



Waste plant inquiry suspended

By Nick Young

A public inquiry into plans to build a major waste processing plant on Pinkham Way, near the Friern Barnet retail park, was suspended after just two hours last month.

The plant is the idea of the North London Waste Authority (NLWA), which co-ordinates how seven North London authorities – Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest – are to deal with waste disposal in the long term.

The inquiry opened at Camden Town Hall on 12 June but was adjourned on the same day due to concerns that the councils involved had not fulfilled their legal duty to co-operate under planning legislation.

Barnet Councillor Barry Rawlings (Labour, Coppetts ward) is opposed to the plans and was due to speak at the inquiry. He explained that “the councils have a duty to co-operate with authorities outside London”.

The proposed plant would manufacture bricks from household waste which would then be sent elsewhere to be burned. Counties such as Hertfordshire are concerned that the plans are incompatible with their own plans for receiving waste.

Toxin concerns

Local residents from the London Boroughs of Barnet, Enfield and Haringey, which all border the area, are worried about the toxins that could be produced in the process of forming the bricks and have formed the Pinkham Way Alliance to protest against the plans.

Access to the site, which is also intended to be used as a vehicle depot, is also a controversial issue which has led to objections from nearby areas including East Finchley.

A decision on whether to continue the inquiry was due three weeks after 12 June. If the decision is that the councils have failed in their duty to co-operate, the plan becomes invalid and they will have to start again. If there is sufficient evidence that they have fulfilled their duty, the inquiry will resume in September.

Around one million tonnes of household waste are generated each year in North London. At present, around half of this goes to landfill sites outside the London area.

Grammar school reunited

Past pupils of Finchley County Grammar School are coming together in September to meet up with old friends over a buffet meal. The venue and timings will be disclosed to former pupils on application.

More than 120 former pupils have already booked. Any other interested former pupils should email the organiser, Ian Thomas, at ianc.thomas@live.co.uk for details and a booking form.

Ian said: “We have already had a response from various parts of the UK and from overseas but it is difficult to maintain contact within a group that has been steadily declining since the school closed in the 1970s and following the demolition of the old buildings.”

The grammar school was sited just north of the North Circular Road opposite the Finchley Lido. The land is now occupied by a modern housing development called Crowder Close.

How to improve your posture and boost your health

By Sharik Ali, of the Spinal Health Centre

Many people are unaware of the relationship between posture and good health. In fact, posture is a lot more than the way one consciously chooses to stand or sit. We’ve all been told to sit up straight, but in reality our posture is the balance and position of our body under gravity. This position is controlled by the alignment of our spine, because it is the central core of our body.



Do you know anyone who walks with a stooped back? Or maybe someone who stands with one shoulder higher than the other? These are distortions that can be caused by a spine that is out of alignment. It is these subtle signs which place increased strain on joints and muscles, which can cause a number of knock-on problems such as headaches, neck and shoulder tension and lower back pain.

Poor posture is also linked to oxygen levels in the body. There is a significant increase in the amount of air our lungs can take in if we breathe while sitting straight compared to slouched!

Here’s a great self-help 60-second neck strengthening exercise: practise tucking your chin back and giving a ‘double-chin’ appearance, while maintaining eye level. Now push your tongue against the back of your top front teeth. Maintain this position for five seconds, and repeat four times. This will benefit you by strengthening the weak muscles at the back neck and loosening the often tight muscles on the front of your neck.

Dr Ali is a registered chiropractor and his Spinal Health Centre is located at 98a High Road, N2. For more information, call 020 7183 2911 or email info@spinalhealthcentre.com.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Travel tips for our Olympics visitors

With only a few weeks to go until the Olympics, it’s time for all Londoners to help visitors to our wonderful city get the most from the experience. Many of them will have never travelled on the tube before and it is our responsibility to help them enjoy their journeys. So here are a few tips for visitors on using the world’s finest underground railway.

Let’s start with food. For many cultures, breakfast is the most important meal of the day and Londoners will think it strange if you do not combine travel with eating breakfast. Make use of local coffee shops, cafes and McBurgers before joining the train and settling down to eat. The general rule is that anything that does not require the use of cutlery can be eaten between the hours of 7.30am and 9.30am.

If you want to bring along a three-course meal you should ensure that your journey is long enough for you to enjoy it. This matters now that the Circle line isn’t a circle and no one wants to end up in Hammersmith. But anyone heading for Heathrow should have plenty of time for dessert. However, for health and safety reasons you are advised not to light barbecues when the train is busy.

Next, we come to the question of space. It is so important to get it right or you might upset the entire fabric of space and time, potentially releasing cybermen from the dark recesses of the Northern line. So, always make full use of all seats. We Londoners normally occupy at least two seats and you should resist all suggestions to move your bags.

The fabulous and famous station announcements will keep you informed, but in the fast-moving world of modern London they can seem confusing, so remember that ‘mind the gap’ is advertising for a well known high street retailer and that keep left and keep right signs are political slogans. On a more serious note, ‘baby on board’ badges merely relate to the wearer’s love of surfing.

Finally, Londoners are well known for their love of music and we’ll be disappointed if you don’t share your music with us. Please make sure that your iPod is turned up loud enough for us to join in the listening experience. After all, it is the Olympics and you are welcome to them.

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