



Letters

Rethink bus lane

Dear Editor,

Roger Ford's letter in the December edition of *The Archer* is correct in pointing out the bad consequences of the bus and cycle lane leading north from East Finchley Tube station. Barnet Council appears indifferent to the problem, although it has been pointed out to them since the scheme started nearly two years ago. Their only response was to change some of the plan north of the Fortis Green traffic lights but do nothing for the problems closer to the station. I collect a newspaper each morning, and so I see the queues that regularly develop which sometimes even reach back to the Archway Road. It is very rarely that I see more than one cyclist using the lane. Surely it is time to scrap the whole scheme.

Barry H White,
Fordington Road, N6.



Red lights: Traffic tails back alongside the bus and cycle lane. Photo Barry H White

Leisure park homes

Dear Editor,

You would think that the 2,303 households forced to live in grim temporary housing because Barnet Council has nowhere else to put them would have got a mention somewhere in the consultation material from developers Regal about the transformation of the Great North Leisure Park into a development of 1,500 new homes (*The Archer*, November 2024). After all, isn't building new housing about meeting housing needs?

Yes, Regal does plan to make some of the homes 'affordable' but that doesn't mean they will be. All it means is that rents or purchase prices will be no more than 80% of local commercial rents/costs, so still completely out of reach for most people.

But there is no law stating that some, or even many, of the new homes can't be social rents, which are set at no more than 50% of commercial rents.

I don't know what complicated funding arrangements are needed

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

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to make social housing part of the new development, but it must be do-able. Regal is not a registered social housing provider, but Barnet Council is. And Barnet owns the land. And they are responsible for giving or not giving Regal permission to build.

It can't make economic sense to deny access to the new homes in the leisure park to the people who need them the most, especially as the temporary homes Barnet's homeless families are living in must be costing the council, and us, a small fortune. Or does it?

Rani Dickson,
Address supplied.

Fallen tree was stressed

Dear Editor,

I have just seen in *The Archer* about the fallen tree in Cherry Tree Wood (*The Archer*, December 2024). The cause will almost certainly be the stress caused to it, and many of our local trees, by the excessive footfall, which is always worse on clay, which compacts so that the roots receive minimal oxygen and dissolved minerals.

Then as the hornbeams are overstood coppice, the topknot of foliage compared to the weight of etiolated trunk is struggling to keep the living wood in good health, as the proportion of heavy non-living heartwood rises. These stresses are compounded by our increasingly 'unusual' weather patterns.

Recoppicing is one solution. At Kew Gardens, since the storm of 1987, arboricultural practices have changed drastically. Airspades are used to create spaces around the roots, so oxygen is able to penetrate the clay to reach the roothair cells. Fungal mycelia and compost surround each tree.

Obviously such practices are limited in a local park like Cherry Tree Wood, but maybe soil disturbance around trees and the addition of mycorrhiza would be possible.

Linda Dolata,
Leopold Road, N2.

Make this the year you keep your resolutions

Having New Year's resolutions is all very well but avoiding anxiety and keeping the confidence to carry them through is another thing. Here, East Finchley-based cognitive therapist Lucas Bouvier offers some tips for success.

Where does confidence come from? Often, we tell ourselves, I want to feel confident enough to take this step. However, this belief about confidence can be misleading. Confidence doesn't magically appear beforehand; it grows after you've done something. It's a result of action, not a prerequisite for it.

As we step into 2025, many of us have goals or resolutions in mind. You might feel unsure about pursuing them because you don't feel confident yet. This is perfectly normal.

Confidence will develop as you engage with your goals.

Park meeting

Everyone has a chance to hear about plans for the year ahead when the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood hold their AGM at 7.30pm on Thursday 23 January, at the Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery, Park House, High Road, N2.

There will be a major update on the feasibility study and its proposed solutions for dealing with flooding in the wood, along with information on all the activities of the Friends group, including how to get involved and events for the year ahead. If you require further information in advance or would like to attend, email the Friends at friendsofctw@gmail.com

Until then, focus on other emotions like curiosity about the pleasures this activity might bring or the excitement of overcoming its inevitable challenges.

Anxiety might be the issue

If you still feel unable to act, anxiety could be the root cause. In this case, the issue isn't about confidence but rather managing feelings of worry or apprehension. Here's a practical way to address anxiety:

1. Focus on the feeling:

Notice where the anxiety manifests in your body, perhaps at tightness in the chest or shoulders.

2. Stay present:

Direct your attention solely to the sensation of anxiety itself, not the source of it, for example a new activity like starting tennis.

3. Observe its nature:

As you focus, you'll realise anxiety is temporary. It's a sensation that comes and goes, not an intrinsic part of who you are.

Try this now. Bring to mind something that usually causes



Confidence: Lucas Bouvier

you anxiety, and focus on the physical sensations rather than the activity itself. This practice can help diminish the power anxiety holds over you, allowing you to take action.

Armed with this new perspective, you can pursue your resolutions with courage, knowing confidence will come with experience. And if anxiety persists, working with a qualified therapist can help you overcome deeper obstacles.

Learn more at LucasBouvier.com, or contact him at Lucas@LucasBouvier.com or 07884 369560.



Helping hands: Volunteers young and old get together to assemble food aid packages at Hammerson House

Age no barrier to being useful

When local care home Hammerson House teamed up with Food Bank Aid, the grassroots charity that supplies 32 north London food banks with a large proportion of their items, it proved that older people can still do something for their community.

"We had a brilliantly organised day," said East Finchley resident and retired GP Helen Halpern, "with residents, their families, staff and local people like myself sorting and packing tea bags. There was a real buzz and many people dropped in food bank donations too. There are lots of sedentary jobs like this to be done at the hub too. And Food Bank Aid always needs volunteers so why not

give it a go?"

The day of volunteering at the home in The Bishops Avenue was part of Mitzvah Day, an annual day of social action when community groups and individuals take on a project for those in need. Originally created by the Jewish Community, with Mitzvah being the biblical word for 'good deed', it has expanded to people of all faiths and none to become Britain's biggest day of social action, with 30,000 taking part.

You can register your interest in taking part in Mitzvah Day next year at mitzvahday.org.uk. Food Bank Aid volunteer information is at foodbankaid.org.uk. Hammerson House also welcomes hearing from potential volunteers. Find out more at nightingalehammerson.org



Chef / Catering Manager

Full time 35 hours per week (Mon – Fri)

Salary circa £30,000.00 per annum

Age UK Barnet is a charity aiming to promote independence and wellbeing amongst older residents in the London Borough of Barnet. We offer a lunch service to clients with early stages of dementia who attend our Day Centres. Catering for up to 40 clients per day and we aim to offer a varied range of nutritious homecooked meals. We have also recently launched our 'Friday lunch club' and organise and run cookery classes as part of our wellbeing services. There are also opportunities to cater for small functions when we hold these. We are seeking to recruit an experienced chef / catering manager to oversee the catering function within our organisation across two sites. (East Finchley and Hendon) As our catering manager you will be responsible for ensuring our kitchens run smoothly and will be involved with all aspects of catering including menu planning, cooking, ordering, and ensuring food hygiene compliance across the organisation.

We offer 5 weeks paid holiday per year, an occupational pension scheme and staff discount schemes after completion of the probation period. For further details and an application form visit our website at <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/barnet/about-us/work-for-us/> or email jenny.coomey@ageukbarnet.org.uk or telephone 0208 432 1418

Closing Date: 25th January 2024