

Editorial

Power over education

IF there is one thing that is guaranteed to agitate parents, it is the concern that their children's schools are having to fix a problem that could be dealt with by government intervention.

Most of us believe that schools are about the educational, social and physical development of our children. So schools should not be about raising money to pay for its power bills. And no school should have to rationalise its educational resources to meet those bills.

Yet this is exactly what Leader Community Newspapers has found across parts of Melbourne.

A combination of increases in power charges and greater use of energy-sapping technologies have left some schools facing huge bills.

The power bill for a school in Mentone had almost trebled in less than eight months. Another school was facing increases of \$500 a month. And principals are having to dig into precious resources – and call for parental help – to cover the costs.

The State Government claims that it is working hard to reduce such costs but the reality is that this problem has been a slow-burning issue that many school communities have been dealing with for more than 12 months.

At a time when the Federal Government has spent millions on Building the Education Revolution it seems cockeyed to now have this drain on school funds. Parents have every right to wonder if the two tiers of government are actually talking to each other. This power bill problem cannot be allowed to continue. A swift solution is necessary with winter looming and school heating a critical issue.

Opinion

Respect our environment

Re: Penders Park mystery: Bin there, who done that?

ALL Nations Park is in great need of recycle bins also.

In general, I think the more we increase awareness of sustaining our lovely planet now, the better off our future.

The skate park at All Nations Park is always littered with bottles and the bin is often overflowing.

I think the majority of people have a natural inclination to "do the right thing and use the bin", but unfortunately, it's taking a backseat in people's priorities these days.

Little reminders, like that great campaign in the 90s and your article, can only help.

Celeste Jones, submitted online

Parklands need care

RE: Rubbish clogs creeks.

ZHIVANA Marks (Opinion, Leader, February 16) is right, the Darebin Parklands really copped a hammering in the floods a fortnight ago.

The restoration task is too big for the park's two hardworking, full-time rangers and that is why they are joining with the Darebin Parklands Association to run two special community clean-up days.

Zhivana and others who are concerned about the rubbish in the parklands is welcome at the second of these days, which will be held March 6.

For full details, check the Darebin Parklands Association's Facebook page or website at dpa.org.au.

The environment, and the rangers, will thank you for it.

Ingrid Svendsen,

Darebin Parklands Association president

Email northcote@leadernewspapers.com.au

Mail The Editor, Northcote Leader,
Level 3, 340 Bell St, Preston, 3072

SMS 0402 967 387 Fax (03) 9875 8344

WEB northcoteleader.com.au



The Preston Junction triangle could become a vibrant and exciting place, a reader says.

Green space needed in junction development

WITH the increase of population density in the Preston Junction area, has Darebin City Council considered the allocation of more recreational and open space?

I see nothing has been proposed.

The council welcomes increased revenue from rates and planning applications, but what portion of these funds is being invested back into the infrastructure to cater for the increase in population?

The junction triangle has great potential. The area contains some lots with double frontages to High St and Plenty Rd, so a civic or green space linking these major roads should be seriously considered.

The council should seek to buy an appropriate lot using a surplus of funds from the increase in revenue, and create the first open space in the area in a long time.

Franc de Petro, Preston

Character compromised

RESIDENTS of Alphington North have a great opportunity to save the character of this leafy, liveable precinct.

Many residents have tastefully modernised their free-standing homes only to have new neighbours build two-storey houses to their fence line and overshadow their homes and gardens.

If this recent trend is allowed to continue,

Alphington North will have no freestanding houses and only small, mostly concrete, gardens. The small gardens will drive children indoors. Looking at natural vegetation has been shown to reduce Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in children.

If you like Alphington the way it is, you need to tell Darebin Council to make the interim Heritage Overlay permanent.

Rudi Anders, Alphington North