



# LETTERS

## No fly zone

Dear Editor,

The anonymous correspondent in your September issue (headed *Waitrose*) thinks it a disgrace that the Council "do nothing" about the East Finchley pigeons.

I am not sure what he/she thinks the Council should do. Should they shoot the pigeons? Poison them? Deport them to Trafalgar Square? And if the Council were able to get rid of the present flock, how would they keep out other pigeons who would inevitably attempt to take over? Would the Council need to establish a no-fly zone, complete with pigeon wardens?

Your correspondent claims that the pigeons foul up the environment. I am not aware of any evidence to support this claim. The Council's mechanical sweepers keep the pavements free of accumulations of droppings. Now, if we were able to keep our

street free of the drunks who vomit and urinate on the pavements, that would improve the environment.

I am not a pigeon fancier. On the contrary, I find them rather unattractive. But I think it sad that some people should seek to get rid of some part of the wild life which manages to survive in an increasingly hostile urban environment. Do we really want to live in a city where no birds fly and no birds sing?

Yours sincerely,  
**John Bagley**  
Stokes Court, N2

## Gang Down Under

Dear Editor,

We (The Gang Down Under) are holding a party in Australia for old mates from the Martin, Alder and Manorside Schools, and wonder if anyone would care to join us?

Regards,  
**Brian Timms**

## One Way

Dear Archer,

I am writing to you to voice my concern regarding the volume of traffic passing along Park Road, and in particular the increasing numbers of vehicles travelling the wrong way down what is supposed to be a one-way street.

I estimate that at least 50 motorists ignore the signs every single day, and these include Council, Post Office and Refuse lorries.

Park Road is also the perfect short cut for drivers wishing to go from the High Road to East End Road, particularly in the morning.

I, and many of my neighbours, have young children who use the park opposite our homes. We feel it is only a matter of time before a serious accident occurs. Our road also has Holy Trinity Primary School and the Herbert Wilmot Youth Centre.

Park Road does have two speed ramps, but they are 100 yards apart, and it is on this stretch where motorists tend to put their foot down.

Over the past few months a growing number of residents, parents and young people themselves have expressed serious concerns, and this is what we would generally like to see.

1. A third speed ramp in the middle of the 100-yard stretch.
2. Clearer and more pronounced one-way signs.
3. Some kind of action taken against drivers who ignore the one-way system.

I am sure that with help from *THE ARCHER* something can be done to make Park Road a safer place for our many young and vulnerable pedestrians.

Yours sincerely,  
**Joe Strong**  
Park Road, N2

Send your correspondence to:  
"Letters Page", *The Archer*, PO  
Box 3699, London N2 8JA.  
(Letters may be edited for space)

Any reader who feels strongly about any matter is invited to use this "Soapbox" column.

Please note that opinions expressed are those of the writer alone.



## Transport of Disgrace

By Jake Eiseman-Renyard

A few issues ago we were asked what we thought about the 263 bus. Some said its service was a joke, but it was no joke for someone like me who had to depend on it every day.

I am currently studying at Barnet College, and I nearly always take the bus there. Since I began using it, the service has changed management twice. First it was run by Arriva, then First Capital Citybus. They usually ran much older buses which became much less reliable and would sometimes even skip stops.

### Relying on the unreliable

Since then it has become part of Metroline, who at least are running newer, better buses, and do not skip stops. However, I still spend nearly as much time waiting for a bus as I do on the journey itself. People tell me I just have to allow for the bus to be unreliable, but what's that supposed to mean?

They need to run the 263 much more often, not just for reliability, but also so that they are less crowded; they are currently packed to bursting point. I hope you hear from other commuters who have to rely on a service that is unreliable. *THE ARCHER* has done a good job in recognising people's needs for public transport.

# GARDENING

## A Clean Sweep

By Zena Robson

It's time to startle the neighbours! Yep - brushing the lawn is a requirement if you intend to cut it in the mornings and they will wonder what on earth you are up to! Using a spring-tine rake will also be mandatory as the leaves come off. Their removal from the lawn is very important. When it comes to both brushing and raking, remember your back. It may be good aerobic exercise but you don't want to be laid up for a week, do you? Alternate the side you hold the brush etc. on - left side across the lawn, right side coming back. Take it from one who knows!!

If, you generally chuck your leaves in the bin... STOP! This could be the year when you finally get around to composting them. The old black-bag technique works well; just make sure the leaves are wet, tie the bag up, punch a few holes in it and leave it in a secluded corner until next spring. Don't put in tough stuff or evergreens or you'll be waiting forever. Shove some in the compost bin too or just pile them up covered with old compost bags so nature can do its work. Don't be tempted to use leaves off the street trees - sorry, but they'll be full of yuck from traffic fumes.

### Tough love

If you are planning on getting a tree, now is a good time to plant deciduous bare-rooted ones. Look for good root development and a balanced head with only one leader - forked leaders will weaken the tree, making it prone to wind damage and consequently disease. The general thinking now is to treat 'em mean (not too mean) but they will get going faster if the roots have to do some growing to find food. The question of staking is back; some say the tree, if small enough, will anchor itself quite nicely; others favour the short stake put in vertically or at a 45-degree angle. Do use the proper tree ties so they can be loosened as the tree grows - nothing worse than to see some poor tree being strangled. You can also do any formative pruning before planting but if you are going for a cherry it's best to leave the pruning until summer to avoid silver leaf.

## Shout for the H3

By Daphne Chamberlain

The H3 runs hourly from Golders Green to East Finchley, via the Suburb. You have to be up early to see it, because it stops at 2pm. London Buses advise that the only way to make it visible after that time is to make a lot of noise.

Veteran campaigner Paula Sanders is used to doing just that. Her letter of complaint to Mayor Livingstone brought this reply from London Buses Customer Services: "Route H3 was introduced as a response to demand for a limited bus service... Our monitoring shows that it runs frequently enough to meet the demand that exists for it".

*THE ARCHER* had two questions for Customer Services: what is the point of a morning-only service, and how is it monitored?

The person I spoke to suggested that it might be intended only for peak-times. So why was it not running in the early evening? There was no answer to that.

How about the monitoring? That is apparently done by counting the letters of complaint. "If enough people complain, we have

to do something about it", said the spokesperson.

### 143 determined to improve

Paula's letter to the Mayor had also complained about the 143. London Buses replied: "I am sorry that you are experiencing reliability problems with route 143. Some sections of its route suffer from traffic congestion, notably Hendon and Archway... We regularly monitor the bus network to identify those services which fail to perform to the standard we expect. We can then work with our operators to overcome any particular problems that they face... In this case, we are absolutely determined to improve route 143, and are doing everything in our power to overcome the problems that Metroline face."

So now we know what monitoring means, I suggest we start shouting.

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