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Green and pleasant land

This unfamiliar view of East Finchley shows there's plenty of room for greenery in our densely-packed portion of north London. *ARCHER* finance and advertising manager John Dearing took the photograph from Highgate Golf Club back in the early autumn, facing roughly north east.

In the foreground to the right are the trees of Cherry Tree Wood with others on the left clustered around the golf club grounds and The Bishops Avenue and High Road.

The red brick building on the left is the McDonalds headquarters. Above it and just to the right, the beige brick building with lots of (foreshortened) white windows is Viceroy Close. Further in the background just to the left is the spire of the Islington (St Pancras) Cemetery chapel (we *think*, contact us if you know differently).

In the middle and right, the line of buildings running more or less north to south are the flats above shops in the High Road, including Securebase and the Poseidon Fish Bar. The white frontages include Jeremy Leaf and Domino's. Further to the right are homes in the Cherry Tree area and the 'county' roads. What a view!



By Adam Justice-Mills

So, depth of winter, hunkered down against the cold, possibly the gloomiest time of year in the UK. It all makes me want to turn up the heating and eat too much. Maybe that's why I've got disenchanted with sustainability recently.

Of course, it could be the continued ineffectiveness of governments (local, national, international) to keep the sustainability ball rolling...up in the air, whatever. I mean: reducing local recycling, cutting the renewable energy tariff, forgetting to agree CO2 levels ... who's in charge here? Anyway, my enthusiasm was renewed (oops) by friends who have bought an eco-house in Dorset, built with all the right technology and lovely views to boot, for their retirement. I'd like to be able to retire with a zero carbon footprint, at least when it comes to my home and travel arrangements.

The house was a one-off, created by an engineer for himself. Maybe watching Grand Designs has affected me, but I'd like to build an eco-house one day. Somewhere with good views, local shops (and good medical facilities).

There are a few building companies aiming at the 'Passivhaus' energy saving standard: 90% energy reduction compared to 'standard' new houses. Perhaps I'll have a chat with some of them.

So, back to here and now: I'm starting to prepare for the EFO Summer Open and wondering if I can use 'found' materials in my work. I like the idea that the work could have renewable credentials. I've seen lovely work with driftwood; amazing African craft using plastic bags, drink cans, old nails; handbags made of old vinyl records; vintage clothes re-purposed. If anyone working likewise wants to show their work with me, let me know. Meanwhile, on with another jumper, back on the bike and roll on summer!

What a load of rubbish!

By Diana Cormack

The stormy weather which prevailed during the first week of the year happened at a time when the recycling bin collection was due. As well as being pretty full after Christmas, many of the blue plastic recycle containers provided for cardboard, plastic bottles and tins have long since lost the net covering necessary to prevent the contents from escaping.

Nor does it take much for the lids of the black boxes, which contain mostly newspapers and magazines, to be blown off. Taking all this into account along with the strength of the wind, the potential for much of the recyclable material to end up on the streets was enormous. And it did!

One local sadly surveying the scene in her side-road commented: "I don't think the bin-men dropped all of this and I don't think they should have to pick up what was already here. Surely there must be some sort of bin that would prevent this happening?"

On the continent some streets have one large wheelie bin for everyone to use and this idea has been considered by some of our local authorities. There are places in Britain where each house has a separate wheelie bin for recyclable products and where a greater variety of products to recycle are collected than in Barnet. Cost will probably mean that no change is possible, but are our recycle bins really fit for purpose? Let *THE ARCHER* know what you think. Our contact details are on page 2.

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