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Eruvs are unpopular

IT IS just as well that Mr Edward Black is not contemplating a "celebratory bash" for his 86 eruv poles scattered all over Barnet (Jewish boundary is almost ready to use, H&H Dec 6).

Quite a lot of uninvited and angry guests might turn up, quite apart from secular Jews (like myself) and the extremely Orthodox Jews, who both strongly object to the Eruv, albeit for different reasons.

Others who object include those who have to suffer unwanted eruv poles very near their houses, and a lot more who are furious that to appease the religious peculiarities of "the estimated 2,000 families" (my guess is that the real number is much smaller) hundreds of thousands of pounds of council taxpayers' money have been spent since 1989 in planning inquiries, meetings, inspections, correspondence and much else.

Some might even turn up to protest that Kenwood trees have been cut to accommodate eruv wires despite these trees being in a conservation area and the Secretary of State laying down that they were not to be damaged.

At a time when grants to charities are being cut and useful schemes being put on hold, this squandering of public money in a bizarre cause is truly outrageous.

We don't of course know precisely how much, because Barnet is too coy to reveal the relevant accounts.

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