



Letters

We need another crossing

Dear Editor,

In a horrific incident on Saturday 16 March, a woman was hit by a car on the High Road. Since she was in the middle of the road, I assume she was crossing it at the moment when she was knocked down.

That stretch of road between Fortis Green and Kitchener Road has a row of shops on both sides, so anyone who is out shopping naturally needs to cross over. However there are no crossings at that point, and it is a long walk to the traffic lights at one end or the zebra at the other.

It's completely unrealistic to expect people to walk all the way to the zebra and then the same distance back on the other side, so of course they just cross the road wherever they can.

It is time that the council put a zebra crossing in that stretch of road, or at the very least a traffic island.

Yours faithfully,
Anna Lowenstein,
High Road, N2.

Time to reclaim our streets

Dear Editor,

I read with interest in the March *Archer* about the stretch of the North Circular west from Colney Hatch Lane being one of the most congested roads in Britain. The article, however, didn't mention the air pollution that is caused by this amount of slow-moving or stationary traffic.

The impacts of diesel emissions on health have been widely reported over the last 12 months, with exhaust fumes being linked to heart and lung disease, increased risk of dementia and likelihood of premature death. Children and the elderly are especially vulnerable.

On the front page was also the road safety campaign launched following a father and daughter being hit by a car outside Martin Primary School. The Fortis Green junction with the High Road, where a secondary school girl was hit by a car recently, regularly has a dented lamp post outside Domino's. No doubt there will be coverage of the tragic news of a recent pedestrian fatality on the High Road.

Is it time then to think about how we can reduce the dominance of cars in East Finchley? The A1000 has become increasingly busy and the risk of accidents and the likelihood of unsafe levels of air pollution are only set to grow.

Don't we want a High Road that is a clean, healthy and safe place to visit, where pedestrians are the priority and we don't need to worry about accidents and air pollution? East Finchley is a wonderful neighbourhood. We need to prioritise our community, rather than the traffic that passes through it. Time to reclaim our streets!

Yours faithfully
Frances Buckingham,
Elmfield Road, N2.



Felled: A chopped tree on the Grange estate.

Tree tragedy

Dear Editor,

Barnet Homes, a subsidiary of Barnet Council, has been cutting down trees which have just survived the recent storms intact. Just as articles write of the need for cleaner air and the positivity of access to nature in the urban environment they are removing these ancient trees.

This is an abuse of funds which could either have been used to look after the trees or carry out essential maintenance, a programme which continues to lag behind. I hope but doubt replacements will be planted.

Trees (other than walnuts) need to grow together as their roots share defences against disease in a kind of network. A new sapling can fit in to this network (even street trees like to be connected) and grow in time to replace the older trees.

It would be better to leave the older trees. We need to retain current trees while adding new ones. They too are our heritage. Once an old tree has gone it takes a generation for a replacement to grow.

Yours faithfully,
Name and address supplied.

Clearance fail

Dear Editor,

In mid-March, on two mornings running, a mini road sweeping vehicle brushed its way up and down my road. I live in a cul de sac where the parked cars are usually in the same position daily with a few gaps in between giving limited access to the road side. So, for the most part, only the centre was swept (twice!). This is, of course, where debris does not gather.

Has Barnet Council read page 5 of the March *Archer* ('Cost cutting is leaving us all with dirty streets')? Here the council says that in instances where its sweepers couldn't reach under parked cars, manual litter picking is carried out. I have yet to see this in my street (where I clear the area in front of our house myself, which not everyone is able or willing to do).

Does Barnet deserve a point for trying but nul points for organisation and financial forethought?

Yours faithfully,
L C Ward.
(Address supplied)

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

How to clear your space of all that 'stuff'

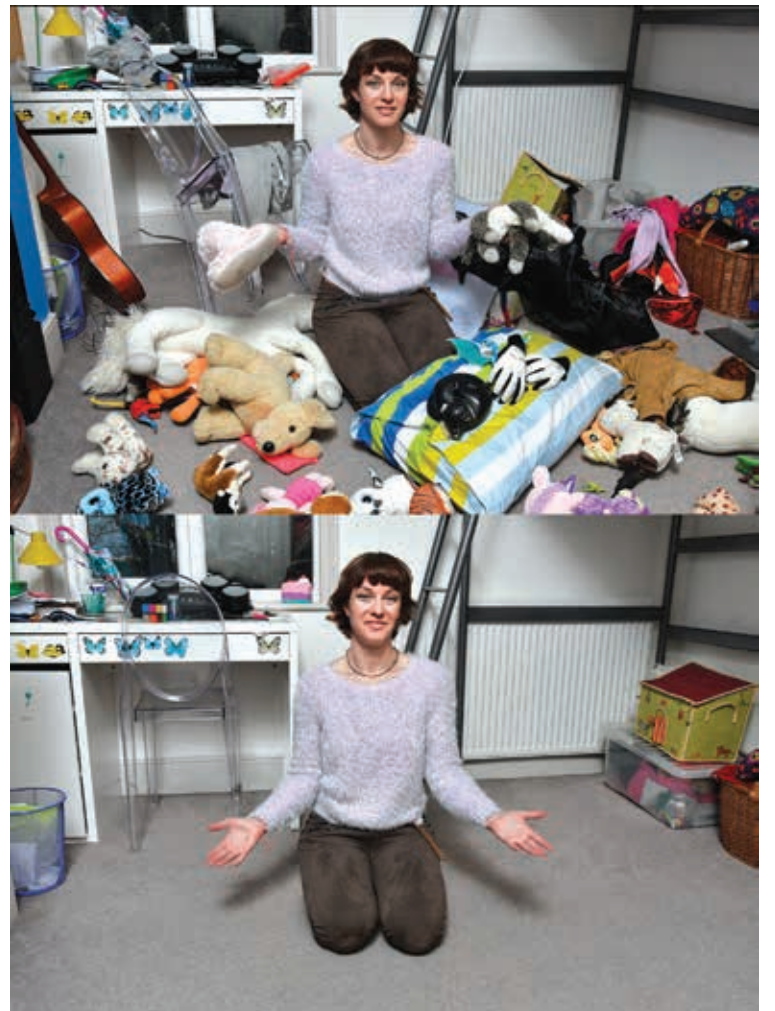
By Daphne Chamberlain
Never mind Brexit! The popular question today is are you a minimalist or a maximalist? East Finchley professional declutterer and organiser Arianna Steigman is a mediamalist. She says: "My father hung on to things, my mother threw everything out, and I suppose I am somewhere in between."

Organisation is her key. When she spent a good part of her life with a young family knee-deep in toddler stuff, everything was stowed away in its own place at the end of the day.

Managing clutter

Pointing out that clutter is subjective, she remarks that some people are embarrassed by a few carrier bags on the floor, while others collect much more around them before they feel overwhelmed. Some people are naturally disorganised; others are too old or ill to manage as they would like; and clutterers who are also hoarders are too emotionally attached to their stuff.

Arianna says: "Don't talk about throwing things out. Instead, we can let things go; pass them on to other people to enjoy. And we can keep things particularly important to us. I keep some of my children's drawings. A client overwhelmed by hoarded baby clothes chose one pair of tiny shoes, framed and displayed them. If you have 150 similar things, keep two, for example, and treasure them."



Clear head: Decluttering guru Arianna Steigman. Photo Mike Coles

Taking action

Arianna doesn't want anyone to feel embarrassed, and certainly not overwhelmed. After a session or sessions in her company choosing what to keep and what to let go, the vital thing is to act on your decisions. Those sacks of things that you've let go have to actually go, but for the physically frail or non-drivers that can be another problem. Arianna is happy to

take bags to charity shops on her way home.

She also advises on selling and advertising, and will help with packing for a house move and setting up in your new home. As well as home visits, Arianna gives consultations by phone or Skype. For more information, visit www.reclaimyourspace.co.uk, call 07564 192780 or email arianna@reclaimyourspace.co.uk.



Art lovers at the Private View of East Finchley Open Artists exhibition at the Barbican Library. Photo Mike Coles

N2 artists storm the Barbican

By Mike Coles

Art lovers from all over London gathered at the Barbican Library in the City last month for the private view of *Prima Vera*, the latest exhibition by East Finchley Open Artists. The exhibition featured 2D and 3D work from more than 50 artists.

The East Finchley Open Artists group formed in 2004 and has become very popular locally with its annual Open House events, art fairs, regular shows at the Phoenix Cinema and other local galleries. This was the first time members had taken their work into the centre of London and they hope the exhibition's popularity will lead to further shows at the Barbican Centre.

Quiz time

Age UK Barnet is hosting a quiz night on Thursday 2 May at the Ann Owens Centre in Oak Lane, N2. You can enter a team of up to eight people or go along and join an Age UK Barnet team.

Doors open at 6.45pm, with a raffle and bar. Tickets cost £15 per person and include a two-course supper. For tickets and information, call 020 8203 5040 or email wendy.nutman@ageukbarnet.org.uk. Booking is essential.

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