



Still moving towards a plastic-free East Finchley

By Ann Inglis, of No2PlasticsN2

Since No2PlasticsN2 began in East Finchley, Gardner and Nash's Budgens have switched to only using paper bags both in store and for carrying away. And across the road Meze and Shish are using foil containers with cardboard lids and paper bags for takeaways.

In the world that emerges from the pandemic, we must not continue pouring ever-compounding quantities of non-compostable, single-use plastics onto the land and into the oceans. They are the only land and oceans we will ever have.

Help us continue our conversations with shop owners and managers of shops in East Finchley. Seeing our signs in shop windows, passers-by will be able to see which shops are committed to reducing and finally eliminating single-use plastics from the High Road.

To all shop owners, please tell us about the steps you are taking towards eliminating single-use plastics and we will celebrate them wherever we can, in print, on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @No2plasticsN2.

Our amendment

We petitioned Lord Zac Goldsmith asking him to propose an amendment to the Environment Bill 2019/21, soon to enter the House of Lords, to ban single-use plastic carrier

bags (SUPCBs). He replied, or rather DEFRA did on his behalf.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) as proposed in the Bill, we heartily endorse. Polluters must pay to clean up the mess their products leave behind. Coping with the detritus inevitably leaves imprints on the environment in the form of carbon footprints.

In the letter, Lord Goldsmith argued that paper bags have a significantly larger carbon footprint than SUPCBs. While this might be true for their manufacture and transport it is untrue when the carbon footprint for their disposal or recycling is taken into account. When recycling, bear in mind that only 15% of plastics in the western world ever get recycled and when they do a similar volume of virgin plastic is always added.

We have reiterated our request to Lord Goldsmith to propose our amendment. As an insurance measure, we have also asked Baroness Jones of Whitchurch to propose it if Lord Goldsmith does not.

N2United: Cycle lanes, workshops and recovery grants

By Chris Stavrou

N2United's March meeting was another successful exchange of ideas and information centred on the local area, with contributions from Age UK, the Food Project and Friends of Cherry Tree Wood.

Councillor Claire Farrier discussed important issues including continued concerns about the cycle lanes and reduced parking on the High Road and the effect on access to local businesses. The cycle lane scheme will be reassessed 18 months after its introduction in September 2020 and a decision made on whether or not to keep it. Barnet Council is still eager to hear from local residents about how well or badly they feel it is working.

Julia Hines and Linda Sou, of The Grange Big Local, spoke about the success of their various grant schemes and a number of recipients shared their stories of how they have benefitted, including enthusiastic teacher Janka, the founder of Little Volcanoes, which is running a series of online science workshops geared towards making science fun.

The meeting also heard

from Katy of N2 Mums Speak, a new group to support mothers, and Aku Adjei of Music and Motivation, which uses sound and music to help parents who have been home-schooling re-motivate themselves. Grange Big Local Covid Recovery Grants are still available for local residents who have struggled with the effects of the pandemic. They can apply for a

Unnecessary alarm

Dear Editor,

The other day a friend of mine phoned to say she had received an NHS letter telling her it was very important that she should shield from the Covid virus. A bit late in the day, you might think, as she is very nearly 96, and has never received a shielding letter before. She was also told that she should take up the offer of a vaccine jab.

She tried to phone to say that she has already had her first jab and is almost ready for the second, but of course couldn't get through.

We know that people are receiving these unnecessary letters all the time. As my friend said, an elderly person living alone could be very frightened by suddenly being told it was very important to shield (after a year), and the unnecessary vaccine letters might make a person who was a bit confused try to get another jab when they didn't need to.

It's such a shame when the vaccinations are mostly carried out so smoothly.

Susan Stevenson, Address supplied.

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

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Letters



Hold-up the front page

Dear Editor,

As I was tidying away the latest copy of *The Archer*, after it had been read by every member of the family, I noticed that my nine-year-old son Wilf had been

doodling on the front page, see picture. I wondered if it might amuse.

Best wishes and keep up the outstanding work.

Verity Meier Leslie Road, N2.

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.



Too heavy to park on our pavements

By Ann Bronkhorst

One side effect of the survival and success of the construction industry during the pandemic is the increasing numbers of large delivery vehicles trying to navigate our car-lined streets. Here's an example of what's happening.

For the last year I've watched with interest the gutting, re-making and extending of a small terraced house nearby. In November a heavily loaded scaffolding lorry, unable to park there, pulled onto the yellow-lined pavement outside our corner house and broke several paving stones.

The driver seemed unconcerned. I got the registration number and took photos. Later, an elderly neighbour tripped over a raised slab, fell and complained to the council. I complained too. Barnet sent someone to assess the pavement damage and soon the slabs were replaced or relaid.



Cracked: The damaged pavement near Ann's house

In February this year an enormous truck parked on the same stretch of pavement and, as I watched, the paving slabs cracked (audibly), shifted and broke. The driver seemed upset, saying he'd been told there'd be enough access for parking and delivering but there wasn't. A van would have been more suitable, he said, and I agreed.

So I emailed his employers. The transport manager replied politely: misleading assurances had been received about access and, yes, a van would have been preferable but how and where to park a huge truck for the transfer between vehicles? And the council could deal directly with the firm's insurance company, which had been alerted.

Again, photos (by several neighbours too) and reports to Barnet Council and to Cllr Arjun Mittra; a week later the doughty repair crew arrived. No pedestrian accidents, luckily. But all over our borough, and in towns and cities all over the UK, this is happening more and more: massive haulage trucks and other large vehicles are manoeuvring along narrow streets and parking on pavements, with councils picking up the costs of the damage they do.

Is this to become routine, with cash-strapped councils dealing with the escalating wear and tear while residents walk gingerly on ever more ugly and dangerous pavements?



Exchange of ideas: The N2United meeting in full flow