



Letters to the Editor

Concerns at tennis club plan

Dear Editor,

On 8 December 2011, I attended the public consultation on proposals for a new Chandos Tennis Club on East End Road. An exhibition at Finchley Cricket Club set out initial proposals for the redevelopment of the Club and its relocation to the Finchley Manor Garden Centre site on East End Road. I have several concerns.

As East End Road is an extremely busy road, particularly between 3-4 pm when four neighbouring schools contribute to the increased traffic, the proposed entrance and exit from the proposed Tennis Club into the "curved" part of East End Road will create challenges for drivers and affect existing traffic congestion.

The provision of 45 car parking spaces will contribute to traffic congestion on a busy part of East End Road and when all car parking spaces are occupied, where will club members and visitors park their vehicles?

The existing side road, which will border the new clubhouse, four clay courts and one junior court, is located opposite Thomas More Way which is used by residents on Viridian's Thomas More Estate and has recently seen increased traffic from the new building at 1 Thomas More Way, in addition to several double-decker buses which wait on East End Road daily to deliver and collect schoolchildren, all of which will create further traffic congestion.

The entrance to the existing side road is also one of the entrances to a cemetery. While funerals are in progress and/or when people visit graves there will be unavoidable disturbance from tennis players' raised voices and tennis balls, all of which are likely to upset people visiting the cemetery.

The "bubble" appearance of four covered courts will look out of character alongside a cemetery and crematorium site.

When construction commences, there will be additional traffic from delivery vans and lorries involved in the project which will further affect traffic on East End Road. In addition, nearby residents will suffer further disruption from noise, dirt and dust, all of which they have recently tolerated during the construction of 1 Thomas More Way.

Yours faithfully,
Betti Blatman,
Address supplied.

Institute debt levels

Dear Editor,

I read your report on the sale of the Institute Arts Centre (THE ARCHER, December 2011) with concern. Although I am sorry that this is happening, I must point out that it is incorrect to state that the Institute debt three years ago was four times what it is at present.

The audited accounts for the year ending 31 August 2008 state on the balance sheet that total net current

liabilities were £3,472,844 for that year. You will know, of course, that I left the Institute in June 2008. The audited accounts at 31 August 2010 show liabilities of £3,755,065. If the statement in the article were true, the liabilities in 2008 would have been some £15 million, which has never been the case.

I have corresponded with the principal and believe that she was trying to make the point that the operational deficit has reduced in the past four years as the Institute recovered from the setting up of the Arts Centre. This is good news but is only one part of the total Institute debt, which has increased in that period.

I hope this clarifies the facts.

Yours faithfully,
Fay Naylor,
Former principal, The Institute

A tale of two councils

Dear Editor,

I found it ironic and not a little sad to note that December's edition of The Archer carried not only a piece on the admirable attempts of worried local parents, under the Walksafe N2 banner, to improve safety in the Barnet Council-administered Church Lane, High Road, Creighton Avenue 'rat run', but also an article on the new primary school to be built in the Haringey section of Creighton Avenue.

I note that Haringey Council has imposed safety conditions amounting to £82,000 of improvements to be done regarding pedestrian and cyclist safety before planning permission was even considered. What a difference from the attitude of Barnet Council, which has declared publicly that it is unwilling to spend money to improve the N2 area until there is a fatality. I only fear it will not be long before this is the case.

Yours faithfully,
Harriet Connides,
Manor Park Road, N2.

Dying matters

Dear Editor,

On Ewan Roberts' letter on the opening of Robertson Memorials on the High Road (Letters, THE ARCHER, December 2011) I would like to offer a response.

It's fantastic that N2 residents have more places to make their funeral plans. Despite the fact that half a million people die in England each year, death remains a taboo in society. A 2011 poll conducted by the Dying Matters coalition confirmed this: more people are scared of dying (67%) than of going bankrupt (41%) or losing their job (38%). So it's not surprising that my fellow ARCHER reader would rather see a hairdressers or estate agent set up on the high street than another 'death

shop'. On the other hand, I welcome the new shop and would happily adopt Ewan's suggested slogan for our village ("Welcome to East Finchley, death is what we do") if it helped more of us in N2 to discuss with our partners the type of funeral we wanted (two thirds of people don't currently do this) as part of broader, more open conversations about our end-of-life wishes. I would urge fellow N2 residents to visit www.dyingmatters.org for more information, and not just because I work there!

Yours faithfully,
Alice Fuller,
Baronsmere Road, N2

Don't take it so seriously

Dear Editor,

I enjoy reading Kalashnikov Kultur; it's fun and you don't have to take it too seriously. If Stuart Rising (Letters, THE ARCHER, November 2011) wants to indulge in a spiteful rant, let him write an article to give us readers an idea of what we should really be reading. Come on, Stuart, forget the spite and lead by example.

Yours faithfully,
John Dixon,
High Road, N2.

I'm no rival to Ricky Savage

Dear Editor,

I was gratified to read Malcolm Griffiths' rather guarded endorsement of my view regarding Kalashnikov Kultur's recent, and in my view unsuccessful, change from being mildly outrageous to presenting heavy-handed politicised comment (Letters, The Archer, December 2011). As to Mr Griffiths' perfectly valid point about criticism being easier than actually performing, this is self-evidently true. Like most people, I suspect, I have always found criticism far more congenial than performing. But, with respect, Mr Griffiths misses the point. As Ricky has admirably demonstrated in the past, a savage review is always more fun to read than one larded with praise. But to confuse criticism with self-promotion is a mistake and I shall resist Mr Griffiths' playful suggestion that I attempt a Stuart Rising column. One only has to reflect on the dismaying spectacle of failed politicians, journalists, and assorted so-called celebrities attempting 'strictly' to dance on TV to know when to say "No". One does not have to do it in order to justify commenting on it. Ricky, certainly so far as competition is concerned, can relax.

Yours faithfully,
Stuart Rising
Durham Road, 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.



Danger on school 'crossing'

By Karen Saunders

I'm like most N2 residents, always proudly raving about where I live; the lovely schools, the Phoenix, Finchley Youth Theatre ... but there is a big flaw: we can't cross the road. Drivers coming from surrounding motorways seem unaware that we're a little village. We're invisible to them on their commute through our streets.

It's not easy teaching my children road safety when I'm shouting, "Wait, go, stop, what's this idiot doing? INDICATE!" Even when the green man is on your side, children are learning that in N2 they must run diagonally across a junction at high speed without dropping anything. It's not very Green Cross Code.

Cars turn right into Fortis Green at the main junction when the green man is displayed; they speed down Church Lane; run red lights on the SCHOOL crossing. But most 'pavement rage' manifests when facing the danger, especially to children, of crossing at the junction where Creighton Avenue meets the High Road. A request to create a safe system here was dismissed at the last Barnet Residents Forum with the statement: "There has been no personal injury /accident to pedestrians for the last ten years at this site, therefore, whilst the concern is appreciated there is no justification in proposing any changes."

This is unacceptable. Lack of evidence of serious incident neatly hides the issue for Barnet. It ignores a genuine perception of fear. It's not only a concern for mums on the school run. Elderly residents are avoiding crossing Creighton Avenue completely. I hope it became clear to the Barnet officers on the site visit on 8 November that if you live to the south of Martin School, the Creighton crossing is effectively your school crossing. I hope they saw the mums weaving behind cars and getting trapped on the clogged traffic island with children, scooters and buggies. I know they saw the cars running the red lights, right on cue, at the Church Lane crossing. The large audience appeared not to dampen the road rage that afternoon. I hope they saw and heard enough this time to take some action.

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