



Letters to the editor

**Inconvenience of traffic calming outweighs benefits**  
Dear Editor,

Referring to Gill Steiner's article (*Traffic calmed by speed tables, THE ARCHER, May 2007*), it seems that she believes that the steps taken by the Council in Woodside Avenue to attempt to slow down the traffic are both the answer to the problem and the solution desired by the residents.

As one of the residents most affected by the mini roundabout, as it has made difficult my means of access and egress from my property (and I am not the only person affected), I have been in lengthy correspondence both with the Council and the Local Government Ombudsman.

The council proposal consisted of 20mph 'entry road surfacing and signing', also of a 'mini roundabout, vehicle activated sign, priority give way build out, pinch points with raised tables, zebra crossing, and waiting restrictions'.

The Woodside Avenue Residents Association surveyed residents' opinions in Woodside Avenue but not those in Fordington Road and Lanchester Road, who were also substantially affected. Nevertheless, many of the residents of those two roads made their views known to the Council and, so far as the roundabout is concerned, 75% were against and 25 % for.

The Council's consultation responses were difficult to interpret as questions were not asked about each individual feature of the proposed scheme but only for or against the whole scheme. Of the responses received by the Council, only 12% were in favour, 52% against and 36% in favour of some aspects only. A substantial part of the £120,000 cost of the scheme was financed by Transport for London to promote safer routes to schools. Many of the measures introduced are still being ignored by drivers but the roundabout is much appreciated by parents bringing their children to school by car as they can now turn round at the roundabout.

That small benefit for parents not living in the area and who only travel to school during some eight months of the year was not the object of the exercise, especially bearing in mind the great inconvenience caused to residents.

Gill Steiner is right in saying that the noise generated by some lorries bouncing off the speed tables can be terrible and indeed those living in the vicinity will confirm that to be the case. She is wrong, however, in concluding that at long last the road commands the respect from drivers that it deserves. A large proportion of drivers even now only slow down when they absolutely have to.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Paul Rees**  
Fordington Road, N6

**Dangerous bridge needs traffic lights**

Dear Editor

I write in response to the letter and information about the East End Road bridge (*The Archer, June 2007*) and your invitation for suggestions to improve its safety.

I use this bridge at few times each week on foot and I am terrified each time I cross it. I try to wait for a lull in the traffic so that I can get across without a car, bus or lorry passing within inches of my person, often at speed. I am frequently surprised by my miscalculations and the futility of

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trying to outwit the traffic.

I like the suggestion from Barnet that they might consider widening both pavements, thereby creating a narrower roadway. This ties in well with my own suggestion which is to operate a traffic light system which allows only one line of traffic at a time to cross the bridge. This would slow down the traffic slightly but would enhance the safety of pedestrians.

Alternatively, as suggested by Barnet, we could wait for 'accident justification' and, when enough people have been injured or killed, to say nothing of traumatised, the money might then be found to rectify the problem.

I hope you will put forward my suggestion to Barnet. Meanwhile there is a forum for complaints on [www.barnet.gov.uk/contact-us.htm](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/contact-us.htm) or by email on [first.contact@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:first.contact@barnet.gov.uk).

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Jan Levin**  
Church Vale, N2

**How tree wardens were axed**

Dear Editor,

I am very surprised to learn that Barnet Council is advertising for "more" tree wardens, intimating that their current members are "dwindling". Maybe your readers would like to know why members dwindled.

The tree warden scheme started in Barnet just over 10 years ago, and those of us who volunteered were given support from Barnet Tree Department for lectures and guided visits to local woodlands, parks and open spaces. We collected seeds, grew these at home to a certain height, and transplanted them to a nursery behind Fellowship House in Hampstead Garden Suburb, with the intention of transferring them to parks, etc, where necessary.

We planted several new millenium woods in the borough, including Lyttelton Playing Fields, Underhill and Grahame Park, where we tended the baby trees at weekends. We were always vigilant, reporting any dangerous or diseased trees, or those needing attention.

But around 2002 the Council started an economy drive, and the tree wardens were casualties. No more accompanied plantings, no more guidance and, worst of all, we were told that we should insure ourselves whilst carrying out any duties on Council property.

It was therefore decided that, as we had no venue for meetings and no Council support, we could no longer carry on with our work. We did not "dwindle". We were forced to discontinue.

I now assume that Barnet Council are desperately looking for unpaid labourers to salvage the consequences of their failings. I won't be rushing to join them.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Pamela Kent**  
Hamilton Road, N2

**Bernhard Herzberg: 1909-2007**

By Ann Bronkhorst  
**Bernhard Herzberg, Britain's oldest university student, died peacefully at his home in Fairlawn Avenue on 16 May, a little over a month before his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday.**



He was an inspiration to many because of his determination to study, undeterred by age; in his 80s and 90s he took BA and MA degrees and had just completed his final MA dissertation. In the words of his son, Paul: "He was driven by the idea of intellectual self-improvement and a hunger for knowledge."

Bernhard grew up in Hanover, Germany, as a far from conforming Jew who recognised the danger in the rise of Nazism. He emigrated to South Africa in 1933 and fought in World War Two to liberate Fascist Italy.

An incident described in his memoir reflects the ironies of his life: billeted with an illiterate Italian family, he read aloud for them from the Latin family bible. "To them it seemed extraordinary that 'Il Ebreo', in the uniform of a South African soldier, had studied Latin in a German school and was sitting among them."

During his long life, most of it spent in Africa, there were many journeys, troubles and upheavals. Bernhard consistently opposed injustices such as Apartheid but took an independent path personally and politically. He was a remarkable man, and not just because he was the oldest university graduate in Britain.

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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.

**Stub out this control freakery**

By Ricky Savage

Hi there, social pariahs, fancy popping outside for a quick cigarette? Meet me on the corner behind the bike sheds for an illicit puff because that's all you can do now. Our 150-year love affair with nicotine is coming to an end as the happy-clappy, smiley, tree-hugging, do-as-you're-told brigade try to force everyone to be healthy-living, non-smoking, non-drinking, drug-free drones and I don't like it.

I know smoking is bad for you, I know that 14 pints of lager and a chicken vindaloo are not the healthiest way to get through life, but we seem to be heading for a society that wants to put health warnings on everything. Bottles of wine are going to have health warnings and 'safe drinking' means never getting drunk.

In America all women of childbearing age are called pre-pregnant and apparently shouldn't drink anything stronger than water in case it harms the child they might have in the future. You cannot advertise cheese at times when children might be watching TV because it's too high in fat. Next stop will be health warnings on butter.

I do not want to live in a squeaky-clean, risk-free society of perfect people smiling happily as they sip their fat-free, caffeine-free, low calorie drinks and eat medically recommended organic fat-free lettuce. I do not want to have to apply for a licence to have more than 14 units of alcohol and I particularly do not want to be told how to live my life.

I can live without smoking in pubs, cafes and restaurants, but I do not want to live in a controlled, DNA-tested brave new world where personal freedom has ceased to exist. So now that smoking is banned can we call a halt to the social control before we find that milk carries a health warning?

**A second taste of Brazil**

**Edir Oliveira da Cunha, of Tarling Road, has decided to change the name of her café-restaurant at 289 Regents Park Road. To reflect the ambience and atmosphere accompanying her authentic home cooked Brazilian food so appreciated by clients, Pizzico is now called Casa Brasil.**

Unique to the area and with new opening hours of 11am - 6pm Tuesday to Thursday, 11am - 9pm Friday to Sunday and holidays, booking is especially recommended at weekend lunchtimes. You can bring your own bottle and pay corkage. Phone 8371 1999 or email [casabrazil@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:casabrazil@hotmail.co.uk).

Edir's has a recipe for us that is as simple as they come. Popular with both children and adults, she has called it after the name under which she is now trading.

**Edir's Doce "Casa Brasil" (serves 4-6)**

**Ingredients:** 400g tin of Carnation milk, Exactly the same quantity of fresh whole milk, 2 eggs, A soup spoon of salted margarine or butter.

**Method:** Mix together or liquidise all the above and place in an oblong Pyrex dish. Cook in a pre heated oven at 200C, Gas Mark 6 or 7. Remove when brown on top (approximately 40 minutes). Serve when cool or, better still, refrigerate and eat the next day.

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