



LETTERS

Car parking in East Finchley

Dear Editor

I agree wholeheartedly with your editorial statement in the November edition of *The Archer* regarding the Baronsmere road traffic control scheme: in the absence of the East Finchley CPZ, nobody seems to have gained by it, and many have lost.

This being the first copy of *The Archer* (let alone any of the other local papers) that I have seen for more than a year, I have heard no news of the CPZ. Have Barnet Council abandoned it, or embarked upon another of their interminable and usually pointless 'consultation' exercises?

It would certainly be good for residents of East Finchley, but nothing ever comes for free. It will force even more all-day commuters into the Viceroy Close car park, to the chagrin of the long-suffering residents, and the motorists using the car park to shop in the locality.

However, there is worse news to come: developers have lodged an outline planning application to build 18 one bedroom flats on the car park, for which 22 car parking spaces will be provided, controlled by a gate at its entrance, effectively ending its use by residents of East Finchley who wish to visit the Village centre.

If the signs welcoming visitors to East Finchley Village mean that Barnet Council recognises the value of this community centre, then it should reject the application, and take over the car park itself, running it for the benefit of the community as a whole. This would complement the CPZ, and further reduce the numbers of all-day commuters driving their cars into East Finchley.

John Dearing
Viceroy Close, N2.

Care in the Community

Dear Editor

Can I remind Mr Ricketts and fellow shoppers ("Our High Street is the street where we want to and do shop. Please help us keep it that way", *Archer* November 2000) that drug and alcohol problems affect many people from all sections of society - even shoppers in East Finchley.

I have no knowledge of the proposed counselling centre nor any direct interest in the outcome, but I do have an interest in the kind of community I want to live in. It seems to me highly unlikely that people seeking help for addiction problems are going to choose a counselling centre as a place to meet suppliers. They would do better to try any of our local secondary schools or housing estates. And anyway - so what?

I would rather live in a community that offers help to people whose lives are out of control, than one where the sole priority is being able to shop without being reminded of the more miserable aspects of the human condition.

Bob Grove
Bedford Road, N2.

Let the market come to you

Dear Editor,

Hooray for a farmers' market, I, like lots of other people would love one. But it may not happen - it's fallen through a number of times before.

So if you are interested in fruit and vegetables, why not think of growing your own for the time being and getting an allotment.

People sometimes have the wrong idea about them. They don't have to mean hours of backbreaking slog with the weeds always ahead of you.

You could put in your own fruit trees and bushes, then all that's needed is an occasional dash around with the allotment strimmer. Put in permanent beds of things like rhubarb and strawberries. They need minimum maintenance. You don't have to plant things in rows you have to dig out. Just make a hole where, for example, you want to grow a new potato, and let nature get on with it.

You can be a pretty lazy gardener and still get a lot of satisfaction out of it. So when, or if, we get our farmers' market, I shall be delighted. But please remember that if it never happens, there are alternatives,

Yours faithfully
Stella Burnett
Trinity Road, N2

Burglaries

Dear Editor

There appears to have been a spate of burglaries over the last few weeks in the county roads, often when people are away for stretches of time.

One house was apparently completely emptied. It seems the burglars are very well informed. On the most recent occasion that we know of, they actually came back and took the car, having taken the car keys the previous night.

Can *The Archer* do a feature on this? The police, incidentally, don't seem to be that responsive - they said they didn't think the thieves would come back for the car, and took no action to immobilise it (or suggest anything the neighbours might do, either).

Nicola Grove
Bedford Road, N2

The parlous state of Coldfall Woods

Dear Editor

These wonderful woods are one of East Finchley's most treasured, open secrets. Blair Witch has nothing on these haunted, whispering woodlands. But the brook continues to be polluted - twice in the summer I took plastic sacks to clear away the Stella Artois from the crossroads waterfall. Lately a young oak tree has been chain sawed in two, leaving a six-foot high stump and its hundred-foot length decaying in the long clearing. Keep this up and there will be no woods left, which I suppose we might deserve.

Yours faithfully
Paul Thompson
Huntingdon Road, N2.

Giving Thanks

Dear Editor

I found your article in the November issue of *The Archer*, passed on to me by a friend who lives in East Finchley, about the Thanksgiving celebrations very interesting and informative, especially as I am Vice Chairman and Press Officer for one of the Borough of Barnet's Town Twinning Societies - The Friends of Montclare - situated in New Jersey, America.

A group of 50 of our members and friends are celebrating Thanksgiving Day on Thursday evening the 23 November at the Hendon Technical College with the traditional dinner - cooked and served by the catering students.

We have just completed an adult exchange to Montclare, which was very exciting and everyone made us all feel so welcomed. Anyone interested in details of our society should contact our Membership Secretary on 020 8446 3020.

Yours etc.
Mrs E.M. Hiscocks
Petworth Road,
North Finchley, N12

Baronsmere Road Traffic Scheme

Dear Sirs

We write to express our surprise at the views expressed by your correspondent Leon Cohen. He appears to have a very short memory.

The short term 'turmoil' he describes as motorists get used to the new layout is minuscule in comparison to the years of daily road chaos which residents used to endure. The success of the scheme is demonstrated by the following:

1. It is now safer for pedestrians, especially elderly people and children who pass through the area heading for Cherry Tree Woods.

2. The regular traffic accidents are now a thing of the past. Smashed up cars, which used to regularly litter the junctions within the area have disappeared.

3. Incidents of road rage and abuse of residents parking has been eradicated.

4. Damage to parked cars by speeding rat-running traffic has ceased.

Tailbacks on the main roads have not increased significantly. The only major change is that the northbound right hand lane, which used to be relatively empty even at peak times, is now used. We therefore have no doubt that the scheme has reduced through traffic in East Finchley.

We therefore applaud the Local Authority for putting the health and safety of the community before the convenience of motorists and hope the scheme is maintained.

Yours faithfully
Simon & Tracy Cottingham
Baronsmere Road, N2

Cherry Tree Woods 2000By Jill Bamber, *The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood*

The park dried out last summer and the ducks left their muddy patch on the Quaggy, the old name for the football ground, where once there were watercress beds. The field remains verdant since formal football matches have ceased and a belt of un-mown grass has been left round the edge of the trees, allowing tree seedlings a chance to grow and replenish the old and the dying.

There was much less squirrel damage to the crowns of the oaks last Spring, probably due to the illegal shooting of crows, pigeons and squirrels. Earlier last year youths with an air rifle killed these almost tame creatures; for a while only a solitary crow remained and few pigeons. Lately, pairs of crows have been seen on the field again, competing for food with the pigeons.

Plans for the Quiet Area were implemented in the autumn, under Lee Tyson's (Countryside Management

Services) management. Six bench tables were placed to the east of the Cafe, on special grass permeable surfacing, to keep the space natural. Interesting trees such as Wild Maple and Bird Cherry will be planted around.

Work on the wild flower area continues; volunteers have cut down the grass and raked away the clippings to gradually reduce soil nutrients, with the aim of encouraging less aggressive species to wake up from their seed banks and grace the sward again.

Speak for Yourself

Dear Sir,

I wanted to ask whether Paul Savill's article, on page 4 of your paper, was supposed to be an opinion piece or a piece of fact, because if it's supposed to be a piece of fact it's a very sorry factual article.

I've never heard of Mr Brophy. Nobody has come round and asked our opinions here. Where does Mr Brophy live? Is he in one of the affected roads?

Has Paul Savill seen one of the forms, because it didn't put forward that the CPZ was a fait accompli, but actually asked people if there was a problem in their road and if they wanted one.

I'd be interested to hear the Editor's opinion of the difference between a piece of propaganda, an opinion piece, and a so-called piece of factual reporting.

Jane Kleiner, Shakespeare Gdns, N2.

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