



Letters

Sunday pharmacies

Dear Editor,

My wife fell ill over the Christmas and New Year period and had to use the NHS 111 service. She was prescribed painkilling drugs by an NHS doctor over the phone on New Year's Eve, a Sunday. However, the NHS doctor told her that none of the four East Finchley chemists (three in the High Road and one on East End Road) opened on Sundays and she had the choice of picking up the prescription at a chemist in Golders Green or Boots in Muswell Hill. This surprised and disappointed us. Subsequently I asked one of the chemists in East Finchley why they did not open Sundays and was told "we are tired and need a day off". While I can understand their tiredness and desire for a day off, I think it unsatisfactory that between the four chemists in East Finchley, they cannot agree on a Sunday or half-day Sunday rota. The elderly and disabled and those without family or friends are going to find it hard to pick up their prescription outside their immediate area.

John Briggs

Address supplied.

No parking permit

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the Q&A about the controlled parking zone (*The Archer*, January 2024) and for highlighting the issues. I totally agree with the comments that it's now inevitable and is mostly a money-making exercise. I also note from one of the answers that someone like me would not be eligible for a parking permit as I live on a private estate in East Finchley. Not having a permit would directly affect my freedom to come and go whenever I want to work on our allotment at Vale Farm on Tarling Road, which will be within the CPZ area.

As someone well on the way to being 80, if I was to walk there and back or take a bus some of the way, I would have far less energy available for the allotment as well as having all the problems of transporting heavy items to and from the site.

Harriet Copperman,

Address supplied.

I can't keep quiet

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your excellent journalism and keeping our community informed. I have been a resident of East Finchley for some years now and I am always delighted to receive the paper as you're instrumental in bringing the community together. Usually I keep quiet but I felt compelled this time to write in regard to the controlled parking zone extension plans, which I know you will have received a lot of correspondence on.

I don't know a single person who is in favour of the move. I find the suggestion to be 'backwards policy' to be frank. In this dire time when the government should be finding ways to support local businesses, bring communities together and help our local economies grow it slaps on another ridiculous idea. It's just a kick in the

teeth for us all.

Would they prefer the community to come together and refuse to pay council taxes? Don't underestimate the power of the collective. The whole idea doesn't work for various reasons: 1) Local businesses will suffer; 2) You cut off the vulnerable who depend on being able to drive near to shops so they don't have to walk to carry their shopping or see their friends; 3) You increase loneliness in communities - visitors are less inclined to visit if they cannot park nearby; 4) You bar professionals from getting to their places of work, as per the comment by Ziz Chater, headteacher at Martin Primary School, about teachers who live outside the area and need somewhere to park all day. The only benefactors are Barnet council who are already receiving plenty of funds via rising council taxes, resident permits and so on. I'd rather we leave the parking situation alone which I feel is stringent enough as it is.

Anita Engebretsen,
Address supplied.

Don't blame cyclists

Dear Editor,

I read with interest Mr. White's letter regarding slow traffic outside East Finchley station. While I was not aware of the absence of any consultation period, I am not sure that his suggestions are without consequence.

Approximately four people a day are killed on roads in Great Britain, with over 80 seriously injured. The risk of death when being hit by someone going 20mph is estimated at around 5%, while going 30mph may increase this risk up to 20-45% (depending on the study used). Given the constant stream of people crossing the road at the mouth of Baronsmere Road, this risk to pedestrians is real.

Equally, assuming that a higher speed limit will reduce the amount of pollution to stop idling is incorrect, as it is thought that accelerations and decelerations contribute more to air pollution than stationary or slow driving in cars. Recent research has suggested London is the slowest city in the world to drive in and continues to get slower. It is infuriating. However, the idea that road infrastructure changes are going to make any significant impact on this is fanciful. There are simply far too many cars on the road.

Long stretches of road from Archway to the North Circular are single-lane regardless of cycle lanes, most typically due to on-street parking. Converting short stretches of single-lane traffic will do little to change driving times. We must simply accept that more journeys need to be made on foot, bike or with public transport to improve congestion for everyone.

With climate change and obesity being two of our major societal challenges, I think any changes that encourage use of public transport or cycling can only be a good thing on wider scale.

Michael Shaw,
Eastern Road, N2.



Hazard: The East End Road pothole, since filled in

Perilous roads

Dear Editor,

I sometimes wonder if Barnet Council cares about the state of our roads and pathways. Two weeks ago, my 89-year-old mother was coming back from visiting her friend five minutes from her home when she tripped over a hole as she crossed the road at the traffic lights on Hampstead Heights and East End Road, N2. Thank goodness the lights were red otherwise she would not be with us today.

We sent an email to Barnet expressing our concerns. The state of many roads is a disgrace and dangerous to pedestrians, cyclists and even car owners (suspensions get damaged). I know that, at this time of year, due to the freezing weather, the asphalt cracks but surely in 2024 councils should be prepared for remedial works and not wait till someone gets hurt.

Apologies if I sound negative but had to raise this matter as we pay thousands in road tax and council tax.

Mandana Merali,
Address supplied.

Cycle lane consultations

Dear Editor,

Please correct the letter in December's edition entitled Traffic Trials. The author Barry H White said that there had been no consultation about the A1000 cycle lane. This is incorrect. There have been two consultations.

Phase 1 included six workshops attended by a total of 60 interested parties including myself during November 2022. Phase 2 saw the formal consultation process from 21 November to 21 December 2022, to which 747 people responded.

The Archer reported about both phases ahead of time so there was every opportunity for people to engage.

As a cyclist who uses the A1000 cycle lane every day from East Finchley to North Finchley, I feel a lot safer since it was installed three years ago. Maybe a New Year's resolution could be for even more people to use it, promoting health, environmental and social benefits.

Adrian Haysome,
Address supplied.

Send your correspondence to: news@the-archer.co.uk

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So what goes on at a gong bath?

By Ruth Anders

Local yoga teacher Lucie Ormerod has been adding another tool to her collection of stress-relieving therapies with gong sound baths. She explained how they work: "After slow-flow yoga breathing exercises, participants lie down and cover themselves with blankets to get warm, cosy and comfortable. With their eyes closed, they just let the gong bath meditation happen to them."

The gong is one of the oldest man-made sounds, and its tones and vibrations cause the brain, heart and respiratory rates to slow down, helping stress to evaporate.

Once she had learned about the benefits of gong sound baths, with help from gong players like Siri Atma and Nick Stolerman, Lucie started adding

these increasingly popular pursuits to her yoga retreats and workshops.

She said: "Not everyone wants to try yoga, but people are intrigued by gong baths. You don't have to do anything but relax. A criminal barrister friend of mine attended a session, at first reluctantly, but then had to admit that it had helped

him have the deepest night's sleep for a long time. They are becoming social events now, and people often take part with their friends."

Along with Nick, Lucie will be holding a gong bath session at the Phoenix Cinema on the morning of Saturday 10 February. For more information, visit urbanacalm.co.uk



Resounding: Gong player Nick Stolerman

All Saints' East Finchley

Living the Catholic faith in the Church of England



All Saints' Church, Durham Road,
East Finchley
Church of England

You are welcome to join us for:

Sunday mass at 10.00 a.m. and
Weekday masses as advertised on the website.

Or join our live-streamed services on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsef/>

Prayer requests are gladly accepted.

For more information,
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