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**Query 1: Street Cleansing on Downsfield Road**

Nick Thatcher (Downsfield Road) explained that the Council's website states that street cleansing is supposed to be done every week but Downsfield Road had not been cleaned in weeks. He asked for confirmation of when the road was last cleaned.

**Response from Paul Tickner – Contract Monitoring Officer, Greenspace Services**

I can confirm Downsfield Road was swept on Monday 14 December 2009 as I inspected the Road.

As this is a busy route due to the schools in the area, we feel a frequency of once a week is not enough and will therefore increase the frequency to twice a week (Monday – Friday) from the first week in January.

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**Query 2: Refuse Collection on Helena Road**

**Mike Cave** (Albert Road) complained that his rubbish is often not collected due to the location of his house and his entrance being on Helena Road.

**Response from Zahir Dehgamia – Contract Monitoring Officer, Greenspace Services**

I have had a look and there has been confusion regarding this property as it is 93 and 93a Albert Road, and not Helena Road even though the front of the property is facing Helena Road.

The refuse bin is kept in the front garden on Helena Road. However the confusion concerning the address led to a mix-up between the crews responsible for Helena and Albert Roads. As the Albert Road crew thought that the Helena Road crew would clear the refuse as the refuse bin was on Helena Road. The Helena Road crew leave the refuse bin thinking the Albert Road crew would clear the refuse bin owing to the address.

I have addressed the problem with the Operations Manager at Verdant and the refuse will now be collected by the Helena Road crew.

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**Query 3: Lack of Publicity for Walthamstow Village**

**Helen Lerner** (Walthamstow Village Residents Association) explained that Walthamstow Village had achieved a silver-gilt award in the 'London in Bloom' finals in September and won the Urban Communities category. She added that it was the first year it had entered 'London in Bloom'. She asked why, when they e-mailed Waltham Forest News (WFN) and informed Council departments, no publicity or any form of recognition had been given to their achievement.

**Response from Andrew Strickland – WFN (Waltham Forest News) Editor**

A story and a colour photograph, celebrating the achievement of the WVRA in the London In Bloom finals, appeared on P10 of the Aug 10 edition of Waltham Forest News. It is

therefore not true to say 'no publicity or any form of recognition had been given to their achievement.'

I hope this clarifies things for Helen Lerner and I look forward to receiving more WVRA news in the future.

The August 10 edition can be viewed on the council website.

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#### **Query 4: Lack of Enforcement regarding Disabled Parking Bays**

**Pauline Samuels** (Chestnut Avenue) asked why the Council will not help enforce disabled bays issued outside residents' homes if they are willing to mark out a parking space in the road. Ms Samuels explained that a resident in her road had written to everyone else in the road telling them to ignore the bay and park there if they so wished as the road marking represented a courtesy bay only and was not enforceable in law.

#### **Response from Steve Leftwich - Parking Section Manager, Public Realm**

The following are required to make the bay enforceable:

- A Traffic Management Order
- Current marking to be removed
- New bay laid that conforms to the Department for Transport directives
- Post and sign erected

The cost to do this would be around £5,000.

Members have recently reviewed the current policy of laying courtesy bays; the decision was that the policy would remain as it is. Please contact Social Services if you have further queries concerning disabled bays as disabled bays are their responsibility.

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#### **Query 5: New Oyster Rules and Freedom Pass on Overhead Trains**

**Stan Britton** (Wood Street Ward) asked for clarification on whether a Freedom Pass would still work at the overhead train stations following the new Oyster rules.

#### **Response from Neil Bullen – Transport Planning Manager**

According to the Freedom Pass website, it does indeed work on trains controlled by Oyster readers as well as tubes and buses so the answer would appear to be 'yes'.

However I know that detailed discussions about revenue have been taking place between the operator on the Chingford line and transport for London (TfL) so we may have to wait until the scheme goes 'live' (should be in the near future) for the precise arrangements to be known.

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#### **Query 6: Barclay Primary School Closure and Eid Celebrations**

**L B Pearson** (Greville Road) asked if Barclay Primary School was giving preferential treatment to one community over another. He explained that the Borough (Waltham Forest) did not close any schools on 27 November for Eid celebrations however Barclay

School postponed scheduled tests for Year 3 children for that day as they anticipated that the majority of Islamic children would not be attending school.

### **Response from Justin James – Headteacher, Barclay Primary School**

Barclay Primary School is a diverse and multicultural school that implements and follows a Equal Opportunity and Race Equality Policy. The school treats all children and families equitably and fairly irrespective of race, colour or religion.

During the week prior to the 27th November the school was informed that the second Eid (part of the Muslim Religious celebrations) based on the moon cycle was to take place on the 27th November 2009. Admissions and the Education Welfare Office informed all schools that all children were entitled to three religious observance days in a calendar year and although the borough had sanctioned one school closure in October, parents could still apply for this religious observance. The school sent a letter out advising all parents that school would still be open and that unless they filled out a religious holiday form if they were intending on celebrating Eid it would be deemed an unauthorised absence. This was to ensure that the school could make the necessary arrangements to open as usual as a number of Muslim staff had also requested the day off as per their entitlement. Based on the number of requests, Barclay which is a school of 1000 had over 65% of the school population out for Eid. In Year 3, out of 120 pupils only 36 attended on the 27th November. All children attending school were catered for as per normal and normal lessons continued.

The Year 3 classes usually have informal tables tests and spelling tests that are scheduled weekly but tend to fall on a Friday. These are flexible based on school activities, school trips, concerts, character days, harvest assemblies, Easter Bonnet Parade and Pancake day (Christian Celebrations) to name but a few. The Year Leader felt it prudent to change the test day to the next Monday also affording children more time on the tasks for the week. A letter was sent by the Year Leader to all parents informing them of the change of the test day. This was in no way targeted at favouring any individual, group or community.

As a school we pride ourselves on our multicultural community cohesion and encourage all parents and carers to contact the school directly if they have any issues or concerns relating to their children. As a school we take all concerns seriously and they are /will be dealt with immediately.

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### **Query 7: Double Yellow Lines and Blue Badge Holders**

**Peter King** (Edinburgh Road) asked whether or not a blue badge holder could park on double yellow lines, as a Parking Shop had told him that it was allowed.

### **Response from Steve Leftwich - Parking Section Manager, Public Realm**

A double yellow line is a waiting restriction. Vehicles can park on waiting restrictions for up to 3 hours whilst displaying a Disabled person's Blue Badge. That is, provided the badge is being correctly used and that the badge is supported by a correctly set blue clock. However if a Police Officer deems any vehicle to be parked dangerously or causing an obstruction they can take action against the vehicle. It is only a Police Officer who has these powers.