



Letters to the editor

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.

Chris Lowe

Dear Editor

We would like to say how much we appreciated all the cards and messages from kind friends and neighbours after Chris's sudden death on 1 February. Thank you all.

From Marian and Jean Lowe, Brighton Road, N2.

One more vacancy to fill

Dear Editor,

Thank you so much for your article on page 3 of January's ARCHER that found new volunteer trustees for East Finchley Advice Service (EFAS). Eleven suitable applicants contacted us, from whom we have offered trusteeship to two. Others have offered ad hoc advice and resources.

Three lawyers applied and one of these has already begun to volunteer for our alternate Tuesday evening legal surgeries. What a wealth of human resources in East Finchley, generous enough to volunteer their services for the benefit of the local community.

We are grateful to THE ARCHER and to all those who have shown an interest in EFAS. A further post has now become vacant, that of volunteer treasurer. Any takers, please contact us on 020 8444 6265 or visit us at 42 Church Lane, N2.

Yours faithfully, Ruby Joseph, Manager, EFAS.

Compromise on pavilion plan?

Dear Editor,

Cherry Tree Wood is a huge part of our community, so it is not surprising so many people have written to you with their concerns about the business plans for the pavilion spearheaded by Sally-Anne Wigfield.

For many, these proposals are already provided for in abundance on

the High Street. The plans are hardly moderate, and if successful will leave Cherry Tree Wood with a pavilion larger than in Highgate Woods.

The original plans, an ultra modern two storey design with a flat roof and barmy ideas such as late nights, a new gate and a mobile-phone free room (has anyone ever heard a phone in the woods?) and a second storey for 'parties and classes', did not help much either.

In February, Sally was asked by a local resident for more of a compromise, a smaller single storey venture, with equal space given to a cafe and a separate conservation facility (similar to the wildlife hut in Highgate Woods). This was flatly refused, as was any input into the new plans whatsoever (save for viewing them again soon outside the pavilion before they are formally submitted to Barnet Council).

This seems wrong when public money is being sought for the venture and it is claimed to be 'for the community'. Most people are very much looking forward to the new playground for eight to 13-year-olds as this fits in with the open space (metropolitan open land is the equivalent to greenbelt).

Sally's plans for the pavilion are very egocentric and do not fit in. If you too are concerned about the proposals, or are interested in more of a compromise, there is a group of residents that you can email at weloven2@yahoo.co.uk.

Yours faithfully, Name and address supplied.

It wasn't all bad

Dear Editor,

In the February 2010 issue, my Soapbox painted an unremittingly black picture of our experience of attending the local planning committee meeting, and, indeed, it was most unpleasant. However, I omitted to say that without the help and support of one of our ward councillors, Colin Rogers, a member of this committee, it would have been awful. He met us before the meeting and explained in plain terms how the meeting would be run, and what we should do and say to make our case as effectively as possible. Thank you, Colin.

Yours faithfully, John Dearing Address supplied.

Autistic children get Rotary support

By Cos Pratsides
The Rotary Club of Islington, Highgate and Muswell Hill collected over £4,540 from their Christmas collections. They pulled their Santa Sleigh through the streets on six evenings and stood in Highgate High Street most of one Saturday.

In the old days, Santa used to ride in his sleigh but in these days of Health & Safety he had to walk while ringing his bell. The Santa Sleigh was festooned with flashing lights and the sound system blasted out carols non-stop. It was quite a sight to see, especially when it got stuck being towed around some tight corners.

The Club's own Charity Trust matches the money collected, so the grand total for distribution this year is £9,080. All the money is distributed to local charities for specific projects, and once again TreeHouse School is included.

The TreeHouse School for autistic children is the President's chosen charity this year and the Club is making a special effort to raise even more money for them.

Team up for quiz night

The Club's annual quiz, for teams of between four and eight, is on Thursday 18 March at the TreeHouse School hall. Tickets are £12.50 each including raffles and a hot supper prepared by Rotarians and their wives. If you'd like to support TreeHouse and have a fun evening, contact the club secretary on 01707 654360.

Help for Haiti

The Rotary Club of Islington, Highgate and Muswell Hill is East Finchley's local Rotary Club. Members meet every Wednesday at Highgate Golf Club. Rotary is all about Fellowship and supporting the local community, with a care for international needs as well. For example, the Club has just paid for three Shelter Boxes to go to Haiti. Anybody interested in learning more about Rotary can contact the club secretary.

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.



Blooming roadworks

By Noah Style

Over the last month it has been impossible, more so for us than for Tom Cruise, to get anywhere without being delayed by roadworks. They seem to be everywhere, multiplying by the day like bacteria, causing problems for everyone, even pedestrians. Walking to school becomes a pain, as half the time we are walking in the road.

All I hear from my mum is "Blooming roadworks this", "Blooming roadworks that". Parents doing the school run, or those with hectic after-school rotas for clubs find it hell, and being late for one thing causes a domino effect, making them late for the next.

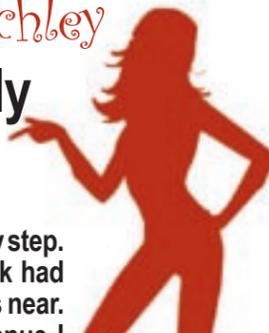
However, some people just don't change. Ever had that adrenalin rush when you charge down the road with bags to catch the bus? It's great, until the bus driver pulls out of the bay, even though he's just seen you dash 400-odd metres. Well, these road works don't seem to be having any effect on them.

Just last week I charged for the bus with my saxophone and school bag and missed it by a matter of milliseconds. Thankfully though, another came a couple of minutes later. I hopped on it and noticed the driver staring at something. Following his gaze, I saw he was watching a lady in high heels running for his bus. As I sat down, he pulled away. I looked out of the window and allowed myself to chuckle inside as the lady was now out of breath and without a bus. But where did we go? Not far: about 150 metres further down the road, where we then waited for far too long, due to temporary traffic lights.

The irony of it all was that the lady in the high heels walked casually past our halted bus and across the traffic lights, where she picked up the bus I had missed just before.

Girl about East Finchley

Slipped discs really hurt



By Fay Sanders

I made my way home with a spring in my step. I was shaking off my nasty cold, work had been productive and the weekend was near. Rounding the corner into Elmhurst Avenue, I stopped in my tracks, blinking in disbelief. My dinky little Clio, always so reassuringly there, was nowhere to be seen.

I rushed home and dialled 999. The operator politely told me to phone a company called Trace, which tracks cars that have been towed away. Was my car properly registered? Did I have a parking permit? Was my tax disc up-to-date? I answered yes on all counts.

I'd registered it when I'd inherited it from my late grandmother last year. After four months' kerfuffle with Barnet Council I was finally in possession of a permit and I was pretty sure the tax disc was up-to-date or I'd have received a reminder, right?

Wrong. The chap at Trace said my Clio had been towed away to a Tottenham car pound at 10am for failing to display a current disc. Crestfallen, I hastily paid for a tax disc online, before realising it would take five working days to arrive and by then I'd be on a business trip abroad. The police rang to confirm the whereabouts of my car and warned I'd be charged for every day my car was detained at the pound.

The next morning brought fresh hope. DVLA informed me I could get a disc from the post office without a form. Another call to the car pound and I discovered I could save an extra £200 by arriving before 10am.

Just in time

I charged out of my door, almost knocking over a local policeman who had come to question me about a smashed car incident in my street. "Can't talk, have to collect my car from the pound," I gabbled. As I ran off I realised it sounded a tad suspicious, given the circumstances. "I don't know anything, try asking the neighbours," I shouted back to the stunned copper.

After paying another £190 for a second tax disc, I made it to the car pound with one minute to spare. As I drove back to East Finchley, I hoped the policeman wouldn't be back for further questioning.

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