



Letters

No fan of van man

Dear Editor,

I wondered if anyone else is annoyed by the Asda van parked continuously outside the tube station? Not only is it parked across the yellow hatched area blocking any access for emergency vehicles, it also leaves its engine running for large parts of the day. The driver told me this was to cool down the shopping. So not only is it blocking access, it's also polluting the environment too.

Strangely, it never seems to park in the space allocated to it either. Apparently it leaves this free for customers who want to collect their groceries by car which surely defeats the objective and only increases congestion in an area which is already very congested.

I appreciate this area is owned by TfL and Asda have probably paid a lot of money for this new Click and Collect service but surely there should have been some consultation with customers? Getting out of the tube station as a pedestrian is now very difficult. Why could they not site the van in the car park as Asda have done at other tube stations? At least this way it wouldn't block access.

Yours faithfully,

Chris Price

Address supplied.

Give a New Year lift

Dear Editor,

Water aerobics is a great way to start the New Year. As a regular exercise in a gently heated pool, it tones and strengthens the muscles and, partnered with a healthy diet, helps to lose weight.

I try to get to the Cophall Leisure Centre from East Finchley regularly on a Friday for the 12.30pm session, but the journey by public transport is long.

Would any of your readers who drive be interested in accompanying me? I think I could provide the incentive if he or she supplied the wheels.

Yours faithfully,

Barbara Huggan,

Name and address supplied.

Please contact us at THE ARCHER (details on page 2) if you can help Barbara and we will pass your message on.

Bins are better

Dear Editor,

I read with interest your article in the December edition entitled "Residents trash new rubbish and recycling system". Whilst I have every sympathy with people who are struggling with limited storage space for their new bins and I share the concerns of others who are deploring the untidy way in which the bins are littering our streets, I think it is also necessary to say how much better the new system is than the old one.

The blue and black box scheme was so difficult to manage and so cumbersome in practice that I felt tempted every now and again just to throw away an item rather than work out where I should put it.

The new system is simple and straight forward and will, I feel sure, result in much more effective recycling. Certainly our blue bin is satisfyingly full each week whilst the black one is almost empty.

We are privileged to live in a street where the houses have plenty of room to store the bins and for us the new system is a great improvement.

Yours faithfully,

Agnes Segal

Abbots Gardens, N2.

Bins are brilliant

Dear Editor,

Regarding Barnet's new rubbish recycling programme. You asked for comments. In contrast to some of the comments you have received, I find the new scheme a great improvement.

The single blue bin with wheels is much more convenient. The brown bin makes it much easier for me to recycle more. The whole introduction of the new system worked exactly as Barnet said it would. And Barnet have even sent someone round door to door to ask for our feedback. So only praise from here.

Yours faithfully,

Joan Jasper

Address supplied

Bins: Poor communication

Dear Editor,

In Bedford Road the rubbish and recycling scheme works well, now that the collection schedule is established. Communication of that schedule was poor. You had to have access to the internet, or be determined enough to ring Barnet Council.

The Barnet website had no facility for inputting your postcode to find your collection days. I had to scroll down scores of postcodes to find mine. They could easily have added the collection day on the sticky address label on the blue and brown bins. Some people are still confused about when to put out bins, leaving them out all week on the pavement. And I appreciate that some homes may find it hard to store two or more bins at the front. I've recycled my old small black collection box as the recycling bin in our kitchen, complete with a handle on the lid. I'm wondering whether it's time to change to fortnightly collection of general waste, or at least make it optional. As a couple household we put out at most two carrier-bags' worth of rubbish a week. Most weeks I don't bother to put the general waste bin out for collection, but they come in and get it anyway.

Yours faithfully,

Roger Beeson,

Bedford Road, N2.

Send your correspondence to: "Letters Page", The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE or e-mail the-archer@lineone.net.

Letters without verifiable contact addresses will not be printed. Contact details can be withheld on request at publication. We reserve the right to abridge letters for reasons of space.

Grit

So far we've escaped the ice but the worst of winter could still be to come.

Once again, Barnet Council is encouraging residents and schools to sign up for its Grit My Street initiative. The council says it will support volunteers who pledge to grit the public highway and footpaths in winter weather. Find out more at www.barnet.gov.uk/street-gritting-application

Parking changes are a step in the right direction

By Diana Cormack

Early last year a meeting was arranged between Cllr Dean Cohen, Cabinet Minister for the Environment and local traders to air problems caused by parking restrictions. This resulted in proposals for possible changes (THE ARCHER, July 2013).

One of these was installing credit and debit card Pay and Display machines as an alternative to Pay by Phone. (Cllr Cohen ruled out cash machines, which are difficult to maintain and need staff to empty them). "Before Christmas" was mentioned and this proved to be true.

In December credit and debit card Pay and Display machines were sited on the High Road outside the Animal Aid and Advice charity shop (no.48), Finchley Youth Theatre (no.142), Amy's General Store (no.79) and near Cooperative Funeralcare (no.133).

In addition, tariffs have been lowered in East Finchley and the loading bay outside 130-134 High Road (near Madden's) now has free parking for 15 minutes maximum stay between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Saturday. South of Fortis Green short-term stay parking places have been extended to medium term (4 hours maximum stay) which serves the Phoenix area.

Peter Barnett of A. Scott and Son Fishmongers, who organised the meeting, has been communicating with Barnet Council over these and other possible measures ever since. One thing he would like to see is more free parking, which would certainly make this new year a happier one for local shops and businesses.

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.



Post Office downgrade

By Malcolm Griffiths

The consequences of the closure of East Finchley Post Office became more apparent yesterday, when my early-morning post 'plopped' through the letterbox at 2 o'clock in the afternoon (as usual), and inspection of said delivery revealed a utility bill and four items of junk mail (as usual). If the Post Office is re-located to the UOE shop, even with extension to premises, will there still be enough space to accommodate the customer queues?

Currently, there are usually two, or three (if you're lucky), out of six screened service counters open at any given time, yet just one such counter will be installed at UOE, plus a few open-plan counters (fully manned or otherwise?). But aren't open-plan counters designed more for soliciting customers to switch their bank account, isa, energy supplier or telephone provider? And possibly to sell some over-priced stationery? I fear the situation will become similar to Muswell Hill Post Office, where the queue to get served often extends outside into the street. I cannot see how the existing bad level of service can be maintained with fewer serving counters; it is likely to become worse (as usual).

Why would it not be better and more economical to incorporate a suitable franchised business within the existing Post Office building?

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