

barnet first

BARNET
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All female crew gives Barnet a clean sweep

New mobile CCTV unit on the road – page 3
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A message from
**Councillor
 Victor Lyon,**
 Leader of Barnet Council

In this issue of Barnet First our long running efforts to secure vital extra funding for Barnet's schools continues. An independent financial expert was invited to inspect the council's budget decisions and it has been confirmed that Barnet passed on all of the funding it reasonably could to the borough's schools this year. It is now clear that the government miscalculated the amount of money needed to run Barnet's schools. Our efforts will continue in order to ensure that we are not left in the same financial crisis next year.

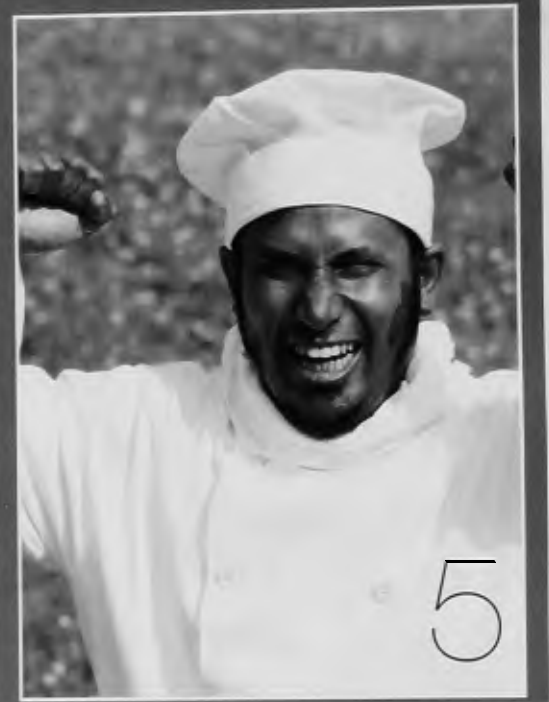
Despite the challenges faced by our schools, the quality of education provided continues to shine through. For example Henrietta Barnett School has been named school of the year by The Sunday Times newspaper in a national competition. I would like to extend my congratulations to all involved.

On another positive note the council and the police have launched their mobile crime-busting CCTV unit. The vehicle will patrol across the borough, helping to tackle street crime and helping the police to bring those responsible for it to justice.

Also in this issue you can read about the first stage of the council's multi-million pound plans for the regeneration of the Brent Cross and Cricklewood area. This marks the beginning of an ambitious project, which will provide thousands of employment and housing opportunities for Barnet residents.

first things first

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Crime-busting mobile CCTV goes into action



Cabinet Member for Environment Councillor Brian Coleman and Superintendent Dave Bilson at the launch of the mobile CCTV unit

Barnet's latest weapon in the fight against crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour has gone into action.

A mobile CCTV vehicle packed with state-of-the-art surveillance technology is now patrolling the borough's crime hotspots.

A joint initiative between Barnet Council and Barnet Police, it was launched last month by Cabinet Member for

Environment Cllr Brian Coleman and Superintendent Dave Bilson in High Street, Barnet.

The vehicle has the very latest CCTV cameras to gather evidence, helping the police and council target offenders and secure convictions. Cameras can pan, tilt and zoom to closely track and identify offenders with the very highest quality images.

Increased numbers of fixed CCTV cameras have been put in

place in Barnet's town centres as part of the council's commitment to tackle crime and the fear of crime. Seven more town centres will benefit from CCTV cover over the next three years. Barnet Council also unveiled its brand new CCTV control centre in February.

Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Brian Coleman said: "This new mobile unit will be an important tool in driving out criminal behaviour from Barnet. It will be deployed right across the borough to target street crime hotspots. The introduction of the CCTV van sends a clear message that there is nowhere safe in this borough for the vandals and graffiti sprayers that make everyone's life a misery."

Superintendent Dave Bilson said: "This new piece of equipment will most certainly assist in the fight against crime. We will be able to target specific areas that the public have highlighted to us to improve the quality of life in the community. Its visible presence on the streets of Barnet should also be a reassuring sight and help to reduce the fear of crime."

Grahame Park votes "yes" for a new future

A huge majority of households from the Grahame Park Estate in Colindale have voted in favour of proposals to regenerate and transform their estate.

The regeneration project is now set to deliver better housing, a range of new community facilities and improved employment opportunities to the area.

1,177 households turned out during the month long voting

period in which they were able to vote and offer comments on the regeneration plans.

The turnout for voting, 68 per cent, was considerably higher than the local election average for the area – just 20.69 per cent. 79 per cent of those who voted backed the regeneration scheme.

Anne Dufton, chief executive of Choices for Grahame Park, the organisation which will implement the regeneration

project, was delighted with the outcome. She said: "This is a resounding yes for the regeneration. It is very encouraging to see such a large number of residents playing a part in deciding the future of the estate."

The £400 million regeneration scheme will consist of the building of over 2,900 one, two, three and four bedroom homes. This will be phased over a twelve-year period.

News in brief

Farrier takes Burnt Oak seat

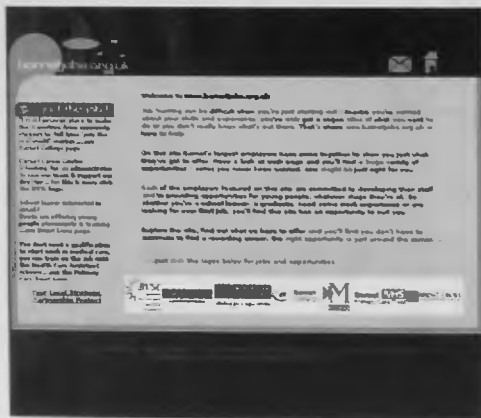
Claire Farrier has been elected to represent the Burnt Oak ward in a Barnet Council by-election held on June 19th.

The Labour candidate attracted 1,774 votes. The by-election was prompted by the resignation of Councillor Alan Williams, who had represented the ward since 1986.

Fancy a new job?

The Barnet Local Strategic Partnership, which brings together the council and key organisations within the borough, has established a new website to help young people get a job.

The site publicises a range of vacancies within Barnet, and so if you're a school leaver, a graduate, need some work experience or are looking for your first job, you'll find this site has an opportunity to suit you.



Regular updates helping you find jobs in Barnet

Want to know more?

Find out more at www.barnetjobs.org.uk



Pupils shout about Noise Action Day

Pupils at Edgware Infant and Nursery School got a rare opportunity to shout in class with their teachers' blessing.

The youngsters were testing their lungs in a special noise booth to help them learn about the upset caused to other people by unwanted noise.

Barnet Council's Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Health, Cllr Brian Salinger, and

Councillor Brian Salinger gets an earful about Noise Action Day from pupils at Edgware Infant and Nursery School

environmental health officers visited the school in High Street, Edgware to drive home the message about noise nuisance as part of Noise Action Day.

Want to know more?

Barnet Council operates a 24-hour seven days a week mobile call-out service to combat loud noise. Call 020 8359 2000 to report a problem.

Hendon Library closure

Hendon Library closes from July 21st for several months when work begins on a £1.4 million refurbishment of it.

At the end of the modernisation residents will have a flagship library with first class services and dramatically improved facilities.

More computers, lifts to every floor and improved

disabled access are just some of the features of this massive revamp.

For alternative arrangements for borrowing books while the library is closed, pick up a leaflet from any Barnet library or council Action Point. You can also ring the library service on 020 8359 3166.

Look out for updates on the refurbishment work at the borough's other libraries.

News in brief

The Masum takes away curry chef title

Sheikh Abdur Rakib from the Masum take-away in Lytton Road, New Barnet has won the coveted title of Barnet's Curry Chef of the Year for 2003.

The chef's lobster kohinoor with bhajee and pilau rice won the day and he took the title, a medal, a certificate and vouchers to spend on kitchen equipment.

It was a close call, but the judges, which included Barnet's Deputy Mayor Councillor Wendy Prentice, finally declared Sheikh Abdur Rakib the winner out of five challengers.

The annual competition is

organised by Barnet Council, Barnet Primary Care Trust and Barnet College.



Masum chef Sheikh Abdur Rakib celebrates taking away the award

Queen honours Barnet homeless action team

Homeless Action in Barnet (HAB) has received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Award in recognition of its work with homeless people and asylum seekers in the borough.

The award was given to volunteer groups that showed outstanding achievement improving the quality of life and opportunities of others.

For the past six years, HAB has run a day centre in East Finchley in close partnership with Barnet Council and Barnet Primary Care Trust.

It provides around 70 meals a day, showers, laundry and clothing for rough sleepers, those in temporary or insecure accommodation and asylum seekers.

School governor one-stop shop

Do you have management experience and are you interested in volunteering as a school governor? If so, then the School Governors' One-Stop Shop would like to hear from you.

Successful schools need effective governing bodies with a range of transferable skills from the world of work and governors can play a vital role in helping to improve educational standards.

School governors form the largest volunteer workforce in the UK with 350,000 governor places nationally.

The School Governor's One-Stop Shop is a small company with charitable status that works with LEAs to recruit people to fill governor vacancies in schools.

Want to know more?

To contact the School Governors' One-Stop Shop, call 0870 241 3883 or e-mail: info@schoolgovernors-oss.co.uk

More help for the over 60s

Pension Credit is a new entitlement for people aged 60 and over and will be introduced in October 2003.

When it is introduced, Pension Credit will provide extra help for nearly half of all people aged 60 and over. You may be one of them.

Want to know more?

To find out more about Pension Credit visit www.thepensionservice.gov.uk

☎ 0845 6060265

Interpreting the future

A new state-of-the-art videophone service has just been launched that will allow deaf and hard of hearing residents to communicate with Barnet Council.

Backed by the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID), users will be able to contact a British Sign Language interpreter to get more advice about council services.

The videophone service is based at the Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4.

Those wishing to use it are asked to book a time by calling 18001 020 8359 2040 (BT TextDirect) or e-mail info.centre@barnet.gov.uk. Slots are available either on Tuesdays 10am-12pm and Wednesdays 2pm-4pm.

Have your say on library plans

Residents are to have their say on proposals for the future of the library service in East Finchley.

From 8th September until the end of November the council will carry out a consultation exercise giving local people the opportunity to comment on the plans. The options include building a new modern library facility in East Finchley or refurbishing the existing 1938 library building.

A questionnaire will be sent to each household in the area giving residents the chance to express their views on the proposals. In addition there will be exhibitions at the existing East Finchley Library and the Phoenix Cinema where you can look over the plans.

The exhibition at East Finchley Library will run for six weeks from 8th September during library opening hours. From 20th October until 28th November the exhibition moves to The Phoenix Cinema at 52 High Road, East Finchley. Here the display will be open for public viewing from 4pm to 9pm each day. The Phoenix Cinema is being used for display only and has no view on the library proposals.

Want to know more?

020 8359 7776

Karen, Tracey, Okeda and Anetta get ready for action



All female clean sweep

Barnet Council's first ever all female street cleaning crew has started work, sweeping pavements and roads across the borough.

Karen Walpole, Tracey Fayers, Anetta Kelson and Okeda Ademikanra have all joined Barnet within the last six months, after a recruitment campaign designed to attract more women to the role.

Street Cleaning Services Manager Dave Ward explains: "It's very unusual to have an all female

crew, in fact we believe we are the only council that has one. We have had problems recruiting women in the past, but by introducing more flexible shifts, we've made the job more appealing, especially to those with childcare responsibilities."

And the verdict on the streets? Says crew member Tracey Fayers: "The reaction from fellow workers has been brilliant - they're a great bunch. And the public loves it too, people even bring us tea and biscuits while we're working!"

Shooting star is Mayor's choice



An artist's impression of the new hospice

The Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Melvin Cohen, has announced that the chosen charity for his term in office will be the Shooting Star Foundation.

The charity provides support and care for children with terminal illness and their families, and has already established twenty-five hospices across the UK. Building

work is currently underway to establish another in Hampton, Middlesex, which is due to open in spring 2004.

The Mayor's Charity Appeal will now work to raise much needed funds for the Trust which needs £6.5 million to build and equip a hospice and a further £2 million each year to keep it running. There will be various events taking place throughout the year that residents can take part in and opportunities for people wanting to help out.

Want to know more?

For more information contact Lorna Minney on 020 8359 2010 or see www.barnet.gov.uk/mayor

Looking cool in shades

What have David Beckham and the Mayor of Barnet got in common?

Well they both showed their support for Guide Dogs for the Blind by wearing their shades for a day in July.

Both David Beckham and Councillor Cohen looked seriously cool during the 'Shades For A Day' campaign, but there was a serious underlying message behind the day. The charity hoped that it would raise awareness of buying the correct type of sunglasses and taking regular eye tests.



David Beckham wears his shades for charity

Want to know more?

For more details of the day see their website www.guidedogs.org.uk

Council commendation for Broadsword

Members of the Training Ship Broadsword Sea Training Corps in Hendon have received a special commendation from Barnet Council in recognition of their long association with the borough.

Since 1942, Broadsword has provided a range of activities for young people based on naval routines and traditions, which has helped them to develop skills such as self-discipline, leadership and service within the community.

Members of the corps attended a special 'adoption' ceremony at Hendon Town Hall which was led by the Mayor of Barnet Councillor Melvin Cohen, and the Deputy Lieutenant of the borough Patrick O'Brien.



The Mayor inspects cadets from HMS Broadsword

Minister opens new look school

Schools Minister Stephen Twigg officially opened a new modern teaching building and facilities at Queenswell Infant School and Nursery in June.

The 270 pupils at the Whetstone school are benefiting from a £3 million project to replace the original timber-clad building which dated back to the 1930s.

Self-contained classrooms have replaced open plan ones and a dedicated centre for teaching the youngest pupils has been provided.

A modern, combined library and computer suite is yet another facet of the transformation.

Funding for the project was gained after the council successfully bid for a New Deal for Schools grant.

Around £1.5 million of council funds are paying for the



Schools Minister Stephen Twigg enjoys a joke with a pupil during the official opening of new facilities at Queenswell Infant School and Nursery

refurbishment of adjacent Queenswell Junior School. Work to replace four temporary classrooms

with new purpose-built teaching areas should be complete by August.

Oakleigh school gets bigger and better

Children and staff at Oakleigh School in Whetstone celebrated the official opening of a new extension which will make learning safer and more fun.

The facility includes a £10,000 sensory room, two purpose-built classrooms with en-suite specialised toilets, lifting facilities and shower beds for the 52 pupils at the school, who have severe and complex learning difficulties.

Around £415,000 was spent on the project, which has been

funded by Barnet Council, charitable trusts and government money.

Extra space available in the extension is a massive benefit to the school. Corridors in the building previously used by pupils were so narrow in parts that children in wheelchairs could only pass each other at certain points.

Within the sensory room, children can activate a plethora of sounds, lights and colours. The equipment fascinates and calms



Councillor Lynne Hillan, Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Lifelong Learning meets pupils at Oakleigh School

them but also teaches pupils how to use switches. This can be vital for a child who cannot communicate through speech as a lot of specialised IT communication equipment for them requires this interaction.

Transport commissioner witnesses road problem

Ken Livingstone's Transport Commissioner Bob Kiley has visited Barnet to see for himself the problems caused by gridlocked road conditions on the North Circular Road at Henlys Corner and Brent Street.

Mr Kiley met with Barnet Council's Chief Executive Leo Boland, Director for Environment Graham Beattie and officers from the highways and transportation service to discuss congestion, rat running and pollution stemming from the road's inadequate capacity.

Barnet are pressing for the go-ahead for the previously agreed major improvement schemes at the two signal junctions which would dramatically ease the frustration currently experienced by residents and road users alike.

The tour included a stop on East End Road where the North Circular Road passes underneath in a short tunnel. The tunnel has now eliminated congestion since it was put in place. Prior to the completion of the east of Falloden Way to High Road improvement, East End Road met the North Circular Road at a roundabout next to the former Manor Cottage pub and the whole area became a bottleneck.

The group then experienced the peace and tranquillity of the Marie Curie garden which now exists on top of the tunnel, where the group had time to discuss North Circular improvement schemes.

Graham Beattie, Director of Environment said: "It was fascinating to see how the road

improvement scheme at East End Road had actually created a new green space for the community to use. The proposed improvements at Golders Green Road, which we continue to press for, would include an equally attractive and

Cllr Brian Coleman, Cabinet Member for the Environment, said: "I am pleased that the Commissioner was able to come to Barnet to see for himself just how bad the North Circular Road is here.



valuable green link between Brent Park and Golders Green Road."

He added, "While cutting congestion to facilitate regeneration is our priority, we are also keen to have the environmental improvements that the remaining schemes would deliver."

"Transport for London's watered down proposal may look okay when they sit in their office in Victoria, but as we have been telling them consistently, there is a major congestion problem here which only the original improvement schemes can resolve."

You can contact the council in a number of ways:

For general enquiries, or if you know the name of the person or section you want to speak to, call 0208359 2000.

Visit the council's website at www.barnet.gov.uk for information on all services including contact details and telephone numbers. For more detailed enquiries on council services call into one of our Action Points. The council has four Action Points at: The Town Hall, Hendon, Chipping Barnet Library, Edgware Library and Golders Green Library.

Action Points can also be contacted by:

Telephone: 0208359 4000

Fax: 0208359 2197; Minicom: 0208203 8942

Email: info.centre@barnet.gov.uk

Con=Conservative, Lab=Labour, LibDem= Liberal Democrat

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MEMBER FOR BARNET AND CAMDEN
COUNCILLOR BRIAN COLEMAN
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Government funding shortfall confirmed

The council's headline grabbing efforts to highlight the funding crisis in Barnet schools has played a key role in a government admission that it had got its sums wrong.

Our battle to secure more funding for Barnet's cash-strapped schools did not stop with the delivery by headteachers and Cllr Lynne Hillan, Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Lifelong Learning, of a petition to Number 10 Downing Street.

An independent report by financial expert Rita Hale which proved in May that Barnet Council had passed on all the money it reasonably could to the borough's schools was dynamite, attracting

widespread press, television and radio attention.

This contradicted Education Secretary Charles Clarke's claim that Barnet could have passed on a further £2.8 million to schools. A fuse was lit towards the explosive admission in May by Schools Minister Stephen Twigg that the government had underestimated the funding needed.

Barnet received the lowest possible funding increase for education from the government.

Despite the council's £14.5

million increase in its spending on the borough's schools, headteachers have seen increases in their budgets swallowed up by rises in staffing costs such as national insurance, teacher pay and teacher pensions which the government did not calculate for.

The borough's schools are using around £7.5 million of their reserves just to cover day-to-day running costs.

Negotiations with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) are on-going as the council continues to work to alleviate the difficulties faced by local headteachers struggling to cope with large shortfalls in their budgets.

Cllr Lynne Hillan said: "We are sympathetic to the plight that many of the borough's headteachers find themselves in through no fault of their own. The fight goes on to secure them a better deal and as a council we remain hopeful a solution can be found with the government to sort out this mess."



Barnet fights back. Financial consultant Rita Hale (left) with Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Lifelong Learning Cllr Lynne Hillan presenting their dossier of evidence to stakeholders and the press

Want to know more?

To see a copy of Rita Hale's independent report visit the website at www.barnet.gov.uk/halereport.pdf

Focus on the Corporate Plan Providing a First Class Education Service

In the last edition of Barnet First we looked at the recently published Corporate Plan, the council's blueprint for improving its service performance over the next five years.

The plan sets out in detail what the council needs to do to improve services for local people. The plan is structured around five key priorities:

- ▶ A first class education service
- ▶ Tackling crime
- ▶ Supporting the vulnerable
- ▶ A cleaner, greener Barnet
- ▶ Repairing roads and pavements.

In the next five editions of Barnet First we will look at each key priority in detail, starting with providing a first class education service.

Having first class educational opportunities for every resident in the borough, whatever their age or ability, is one of the main priorities of the plan which sets down all of Barnet's high-level strategic objectives from 2003 to 2007.

Better equipped schools and libraries, new and refurbished schools and more parental choice about their children's schooling are among the things we aim to achieve.

All people in Barnet should be able to benefit from learning throughout their lives. Learning needs to be accessible and affordable to all residents, whatever their circumstances. The plan sets out a co-ordinated approach,



appropriate to the needs of the community in the 21st Century, to make this happen.

In order to increase parental choice in the borough we are working to extend places for girls, including pursuing our commitment to provide a single sex girls school with the School Organisation Committee as part

of a review of secondary provision. On top of this, new and refurbished schools are being provided in Barnet through successful bids for government grants and other money.

To help people balance the difficult demands of work and being a parent, the council aims to increase childcare places by almost 2,000 and will set up four new childminding networks by April 2004.

Despite Barnet's excellent schools, there are still some areas of under achievement and a target for April 2004 of having almost two-thirds (62 per cent) of children leave school with five or more A-C grade GCSEs is being worked towards.

We cannot afford for young people to give up on learning. Study support programmes will be offered to young people, especially to those at risk of exclusion.

Libraries play a crucial educational and leisure role for the whole community and are being modernised throughout Barnet. These will benefit from having full use of a national Internet service and the latest computer equipment.

Having a vibrant learning community is vital to Barnet's continued prosperity and the council aims to ensure access to the widest range of educational opportunities possible.

Want to know more?

To get hold of a copy of the council's Corporate Plan telephone 020 8359 7022 or email claire.johnston@barnet.gov.uk

Ravenscroft's triumphant year

Ravenscroft School in Barnet has capped a triumphant year with a successful bid for Technology College Status which will bring major improvements to the school.

Resting in 29 acres of green belt land in Totteridge, the school has also just received a School Achievement Award from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for its substantially improved results between 1999 and 2002 and achieving better results than other similar schools.

The Technology College Status approved by government means an extra £1 million in funding over ten years for the school.

This money will allow the school to invest in a new IT suite, new science laboratories, hi-tech teaching equipment, as well as

specialist electronics and engineering equipment.

From September, Ravenscroft will lead a cluster of secondary and primary schools, sharing their expertise and good practice in the delivery of Design and Technology, Maths, Science and Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

The school has a good record of examination success at A level, Post 16 GNVQ, GCSE and SATs. It achieved record GCSE results last year, showing value added significantly above the national average, which resulted in the School Achievement Award from the DfES. Headteacher, Mary Karaolis, said "Our school's recent successes are a just reward for the dedication and hard work of staff and pupils at the school."

Jeremy Law, deputy headteacher, said: "The award of Technology College Status has capped what has been a very successful year and entails major benefits to the school.

"We seek to provide high quality education in a safe, caring and disciplined environment so that pupils are equipped to become responsible citizens in a scientific, technological and international community. Our new status will help us to extend learning opportunities for all our students and our wider community".



Ravenscroft School pupils at work. Technology College Status will mean new state-of-the-art facilities for the school

Henrietta Barnett School of the Year

Henrietta Barnett School in Hampstead Garden Suburb has been named 'School of the Year' by The Sunday Times.

An article in the newspaper said results like that of the school had never been seen before in the state sector.

In 2000, the school held 22nd place in The Sunday Times table of schools. In 2001, it moved to 7th and in 2002 it went to 1st. Last year, 94.1 per cent of all A-level papers sat got A or B grades, results bettered by just three independent schools in the country.

The Reading Maze

Young bookworms using Barnet's libraries throughout the summer will have the chance to win a face-to-face meeting with an author or storyteller later in the year.

This summer's children's reading challenge is called the Reading Maze and is aimed at children between the ages of 4

and 12 years old.

Children are invited to collect a series of stickers to add to a collector folder as they read and borrow books from their local library.

Each child that reads at least six books will receive a certificate and will be entered into a prize draw, with the chance to attend a session with an author or storyteller in September or October.

The Library Service hopes to get around 1,500 of the borough's children to take up the challenge.

The challenge starts on July 19th. For more information, just pop into any Barnet library.

Extended green recycling



Totteridge resident Lynne Sales with the green waste collection team

Barnet Council is rolling out its popular green waste collection service into more areas as part of its drive to increase the level of recycling in the borough.

Nearly five thousand households have already signed up to use the free scheme after it was piloted last September.

Parts of Totteridge, Mill Hill, High Barnet, Monken Hadley, Lyonsdown and East Barnet are the latest areas to benefit from the service which supplies a free garden waste bin for items such as grass clippings, hedge and tree cuttings, dead flowers and weeds, all of which will be composted and reused.

Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Brian Coleman and Leader of the Council Cllr Victor Lyon attended a special event in Totteridge in July to mark the expansion of the popular scheme.

Cllr Coleman said: "The trial scheme was a real success and now we want to give even more people the opportunity to recycle their garden waste. We're determined to tackle the problem of the growing rubbish-mountain and this and our other recycling services underline our commitment to do just that."

The garden waste collection service complements the weekly kerbside multi-material recycling scheme available to every household, the wheeled bin recycling service for the borough's 13,000 flats and the Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre in Summers Lane, North Finchley.

Want to know more?

Call the Recycling Hotline on

020 8359 7400

Meet the Green Team

From next month, finding out about recycling in Barnet will be made easier than ever - with the introduction of a new 'green team'.

Called Recycling Assistants, their job will be to let you know how you can recycle more than you think and provide details on all the services which make doing this simple.

Homes in Barnet already recycle 13 per cent of their rubbish but if we all used the doorstep and flats recycling service more, this figure could reach 40 per cent. And as a result, less rubbish would end up either being burnt or dumped in the ground.

As well as touring libraries, staffing Action Points and being on hand at community events, the green team will also be going from door-to-door to make sure you have all the information you need.

Quick Quiz

Every hour, UK homes produce enough rubbish to fill?

- A: The Albert Hall
- B: Spires Shopping Centre
- C: Hendon Town Hall
- D: Hendon RAF Museum

Answer: A

Want to know more?

If you would like more details about recycling in Barnet call 020 8359 7400 or e-mail: nicola.buck@barnet.gov.uk



Grahame Park walkabout

Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Health Councillor Brian Salinger joined residents, ward councillors and members of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a tour of the Grahame Park estate. The tour showed how the regeneration will not only provide better housing but combat vandalism and anti-social behaviour, as well as providing safe play areas for children.

Barnet gives more B&B families proper homes

More and more children in Barnet are being given the start in life they deserve because of the success of innovative schemes that are reducing the number of homeless families living in bed and breakfast hotels. In 2002, there were 90 families housed in this type of accommodation. By the end of May 2003, just four families were waiting to be placed in proper housing by the council.

Housing staff at Barnet Council have almost achieved the government's goal of stopping the use of B&B hotels by homeless families with children.

There is now better quality, better value temporary accommodation in the borough. One example is the conversion of a former office block in Ballards Lane into temporary homes for 43 families and 23 single people. Housing associations working in partnership with the council now offer nearly 1,000 decent temporary homes.

A family mediation service has been set up to stop people becoming homeless in the first place and procedures for making decisions in homelessness cases have also been speeded up.

New steps to protect vulnerable children

The tragic death of Victoria Climbié and Lord Laming's Inquiry report horrified the nation and raised fundamental questions about child protection practice nationally.

How could a young child die at the hands of her great aunt and her partner with no one intervening decisively to save her life? The council is determined to ensure that a tragedy like that of Victoria Climbié in February 2000 could never occur in Barnet.

Barnet Council has reaffirmed its commitment to children's

safety by investing in the staff, accommodation and technology that will improve the way child protection cases are managed.

Sophisticated new software called SWIFT replaces a more basic case recording system as part of a £2.5 million investment in IT across a range of council services. Children's services are being relocated to Barnet House, which is to receive a £1.4m makeover, and £600,000 is backing a comprehensive recruitment and retention strategy.

A recent audit by the council found substantial improvements have been made to children's services since a 2001 inspection. Rating elements of the service on scale of one to four (four for highest achievement), Barnet is rated four in 31 of the 53 criteria and is grade three in 31 others.

"We are determined to ensure that the risk of harm faced by children in Barnet is reduced to a minimum," said Cllr Lynne Hillan, Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Lifelong Learning.

"The new measures we have invested in will help us to make sure our highly skilled and dedicated child protection staff have the very best tools available when they are helping children at risk of abuse or neglect."

Raising the roof at artsdepot

It was certainly a cause for celebration when the last brick was prepared for the artsdepot building in North Finchley.

At a special 'topping out' ceremony to commemorate the occasion which was attended by the Mayor of Barnet Councillor Melvin Cohen and Cabinet

Member for Community Development and Youth, Councillor Peter Davis, actress Miranda Richardson skimmed the

final brick with cement to be placed in the roof of the building.

In keeping with the tradition of planting a yew tree at the highest point of the building for

luck, a giant yew branch was swung around the theatre space on a crane to bring luck to future productions.

The artsdepot building is due to open in spring 2004, and will provide a vibrant centre for art and theatre productions, as well as becoming new home to The

Bull Arts Centre, Community Focus Disability Arts and Barnet College arts. Situated at Tally Ho

Corner, it is part of an ambitious £38 million town centre re-development which will create shops, a health and leisure centre, restaurants and new homes in the North Finchley area.

Miranda Richardson skimmed the final brick with cement to be placed in the roof of the building.



Miranda Richardson prepares the final brick for the artsdepot

Residents have their say on Cricklewood regeneration



A new look for Cricklewood

Barnet residents have been given the opportunity to have their say on exciting new development proposals for the first stage of the Brent Cross and Cricklewood Redevelopment Project.

An exhibition showing potential ideas for the former Cricklewood railway land has attracted much attention from the general public when it visited Brent Cross Shopping Centre and Hendon Town Hall in July.

Residents were asked for their opinion on plans for the area, which included proposals for new housing and retail units, and improved transport links.

The exhibition is the first stage of a vast consultation programme that will take in the needs and ideas of residents within and around the redevelopment site. A team of council appointed designers, called EDAAW, are working to prepare a comprehensive plan for the area which will bring thousands of new business, housing and employment opportunities to Barnet within the next ten years.



Twins Alexia and Aurora Barrett, aged four, having fun at the festival

West Hendon regeneration gathers pace with a samba beat



'Antigua Joe' entertains West Hendon residents

Residents from West Hendon danced to a Samba beat when a regeneration community festival in July heralded the next exciting phase of a £340 million scheme to transform their estate.

A Samba procession, with music, dancing and colourful costumes brought a carnival atmosphere to the area.

Entertainment in York Park included local bands, a magician, and theatre workshops. Sporting activities ranged from a 'Beat the Goalie' competition and 'Brazilian' football skills to basketball coaching.

In the 'Discovery Zone', people were able to learn the art of Samba and Chinese ribbon dancing in workshops.

West Hendon's residents have been well and truly won over by the regeneration proposals so far and have played a crucial role in their development. In last December's ballot, 75 per cent voted in favour of the project on a 63 per cent turnout.

The council and its development partners Metropolitan West Hendon are keen that even more people get involved in shaping the fine details of the scheme before a planning application is submitted in November.

The regeneration scheme will see low-rise housing, medium-rise blocks and one tower demolished and replaced with seven new tall buildings, a range of medium rise new homes and new houses with gardens. Improvements planned for community facilities include a town square with shops and a health centre and fitness club.

Cllr Brian Salinger, Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Health, said: "These are exciting times for the residents of West Hendon and this was a great day out for everyone. This is their regeneration project and we want as many people involved as possible.

"We've been overwhelmed by the level of support for this scheme which will bring lasting improvements to the whole area. There are still opportunities for people to play a part in shaping the future of West Hendon as we enter the final phase of developing this ambitious project."

what's on

Planning a local event? Want free publicity? **Barnet first** can help you.

Send us details and we'll publicise it on this page (space permitting) and we'll also put it on barnet's website (www.barnet.gov.uk).

So if you are holding an event at your local pub, youth club, sports centre or wherever send details (including a contact number) to Susan Segar, Barnet

First Magazine, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4 4BG, fax: 020 8359 2677 or email:

susan.segar@barnet.gov.uk

Barnet first is delivered to over 130,000 homes and businesses in the borough. The next issue is out in October.



Memories of Hendon Aerodrome

Until 14 September, 'Memories of Hendon Aerodrome' exhibition tells, through photographs, posters and memorabilia, the story of early aviation at Hendon - from Claude Grahame-White's Flying School to the elaborate aerial displays which made Hendon an important part of the pre-WWI fashionable social scene. **Church Farmhouse Museum, Greyhound Hill, Hendon, NW4. Open Mon-Thurs 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm; Sat 10am-1pm and 2-5.30pm; Sun 2-5.30pm. Closed Fri. Free admission.**

August is full of activities for kids of all ages! Including Pulsar Battlezone game where you can blast your way to freedom, quizzes, face painting, falconry displays, mini fun fairs, garden games (giant size indoor board games so you can be part of the fun). **30-31 Aug. Summer Festival Weekend** with arena displays, flypasts, parachute drops, dog display team, spaceball ride, military displays, line dancing and more. **RAF Museum, Grahame Park Way, Hendon, NW9.** For more details phone 020 8358 4849 or see website www.rafmuseum.org **Free admission and parking.**

Coaching in basketball, football and multisports during the summer holiday time at the Barnet Burnt Oak Leisure Centre. For **information phone 020 8359 7812.**

'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to The Forum', 13-16 August, 8pm (matinee 16th, 3pm). Farcical

fun. Tower Theatre Company present the Stephen Sondheim musical at the open air **Little Wood Theatre, off Falloden Way (A1), NW11. £8, £5 conc., matinee all seats £5. Box Office 020 7226 3633.**

Friern Barnet Summer Show, 16 and 17 August (Fun fair opens 14 Aug). **Friary Park, Friern Barnet Lane, N12.** Flower, fruit and vegetable displays and cakes. Hobbies, crafts, photography and painting displays. Arena events, barbecue and fireworks. **For more information phone 020 8349 9401.**

Watling Festival, Montrose Park, Montrose Avenue, NW9. 7 September, noon-8pm. Fun fair, dancing and martial arts displays, Gaelic football competition, tug-of-war, dog show, variety of stalls and music, fortune teller, food, including spit roast, beer tent, mystery VIP guest. **For more details phone 020 8959 8595.**

Freddies Film Club on Saturdays. 11am, workshop for ages 6-11 to explore film, drama, storytelling and more. Film at noon. **2 Aug. 'The Wild Thornberrys'; 16 Aug. 'Kirikou and the Sorcerer'; 30 Aug. 'Jungle Book 2'; 13 Sept. 'The Adventures of Huck Finn'** (recent adaptation with Elija Wood); **27 Sept. 'Way Out West'** and **'The Music Box'** (Stan and Ollie). Activity and film, £4.50; Film £3. **Phoenix Cinema, 52 High Road, East Finchley, N2. Box Office 020 8444 6789 (4-9pm).** Phone or see www.phoenixcinema.co.uk or for programme or film events

20-22 August, 10am-4pm. A fun and energetic introduction to the world of 'Bollywood' for ages 6-17. Singing, drama, arts and crafts and a chance to learn how to dance real Bollywood style with Honey's Dance Academy at Stomp! The School for Performing Arts, Mill Hill, NW7. £65 per person for 3 days. **For more details phone 020 8446 4079/8440 6255.** Stomp! run Saturday classes in performing arts for ages 6-17.

14 September, 9.30am. Rockport Mile Fitness Walk. Phone 020 8358 7825 for details.

Walk for Life, free supervised health walks organised by Barnet Council. For details phone 020 8359 7816. For walks led by members of Barnet Asian Old People's Association phone 020 8202 4414 or organised by Barnet Elderly Asians Group phone 020 8445 3644.

18-20 September. Reduced Shakespeare Company. London

premiere of their latest madcap show 'All the Great Books (abridged)'. Covers a staggering 83 great books. 8pm (matinee 20th, 4pm). **The Bull, 68 High Street, Barnet, EN5 5SJ. £12/£10 conc. Box Office 020 8449 0048.** Phone or see website www.thebull.org.uk for details of events and The depot Learning Ladder, a progressive learning programme from 2 years to adulthood on the performing arts. Courses start in September. Advance booking essential.

20 September. 10am-4.30pm. Arts and Crafts Fair. Talented people sharing their skills and secrets in their individual crafts, including marquetry, painting, needlecraft, jewellery, mirror making, wooden clocks, pyrography, thread art, glass engraving, stained glass and handmade cards. Exhibits from the Art and Design Department of Barnet College. Children's Craft Activity Room. Refreshments. **St. Paul's Church Hall, The Ridgeway, Mill Hill, NW7. Entry £1.**

Ballroom and Latin dancing monthly Saturday evenings, **For further details phone 01992 711007 or 07967 494798** keith@ballroomsounds.co.uk

Monthly Sunday tea dances with ballroom, Latin American and sequence dancing. Singles and couples welcome. North Finchley, N12. Also monthly Friday evenings social and practice **For more information phone 020 8444 0280.**

Barnet Borough Arts Council Annual Poetry Competition, deadline for entries is 20 September. General poems for ages 7-11, 12-16 and adults. Send an SAE for entry form to **BBAC, c/o All Saints Arts Centre, 122 Oakleigh Road North, London N20 9EZ**

Barnet Borough Arts Council Café Bar Poetry, 27 September, 7.30pm. Stevie Smith and her Contemporary Poets. artsdepot, **The Bull, 68 High Street, Barnet.** Admission £3/£2 conc. **Box Office: 020 8449 0048.**

Black History Month October 2003 Barnet hosts a series of events celebrating Black history. Look out for the brochure that will be available in libraries or visit www.barnet.gov.uk for the full programme.

Putting the Community First

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH



Barnet Civil Ceremonies Guide

Times are changing rapidly and Barnet Register Office has responded to the differing needs of families in our diverse borough by offering a range of ceremonies, some completely tailored to individual preferences.

The new Barnet Civil Ceremonies Guide provides detailed information on everything you need to know about the services provided by the Register Office including:

- ▶ Civil Marriages
- ▶ Naming Ceremonies
- ▶ Renewal of Marriage Vows
- ▶ Civil Funerals

Barnet is one of the first boroughs in the country to provide a fully comprehensive guide to all of the services provided. You can pick up a copy of the guide at your local library or Action Point. Or call 020 8731 1100.

Got the Grades? Or not?

Drop in to Barnet College,
Grahame Park or Russell Lane
Centres for advice

27 & 28 August 1.30-4.30pm
29 August 9.30am-12.30pm

For courses at Grahame Park or
Montagu Road go to:
Grahame Park Way Centre, Colindale NW9

For courses at Russell Lane or
Wood Street go to:
Russell Lane Centre, Whetstone N20

0845 60 800 68

www.barnet.ac.uk email: info@barnet.ac.uk

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