



Bus stop fix has 'made it worse'

By David Melsome

A bus stop that was moved several yards along the High Road is in a worse position than it was before, claim traders.

The bus shelter and seating used to be outside PACEYS Newsagents at 103 High Road but Barnet Council moved them over the summer to a new site outside the Heck of a Wash launderette at 109 High Road.

One of the reasons given for the move was that northbound 263 buses could not pull in to the kerb fully, causing obstruction to traffic behind them. The new position is said to give them more room to pull in.

But launderette owner Hector Cisneros claims the change has made no difference to whether buses pull in or not and, what's more, the new position is potentially damaging to his business. He claims he was not properly consulted about the bus stop move.

Mr Cisneros said: "The bus stop is now obliterating my shop front and stopping it being seen easily from the road. It made much more sense for the stop to be outside the newsagents where people waiting for a bus could pop in to buy snacks or a newspaper."

The owners of the Cochin restaurant next door to Heck of a Wash are also objecting to the new position.

Consultation

Barnet Council said a full consultation was carried out at the start of the year, when documents were hand delivered to all owners of trading premises and notices placed in the local press and on site.

A spokesman said: "Subsequent discussions took place including a successful meeting on site. It was agreed that we would seek to relocate the stop

further northwards and manage this with no loss of parking facility overall. A letter was then delivered to all the traders in July advising them of the new layout. Traffic congestion in the area has reduced."

At the time of going to press, however, the road markings next to the bus stop had not been altered, so cars were still able to park across half of the bus stop space.

Coleman supports call for better bus service

By Daphne Chamberlain

Barnet councillor Brian Coleman, Deputy Chairman of the London Assembly, has come out in support of the campaign for a better bus service along the High Road.

In a letter dated 24 September to East Finchley Bus Watch's Hazel Burnett, Mr Coleman wrote: "I agree that the performance of the route 263 bus has been extremely poor. Your suggestion of augmenting the 263 with an extended route 17 is a good one."

He added that when, in the past, he asked for more resources to be diverted to the 263 route, he was told that the level of service was appropriate to the existing demand throughout its route.

This is what Bus Watch has

also been told on several occasions. In fact, it misses the point that demand is much higher on the part of the route between East Finchley station and North Finchley, the infamous "solo stretch". It also does not address the complaint that anyone travelling beyond Archway has to either change buses or use the Underground, which is out of the question for many people.

Brian Coleman continued: "You are quite right to make the point that if people are to be persuaded to abandon their cars and use public transport, it is vital that the public transport infrastructure is strong and flexible enough to cope. Enabling people to travel easily from their doctor to the hospital is certainly a key consideration, which a good bus service would undoubtedly provide."

One of the points made by Bus Watch was that the 263 serves a hospital at either end of its route.

Bus Watch on

Consultation Database

Hazel Burnett has also received another letter from London Buses, saying that the 263 is currently being fully reviewed. All suggestions and comments, including those for route 17 and services in the area generally, will be taken into consideration.

Bus Watch have accepted the invitation to be placed on the consultation database for London Buses. This means they will receive all consultation documents for Barnet.



Church Vale's spectacular water-spout. Photograph courtesy of Martin Bronkhorst

Water, water, everywhere

At the top of Church Vale the road has been up for some time. On the afternoon of Thursday 11 October the water was up, too, to tree-top height, and for more than two hours.

Someone 'went through a pipe' and it wasn't the Clancy Docwra road team, who were watching with amusement. The luckless man from Enterprise, a firm working for Thames Water, scrambled out from the hole he was working in followed by a massive water spout. That was at about 2.30pm.

At 5pm, a man in a van from Thames Water turned up and shut off the supply, but by that time one house and its garden had been thoroughly watered, the gutter all the way down Church Vale had become a stream and several schoolchildren had got joyfully wet.

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Stubbing out cigarette litter

Free portable ashtrays are to be handed out as part of a campaign by Barnet Council to discourage smokers from dropping cigarettes in the street.

Working in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy, the council will promote the message that dropping cigarette litter is illegal and can attract a fine of up to £80.

Posters depicting a camouflaged cigarette and the slogan 'However you disguise it, it's still litter' will appear around the borough. The ashtrays will

be handed out in Barnet's main shopping streets and at Brent Cross Shopping Centre.

The campaign comes as research commissioned by Keep Britain Tidy revealed that the level of cigarette litter on streets in England had increased by 43 per cent since the ban on smoking in public places was introduced in July.

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