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Letters to the editor



A sparrowhawk 'dealing with' a pigeon in Brownswell Road. (See letter below). Photo by Leo Smith

Parking consultation was a farce

Dear Editor,

Did you notice that the air has been red with rage round the Cherry Tree Wood area this week as residents received Barnet Council's letter of response to its so-called consultation on the parking hours in our Zone.

To call it a consultation was in fact an insult to the residents, as despite the fact that those of us who live in the all-hour Zone indicated that 72.7% were NOT happy with the way the CPZ operated, not only were the Council not going to change our hours but they were going to extend them and reduce our ability to park in parts of the existing zone as is our current right as residents.

The views of the 77.3% who had made representations counted for little, especially the request for a public meeting with the Council when we could have a face to face debate on the matter. What a waste of time and money this exercise has been!

Is it more than a coincidence that Area A of our Zone remaining a one hour zone lies in the Hampstead Garden Suburb ward, which is represented by Tory councillors, while the existing and extended all-hour zone (Areas B and C) where our parking facilities are being reduced lies in the East Finchley ward, which is represented by opposition (Labour) councillors?

The council is making parking more and more difficult in this area and the knock on effect is that it will be the death of the family shops which currently still exist in our High Street who will have to close if their customers cannot park to shop with them. What kind of support does the Council think this gives its residents? Zilch!

Barnet, tear up your proposals, do as your resident tax-payers request. Call the public meeting for us to thrash this out.

Yours faithfully, Joyce Arram, Summerlee Gardens, N2

Welcome the new street lights

Dear Editor,

Regarding East Finchley's new street lights, I really do not understand people's fear of better lighting. The more light you have around your house, the safer you are. Burglars, muggers and those who break into cars love the dark. It is the friend of the wrong-doer. They can carry out their evil deeds without anyone seeing or stopping them.

Please wake up and let us be surrounded by light. Welcome it with open arms and put curtains on your bedroom windows. You need them in the summer, anyhow.

This is the first good idea the council have had to help all the people, old and young. It would also be a premium on property. Who would buy a house in a dark road if they could buy one in a well-lit road which you would feel safe walking down?

Yours faithfully, M Gallacher-Mackay Leicester Road, N2

What pigeon problem?

Dear Editor,

In response to Jake Eisenman-Renyard's letter regarding the pigeon problem, who needs statues when we have our own resident solution in the form of Accipiter nisus, the sparrowhawk, which contrary to its name does have a taste for pigeons.

This one was seen in Brownswell Road, N2, a few weeks ago but the same bird still puts in regular appearances, lurking between trees, waiting for an unsuspecting victim. Pigeon corner is only a short distance away, so pigeons beware!

Yours faithfully, Leo Smith Brownswell Road, N2

Bring in the real birds of prey

Dear Editor,

In response to Jake Eisenman-Reynard's letter in last month's ARCHER, there is indeed a way to control pest pigeons with birds of prey. The most effective birds for this purpose are Harris hawks and peregrine falcons which can be released by their trainer in the affected area over a period of time until the pigeons get the message and move on.

These pest controllers might also leave statues of the same birds in the area to deter the pigeons from returning. I did suggest this method to the council who must have thought I was joking as I never heard back from them. The problem of pest pigeons will, of course, persist as long as the ignorant few continue to leave mounds of food for them.

Yours faithfully, Name and address supplied

Tidy up our station forecourt

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your piece on East Finchley Station and the Old White Lion in the July issue. It's good to have these bits of knowledge from you when we are no longer neighbours gossiping on the green.

It is a pity that the latest revamp of the Old White Lion involved tearing down the pargetting. No doubt they thought they'd find Tudor brickwork, but if they'd read your sources they'd have known what they would find. And a few pounds spent on some beading to fake up the 'beams' on the new entrance to the pub would improve the look of the place no end.

The forecourt to East Finchley Station is much improved, thanks to your publicity, but there are still too many bent signs and ill-placed bollards. The damaged litter bins are still there and they are a disgrace to our fair suburb.

And will someone, please, please, take the planters in hand, or cement them in, so that we are not greeted as we are. I don't know how many thousands pass through these spaces every day, but the current sad circumstances reflect badly on us all.

Yours faithfully, Robert Morris Heath View Close, N2

Litter letter

Dear Editor,

I applaud the lady from Shakespeare Road who takes the trouble of clearing up other people's litter (THE ARCHER, August 2009). I am one of dozens of people who do the same in the Hampstead Garden Suburb area.

Yours faithfully, Name and address supplied.

The statistics man:

Peter Crockford 1924 – 2009

By Daphne Chamberlain

Peter Crockford, lifelong resident of East Finchley, died this summer. A slim, upright, fresh-complexioned man, he could often be spotted at bus stops using his own method of meticulously measuring the performance of the 263 and 143. He once told me that he travelled round London assessing other routes too.

East Finchley Buswatch's Hazel Burnett told us: "Peter cared passionately about public transport issues. He was one of our founder members, and very active. His flair for providing statistical evidence of bus performance was useful when presenting our case to TfL. We very much appreciated the work he did for the group, and we will miss his contribution."

Peter also contributed to the Transport and Environment Committee of The Finchley Society, of which he was a long-standing member. Chairman David Smith has paid tribute to his surveys of buses, Finchley's (few) public toilets, public clocks, road conditions and traffic speed along the High Road.

Writing in the Society newsletter, David Smith praised him for his constant reporting of failures, and interest in everything going on around him. He said: "We hold him up as an example of a person who thought about his environment,

and whenever he found fault he did something about it."

A former pupil of Tollington School, a graduate in aeronautics and a lifelong cyclist, Peter Crockford worked for Handley Page and later for the traffic control department of Westminster City Council.

A contribution he made to THE ARCHER for the 60th anniversary of VE Day shows his single-mindedness. He wrote: "On Monday I caught the train to Teddington, where I worked. I was urged to stay longer (visiting in Bristol), as VE Day was expected at any time, but I wanted to get back to my work at NPL on wind tunnel propeller tests". On VE Day itself, he went to church.

Peter lived for many years in Leslie Road, but spent his last few months in a care home at Muswell Hill, where he typically carried out a risk assessment on the premises. Peter could truly be called a "one-off".

Search for family of RAF man

An appeal has been issued to find the relatives of a RAF pilot who was killed during the final year of the Second World War.

Flight Lieutenant Patrick James Garland was 36 when he died on 1 January 1945. Now his family are being sought to contribute to a roll of honour mentioning all officers and other ranks who lost their lives while serving in the No II (Army Co-operation) Squadron RAF. The squadron, currently stationed at RAF Marham in Norfolk, celebrates its 100th anniversary in May 2012.

Flight Lieutenant Garland

was the son of Patrick Joseph Garland and Winifred Irene Garland, and the husband of Mary Elizabeth Garland, of East Finchley. The family must have suffered greatly as his three brothers also died on service.

Relatives of Patrick Garland are asked to contact historian Hans Onderwater at 26 Pinksterbloem, 2992 VP Barendrecht, Netherlands or by email at j.onderwater@chello.nl



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