



Letters to the Editor

Gritting: give us the tools

Joyce Arram, who lives in Summerlee Gardens, wrote to us to say residents might be willing to keep crucial road junctions clear if Barnet Council could provide the necessary grit.

Dear Editor,

At a Residents Forum meeting held by Barnet Council shortly after last winter's bad weather, we were told that Barnet had over 1,000 bins with sand/grit on the streets of the Borough for use on our roads. Where were the ones for East Finchley? I certainly have not seen any in our streets or even the High Road, and neighbours assure me they have not seen them either.

It is all very well for the Council to make sure that the main roads are passable, but if they ignore the side roads so that residents cannot drive on them as they are too dangerous, how is this going to help our economy, if people cannot get to work, or delivery vans get to them?

Surely it is not too much to ask for or expect of this council in these days of the "Big Society" for it to ensure that these bins are placed on strategic parts of our side roads - junctions are obvious places - filled with the requisite sand/grit/salt.

Certainly in the little conurbation of Summerlee Avenue/Baronsmere and Southern Roads there are residents who would be willing to ensure that the junctions are gritted so that we are not isolated. And of course it's not just roads; just as important are pavements. While some residents are willing to clear the pavements outside their homes for people to walk safely, there are still areas which resemble skating rinks so that the elderly and infirm are marooned in their homes unable to get to the shops. Come on, Barnet: if you provide us with the tools we will get on with the job.

Yours faithfully,
Joyce Arram
Summerlee Gardens, N2.

Protect our local museums

Dear Editor,

Barnet Council's cabinet met on Monday 13 December and proposed the withdrawal of all funding from the only two council-supported museums in the borough: Barnet Museum and Church Farmhouse Museum. There was to be a period of public consultation up to 17 January, and then a final recommendation by the cabinet in February.

The Borough of Barnet contains a long and rich history dating back to the Romans and beyond, and this has been a significant contributor over the years to the sense of community and coherence within Barnet.

It is essential that this sense of history and community should continue if Barnet is not to become just another outskirts of the metropolis, and these two museums are important factors in this.

For example, in addition to its educational exhibitions, every year Church Farmhouse Museum in association with HADAS, the Barnet-based archaeologists, hosts demonstration excavations in its grounds for local schools. These have proved extremely popular and educational, helping the pupils gain an understanding of their history and that of Barnet.

Whilst we recognise the need to economise, the benefits to the Borough of keeping these museums open are out of all proportion to the relatively small sums of money involved, and we strongly oppose any suggestion of their closure.

Yours faithfully,
Don Cooper,
HADAS Chairman

Thanks for your support

Dear Editor,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all your readers for the invaluable support they have given Barnet charities over the last year and to wish all of them the very best for 2011.

CommUNITY Barnet represents close to 1,000 voluntary and community organisations in our borough.

From the smallest community groups to larger charities, our members do excellent work such as improving our environment, organising fun activities for our children, providing information, advice and befriending, supporting people with disabilities and their carers or providing meals and shelter for vulnerable people in our communities.

They would not be able to do this important work without the fantastic support from Barnet residents who generously volunteer their time and money. Please accept our deepest thanks and best wishes for 2011.

Yours faithfully,
Ruth Mulandi,
CEO, CommUNITY Barnet,
www.communitybarnet.org.uk

Praise for local shops

Dear Editor,

After moving from N10 to N2 last year, my local shopping experience has been unexpectedly delightful. The shops in the High Road are genuinely useful and the service very helpful. In particular, East Finchley Electrical has dealt with a variety of lighting problems with a patient cheerfulness and understanding of one's ignorance that brightens a dull day. We are lucky to have shops like these.

Yours faithfully,
Barbara Goward,
Fortis Green Avenue, N2.

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.

Join the singing and signing

Deaf and hearing young people are invited to perform show tunes, chart hits and favourite songs at artsdepot every Saturday until 2 April from 12.30-2.30pm.

All songs are translated into British Sign Language, so that participants can sing or sign. Anyone aged 13 to 19 will be very welcome. Artsdepot is at 5 Nether Street, Tally Ho Corner, North Finchley. Please contact 020 8369 5454 or education@artsdepot.co.uk to book your free place.

Driver wanted

THE ARCHER is looking for someone who could spare a small amount of time once a month to distribute the paper to some of our network of deliverers.

If you have your own car and could take copies of the paper to a handful of local addresses, please contact us at the-archer@lineone.net or leave a message on 0844 579 6949, then mailbox number 63450. Thank you.

For those who love to write

Although immensely satisfying, writing is a lonely occupation, according to author and confidence coach Dave Robson. That's why he believes the most valuable thing a writer or would-be writer can have is feedback from other writers and aspiring writers.

Dave has started The Pen and Ink Club, an informal writers' group open to anyone who loves writing or yearns to write. "It doesn't matter what you want to write or whether you want it published, or even if you haven't started yet," Dave explains. "Our members are working on novels, non-fiction books, advertising copy, websites, blogs, newsletters, articles for magazines, newspapers and ezines, humour, satire, poetry and plays."

Encouragement

Members can have their articles, poems or other material published on the club's website www.penandinkclub.com, and they receive support and inspiration from fellow members.

Dave started the club while finalising the manuscript for his new book *The Five Pillars of Happiness* and he says the support he received was immensely helpful. The group was then able to celebrate its first successfully published author.

"Many would-be writers give up, especially when they get rejections, and some never start because they believe they'll never be good enough,"



says Dave. "We remove the intimidation by encouraging, supporting and giving positive feedback to anyone who wants to have a go."

The club meets at The Café in Alexandra Palace Garden Centre from 12-2.30pm fortnightly on Tuesdays. The next meetings are 15 February, 1 March, 15 March and 29 March. The cost is £10 per person per meeting, or £7 for people on a low income. Dave can be contacted at info@daverobsoncoaching.co.uk or 020 8374 7911 and advises phoning or emailing in advance to confirm the meeting is going ahead.

Further study lures Sage director

By Diana Cormack
Change is coming at The Noble Sage Art Gallery, 2a Fortis Green. After four years of setting up and running one of the few places in the country specialising in South Asian contemporary art, director Jana Manuelpillai has decided to follow a long-held dream. This is to expand his already extensive knowledge of art history and connoisseurship by undertaking a PhD research degree.

Jana will be studying at London's world famous School of Oriental and African Studies. He will research and write his thesis around the Madras Government College of Art and the artists who have emerged from it in the last fifty years, some of whom he has promoted at The Noble Sage along with many other artists from South India.

Due to this change, The Noble Sage will now function on an appointment-only basis. Anyone interested in viewing needs to contact Jana (jana@thenoblesage.com) to arrange for a specialist tour of the current collection. The collection itself will continue to grow and change as normal with works still available to view online at www.thenoblesage.com.

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