



Letters

Old Barn questions

Dear Editor

While I am fully supportive of the Old Barn being brought back into use for the local community, I think that knocking down and replacing a perfectly good facility is a total waste of tax payers' money. Although the building requires upgrading, complete demolition seems an extraordinary approach for the council to take in these days of austerity.

I am also against any part of a public building being set aside for the exclusive use of any single community. As a society, do we not promote and strive for integration? Just because the council has chosen to provide segregated premises for the Bravanese Association in the past does not mean that it was a good or the right decision.

Any enlargement in the capacity of the facility would also cause an issue from a traffic perspective, particularly if the small numbers of Somalis living in East Finchley means that many would be travelling to the centre by car.

It would be good to see green open space adjacent to the centre developed as a small park, as proposed, provided it is properly maintained and supervised.

Questions that remained unanswered by the council include the cost of the demolition and rebuilding as opposed to the cost of refurbishment; how the new development will be funded and whether the areas allocated to the Bravanese will be available for use by other groups when not being used by the Bravanese.

Yours faithfully, Sue Stevens, Vanderville Gardens, N2.

Stanley Field for all

Dear Editor,

I was most gratified to hear that The Archer Academy is so graciously "keen to ensure that local people of all ages benefit from the investment that has been made, and so will be making the sports facilities available to local people outside school hours" (The Archer, August 2015).

Perhaps your readers will recall that this was a condition of the provision of the site (the former Stanley Field) to the school, its planning permission and funding, and not a voluntary gesture on their part.

Yours faithfully, Lawrence Robinson, East End 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.

Macabre fox tale

Dear Editor,

I was interested to read Isabella's fox story in THE ARCHER (August, 2015). It reminded me of a very unpleasant incident that we had with foxes in Muswell Hill.

Our three children decided that it would be a good idea for us all to buy two Burmese kittens for their dad's special birthday. When we bought them and took them home they were much loved and it was a very happy present that lasted nine months.

Dad was alone in the house one weekend when he was told by a neighbour that Phoebe, one of the cats, was lying dead two doors away. Absolutely horrified and afraid of the rest of us seeing her dead, he dug a hole in our garden and buried her. He gave us the bad news later that evening and with great sadness we all, including Mingus her brother, went to stand at her grave.

The following morning, to our horror, Phoebe had been dug up and spread-eagled on the lawn. Dad quickly returned her to her grave and dug a deeper hole which we covered with more earth and flat stones. As you can imagine all of us were shocked and upset.

The following morning she was back on the lawn in exactly the same place. Fortunately the kids were not around at this time so we decided to give it one more try by putting a heavy metal incinerator on top of the grave.

It didn't work. The next day the same thing happened again and we had to take her poor corpse to the vets. It was explained to us that foxes use a situation like this to teach their cubs how to dig. Whether or not this was true, there still are, a number of smug-looking foxes lurking at the bottom of our garden.

Yours faithfully, Carey Miller, Address supplied.



Green transport: Some of the plants beautifying East Finchley station.

Splash of colour on the tube

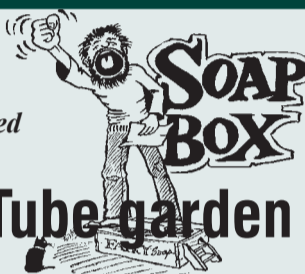
East Finchley station is once again taking part in the Underground in Bloom competition. This year, member of staff Nino Rocha Santos decided to paint the pots on the platforms in vibrant pastel colours in an attempt to catch the judges' eyes.

Apart from the tubs on the platforms, the station was also judged in the categories for baskets, fruit and vegetables and established gardens. The cultivated bank of land outside the station, worked by local volunteers N2Gardeners and other community groups, is putting on a particularly good show this year.

Nino said: "I'm really happy with the display this year. Most importantly, commuters seem to love it too." The winners will be announced on 8 October in a ceremony at London City Hall.

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.



Not rosy in the Tube garden

By Mary Whiting

I've just had a shock at Finchley Central station. I went to look at the wonderful garden there and found it derelict. Heavens! Had someone retired? I asked a station official. But he said: "No, he's been sent to Tottenham!" "He didn't want to go," he added, "but it's all this ticket office closure business. Everyone's being sent somewhere else. We don't know what we're doing any more."

He told me he'd been at Finchley Central for 26 years, but now he's being sent to the Angel, and that of course he didn't want to go. And of course no one wanted to take over the garden because they'll soon be moved. The former gardener turns out to be Mark Kirwin, who was station supervisor. He'd created the garden on a long strip of waste land. It had won awards and was enjoyed by many. What a body blow for any keen gardener who's been robbed of the garden they've created and tended for years. And what staggeringly callous treatment of employees! And meanwhile, passengers can gaze upon an expanse of weeds. Anyway, I decided to check this out elsewhere, starting at Golders Green. All corroborated! Staff there said they're being reduced from five to two and have no idea how they'll manage. I asked: "Is it all Boris?" He replied: "Ohhhh, yes!" So who could passengers complain to? TfL, perhaps? That question got a snort of laughter: "Boris is the chairman of TfL! You'd have to go higher, but no idea who." So what could possibly be the point of sending everyone somewhere else against their will, surely the perfect way to alienate the entire workforce? He said there was no good point: "It's deliberate. He just wants to break everybody up. He wants to crush the union." But maybe if enough people complain, at least Mark Kirwin might get his old job back - and his wonderful garden.....

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