



Letters to the editor

Ok the way we are
Dear Editor,

I read with interest on a couple of occasions about the rumoured new Sainsbury's that might be bidding to come onto the High Road in East Finchley at the current corner bike store and restaurant.

May I add my voice to the NO group? Keep Sainsbury's out of East Finchley. I shudder to think what would happen to Budgens, Iceland and, more important, the smaller independent shops. We don't want the big brands in East Finchley: Sainsbury's, Waitrose, Tesco etc. We're ok the way we are and love the village type of environment we've enjoyed for decades.

Yours faithfully
Patricia Chinyoka
Address supplied.

Don't drum them out of town

Dear Editor,

As residents of Church Lane, we were delighted when the Oasis restaurant opened. Having felt the need to cross the road when walking past the Alexandra pub that used to be there, it was a relief to see this well designed decorative restaurant in its place.

We have eaten at Oasis several times and love it and it surprises and saddens us to see it so empty of customers. The Moroccan food is freshly cooked and delicious, the family who own and run Oasis hospitable and professional, the interior is immaculate, exotic and comfortable, and it is alcohol free; a far cry from the sleazy old Alexandra with its noisy regulars loitering in a haze of alcohol and smoke on the pavement and out the back at all hours.

So when we read about the objections raised by neighbouring residents in Leopold Road and parents of Martin School children we were completely astounded. Will someone please explain to us how smoking shisha under cover several metres from the nearest neighbour and a street away from a primary school can be worse than the general public smoking in the street or indeed pollution created from the heavy traffic outside the school?

Smoking shisha after a meal is as much a part of the dining experience in Moroccan/Lebanese culture as an after-dinner liqueur is

to Britons. As non-smokers we do not favour any kind of smoking but it is a legal activity, and we are confident that the proprietor of Oasis is doing everything he can to create a lovely restaurant in Church Lane.

This local businessman is making every effort to appease and fit in; he and his family want to be part of our multicultural local community. Please at least extend him the courtesy he deserves by visiting his restaurant before you drum him out of town.

Since when did N2 residents become such a reactionary intolerant bunch towards new cultures in their neighbourhood?

Yours faithfully,
Caroline and David Broome,
Church Lane, N2.

Budgens pricing

Dear Editor,

I am a regular shopper at Budgens, shopping there almost every day. Recently I had a bill that seemed to be exceedingly high so decided to check through all the items on the bill. I found three items that had been overcharged!

Since then I have been checking my receipt from Budgens every time I shop there. I have been shocked to find almost every receipt from Budgens I've had in the past week has an item that has been overcharged.

The ones that seem to be particularly susceptible are the special offers such as '3 for £1' or 'two for £2.50'. Although I noticed that one item was charged at £3.68 on my bill, which I thought excessive, so I checked the shelf and found it was labelled as £2.21. I recommend that other readers start to check their receipts carefully and demand refunds. Hopefully a stream of customers demanding refunds should soon put a stop to this outrageous practice.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.
We contacted Budgens manager Mr Janakan for his response. He told us: "We run price checks on our items every week and we do bear in mind our legal responsibilities for getting prices right."

"Sometimes when we have a lot of price changes or new deals and we have to make a great number of ticket changes all at once there can be a difference between the displayed price and

the till, but this is very rare and will only be for a very short time.

"I would encourage any customers who have questions about their bill to talk to me directly. I am always happy to try to help them."

Dog show

disappointment

Dear Editor,

Much as I enjoyed the East Finchley Christmas festivities on 5 December, I was most perturbed by the dog contest. The winner was a large dog draped with about 20 lit fairy lights and wiring round his neck.

Aside from the discomfort for the dog, I think it presents a poor role model for appropriate pet care. I am baffled how it was considered acceptable by the contest organisers.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.

Dementia friendly

Dementia-friendly screenings of popular films continue at the Phoenix Cinema, free for anyone over 60, with brighter light, quieter sound and an interval for a sing-a-long. Films in March are West Side Story on the 1st and Guys and Dolls on the 15th.

Is Barnet a safe place?

Barnet Council is inviting people to take part in a consultation on crime and anti-social behaviour. The consultation, which runs until 29 February, will help to shape action plans for the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership, made up of the police, fire and probation services and Victim Support.

To take part, visit engage.barnet.gov.uk. You can also request a printed copy of the survey by calling the Community Safety team on 020 8359 6071.

Paperwork can be easy

By Diana Cormack

East Finchley resident Margaret Crockett recently had her first book published. Writing it took her the best part of two and a half years whilst at the same time carrying on with her occupation. Margaret has been a qualified records manager and archivist for 30 years and a consultant for over 15. She is one of two partners in The Archive-Skills Consultancy Ltd.

Margaret's knowledge and experience is reflected in *The No-Nonsense Guide to Archives and Record-keeping* which has been described as "a nice reference tool for the seasoned archivist, a text book for university students and a comprehensive guide for new archivists".

The book, published by Facet, was launched on 22 January at the British Library. Professionals responsible for archives and records will not be the only ones interested in it: Margaret has already had enquiries from people sorting out problems at home. If you are feeling totally overwhelmed by your paperwork and computer hard drive levels, Margaret can help you.

With a client list which includes large multi-national organisations, high-profile charities, local authorities and businesses she has plenty to draw



Margaret with her freshly printed book.

Photo Xenia Crockett

on for this practical how-to-do-it guide. As well as working for various countries abroad, Margaret has also been involved in supporting researchers for television productions such as *Mr Selfridge* and has worked at Alnwick Castle, the setting for the Harry Potter films. For further details visit www.margaretcrockett.co.uk

Computer know-how

Helpers are sought for EFAB's Computers and a Cuppa learning sessions in East Finchley. If you have experience with using computers and the internet and want to share that knowledge with others, give them a call.

You don't have to be an expert, just patient and friendly and happy to explore devices with learners. EFAB currently need extra support on Tuesdays from 2pm to 4pm at a venue in

Homefield Gardens, off East End Road, and on Thursdays from 10am to 12 midday at Season's Café, opposite East Finchley Library. Call Lisa on 07909 998453 or email us@efab.org.uk



Poo chalker panic

Residents fed up with finding dog mess on our pavements are increasingly chalk-marking the spots in an attempt to shame the offending owners. But, as Richard Osley who took this photo points out, this chalker must have had a slight last-minute panic when it came to spelling faeces. It could happen to the best of us!

All of which reminds us of the joke, best said out loud: what's the difference between 'falsified' and 'doctored'? The answer is when something is falsified it is altered or faked in order to mislead, whereas when something is doctored it should be picked up in a small plastic bag.



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