



Cycle and bus lanes:



The cyclists' view

From the Barnet Cyclists group
Many cyclists and would-be cyclists have complained that main roads in Barnet feel unsafe and they are reluctant to use them. Since the 1980s, Barnet Cyclists have campaigned for the council to provide a safer environment for cyclists, pedestrians and children.

Despite some valiant attempts, and much consultation, almost all have come to nothing. The new cycle lane scheme in East Finchley is modest, but at least it is a start.

It is bound to be opposed by some people, but there are tremendous advantages for all, in encouraging those who can cycle to do so safely. The experience of lockdown showed us all what it was like when there was a reduction in road traffic. The environment was quieter, less polluted and more pleasant.

We have all come to appreciate being in the open air and have had

to learn to reduce the distances we travel. Many of us have had to think about our lifestyle and how we can get more exercise and live more sustainably.

The Government and Barnet Council, to their credit, have responded by fast forwarding some green initiatives including encouraging cycling in Barnet. It will be great to see people of all ages enjoying these new facilities. Why not encourage the introduction of more schemes by responding positively to Barnet Council and help them to make Barnet a better place to live.



The traders' view

As told to The Archer and business network N2United
As we reported last month, the removal of all parking spaces on the southbound side of the High Road has already had a negative impact on the local shops and businesses, especially at a time when they are experiencing extremely difficult trading conditions due to the pandemic.

One shopkeeper told us: "We recognise the value of getting people more active by promoting cycling but it also affects other sections of the community."

Now a few weeks into the scheme, the full effects are being felt by residents and shop owners trying to take deliveries on the High Road where a designated loading bay has been removed. Traders say they need to be able rely on deliveries of stock and supplies so this seems to them another problem born out of a seeming lack of planning or co-ordination. The general feeling of many

shops and restaurants is that the introduction of the bus and cycle lanes and removal of parking spaces has made them almost inaccessible to everyone except for those in the immediate vicinity. Those from outside N2 who might be tempted to shop, eat or drink in East Finchley won't do so if they can't park.

In general, traders don't oppose a safe cycle route in the area but they seriously question the execution of the current scheme. The intermittent nature of the cycle lanes make them seem pointless, but at huge cost.

Changes ahead for 'experimental' bus and cycle lanes

Continued from front page

Many shopkeepers and restaurant owners are dismayed at the removal of parking spaces along the High Road, which they say deters shoppers and diners at an already-difficult time for trade during the pandemic.

When The Archer asked how these traders could be helped, the council told us: "We will work closely with businesses

based along the routes and are taking measures to prevent their trade in the long-term from being affected. We also expect the scheme will also open up new commercial opportunities for shops and traders." It did not specify the measures or the opportunities.

The council spokesman added that the traffic congestion was a short-term issue for

commuters and the borough was looking at long-term sustainable ways to keep people moving.

Feedback is being welcomed and the East Finchley scheme will be monitored for an 18-month period. To submit your comments to Barnet Council, email traffic.consultations@barnet.gov.uk or write to Traffic and Development, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale NW9 4EW. Include the reference: A1000 phase 1.



Hot stuff: Ramadan Guzeltas behind the counter

Twenty years behind the fryers at Poseidon

There have been some developments since we printed our last story about Poseidon fish restaurant in November's edition. The high street favourite does not have new ownership as previously printed and is in fact staying in the hands of the family who have owned it since 2015.

We are pleased to say chef Ramadan Guzeltas, who has been behind the fryers at Poseidon for more than 20 years, continues to look after all the customers on the takeaway side and the team has plenty of positive plans to see it through the pandemic. The owners hope to be able to re-open the eat-in restaurant area as soon as government regulations allow.

Ramadan, who has a formidable reputation for making his own tartare sauce, said: "We're so grateful that we still have lots of regular customers supporting us and we can continue to supply our customers' needs during the pandemic. People like to know they're getting the same quality each time they come in." Whilst

fish is brought in fresh daily from Billingsgate Market, and with a tweak of the takeaway menu to add more variety, the restaurant will be introducing new and exciting fresh pies, to cater for both meat lovers and vegans/vegetarians. Roast chicken has also been added to the menu, with Ramadan's own secret recipe.

For those with allergies or special dietary requirements the restaurant offers a gluten-free batter, or matzo meal. The restaurant has also seen a growing demand for takeaway grilled fish and salads, allowing for a healthier takeaway option.

Poseidon's new phone number for orders is 0203 638 9171.

Join the team at Grange Big Local

Local community project Grange Big Local is on the lookout for new board members to help shape their agenda for the next few years. They've been given a lottery grant of £1million to make a positive difference to the local area and want fellow residents to help decide where that money goes.

You don't need any qualifications or specific experience, just enthusiasm and a drive to make East Finchley an even better place for everyone to live. Anyone is welcome to join, but they would especially love to hear from young people, ethnic minority communities, or those with financial or legal backgrounds.

If you're interested or want to hear more, get in touch with them at info@grangebiglocal.org or call on 020 3857 9492 ext 0237.

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