



## Letters to the Editor



Suffocating: An ivy covered tree in Market Place.

### Creeping menace Dear Editor,

In September, I contacted Barnet Council to report large volumes of ivy covering the holly and cherry trees in Market Place, N2. Barnet assured me they would remove it but nothing has yet been done except perhaps the tree itself has been cut and the ivy continues to grow more.

If it is removed annually it's very easy to cut off but the council either doesn't know what ivy is or thought it didn't matter. However eventually it will bring trees down. All parks manage ivy but not it seems Barnet Council. I wanted to bring it to readers' attention as the more it is reported to them the more likely it is to be dealt with and I was wondering if anyone would be interested in working together to remove it. Eventually the ivy will mean the trees become a hazard rather than a beautiful sight

**Yours faithfully**  
**Jane Beyer,**  
Address supplied.

### Ticket shock

Dear Editor,

On visiting the Everyman Cinema in Muswell Hill last Sunday, I was appalled that the price of two tickets was £28! When I queried that and asked about the concessions for 'oldies' I was told this was not applicable on Sundays. So you can't be old on a Sunday... is this not 'ageist'?

Yours faithfully,  
**S Loudon,**  
Cherry Tree Road, N2.

### Admissions policy doesn't add up

Dear Editor,

The Archer Academy may have had to absorb a couple of setbacks (*The Archer*, November 2016) but we fear the children of N2 are about to be dealt yet another blow.

There are 150 places available in the academy's year group. Siblings are predicted to take around 75 places. With another 12-15 places taken under special education needs and other circumstances criteria, and the 40 feeder places handed to schools from outside East Finchley, next year will leave a woeful 20 or so places for the local children of N2 without a sibling already attending the school.

Martin Primary and Holy Trinity Primary schools alone will have 120 children looking for school places in the 2018 intake.

Our concerns were about why the academy believes the pupils of two schools in NW11 count above all the other children in the priority postcodes and are therefore being given the lion's share of the feeder places. We took our case to the adjudicator and he agreed with this concern that the distribution of places and feeder schools was unfair.

We have seen the correspondence between the Chair of the Archer Academy Trust and the adjudicator's office. The school was not, "given the go ahead" by the adjudicator for its feeder policy as planned. Indeed it appears they were unsure if they could proceed.

In the end the founders obviously came to a decision to push

ahead for this year thus making it the default admissions policy. It is worth pointing out to parents that the school may have left itself wide open to appeals.

Now the academy must consult on a new admissions policy for 2018 to be published in February 2017. We are deeply concerned any new proposal will not be fair for N2 children who could lose out further in a postcode split. This is too depressing for words.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**From a group of N2 parents,**  
Names and addresses supplied.

### Fair deal on Stanley Field?

Dear Editor,

As one of the many N2 parents that followed the objections to the Archer Academy's choice of feeder schools, it came as no surprise they have adopted it for 2017 admissions regardless.

A letter from Barnet Council's educational department advised the day after their public consultation that their choice of feeder schools, originally based on "ethos", was potentially unlawful.

Later when this word "ethos" was dropped, but the choice of feeder schools remained, only removing Martin Primary in N2, an Equalities Impact Assessment advised them the "fairest" option would still be to return to the location policy.

It's a shame Barnet Council, having pointed out the flaws so comprehensively, decided not to submit their concerns to the adjudicator themselves. Perhaps they knew better than us parents that the freedom afforded within "free school" status allows these publicly funded schools to disregard expert advice if it doesn't suit their agenda.

Let's hope the Admissions Appeals service is more effective as they'll be busy in March when N2 parents find out the true cost of giving up Stanley Road playing field in exchange for so few secondary school places for local children.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**An N2 parent,**  
Address supplied.



Some of the resurfacing work in Abbots Gardens Photo Mike Coles

### Save our pharmacies Dear Editor,

I saw an article in the Evening Standard saying that funding for pharmacies is in danger of being reduced by a third in an attempt to save money. I would make the case for retaining small pharmacies as they do in fact save money, both in the short term and long term.

The Government are in favour of private enterprise. All small pharmacies are a great service to the community. Originally pharmacies were apothecaries. My local one C W Andrews was established in 1848.

All pharmacies provide toiletries and many other goods. They sell minor products such as paracetamol and aspirin and other remedies for minor ailments. They make up prescriptions and get to know the patients on a personal basis face-to-face. As they know the patient they can see if the person is not too well and can answer a question about health matters. They will advise them to visit their doctor as a matter of urgency based on their face-to-face observations.

Pharmacists give influenza and other injections, freeing the doctor or the practice nurse. I discovered that there was a once-only pneumonia injection available for people over 50 years of age. Naturally I had the injection. My doctor was not aware that I was entitled to it and he has made it his standard practice to give the injection to the appropriate people.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**G E Ferris,**  
High Road, N2.

### Misleading and a shambles

Dear Editor

In September residents in Abbots Gardens, N2, received a letter from Barnet Council informing them that road works would be carried out and were told "micro surfacing", a type of carriage surfacing treatment used to prolong the life of a road, would be used.

The letter informed us that the purpose was to seal the road by applying and rolling a layer of bituminous mix material and creating a new surface layer. The material would also correct the surface texture and small undulations and cracks. In reality, we were left with ridges in the road and appalling finishing up against the kerbstones. The work was hurried and the rollers did not do their job properly. The material does not seal.

What a mess! We assumed Barnet had tendered its road work but we have since found out that no tender was required, which is amazing for a £50 million contract.

**Yours faithfully,**  
**Ralph Eschwege,**  
Abbots Gardens, 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.

## Meditation classes just a breath away

Experienced teacher Eddy Levin is returning with his mindfulness meditation classes that have been running successfully for several terms now.

Eddy said: "Mindfulness meditation isn't so much about switching off from the everyday world as it is about tuning in to it, by focusing on your ever-present breath, undisturbed by your ever-busy mind."

Regular attendee Tim Cordell, said: "Mindfulness meditation may be about bringing order to our stressed-out and chaotic lives, but you don't have to be po-faced and pious to practise it. Eddy's classes are always thought-provoking and full of humour."

The group will welcome new

students and returnees alike on Tuesday 10 January 2017, for a five-week course ending Tuesday 7 February. New attendees will be given an introduction, whilst returnees who have already undertaken the beginners' course will be led in a separate session which builds on their current understanding.

Anyone wishing to take part on Tuesday evenings from 7.30pm to 9pm at the Archer Academy in Eagans Place, N2, can email efabmindfulness@gmail.com. The cost is £4 per session, including refreshments.

## Seasonal celebration

The festive season starts at Martin Primary School on Saturday 10 December. Children, families, staff and friends will be getting together for the school's Christmas Fair and an afternoon of fun, including a winter feast, bouncy castle, games, singing performances, stalls... and a visit from a special 'someone'. Everyone is welcome at the school in Plane Tree Walk, N2, from 12noon to 3pm.



**EAST FINCHLEY BAPTIST CHURCH**

To grow, to serve, to reach out

You are warmly invited to join us for our Christmas celebrations:  
**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December**  
10.30am a service for all the family to hear about the Christmas story and 6.00pm Carols By Candlelight  
**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Day**  
10.30am service

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