

HORNSEY & CROUCH END JOURNAL Viewpoints

WRITE TO: The Editor, The Journal, 100A Avenue Road, London NW3 3HF. E-mail letters can be sent to journal.letters@archant.co.uk – but please supply a postal address as well. The Editor reserves the right to shorten or amend letters at his discretion.

What will they do for us now?

ROBERT GORRIE (Journal, August 19) claims that Lynne Featherstone and David Cameron will do more for the people of Haringey in five years than Labour have in the last 40. That's a pretty strong claim.

Featherstone and Cameron are committed to a massive programme of cuts to just about every public service that local people use.

In the last 13 years, by contrast, Labour delivered so many changes for the better in Haringey and across London – just a few that spring to mind:

- A National Minimum Wage lifting thousands out of poverty.

- Children's Centres in every part of Haringey.

- The New Deal getting thousands of people back into work.

- Finsbury Park and Markfield Park completely refurbished.

- Brand new health centres in St Ann's and central Hornsey.

I could go on for pages and pages. But what I'm interested to know is – exactly what is Robert Gorrie promising us by 2015? – Claire-Frances Lennon, Quermore Road, N4.

Silly insinuation

COUNCILLOR Richard Wilson and Justin Hinchcliffe cannot be allowed to get away with their silly insinuations (Journal, August 26) that the global economic crisis in the last few years is the fault of the last government.

It wasn't Gordon Brown and Alistair Darling who sold hundreds of thousands of mortgages to subprime US lenders, and they weren't in charge of every economy in the world. Indeed, you can make a strong case that it was Brown and Darling, by leading the way on the recapitalisation of the banks, who actually saved the global financial system and prevented the collapse of our economy, while Vince Cable vacillated and George Osborne made wrong calls every step of the way.

So let's have less of this pretence, from coalition politicians both national and local, that the economic difficulties our country faces are either unique, or locally-produced: they're neither.

Of course, we need to cut the deficit, but the decision of the coalition government to do that overwhelmingly by slashing services rather than raising taxes is a politically-motivated attack on the vulnerable, not an economic necessity.

It is a source of concern to me that the Liberals and Tories either don't seem to understand what has happened and what they are doing, or less charitably are consciously misrepresenting it to the electorate. – Tim Waters, Cunningsham Road, N15.

Supermarket opposition isn't 'scare stories'

I WAS surprised to read my friend the Reverend Trefor Jones's letter (Viewpoints, Journal, August 26) using emotive words like "scare stories".

But his first point is incorrect. The correspondence in the Journal has been from people who live in Hornsey. The reportage covered a wider range of locals.

From his comment on size, I do wonder if he has read the full council report noted in the Journal (July 22), especially when he talks about "... a reasonable size".

Does he consider "a supermarket of 3,239 sq m gross (35,000 sq ft) with a separate retail unit of 550 sq m (6,000 sq ft) with surface car parking of 116 cars (non residential use)" to be a reasonable size?

For comparison, the Waitrose Store in Crouch End is 6,230 sq feet and Thornton's Budgens is 9,000 sq feet.

The original Sainsbury's (before its extension) at Arena Shopping Park (Green Lanes) was, I recollect,



■ THE Hornsey Depot site off Hornsey High Street where the supermarket is planned

about 40,000 sq feet. But most importantly, a supermarket of this size will inevitably create more traffic from its customers and suppliers as well as from the residents of the 230 residential units planned for the site.

Air pollution on the High Street has been of concern for the last 15 years, primarily because of the proximity of the three schools to the High Street and the lie of the land – in a valley.

An increase of upwards of 300 extra journeys a day to and from the supermarket can only exacerbate the problem, never mind the expected

rise when the construction at the concrete factory is started, and its subsequent traffic additions of concrete tankers to our streets.

I would urge the Reverend Trefor to join us in opposing the size and scale of this proposal.

We all want the High Street to continue its regeneration, but on a personal scale.

Not only will this proposal fail to achieve that objective, but it will further endanger lives, particularly of our children and young people. – Chris Warburton, Hillfield Avenue, N8.

Parking problems ignored

WHEN the New River Estate was built, local residents were promised by the council that the increase in car ownership would not affect them as those buying homes on the private estate would have private parking.

Recently the residents of the council's Newland Estate [Miles Road, Moselle Close and part of Newland Road] were the happy recipients of an estate parking scheme.

It was requested due to knock-on parking from the New River Estate where car owners are reluctant to comply with the requirement

to purchase/rent parking spaces at £15,000.

As the parking scheme requires permits, and is on a road-by-road basis, and cars not registered to an owner in that road are being clamped and towed and fines issued, vehicles belonging to residents of New River are parking elsewhere in the area. But where?

I wonder who is responsible for parking their cars in Myddleton Road, Hornsey, and blocking the emergency vehicle access?

If I lived on any road served by

that emergency vehicle route I would be most concerned that my health safety, and that of my family, was being compromised by inconsiderate drivers.

This is a very recent occurrence as this area is normally free of cars.

Are the two issues related I wonder? I am astounded that our over zealous parking wardens have not discovered this potentially dangerous, and financially lucrative, situation. Why is the council ignoring this situation? – L. Ramm, Campsfield Road, N8.

Closure basis

YOU report the closure of the walk-in GP Centre at the new Hornsey Polyclinic, apparently for budgetary reasons. Views on the closure are understandably mixed.

One of the arguments against the Polyclinic was that people preferred to see their own GP. The argument of NHS managers was that with a considerable churn in population in places like Haringey many did not have such an attachment but were happy simply to see a GP on request. There a number of issues but one important one is precisely on what basis the PCT made the decision to shut the service and what might they shut next?

Ordinarily I would expect to read that local MP Lynne Featherstone was hot on the case, but your article carries no comment from her. I'm sure that a change of Government won't shift Lynne's desire to defend our NHS so no doubt there is more to be said about this matter. – Keith Flett, Mutchley Road, N17.



Blair's Legion gift not 'blood money'

I AM not surprised to read some of the cynical comments about Tony Blair's donation to hard-up veterans.

I believe Mr Blair's gift to the Royal British Legion is not a blood money.

It has nothing to do with his decision to go to war without the approval of United Nations, as it came to light that the supposed weapons of mass destruction that triggered his motive for invasion of Iraq did not exist.

Most British people will agree with me that it was an error of judgement by Tony Blair. More so, he should have pulled out troops as soon as Saddam Hussein was toppled. We will always remember the British soldiers and civilians who lost their lives in the war.

I must say that Chris Simpkins – Legion director general – did the right thing by his appreciation of Mr Blair's generosity. Chris received the donation with open arms bearing in mind the money will make a difference to the lives of hundreds of wounded soldiers who are struggling to make ends meet.

Lord Peter Mandelson and other Labour ex-cabinet ministers who supported Tony Blair's decision to take Britain to war should also donate proceeds of their respective autobiographies to British Legion for injured soldiers. – M. Allende, Blythwood Road, N4.

We should worry for NHS future

UNISON lodged a legal challenge to the implementation of proposals contained in the NHS white paper. The challenge includes a quotation by Karen Jennings, Unison head of health: "The Government's White Paper will change forever the NHS as we know it. These sweeping changes were not part of any party manifesto and it is outrageous that these changes are being brought in without consulting the public, patients, staff and unions."

"The NHS Constitution enshrined in law the right to consultation and yet, in writing to NHS managers, Sir David (Nicholson) is working on the premise that the consultation is only about the best way to

achieve pre-determined outcomes – this makes it nothing more than a paper exercise and a sham."

Does this indicate that Karen Jennings may be far more influential in defence of the NHS in her current role as Unison head of health than she could have been as elected back-bench MP for Hornsey & Wood Green? Lynne Featherstone MP has so far been unable to reverse threats to local health services that are driven by government budget cuts, in spite of her new post as Home Office minister with responsibility for equality.

The cancellation of the out of hours contract to Camidoc (the GP's consortium) in favour of a pri-

vate company is merely an early signal of what is to come, when severely reduced budgets are the norm, lowest bids get the contracts, commissioning is scattered locally and government abandons overall responsibility.

If you are worried – and you should be – obtain a copy of the white paper Equity & Excellence: Liberating the NHS from The Parliamentary Bookshop, 12 Bridge Street, Parliament Square, SW1 (020 7219 3890). Read it then make your objections. – Janet Shapiro, Celia Bower and Susan Secher, members of Better Local Healthcare Campaign, Connaught Gardens, N10.

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