



Time to stop dropping these dirty face masks

By John Lawrence

East Finchley workers and residents are being urged to rid the area of yet another unwanted symptom of the Covid pandemic: the blight of hundreds of masks dropped carelessly on our pavements and in our parks.

Eden Ford has lived in Hertford Road, N2, for more than 20 years and daily walks his black German shepherd dog Seren from his home along Durham Road and Summerlee Avenue to Cherry Tree Wood, returning via the High Road.

Noticing so many discarded masks, Eden decided to photograph all those he saw along his route, being careful not to duplicate. The composite picture shows his results. Taken over one week, he photographed no less than 34 masks in only five roads and the park.

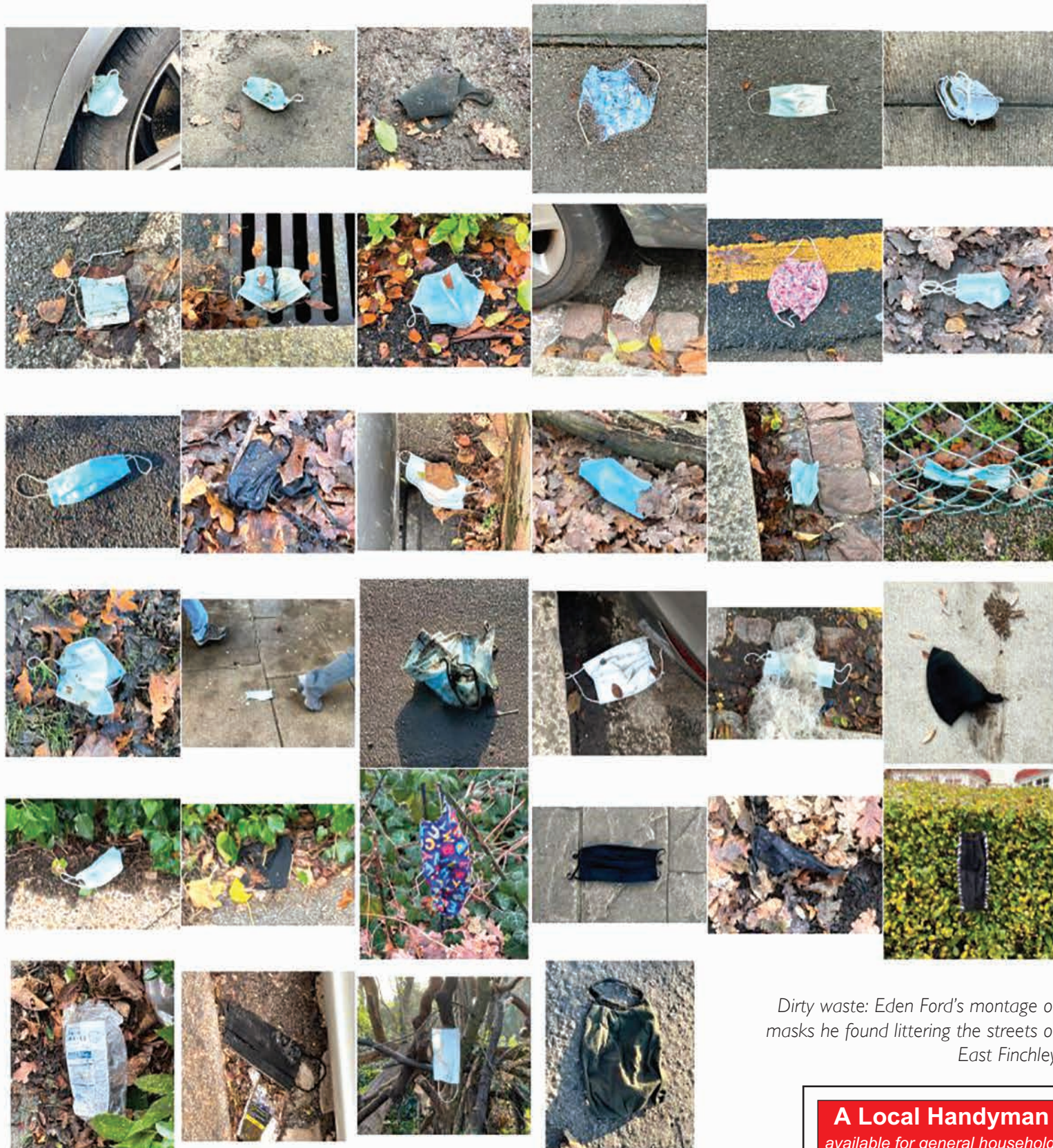
Eden said we had just started reaping the rewards of fewer plastic bags littering our roads thanks to the single-use carrier bag tax when they were replaced by something altogether more heinous.

Eden's message

"We now have what is basically medical waste, something even the boldest of good citizens would balk at the thought of picking up," he said. "Horribly disposable single-use blue masks and brightly coloured reusable masks are hanging from hedges and polluting pavements all about our village."

"The fact is that masks will be with us for some time and people may never want to give them up. Something we can all do is pay much more attention to what happens when our masks are not on our faces. Please dispose of them properly, not on the ground."

Eden has created a Facebook group called Stop Dropping Dirty Facemasks and an Instagram account with the name stopdroppingdirtyface-masks. He urged people to help raise awareness of the problem by posting examples of mask litter they see out on their daily walks.



Dirty waste: Eden Ford's montage of masks he found littering the streets of East Finchley

Clean air zone charges are coming

Households in East Finchley received a leaflet last month reminding them that the Mayor of London will be introducing charges for the worst-polluting vehicles across the capital anywhere inside the North Circular and South Circular roads from October.

The Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) will impose daily charges of £12.50 on cars, motorcycles, vans and minibuses every day of the year except Christmas Day, depending on their emissions.

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan says the expanded ULEZ will help to improve air quality for millions of Londoners, and that four out of five cars in the zone already comply with emission standards and will therefore not incur charges. But there are concerns that the

daily charges will heap extra costs onto the poorest families who cannot afford a new car and onto small businesses who may be running older vans.

To find out what you will pay, enter your vehicle registration at tfl.gov.uk/ulez-21.

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