



Letters to the editor

Congratulations, ARCHER Dear Editor,

It was an enormous pleasure to be at the Barnet Civic Awards Ceremony at Hendon Town Hall on 11 March to see Diana Cormack and John Dearing accept a Civic Award on behalf of THE ARCHER Editorial Team from the Mayor Brian Coleman.

The award recognises not just their very considerable achievements as a long-standing volunteer run community newspaper but also their place at the heart of our East Finchley community, epitomised by the support and profile that they've given to local events such as the East Finchley Community Festival and to our local schools and small charities. They are part of the "glue" that makes East Finchley such a special place.

Yours faithfully, Cllr Alison Moore, Local councillor.

Better signs could avoid junction problems

Dear Editor,

Reading the large number of letters about the changes to the Fortis Green and High Road junction (THE ARCHER, March 2010), what struck me is that no-one has pointed out that the large numbers of heavy vehicles turning left at Domino's Pizza to continue to Muswell Hill are a result of the removal of the interchange between East End Road and the North Circular Road in the last 'improvements' 20 years ago.

At the time of the public enquiries into these so-called improvements, the officials from the Department of Transport were wilfully and stubbornly obtuse and disingenuous, long-term residents may remember, supplying maps that finished well to the north of the Fortis Green/High Road/East End Road junction, and insisting that the junction was too far away from the improvements to have its traffic flows altered in any way.

What is needed, to remove these vehicle turning movements, is signage on the North Circular/High Road junction saying "Unsuitable route for HGVs to Muswell Hill", and banning left turns to southbound HGVs for all the County roads AND Fortis Green.

The HGVs could then either proceed to Colney Hatch Lane, or if they persisted in coming down the High Road, they could turn left only at Creighton Avenue or Woodside Avenue, leaving Haringey to cope with their difficult junctions.

The number of times the traffic light and safety bollards have been demolished over the past few years is a clear sign this should not be a permitted left-hand turn for HGVs.

Yours faithfully, Pete Eiseman-Renyard Fortis Green, N2.

Respect for green space

Dear Editor,

I would like to add my support to some of the letters regarding the pavilion in Cherry Tree Wood. There is no need for the proposed café / activity development. It is a sheer waste of taxpayers' money.

Make the play area better for children, employ a caretaker and have more weekend family activities. Demolish the pavilion and perhaps the children could be encouraged to have a project that would be environmentally and educationally responsible, and teach them to respect what little green space we have.

Yours faithfully, Dolores Connolly, Summerlee Avenue, N2.

Take us into town

Dear Editor,

Why is East Finchley not served by a bus route that goes into central London? As a regular commuter, I know that the number of people using the tube at peak times to and from East Finchley is considerably more than at any of the other stations on the section from High Barnet to Camden. If there was a decent bus service along the High Road and into the centre, this would ease pressure on the Northern line which, as I am sure most East Finchley commuters are aware, is packed from 7.30am to 9.30am on weekdays.

Also, the two buses that go into town from High Barnet, stopping in North Finchley and Muswell Hill, the 134 and the 43, are usually full when they reach Muswell Hill at peak times, thus unable to pick up passengers in Muswell Hill who might use this service to travel into town. The recent extension of the 264 to Holloway Road is hardly helpful for commuters.

As the Northern line will be shutting earlier and more frequently over the coming months, it would seem a good time to review buses serving the area and consider a new bus service for Finchley which would finish where most people in the suburbs work: central London. What do ARCHER readers think?

Yours faithfully, Deborah Granville, Address supplied.

Concerns over travel pass changes

Dear Editor,

One thing we know for sure will be in next month's budget is the controversial policy of raising the age of eligibility for the bus pass. The Government has announced that it will raise the age of eligibility for all travel concessions, currently 60, in line with the changes in pensionable age for women such that between 2010 and 2020 it will increase to 65.

I was most concerned to read this. If the age for eligibility for the bus pass will be raised in the next budget it will go against the green policies of the government by discouraging people from using public transport and encourage more car use and/or discourage over 60s from getting out and about.

This will have a harmful effect on their health and well being which will probably end up costing the NHS more than it saves.

Yours faithfully, John Silvertown, Address supplied.

Cake freeloaders leave sour taste

Dear Editor,

Offered delicious cakes and dessert portions by two cheerful and enterprising young people at Budgens on 20 February, I fell for a tiramisu and made a donation. They were raising money to help TreeHouse, the local school for autistic children, with encouragement from their employer Budgens. All the food was home made and the cause was a good one.

Two days later, I asked how the fundraising had gone and was told that, although most people had donated quite generously, a few had simply taken the food without giving anything in return or just coughed up a few pennies. Even when it was made clear that this was for charity these free-loaders simply shrugged. I hope such shabby behaviour doesn't put off our young fundraisers in future.

Yours faithfully, Sarah Dudley, Durham Road, N2.

Is this tube shutdown really necessary?

Dear Editor,

I am very glad that THE ARCHER has highlighted the proposed forthcoming engineering works on the Northern line (THE ARCHER, March 2010). As always, the passengers are the last ones to be told about such plans. Whilst disruption is inevitable to upgrade the tube after so many years of neglect, there must be a better way than allowing works to go on for 18 months.

Surely there aren't enough engineers to go round to work on the entire line all at once? Why is it not possible to have a phased closure of certain sections? That at least would give commuters some additional travel options. Why cannot the shutdown be from 11.30pm rather than 10.30pm which would then mean a large majority of those out, or working, at night would still be able to get home by tube?

If these closures go ahead and no replacement buses are provided, then that is a complete dereliction of public duty to those who use the Northern line. We must have buses that only stop at the closed stations, so that late night commuters can get home in reasonable time.

I'm sure the closures will have huge implications for the local and London economy and will result in considerable wear and tear on commuters. For a limited period of time, say three months, people can probably adapt and change their plans, but 18 months is far too long and, judging by the Jubilee line experience, we'll be lucky if the Northern line reopens fully this side of 2012.

Yours sincerely, D Wray, Address supplied.

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

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be reviewed or printed. Contact details can be withheld, however, on request at publication.

BlackBerry found

A reader has contacted THE ARCHER to say he found a BlackBerry phone in East End Road in mid-March. He has tried many ways to trace the owner but with no success. If you can identify the owner, please contact David on 07970 622008.

Pool plan for Wood

For anyone who may have looked twice at our story on page 3 about plans for a swimming pool in Cherry Tree Wood, you were right to be suspicious. It was our April Fool story. A little late in the month, admittedly, but just a bit of fun.

Girl about East Finchley

Girl about Paris (via Finsbury Park)

By Fay Sanders

As much as I love East Finchley, I am a hopeless Francophile. Six full years back in London after a three-year stint in Lyon have made me more eager than ever to experience French life again before finally settling down, wherever that may be. So when an opportunity of moving to Paris with my company cropped up, I instinctively seized it.

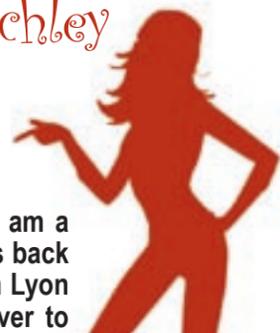
Ironically, it's only now I'm leaving that I'm really starting to feel part of the community here in N2. Alison Goodman opened my eyes to the wonders of Pilates when I wrote an article for THE ARCHER on her new Church Lane studio, Pilates Nation. I've been religiously attending her sessions ever since. Not only does it help keep me trim and fit, but it also gets me out of bed bright and early on a Saturday morning and has introduced me to a new sample of East Finchley's population.

German lessons are another pursuit I've taken up relatively recently. I'd been oblivious to the fact that the large red brick buildings looming up on my left when leaving the station belong to the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute. It wasn't until it casually came up in conversation with my housemate that I enrolled on an evening course. It was so convenient popping in on my way back from the office to work on my language skills, as well as making new friends.

Getting to know you

The final nail in the farewell-East-Finchley coffin was bumping into some neighbours who'd been living a few doors away for nearly a year, yet we'd never met. We spent a while chatting in the street and I took an instant liking to them. They invited my housemate and me over for a drink. I didn't have the heart to say I had decided earlier that very day to move out. Only weeks later, they caught me carrying boxes out of the front door and ran over, appalled we were moving out so soon.

However, a final blow was yet to come, when I discovered I'd been slightly premature in telling my landlady we wouldn't be renewing our contract. It turns out the relocation to Paris will be a few months later than I'd initially hoped, so for the time being I'm moving in with a friend in Finsbury Park. I'll miss life in East Finchley, but who knows what the Girl About Finsbury Park will encounter before she sets foot in Paris



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