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Local News Is Our Aim

# THE ARCHER



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*A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.*



Another day, another dollar. Photo by Erini Rodis

## Till death us do park

By Diana Cormack

It looked like a scene from an Ealing comedy – a group of traffic wardens and undertakers arguing while an empty limousine and a hearse, waiting for a coffin to be loaded, stood at the roadside in the pay and display zone. But in reality it was no laughing matter, for onlookers outside Co-operative Funeralcare at 133 High Road were witnessing what could have been a classic example of warden zeal.

The funeral parlour's limousine driver had had to buy a pay and display voucher and, though no parking tickets were issued, he said that he had been fined previously for parking outside the premises.

### Respecting the dead

He said, "There was a time when the wardens used to turn a blind eye but, now that they get paid for the number of bookings they make, it has all changed. One even replied 'No' when I asked him if he had any respect for the dead."

This was not an isolated incident. Lucy Oliver, manager of Funeralcare, told THE ARCHER, "It is a continuing problem," she said. "The undertakers have to be constantly watching for the wardens." A few days later, Lucy had to intervene when she spotted a warden who appeared to be in the process of preparing a parking ticket for a hearse. She told us that she managed to persuade him not to do it.

### Disturbing

Many of the people who were watching were disturbed by the situation and felt that the undertakers should be allowed to go about their task without being hassled.

When questioned by THE ARCHER, a spokesperson for Barnet Council said, "Anyone may load or pick up and set down passengers at a pay and display parking place, and, in the case of hearses and limousines, our parking attendants recognise that this may take some time."

"In relation to the date under discussion, our parking attendant approached and saw that the hearse was unattended and did not have a pay and display ticket. When approached by the driver who explained that the hearse was in fact in use, our parking attendant voided the ticket."

### Apologies

"Barnet Council apologises to onlookers who may have believed that the parking attendants were being insensitive. We invite the owner of the funeral home to contact us and we will assist in any way we can to resolve any parking issues with the premises."

"Barnet Council would also like to point out that all our parking attendants are salaried staff of the council and receive the same pay regardless of how many penalties they issue."

## Oak Lodge cuts

By Sheila Armstrong  
Oak Lodge School in Heath View, East Finchley, has been hit by changes to Barnet's funding formula for special schools. With cuts of £100,000 the pupil staff ratio will be affected including teacher loss.

THE ARCHER spoke to head teacher Lynda Walker who said the school were hoping to manage their budget so as to have the least impact on all pupils in the school including their specialist autistic spectrum disorder unit.

Parents have already been to a meeting at Hendon Town Hall about the future of the ASD unit, voicing their concerns about maintaining specialist provision for their children.

At the time of writing, a meeting was being arranged on April 26 to outline the school's position and its plans for the future.

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