



Letters

Bin blight

Dear Editor,

I was wondering if you have plans for a feature on the latest environmental blight to disfigure our neighbourhood in East Finchley? While the principle of encouraging recycling is to be commended this latest roll out seems to have been done with complete disregard for our neighbourhood which is of large numbers of houses with very small front gardens and hence little room to accommodate yet another large bin.

Consequently here in Leopold Road there are bins all over the place and where people have managed to squeeze them into their front space you see as much of bins as of the house behind it. A walk from the tube station to here and through intermediate streets shows many similar situations.

A telephone call from a friend in Ingram Road just now has revealed that they have already been given the alternative of a bag rather than a bin, much to their relief. The difference between the size of the gardens there and here must be a few centimetres so why we have not been treated in a similar fashion I cannot understand.

I see from a Council leaflet that they will review the situation in January 2014 and may supply bags to residents who request them. Why on earth they cannot have started with this process now I cannot understand. Why go through the roll out and then have to reconsider later?

It seems to be yet another example of a thoughtless Council having little regard for the consequences of its actions...and giving recycling a bad name.

Yours faithfully, Brian Merison, Leopold Road, N2.

Why throw it away?

Dear Editor,

As someone who has recently moved to East Finchley, something has been puzzling me about the new waste and recycling scheme.

Nowhere have I seen any mention of the word 'compost', nor any encouragement for residents to compost their own kitchen and garden waste. In other London boroughs, some councils actively encourage home composting and provide compost bins to residents for a small cost.

As for me, a passionate devotee of the compost heap, I think it's such a wonderful natural process for dealing with waste and ending up with free good quality compost for the garden. Magic!

And it reduces the actual waste that needs collecting by a huge amount. So, come on Barnet, how about giving us some compost bins?

Yours faithfully, Francesca Lincoln, Address supplied.

In search of Goozee

Dear Editor,

I wonder whether you would be kind enough to print this letter for me? I am currently researching material for a book regarding a Lancaster bomber which crashed on the village of North Thoresby, Lincolnshire on 4 October, 1943 as a result of which all the crew members were killed.

The plane, a Lancaster ED583, had taken off from RAF Waltham, Grimsby, with eight crew on board one of whom was Warrant Officer (Pilot) John Thomas Goozee who is buried in Islington Cemetery. John was the son of John Donovan and Mary Ann Goozee of Kingsbury and the husband of Doris May Goozee nee Green. They had got married in the summer of 1942.

I do know that a Robert Goozee lived in Grange Avenue, N12, between 1927 and 1939, a Harold Goozee lived in Ravensdale Avenue, N12, from 1930 to 1939 whilst a Mrs Goozee lived in East End Road, N2, between 1924 and 1937.

As the surname Goozee is somewhat unusual I wonder whether W.O. Goozee was related to any of the above? I would love to hear from anyone who may be able to help me in my quest.

Yours faithfully, Dave Barnett Langholme, The Square, North Thoresby, Lincolnshire, DN36 5QL, Email: davebarnettnt@gmail.com

What a mess!

Dear Editor,

I am disgusted by the amount of dog mess on the pavements in East Finchley. I would like to ask all dog owners to please clear up after their dogs.

Every single day there is an incident of having to avoid it and very often we don't manage to and so I am left having to clean it off my shoes, my

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children's shoes and my pushchair.

I would like to appeal to all dog owners and remind them that dog mess carries potential diseases for both humans and dogs, with children being most at risk of a disease which can lead to blindness. If there are other residents who feel strongly about this please call and register your complaint with the council.

Yours faithfully, Name and address supplied.

Dangerous blind spot

Dear Editor,

Local parking controllers are quick to issue tickets to shoppers on the High Road, but lack reinforcing the rules in parts of the area where there are actual safety issues. A real blind spot exists when you turn right onto East End Road from Market Place. Many times cars park on the double yellow lines close to the junction, totally obstructing the views of the drivers intending to turn right.

Although the section close to the road has double yellow lines, I have yet to see any of these illegally parked vehicles to be penalised. If any vehicles should be towed away, it is here. Do we have to wait for a serious accident before the local authority take this junction seriously? At the very least, it would be good to have a convex mirror on the lamppost opposite to help drivers know if it is safe to proceed.

Yours faithfully, Michelle Huberman, Creighton Avenue, 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.



Why risk our successful school?

By Emily Burnham

I have three children at Martin Primary School and have a very positive view of the school and its place in the community. Its Ofsted 'outstanding' status is a bonus. I was deeply shocked when my children handed me letters home about a consultation for Martin to become part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) with two other Barnet primaries, Foulds and Northside.

As many people know, our school is in the middle of expanding to a three-form entry to increase primary spaces in the area. Parents, including me, accepted the need for this expansion more or less without turning a hair. We knew parents who had no school place for their child and realised that we had the space to do it without losing the character of the school too much.

But we could not believe that the MAT proposal was coming in on top. How would staff cope with two such major things at once?

When we found out that five governors had voted against the proposals even going to consultation, that the benefits for our pupils are very thin, and that staff members are firmly against, we wondered why the proposal was still on the table. It turns out that Barnet Council has promised a new school in Mill Hill East in September 2014 and we are part of the proposed solution.

And so we have it: a totally new, unwritten, and intrinsically unaccountable structure that will convert three existing schools and open another within 12 months. We are told that it is positive that the new school in Mill Hill East will continue to be part of the "Barnet family of schools" under the MAT sponsorship.

But, actually, this is to be achieved by three existing Barnet schools LEAVING the local authority, setting themselves apart from their communities by joining with schools in other parts of the borough and, at least for Martin, going against the wishes of parents and staff.

People might think a MAT is better than an Academy chain. But, in reality, what is the difference, apart from a hope that the personalities of the head teachers will prevail over a purely business model ... forever?

The structure is designed to shift power away from individual schools - including staff, parents and community governors.

The future of education in Barnet holds many challenges, but we should not give up what is most dear to us in the process of seeking solutions.



East Finchley Community Trust members Roger Chapman, Robina and Stan Spinks with Bernadette and Geraldine from Paul Byrne House at the official opening for the shelter.

Shelter from the wind

The East Finchley Community Trust has helped to fund a shelter and outdoor windbreak for residents of Paul Byrne House on the Thomas More Estate off East End Road.

Budgens of East Finchley are also making funding available for outdoor furniture for the area. More than 20 residents attended the opening with a fine range of sandwiches, snacks and cakes laid on by Viridian staff, manager Bernadette, surveyor Geraldine and some of the residents.

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