal limit for coppers is 20p (which I must admit I didn't know).

Each bus company I rang confirmed the 20p limit, but agreed there was no ceiling for 5p and above. As for the driver not wanting to give change (the occasional rudeness and stropiness apart), it seems that there is no official float. It's up to the drivers to supply their own float. This seems a bit odd and unhelpful to me. What do you think?

The Island Revisited

By David Brooke

Life is much quieter now on several East Finchley Streets. This follows the construction of the traffic island in the High Road facing Baronsmere Road.

Not surprising then that most residents in these roads want it retained, unlike some High Street traders quoted in the October edition of *The Archer* (Avoiding The Issue).

This is not to say improvements cannot be made. In fact: immediate action must be taken to stop drivers who make dangerous U-turns around the island in order then to get into Baronsmere Road from the north. A 'no U-turn' sign could be placed on the island straightaway. Police should then carry out periodic checks during the evening rush hour to ensure that the 'no U-turn' rule is observed. Anybody ignoring it would be charged and the local press (including *The Archer*) could make the police's intention clear. As for the traffic lights at the junction of the High Road and Fortis Green, filter lights ought to be installed. They could be programmed to allow a good stream of traffic through from the High Road into Fortis Green during each traffic-light-cycle in the evening; and the reverse - from Fortis Green to the High Road going south - in the morning. That would greatly reduce the present traffic queues during the rush hour.

The message is: keep the traffic island and the Baronsmere Road traffic system in the interests of local residents! Parking restrictions in roads around East Finchley Station should be introduced - as proposed by the Council - to encourage more commuters to leave their cars at home and take busses - or walk to the station. These parking restrictions would provide an additional environmental benefit. It is not an alternative to the Baronsmere Road traffic system. When it is reviewed in a few months' time, it should be retained. Perhaps by then the Council will have got the other message: to carry out the suggested improvements.

Out of the mouths...

By Diana Cormack

A recent questionnaire about Cherry Tree Wood was only for those aged sixteen and above. This seemed strange when a large percentage of users are under that age, with their own views about the park.

Only a couple of years ago local children expressed their ideas on the Young Archer page, but still Barnet Council fails abysmally with regard to those who are too old for the play area. The removal of the football posts and the decision not to provide a basketball (or even a netball) court underlines this lack of provision.

But take a look around the rest of East Finchley and ask yourself what you would find to do if you were a teenager. Surely providing suitable places for cycling, skateboarding, climbing, even building an adventure playground would not be too much to ask for. Kids now have to put to use what is available, such as the steps of the social offices opposite East Finchley tube station, then risk being accused of vandalising the place.

Charter pilot

But there is hope! Barnet has unveiled a new radical charter which promises a greater say for children and young people in the borough. It commits the Council and its partners to seeking ways to consult with children and young people on issues which concern them. Schools and other organisa-

tions will be encouraged to offer young people some real decision making opportunities - for example, through school councils. Community and tenants' associations will be encouraged to involve young people.

The charter is going out to consultation with community groups and young people. The council's hope is that partner organisations will sign up to the charter to ensure young people's views are heard across the full range of local services and agencies, for its purpose is to recognise the right of children and young people to be heard and respected.

It isn't clear whether or not their views will be acted upon.

From the Archer Archive...

By David Tupman



East Finchley lido photo by Graham Hobbs

October/November 1993:

The Archer reported the redevelopment of the Finchley swimming pool closed since 1991. Despite an 11,000 signature petition opposing demolition, Tory controlled Barnet Council gave permission for a multi million pound leisure complex with cinemas, swimming pool, bowling alley and restaurants scheduled to open in the summer of 1995. Local residents lamented the loss of the Art-Deco lido as well as the demise of Squire's Lane baths

The world famous Bobath Centre for the treatment of children with cerebral palsy opened its doors for local residents to see its inspirational work. Built in 1847, the building in East End Road, now refurbished, was the first industrial school in Britain providing a blend of academic and practical education.

Friends of Cherry Tree Wood

By the Chair, Mary Atkinson

I am reporting on our progress and also setting out our future hopes and plans for the Wood.

During our Activity Sundays, some 50 trees have been planted in the woodland area. All are species indigenous to the Wood and they replace dead trees and fill in the bald patches. A wild flower area is being prepared in the area adjacent to the Underground line, which we hope will bloom in the spring.

The picnic tables with seats that appeared fleetingly when the picnic area was opened will return, seasoned and bolted down, at the end of the year when the area will also be landscaped and planted with various shrubs and more trees.

We made our first efforts at fund-raising at our stall at the East Finchley Community Festival and garnered a creditable £100-plus through the efforts of all the enthusiastic volunteers.

Since then, a further £50 has been added and the monies placed in an account for the Millennium Seat Fund. Our aim is to donate one or more

seats from the Friends for the benefit of all who use the Wood, to commemorate 2000AD.

Next year we hope to have our own Friends notice board and a permanent exhibition, illustrating the history of the Wood and displaying flora and fauna to be found there. We particularly hope to raise children's interest in preserving the environment.

To achieve what we have accomplished we have relied on a small circle of active volunteers. This badly needs expanding with new young blood coming forward to carry on the good work.

Don't be shy; the smallest amount of work in the field or on the Committee will be very warmly welcomed. Do consider volunteering. Telephone the Secretary on 020 8883 3846 to see how you can help.

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