



Letters to The Editor

Phone mast objections

Dear Editor,
I was appalled to discover the other day that an application has been put to Barnet Council to site a phone mast on the land between East Finchley High Road and Strawberry Vale (Application Number: C15724/04). If the mast is given planning permission it will end up being sited very near to homes and a local community centre.

Phone masts have not been shown to be without health risks and caution must be exercised when masts are to be situated so close to homes. It is for this reason that I myself have lodged an objection and I strongly urge the rest of the community to do so as well. It is only by showing our displeasure at the insensitive siting of masts that we will ever get local councils to take our concerns seriously.

Noel Lynch
Member of the London Assembly
City Hall

Rubbish tips

THE ARCHER received the following letter from a resident of Sedgemere Avenue, so we contacted the Council to find out:

Dear Archer,
I am an East Finchley resident for a few years now. I like the area and the community. It's the council that bothers me. First of all, I rang the council a few times to request recycling bins for plastic, cardboards and so on. I left my address, name and my phone number - nothing happened. So I've given up.

What I do find most ridiculous though is when my bin doesn't get emptied just because there is a bucketful of weeds in it. Like last week. The bin is not heavy, but there's a bit of soil on the top of my rubbish, and so it gets left behind! When I rang Barnet Council, I was told that 'no garden waste' should be in my bin. Not even a bucket of weeds. So where exactly am I supposed to put it if Barnet refuses to help me recycle and they do not provide garden waste bins in my area? What if I didn't have a car to take it to the dump? Why should I

pollute the air with petrol and waste my time and money when I do pay my council tax? Am I supposed to go through my rubbish now to take it all out? I don't think so! As the kind lady from Barnet Council customer care said to me - cover it all up with more rubbish, they'll take it. Hmmm.

Kind regards,
Name and address supplied

The Archer contacted the Waste Statutory + Contracts Manager at Barnet's Recycling Department regarding the collection of garden refuse if left inside wheelie bins. She advised that refuse collectors should collect garden refuse left inside wheelie bins unless the bin is too heavy (e.g. if rubble has been left in it) or unless the bin's lid is not closed (i.e. the bin is over-full, restricting closure). Refuse should not of course be left at the side of a wheelie bin even in bags.

There is in addition the council's three times a year free local street collection of a much wider range of items. (The Museum of Garden History in Lambeth will recycle your old seed packets, old plant labels and old gardening books. Phone 7401 8865 for details.)

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net. (Due to space restrictions, letters over 200 words will be edited)

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.



A-star arrogance

By Hannah Eiseman-Renyard

A level student, Fortismere School

In an education system organised purely around exams, in which all schools are, unsurprisingly, getting better exam results, private schools are now beginning to wish there was something to distinguish their students' grades from everyone else's. I read in the 26th April's Evening Standard that private sector schools and colleges are pushing for a greater distinction to be made between A grades, as too many people are achieving them these days. They would like to see the grade A* introduced for AS and A2 levels, as it was for GCSEs. The introduction of A* would, by definition, make hard-earned A grades worth less by comparison, and would push the merit of every other grade down one notch, too.

What angers me, is that those in private schools have the cheek to complain and want 'ordinary' A grades demoted because those in state education are doing almost as well as they are. If you have the money you can buy your child a better grade. I don't like it, but you can pay to take yourself out of the system. Once you have done this, however, what right have you to complain when the system you have turned your back on is doing well? As the gap between rich and poor in education appears, slowly, to be closing, instead of sending their children back to the apparently successful state schools, those in the private sector want to maintain an elitism within the very top grade - an example of snobbery and arrogance surely worthy of an A*.

12 Things You Didn't Know About....

Every month [despite a brief lull] THE ARCHER hits an eminent member of the community with 12 quick-fire questions. This week a living legend...

1. Name: Jim Dimitris.
2. Date of birth: 6/3/36.
3. Family in this country: Two brothers, a wife, two sons.
4. How long have you worked as a barber on Lincoln Road? Since 1964 - 40 years.
5. What is the best thing to have changed in East Finchley in that time? Plenty of restaurants now.
6. And the worst? Not enough funeral directors.
7. Why is there always a red stripy pole outside barber shops? Red for men. Hairdressers have blue stripes.
8. Favourite inane barber conversation? How is the love life?
9. How often do you visit Cyprus? Every 2-3 years.
10. Favourite Film? Zorba The Greek - very funny. But English films? The Sound of Music or West Side Story.
11. What was the last book you read? Don't read much - I watch sexy movies. Wait... is Page 3 reading?
12. If you won the lottery what would be the first thing you would buy? Seven women.

RSPCA news

Recently, more than 12 cats had to be removed from a local house when their owner died. An inspector and police, all in protective clothing, carried out the rescue operation.

This is still ongoing as, obviously, cats come and go and some will still be returning to the empty house. So far, £50 has been spent on making food available for them. Natalie, the inspector, told us that the cats had not been ill-treated but they were becoming undomesticated and were breeding indiscriminately. The ones removed are now in the RSPCA animal home and are being neutered and prepared to go to new owners.

The winner of the Easter Bonnet Cake, star raffle prize at our recent Spring Fair, was Marian Dewey, one of our volunteer workers for many years, delighted never having won a raffle prize before.

The committee have decided that the next fundraising will be held at the Clinic to make it easier for our neighbourhood friends to drop in and see the next seasonal cake on show. Date to be announced in this column later in the year.

She's got to hand it to you!

By Diana Cormack

Sandra Stokes, of Milton Keynes, contacted THE ARCHER to share a story which will gladden many readers' hearts.

One Saturday afternoon a few weeks ago, Sandra and her elderly mother came to East Finchley to visit her father's grave. Sandra accidentally left her handbag in the bus shelter opposite the Phoenix cinema and only realised her mistake once she was on the bus. It took at least 20 minutes to

get back to the shelter where, to her amazement, she found her bag where she had left it.

Sandra would like to pass on her thanks to the community for being so honest. She said that the people of East Finchley have restored her faith in humanity.

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