



Letters to the Editor

Pavements are safe at night

Dear Editor,

I read your article in THE ARCHER about the tax on using the pavements in East Finchley.

It would be a shame if traders had to stop this, as it gives the village such a nice friendly feeling. It also stops a lot of crime, as the place is so alive at night. I am never afraid to walk up the High Road at night.

I think the council should pay the traders for the lovely look it gives. It is like a continental village, and people get to know each other just by seeing them all the time. I think there is a bit of jealousy there by Barnet. East Finchley is so much nicer.

**Yours faithfully,
M.C.Gallacher-Mackay,
Leicester Road, N2.**

Tax will create a ghost town

Dear Editor,

Barnet's Licensing Team should listen to the traders and not charge for use of the pavement outside their premises (THE ARCHER, July 2008). It doesn't make sense. As your article stated: "Part of the rationale for the charge is to discourage traders from cluttering the pavement and obstructing pedestrians." Then they contradict themselves, as they are quite happy to let them use the pavement as long as they pay a licensing fee.

Pavements are wide in East Finchley and it is not really an issue. You are more likely to fall over a broken paving stone in the street than be obstructed by traders' goods. So let's not damage the image of East Finchley by taxing local traders. Let's see displays of shops goods and allow

cafés to continue with tables placed outside and not turn East Finchley into a ghost town.

**Yours faithfully,
Maggie Golden,
Sylvester Road, N2.**

Tax pavement use: within reason

Dear Editor,

The pavement tax you refer to in your July issue is yet another 'catch-penny' by Barnet Council. It seems that one of the reasons for this stupid tax is to reduce pavement obstacles for pedestrians (not a problem in the High Road). If so, those pavement stalls or tables and chairs which do not unreasonably restrict pedestrian movements should be free of the tax. Much is written these days about how London is becoming 'continental' - if not if Barnet can help it.

**Yours faithfully,
Alan Grant,
Hertford Road, N2.**

Pavement palaver

Dear Editor

After reading your front page article "Pavement tax protest by traders" (THE ARCHER, July 2008), I wondered if Barnet Council will also be charging Domino's or Pizza Hut for parking their mopeds on the pavement outside their shops in their crackdown on unlicensed street trading to make pavements more pedestrian-friendly?

I cannot understand (or accept) that traffic wardens employed in East Finchley can overlook the mopeds parked on pavements without issuing penalty notice charges (which is also a loss of revenue to Barnet Council). After all, traffic wardens will penalise motorcyclists when they have parked

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 8JA or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net.

one wheel slightly on the pavement! I was advised by Barnet Council's Enforcement Department that "due to the limited resources, it may not be possible to send Enforcement Officers every day and as such the mopeds continue to park on the pavements. The legislation that governs Barnet Council's ability to issue penalty charges does not facilitate parking attendants issuing verbal/written warnings to individuals who are not observed to be parked in contravention of restrictions."

Perhaps there's one rule for some and another rule for others?

**Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.**

Local supermarket is badly needed

Dear Editor,

East Finchley is a pleasant place to live, with its excellent tube connections, wonderful primary schools, hard-working Safer Neighbourhoods Team, decent restaurants and haphazard bus service. What it clearly lacks, however, is a supermarket. Iceland is fine for fish fingers and bargain crisps. Budgens isn't bad as an over-sized corner shop with a particular specialism in wildly expensive craft-baked pies. Tony's Continental is lovely for a treat or an olive cornucopia. And I like the idea of having a fishmonger, even if I'm too intimidated by a wet fish counter actually to go in there. But nobody is able to do a weekly family shop in these places. And, if they do, they've clearly got more slack in their family budget than we have. It's frustrating enough to see large planning applications such as that from Waitrose turned down, but even more so to see a proposal for a small supermarket on the long-empty Stag Court site being subjected to the same old "protect our village atmosphere" campaign. East Finchley may boast a cheery local character who roams the streets shouting "The best of luck" but that - combined with a fishmonger, a baker and a greengrocer - does not a village make. As somebody without the resources to own a car, or the eyesight to drive one, I'm resigned to schlepping to Tesco in Finchley Central to drag competitively priced nappies back down Long Lane.

I suppose I can see how there's an argument for resisting a big, big store on our doorsteps. But please can those of us on the Church Lane end of East Finchley at least be allowed to have a local supermarket at our end of the High Road? There is a real need for it, in this household at least, and I'm sure it won't prove too disruptive to those playing cricket on the idyllic East Finchley village green or sipping tea while admiring the thatched Tudor splendour of the Local Café.

PS: I have no association with this planning application.

**Yours faithfully,
Alan Crockford
Trinity Road, N2**

Cyclists saddle up for mini Tour de France

The annual summer barbecue at Holy Trinity School had a French flavour this year, with everyone going cycling mad to coincide with the Tour de France.

Children and adults alike got a chance to compete for the fastest lap and the slowest lap as well as the formidable Turbo Challenge: a kilometre in the fastest time.

The less energetic could sit on the school field and enjoy the barbecue food and the special French tarts for dessert.



Daniel Weir, of Year 5, takes a corner in the fastest lap competition. Photo by John Lawrence

Tesco or not - the name is not the issue

Dear Editor

A new supermarket on the High Road (THE ARCHER, May 2008) would surely be a step in the wrong direction for East Finchley.

My partner and I live in Creighton House overlooking Stag Court, and we moved here because we knew and liked the area. East Finchley has a great village feel, quite distinct from other areas such as North Finchley or Golders Green. We protested against the supermarket in March. The planning application was subsequently withdrawn but has since been resubmitted.

Our fear is that further growth of the shopping area could tip the balance and end up quite fundamentally changing the nature of the area. Certainly a new supermarket is going to lead to more noise and disturbance nearby. And more traffic: Finchley High Road is already congested during peak hours, and an additional supermarket will surely add to that.

Parking is another issue. It's clear that no provision has been made for any additional parking for customers.

Fellow residents of East Finchley I have spoken to feel the same way about this proposal, and the fact that Barnet Council will not take into account the petition of 312 people who protested against the supermarket when the first application was made in March, simply because the application was withdrawn.

As the consultation period will be over once this edition of THE ARCHER is published, local residents who were unaware that a further application had been made might want to write to the Chair of the Planning Committee at Barnet to protest that their views have been ignored for purely technical reasons.

Write to Planning Services, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP, quoting planning application F/01379/08.

**Yours faithfully,
Dr Phil Prentice,
Creighton Avenue, N2.**

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.

Time I stopped whining

By Dawn Powell

For several years now, I have been dreading the day I turn 30: I view it as the deadline for achieving all of my life ambitions. Each birthday is a depressing reminder of all that I haven't done and that time is running out. But this year, when I turned 28, I had an epiphany: I should really learn to shut up and quit whining. Firstly, I am perfectly capable of getting what I want in life and, secondly, 30 is a ridiculous time limit. Thirdly, and most important of all, if I put even half the energy that I put into feeling sorry for myself into helping others, I could make a real difference. And that's why I joined Amnesty International.

Amnesty International has been campaigning for human rights for the past 47 years. It has helped to get a United Nation's resolution to work towards an arms trade treaty, got thousands of people who have been unfairly imprisoned released, and generally told the Robert Mugabes of this world that their abominable behaviour won't be tolerated. A recent crusade was to secure the release of two leaders of the human rights group Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), who had been denied bail after being arrested for protesting against the violence surrounding the elections in Zimbabwe. Amnesty International petitioned Zimbabwe officials and sent messages of support to the women; in short, made it clear that these two prisoners could not be locked up and forgotten. Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu have now been freed, something that might not have been achieved without the work of Amnesty International.

In a very small way, I played a part in this work and it feels fantastic to be part of an organisation that is changing the world for the better, one step at a time. For more information, visit the St John's Wood Amnesty International group website, http://stjohnswood.amnesty.org.uk

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