



Letters to the editor

Stanley Field: entire site essential

Dear Editor, With reference to the August issue of THE ARCHER and the article "One third of Stanley Field is not enough" I was compelled to put pen to paper. Barnet Council has the pound signs dangling before its eyes once again and is rubbing its hands in glee with the thought of more rate payments to fill its coffers. The Herbert Wilmot Centre was rapidly demolished. I wonder why? Could it be to give access to Stanley Field to aid its materialising plans?

It doubtless pondered, "How can we sell this plan to the East Finchley populace?" Offer the serfs a third of the land, appears to have been its conclusion.

So it is assumed that will suffice? No it won't. East Finchley residents are constantly getting a raw deal from this Council in a number of areas. Enough is enough. Allow our youngsters the amenities they desperately need, along with facilities which would benefit all members of our community. In order to achieve this, use of the entire site is essential.

Yours faithfully, Sheila Mary Ertughrul Leopold Rd N2

Why spurn volunteers?

Dear Editor, Your letter from Pamela Kent in the July issue (How tree wardens were axed) was a sad reflection on Barnet's treatment of volunteers. I was for several years involved in Agenda 21 in the South Friern area. A small group of us who were interested in improving our area worked with Barnet Council's officers in removing litter and graffiti in the area, and in clearing and planting a disused flowerbed outside South Friern Library, with plants generously donated by a local DIY store.

We also produced a Newsletter which we distributed to some 2,500 households in the area which urged people to recycle. We did this voluntarily and in our own time because we cared about our neighbourhood. There were eight other Agenda 21 groups in Barnet, all doing similar voluntary work. Barnet Council provided a small sum to keep the groups running and also positively encouraged liaison with their officers.

Out of the blue in 2004, Councillor Brian Coleman announced that all funding would be withdrawn, and Barnet's officers would not be able to work with Agenda 21 volunteers.

This was the same Brian Coleman who then spent council taxpayers' money removing speed humps that had been installed at the specific request of local residents.

If you were running a local council, wouldn't you welcome and encourage the help of volunteers who give their time and effort in improving the environment of the borough? Many councils do but Barnet (motto: Putting the Community First) now treats volunteers with contempt. Perhaps they should remember that volunteers are also council taxpayers and voters.

Yours faithfully, David Berguer, Palace Gates Road, N22.

Who holds the key?

Dear Editor, I have never written to you, but I thought I would share an experience I had two weeks ago after reading your article 'After safer neighbourhoods, it's safer transport' (THE ARCHER, August 2007). Can we really believe it?

My daughter went for a walk with her dogs in Coldfall Woods and found a bunch of keys lying on the ground next to a bench. She took home the keys and, as she is at work during the week, she asked me to hand them to the police.

I rang the Dedicated Police Team number for East Finchley and got a telephone message, that the office was unattended and I could leave a message, but it would take days, up to a week, before somebody would actually check the telephone messages.

As I had to pass Fortis Green Police Station at 11am next morning, I took the keys with me, only to find a notice that the Police Station was not operational. I then drove to Temple Fortune police station. A poster outside told me that the station was open from 7am to 10pm. However, it was closed at 11.30 am.

I stood around and eventually somebody came out and told me that the station was only open from 7am to 10am.

I went home and rang Barnet Police. I was told that Temple Fortune station was open from 7 am to 10 pm. When I told them that that was not the case, they were astonished. The policewoman was very courteous and said she would send an officer to collect the keys. A patrol car with three officers came next morning.

I tried to do my civic duty by handing in a bunch of keys, but I felt I was being sent from pillar to post. The Neighbourhood Police Team obvi-

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ously needs to listen to messages more often. I left a message on their answer phone but have not heard from them since. Temple Fortune Police Station needs to be open at the times advertised. And is a patrol car of three officers to collect a key the proper use of police resources? I leave the answer to you.

Yours faithfully, Dr Dorothea McEwan, Address supplied.

Parking zone deserves praise

Dear Editor, It is easy to moan, isn't it? Much harder and less fashionable to say "Well done" or "Jolly good". Positive events aren't very often news. However Haringey Council is to be congratulated for at last overcoming the doom-mongers and gainsayers with the introduction of a fair, sensible, reasonably priced controlled parking zone for the Muswell Hill shopping area.

At 20p for 20 minutes, it is cheaper than East Finchley (30p for 15 minutes) and it is already noticeable that it is easier to park and shop due to a higher and quicker turn-over of parked vehicles. I think we'll find that once bedded in, local shop trade will increase as folks realise that street parking is more readily available.

Of course the complainers will still carry on but without any sensible or constructive alternative. For them, moaning is enough.

Yours faithfully, Robin Dunn, Springcroft Avenue, N2.

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Donna Hughes Utopia, 1 Leicester Mews, East Finchley, N2 9EJ

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.



Who's the twisted fire-starter?

By Jake Eiseman-Renyard

As mentioned in several issues of THE ARCHER, making fires has become epidemic in Cherry Tree Wood, especially after dark. I have sometimes witnessed this in action, and I sadly suspect many of those who do this are under the influence of drink or drugs.

They seem to think it is acceptable behaviour. Don't they realise how easily fire spreads? They might even be unwittingly aiding developers with an eye on this beauty spot; a forest fire could clear a nice, empty space for them where the woods used to be.

Other examples of anti-social behaviour I have seen include climbing on top of the tube tunnel mouth and pelting a passing train with rocks and an empty cider bottle.

Whoever does take over maintaining the park will have a mountain to climb after all this time of being keeper-less. Luckily, one day in July, I saw two council dustmen emptying bins in the park. Later, in a spot known as Junkies' Corner some burnt logs were still smoking. Although I could quite easily have stamped it out with my foot, I first called one of the council men to show him the fire. "See?" I told him. "This is what's happened to the park since the Council lost interest in looking after it." He told me he would report this to the Council; then we both stamped out the fire.

Now what? The field is still covered in tyre tracks, some flowerbeds are bare, and a corner of the playground has been devoid of equipment for over two years. Come on Barnet, is this really a "Beacon Borough"?

OBITUARY: Mabel Cairns, 1918-2007



Photograph by Craig Johnson

Mabel Cairns worked in Market Place for most of her life. Her husband Sid bred prize-winning pigeons for the East Finchley Pigeon Club back in the 1950s.

Mabel was a woman with strong family values, her arms always open wide for everyone to have a hug. Her door was always open for anyone at anytime, as was her kitchen. Nobody ever went hungry.

A very loving and caring person, she had lots of good friends in East Finchley and in North Finchley, where she lived. She will be missed at the North Finchley British Legion club where she was a bingo 'regular'.

As mother to Ron, Ella, Tommy, Alan, Janet and Mick, Mabel had a large extended family that she loved. She and her beloved Sid loved nothing more than a big family get-together.

Her last family gathering was a wedding, when she dug her heels in and said she was going to walk there and not sit in her wheelchair. True to her word, she did and had a wonderful day.

Jennie Mann Flowers advertisement listing services like hand tied bouquets, scented candles, gifts, events, and corporate services. Includes contact info for 63a Church Lane, East Finchley.

Sallie Rose advertisement for a practice in East Finchley. Has resumed her practice after 20 years experience. Contact: 0208 444 7217.

The East Finchley Dental Centre advertisement. NHS Dental Centre of Excellence. Services include general dental care, special care for nervous patients, dental care for children, preventative care, cosmetic treatment, private treatment, and teeth whitening. Contact: 020 8444 3436.