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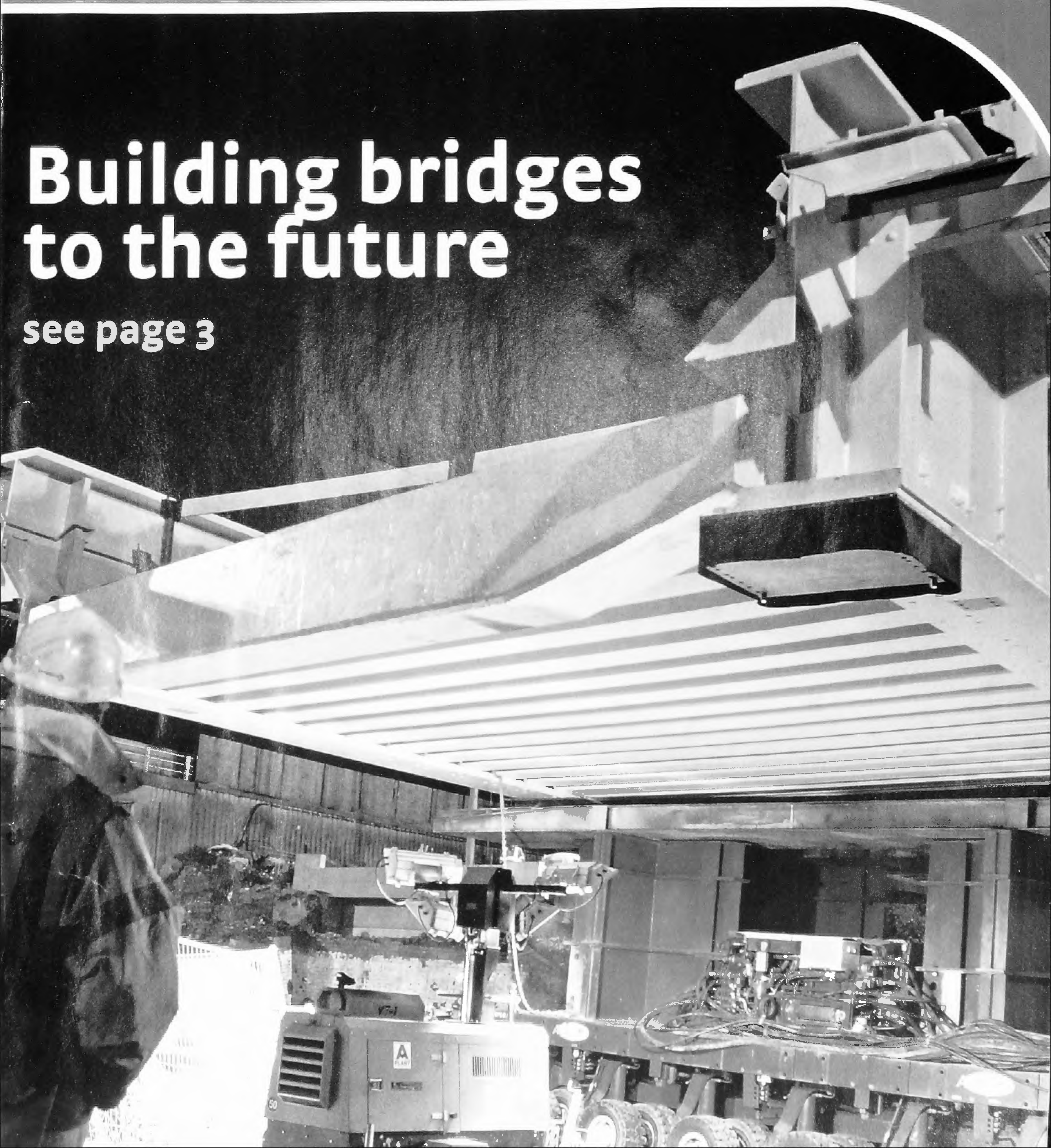
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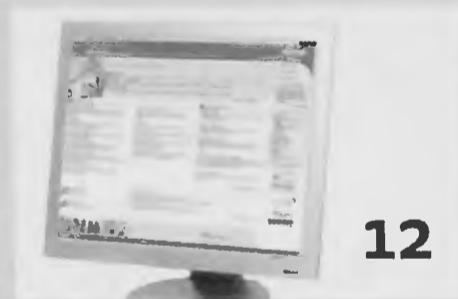
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Production details

Barnet First is your magazine, bringing you news and features about what your council is doing for you. For editorial and advertising enquiries, or to make comments about the magazine, please contact Rachel Tansley on 020 8359 7795 or rachel.tansley@barnet.gov.uk

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Copies of Barnet First are delivered to every home in the borough. The magazine is printed on 100 per cent recycled paper and can be recycled after use.

The cost of designing, printing and distributing each magazine is just over 10 pence per issue.

Barnet First is also available in **large print** or on audio tape.

Designed by hey moscow 020 8869 1420 heymoscow.com

Message from the Leader

As we approach the start of the new financial year and the beginnings of spring, the next council budget is in the final stages of being agreed. This year the council has pledged to keep Council Tax increases below inflation and again we have been able to do this. This year the increase is expected to total 3.2 per cent.

Visitors to Barnet Online may already know about the difficult decisions that I and my colleagues have to make on public spending, through our interactive 'Budget Simulator'.

This year we have taken a new approach to consulting you, the public, on the council's budget making decisions. The online simulator gave you the chance to increase or decrease the amount of money being spent on each council service, and see the impact that would have on the increase needed in Council Tax.

As I write, we are just a few weeks away from finalising the 2008/9 budget, and we believe we have made decisions that will see the council working more effectively and efficiently over the next 12 months.

We are spending money to enhance our town centres, continuing to invest in our primary schools through the innovative PSCIP programme and also making it easier for residents in the west of the borough to access council services. We continue to invest in our social care services and in roads and pavements. We have worked hard at reducing administration costs to divert resources to frontline services.

You can read more about our plans to revitalise Burnt Oak Library to become a customer contact centre and enhanced library for residents in the west of Barnet on page 10. Burnt Oak Library is the first to benefit from a major investment in libraries, and High Barnet and Edgware libraries will also benefit this year from refurbishment and investment.



Regeneration moves a step closer

Engineers have completed the major stages of a £12m project to open the way to one of the biggest regeneration sites in north London, ahead of schedule.

A non-stop weekend operation in January saw the demolition of a large brick-built Victorian arched bridge which was acting as a bottleneck for new development, and its replacement by a wide new steel-beamed structure.

Barnet Council's contractors Norwest Holst took possession of the Midland Mainline slow line at Aerodrome Road in Colindale on the evening of Friday January 25, before returning the new bridge to Network Rail one hour early, at 5am on Monday 28 January. The first train passed over it at 6.10am.

Trains were diverted over the weekend to allow the work to take place, much of it overnight under arc lights.

After the Victorian arch was demolished, a new bridge section was carefully manoeuvred and lifted into place. The railway line was then restored and joined up to existing track before testing.

A similar operation was carried out over the Christmas break to replace a parallel bridge carrying the Midland Mainline fast line. Both operations were completed ahead of schedule and there were no delays for rail passengers.

The project is seen as providing a gateway to the large-scale regeneration of Colindale, including the £500m rebuilding of Grahame Park, Barnet Council's largest post-war housing estate.

The work is being completed as part of Barnet's three-pronged



Midland Mainline slow line bridge being moved into place at Aerodrome Road in Colindale

policy of protection, enhancement and growth within the borough, and backs up its campaign to create successful suburbs. The borough's growth agenda will deliver housing in excess of the Mayor's London Plan targets.

Barnet Council's Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor Matthew Offord, said: "The early completion of this operation is a great tribute to a successful partnership between the council and the private sector, and shows what great strides forward we can take together.

"The new Aerodrome Road access to Colindale is also a visible proof that we are getting on with the job of improving transport in the borough to the benefit of both residents and business."

Alleyway security advice available online

Information on how residents can help solve anti-social behaviour problems in access alleyways close to their homes is now available on the council's website.

Although there are numerous alleyways in the borough, many are classed as private access roads and so are not the council's responsibility.

When a group of Brunswick Park residents began to experience problems with flytipping in the access roads between their homes, they looked into having gates installed. Their initiative was encouraged by their ward councillors.

Forty-nine householders applied for planning permission and shared the cost of erecting gates across three entrances.

They report that they are delighted with the effect this has had on their environment.

To help others benefit from the Brunswick Park success, a guide to alley-gating can be found on the council's website, at www.barnet.gov.uk/alley-gating

Are you in the mood for MEND?

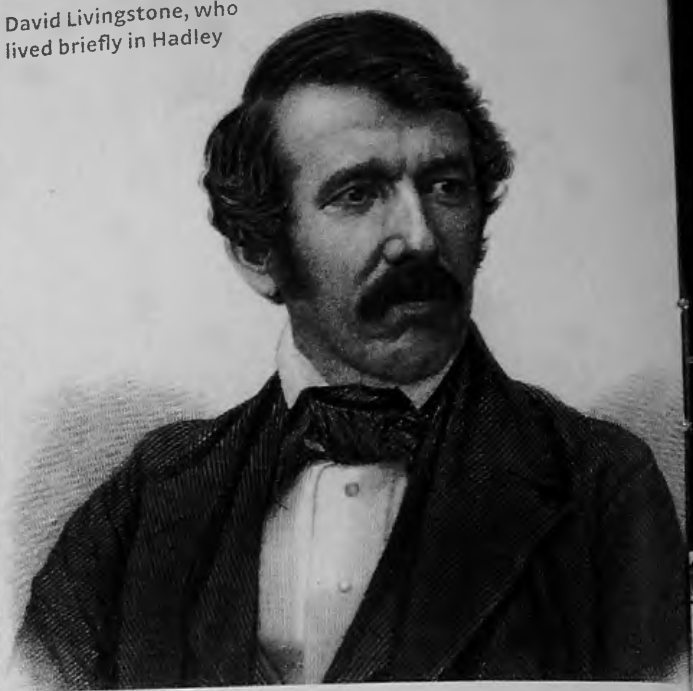
Two new groundbreaking MEND programmes to tackle childhood obesity are starting at the end of April.

One is to be held in Brunswick Park Junior School and the other in Childs Hill School in Cricklewood. The programme is aimed at overweight children aged seven to 11 years old and lasts for 10 weeks. It takes place twice a week from 5.30pm until 7.30pm.

The programme is full of fun-filled activities for the whole family to take part in on nutrition, raising self-esteem and exercise. If anyone is interested in taking part in the programme, please contact Christine Morris on 020 8359 6360.

Barnet Cinema was opened in 1912 as The Palace. After it was bought by Odeon it was renamed the Barnet Gaumont in 1955. It was closed in 1959

David Livingstone, who lived briefly in Hadley



Spotlight on your ward

High Barnet

In our continuing feature looking at the history of different wards in the borough, we turn the spotlight onto High Barnet.

High Barnet is an Elizabethan place name which gained popularity after the railway station opened in 1872.

North of the town, the Battle of Barnet was fought in 1471, resulting in the death of Warwick the Kingmaker. Until the 18th century some even thought it was fought close to Friern Barnet, but the most likely location was Hadley Green.

Barnet Market has existed since at least the 12th century. The parochial name Chipping Barnet refers to the market. There may well have been a livestock market at High Barnet before the granting of the charter by King John in August 1199. The old market was originally located where Wood Street divides from the High Street, was held on Mondays in the 16th century and it supplied nearly all of London's meat. By the end of the 17th century, the market had lost trade to Smithfield Market in London. Barnet's market was re-established in 1869 near the Green Man inn by William Kemp. The last cattle auction was in August 1959.

Hadley Green's 18th century houses proved popular to London merchants and other "well to do" people. Hadley was a short distance from London and, even in the days of horse transport, day trips to and from London were quite quick. Livingstone Cottage was the brief residence of David Livingstone, the African explorer and missionary. It was here, on his first return to England in 1857, that he wrote *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa*. Frances "Fanny" Trollope, a famous early feminist, lived in the house called Grandon. Birt Acres, the film pioneer, lived at what is now Manor Cottage in the 1890s, and one of the earliest films made in the world (1895) records a hay cart crossing Hadley Green.

Hadley Brewery existed in the top north-eastern corner of Hadley Green from 1780 to 1969 and it was demolished in 1976. Beers brewed included Hadley Stout, Hadley Special Pale Ale, Dinner Ale, ginger beer, and Nourishing Stout. Twenty to 30 barrels of barley wine (Old English Ale) were made every year and bottled by hand at Christmas time.

Arkley Windmill was in use by 1806. From photographs, it appears to have had only two of its original sails by the 1890s, by which time it may have been powered by steam. It ceased to be a functioning mill during World War One.





High Barnet's tram line was opened in March 1907 providing a direct link with Archway, giving holidaymakers a cheap service out into the Barnet countryside.

Did you know...?*

- with just under 14,000 residents, High Barnet has the second smallest population of any ward in the borough
- but at an area of 8.3 square kilometres, it's the third biggest ward in the borough
- a greater proportion of High Barnet's population were born in England than any other ward in Barnet – just under 85 per cent
- the ward has, at 8.7 per cent, the second highest proportion of people aged 75 and above.

* Figures taken from 2001 census.

Arkley is 440 feet above sea level. During World War Two, a number of houses were used by the Radio Security Service (M18c) to secretly listen to German military radio messages. The messages were in code so they had to be taken to Bletchley Park for the code to be broken. Before the D-Day landings, the Radio Security Service at Arkley sent messages to confuse the Germans as to where the Allies would land.

On the eastern edge of the ward is the northern part of New Barnet, a Victorian railway development centred on the old Great Northern Railway. The old town hall was originally built in 1892. It closed in 1996 and is now a block of flats called Chamber Court.

Where the houses 68 to 76 Lytton Road are today was Barnet Water Works, a private company which provided water from a 500 foot artesian well. Argent Court in Lytton Road sits on the site of what was once East Barnet Fire Station (1903 – 1991), and Clivedon Court (again in Lytton Road) sits on the site of The Hippodrome cinema (1926), later renamed the Regal (1933).

You can now read more about Barnet with Barnet's Pocket Histories, or do your own research at the Local Studies Centre. For more details, visit our website www.barnet.gov.uk/archives or phone Barnet's Local Studies Centre on 020 8359 3960.

What's in High Barnet?

Parks

- Ravenscroft Gardens, Wood Street
- Tudor Sports Ground, Clifford Road.
Facilities include: children's play area, toilets, basketball hoop, cricket and golf
- Victoria Recreation Ground, Park Road (gardens, children's play area, basketball and football)
- Highlands Gardens.

Council services

- Chipping Barnet Library, Stapylton Road
- Queen Elizabeth's Sports Centre, Meadway.

Recycling bring banks

- Great North Road (by railway bridge)
- Stapylton Road car park
- Victors Lane car park, Moxon Street.

Schools

- Queen Elizabeth's Girls', High Street
- Queen Elizabeth's School, Queen's Road
- Christ Church CE, Byng Road
- Cromer Road, Cromer Road
- Foulds School, Byng Road.

Your councillors

As with all Barnet's 21 wards, High Barnet has three elected members, or councillors, who have been elected by the ward's residents to represent them. Councillors are elected for four years at a time.

Councillor Duncan Macdonald (Lib Dem) has been a ward councillor since 2005.
Tel: 020 8344 2674
Email: cllr.d.macdonald@barnet.gov.uk

Councillor Bridget Perry (Con) has served the ward since 2006.
Tel: 020 8441 5683
Email: cllr.b.perry@barnet.gov.uk

Councillor Wendy Prentice (Con) has been a councillor since 1998. She was the Mayor of Barnet in 2004/05 and is currently chairman of the Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Tel: 020 8364 9249
Email: cllr.w.prentice@barnet.gov.uk

Meet your councillors

Barnet's councillors hold regular advice surgeries to give residents the chance to discuss any topics they wish to raise. You can meet Councillor Perry and Councillor Prentice on the third Saturday of every month between 10.30am and 12noon at the Conservative Offices, 163 High Street, Barnet. Councillor Macdonald's surgery is on the second Saturday of every month, from 3.30 to 4.30pm at Chipping Barnet Library, 3 Stapylton Road, Barnet. No appointment is necessary.

Practise the 'three Rs' this Easter

Compulsory recycling of glass, paper and cans celebrates its third birthday in Barnet on 1 March, and the amount of recycling collected in black boxes has rocketed by 45 per cent in that time.

But while residents across Barnet now know what has to be recycled and how to do so, how much do you know about 'reusing, reducing and recycling' – or the three Rs?

Tackling issues like climate change and decreasing landfill space needs more than simply recycling through the black box service, so why not see how many of these tips you could stick to this year?

Reduce your waste – try taking reusable bags when you go shopping, only buy items with minimal packaging and make a shopping list before you go out so you only buy what you need.

Reuse items rather than throwing them away – get composting and turn your garden and food waste into something useful, take items you no longer want to a charity shop or advertise them through the Barnet Freecycle group (which can be found at groups.yahoo.com/group/FreeCycleBarnet), and create tasty meals with your food leftovers.

Recycle – visit www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling to find out about the range of recycling services offered by the council, and start recycling at work as well as at home.

And as Easter is typically the time when most people set their minds to doing some DIY around their homes, make sure you don't just throw away the rubbish you create. The Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre in Summers Lane, Finchley, now takes more than 40 materials including paint, garden waste, furniture, cardboard, hard plastics and tools. Visit www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling for the full list.

The Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre is open Monday to Saturday, 8am to 4pm, and Sundays and Bank Holidays, 9am to 4pm.



Shoppers reflect on power of buttons

Hundreds of shoppers at Brent Cross Shopping Centre were moved by the sight of more than six million buttons in an art installation to commemorate the Holocaust in January.

Entitled 6 Million +, it attracted donations of thousands of buttons from visitors, who wanted to leave them to represent friends and family they lost during the atrocities of World War II.

Hundreds of people also attended the Holocaust Memorial Day service on 27 January – held for the second year running at Ricketts Quadrangle in Middlesex University in Hendon. Speakers included Major Dick Williams, who helped to liberate Belsen concentration camp, and the Mayor's daughter Suzi Behl who recounted her father's story of survival during the war.



The Alyth Youth Singers performed several pieces at this year's Holocaust Memorial Service



The launch of 6 Million + was attended by (from left) Holocaust survivor Bernd Koschland, artist Antonia Stowe, the Mayor of Barnet Councillor Maureen Braun, Councillor Brian Coleman, and Kim Strickson from Kirklees Museums and Galleries, who commissioned the artwork



Nearly 1,000 visitors to the exhibition left heartfelt messages

Individual budget – individual choice

What images do the words 'social care' bring to mind? For many people, social care services are associated with day centres and residential homes. While such centres provide an excellent service that meets many people's needs, some feel they are 'not for them' and worry they would be too 'institutional' to allow them to continue living life the way they want.

Barnet Council and Barnet Mencap are running an exciting project, called 'Brokers for Change', that is designed to provide a more personalised type of social care service. In this, young people with learning disabilities are given an 'individual budget' for their social care. They, and their families, are then supported to control that budget, spending the money to meet their needs in a way that reflects their personal interests and desires.

This process has now been completed with the first young person, Bobak Sarbaz, who had previously been receiving limited assistance. It has been a success. He has chosen a number of services, such as buying a piano and redecorating his room, which reflect the changes he wanted to make to his life. His family were pleased with the service. His mother said: "It is really helpful as we have the freedom to spend the budget on what we wish."

This has allowed them to arrange extra support and helps their son to go out more. He is happy about this, and said: "Staying in is boring, watching TV is stupid!"

Those involved from the council and Mencap are excited about this project. Social worker Richard Poynton said: "It is an exciting new way to work, focusing wholly on the client's wishes and aspirations."

Shelley Gibbons, the Mencap 'broker' who supported the young man through the process, was pleased to have the opportunity to "spend a lot of time getting to know him and getting him to trust and feel at ease with me". This allowed her to help him "as an individual, looking at his interests, his aspirations and his needs and working out a budget to support his lifestyle choices."

Following this first success, the council and Mencap are now planning to start working with another ten young people with learning disabilities in this way in the next month or so. The council is also running a wider programme to make 'individual budgets' available to all its service users. Through this, we hope you will think of 'social care' as a way of meeting your needs in a manner that is very personal to you.

Making a clean sweep of Barnet's streets

Keeping all 517 miles of Barnet's streets clean is a full time task for our five teams of street cleaners who patrol roads and pavements around the borough. They are in charge of scooping up litter and making sure that over 3,000 bins are emptied.

Armed with brooms, shovels and mechanical road sweepers, the teams try to make sure that each street gets cleaned at least once a month, and can call on back-up from 'hot spot' teams to deal with litter problems in the busier parts of Barnet.

Now residents can report any problems online, such as overflowing bins, and check up on progress on street cleaning in their neighbourhood at <http://www.barnet.gov.uk/street-care-and-cleaning>.

So if you think the street outside your house or office is not up to scratch then check our website to find out when your cleaning team is due to arrive or send an email to let us know to send in a hot spot squad. We will endeavour to clear the streets you report as urgently in need of a clean within 24 hours. If you don't have access to the internet then you can also make a report by calling the council on **020 8359 4600**.

Council welcomes residents' backing for regeneration

Regeneration plans are moving ahead in Grahame Park



No objections have been received to plans to demolish the first major area to be cleared to make way for new construction at Grahame Park estate.

It means there will be no need for a public inquiry, and it ends any uncertainty over phase 1b of the £500m scheme.

It's believed to be the first major Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) - when the council obtains land and properties necessary to progress with the project and offers compensation to affected residents - to be confirmed through a new streamlined process introduced by the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, and the news was warmly welcomed by Barnet's Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Councillor Anthony Finn.

He said: "This is a big vote of confidence in Barnet Council's plans to bring about radical improvements for everyone who lives at Grahame Park. It shows without doubt that residents are fully behind this ambitious regeneration and we will now press ahead together to ensure its success."

The council has made and now confirmed a CPO to include the whole of the first phase of the scheme, although it hopes that the purchase of all properties will be carried out through negotiation by its development partner, Choices for Grahame Park. The CPO would only be used as a last resort in the event that purchase by agreement could not be achieved.

Owner occupiers will get compensation equal to the market value of their homes plus 10 per cent. All secure council tenants will get compensation (currently £4,400) plus removal expenses. The council's non-secure tenants will be visited to reassess their housing needs and be given advice on their future housing. Where they are still in housing need, the council will assist so they can obtain suitable homes.

Apprentice scheme launched for care leavers

Earlier this year, seven care leavers from across the borough were offered apprenticeships within the council after the Leaving Care team appealed to managers with a hard-hitting campaign.

The strapline that read, 'If you had a business you'd give your child a job, well we do have a business and our children need a job', prompted nine service areas to respond, and six have now offered one year contracts to the young people who will each receive key skills training and undertake an NVQ at level two or three.

Marion Ingram, who leads the Looking after Children division, and championed the scheme, said: "Of the seven young people offered positions, four were not in any form of education, employment or training prior to applying, which emphasises the need for such opportunities if we are to help our young people move on to lead successful adult lives."

She went on to say: "This is a fantastic opportunity for these young people to get on the career ladder and I wish them all the best."

The scheme was set up with the support of councillors, and council services, and in partnership with Connexions and the Learning and Skills Council. The young people will receive support and advice throughout the year, and at the end will be helped to find permanent employment, ideally within the council.

Pledge to go 'green'

The council has pledged to become 'greener' after publishing a landmark Environmental Policy.

The document, launched at the end of 2007, acknowledges the reality of climate change and sets out how the council will reduce its carbon footprint and become more energy-efficient over the coming months and years.

It covers issues such as reducing the council's use of energy and water, sustainable travel, preventing waste and being a community leader on green issues.

To find out more and read the policy in full, visit www.barnet.gov.uk/environmental-policy or call 020 8359 7400.

Housing Benefit is changing

Residents who rent privately and claim Housing Benefit need to know about important changes taking place this April.

From 7 April, private tenants who make a new claim or change address will receive the new benefit called Local Housing Allowance (LHA).

The main change is that the amount of benefit paid will be fixed according to the number of bedrooms and location of the property – instead of each claim being processed and calculated individually. If your rent is less than the LHA amount to which you are entitled, you can keep the difference up to £15 a week.

Another important change is that in most cases the money will be paid directly to the tenant rather than the landlord.

The changes are aimed at giving tenants more choice and encourages them to manage their own finances, instead of relying directly on the council to pay their landlord. It also means that claimants will know the maximum benefit they could get before they even apply.

The new rules only apply to private tenants submitting new claims after 7 April 2008 or private tenants who move or have a break in their claim. It does not apply to those who rent from Registered Social Landlords (housing associations), those who rent from Barnet Homes or anyone in bed and breakfast accommodation.

To find out more about LHA, visit www.barnet.gov.uk. The LHA rates for each area and size of property will be available online from 7 April.

All Barnet's children will benefit from lottery funding

It was smiles all round earlier this year when the Children's Service was awarded £700,000 to provide activities for children and young people who have special needs or limited activities in their area.

Barnet's successful bid to the Big Lottery Fund to develop play provision means all children and young people in the borough can look forward to a host of exciting activities over the next three years.

The money will fund five innovative projects and will be delivered by voluntary and community organisations across Barnet.

They are:

Barnet Play Rangers

A team of play rangers will run sessions in Barnet's parks, estates and other open

spaces all year round to help children and parents develop their own games to play in a safe environment.

Inclusive Play Support

Disabled children and young people will be able to access mainstream play opportunities (like after school clubs) with the help of 'iRangers' who will have specific skills in working with disabled children and young people.

Open Door

Play opportunities will be developed in the west of the borough; an outreach service will be provided to help playgroups become more inclusive, and play days will be delivered in the school holidays for disabled children and their families.

Sports Base

A vehicle full of sports equipment will be

available for groups to use across Barnet to enhance their play provision.

Summerplay

Free outdoor play activities will be delivered throughout the summer holidays for children of all ages. They will be run daily in parks and open spaces in areas where holiday provision is currently limited.

All the projects will be launched over the next six months, and support Barnet's new Play Strategy that aims to increase play opportunities across the borough over the next five years. The strategy can be found at www.barnet.gov.uk/chypf.htm

For more information on activities for children and young people, visit www.barnet.gov.uk/holiday-activities or contact the Children's Information Service on 0800 389 8312.

Trials start for the 2008 London Youth Games

The trials for this year's London Youth Games are about to begin and the council's Sports Development Unit is looking for young people to take part and represent the borough.

Young people who either live, or go to a school, in Barnet have a chance of competing in the games, Europe's largest youth sporting event, by getting in touch and signing up for any of the 30 different sports.

Last year, four coaches transported 200 young people from across the borough to Crystal Palace where they took part in over 20 sports including cycling, rugby, archery, netball and gymnastics.

In the 2007 games, Barnet's winners included Ryan Searles, 17, who won the gold medal for 50m backstroke, Jenny Budden who won silver for 50m butterfly, Guy Ben-Aroya and Ralph Maron who won bronze in table tennis, Lucie Colt, Natalie Ekweogwu and Hannah Taylor who won bronze in squash, and Chekina Makasi who won bronze for the long jump in the disability athletics.

Joe Hall, 17, also walked away with the 'capital's best up-and-coming sports photographer' title for his artistic talent.

The London Youth Games begin on 5 July at the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre.

If you want to get involved, contact the Sports Development Unit on 020 8359 7818/7817 or email layla.hall@barnet.gov.uk.

To find out more about the London Youth Games, visit www.londonyouthgames.org



Barnet winners included Ryan Searles, 17, who won the gold medal for 50m backstroke and Jenny Budden who won silver for 50m butterfly

Joe Hall 17, won the photography competition for the capital's best up-and-coming sports photographer



The archery team compete

Success continues for Barnet swimmers

Barnet swimmers have won the most prestigious gala for London swimmers for the third year in a row.

Athletes from across the capital took part in the 2007 London inter-borough final but it was Barnet swimmers who once again scooped the top prize.

The Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Maureen Braun, presented the team with their trophy at the February council meeting, and invited them to a reception at the Town Hall

afterwards.

She said: "This is a great achievement by all our swimmers. They have performed exceptionally well, winning the title for the third year in a row.

"The hard work and commitment from Barnet's team is extremely impressive. Well done to all who took part."

The gala, which has been running in London since 1972, was devised to promote the benefits of swimming in all age groups. So far the event has attracted in excess of 32,000 swimmers including notable champions Mark Foster, Mike Fibbens and Sarah Price, who have all represented Barnet.

Libraries revolution bearing fruit

Barnet's flagship library, in Hendon, is officially one of the top 20 most visited libraries in the country.

The recognition came from figures released by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and revealed that nearly three quarters of a million people came through the doors of the library located in The Burroughs last year.

The surge in visitors has been attributed to both the facelift in 2004, which saw the introduction of a series of bright and welcoming 'zones' with resources for all the family and an award-winning café, and the more recent introduction of 'wi-fi', which allows library members to surf the internet free from anywhere in the building.

The council last year launched its exciting Library Strategy, which will create a series of 'leading' libraries and 'local' libraries for the future, across the borough. Next to undergo a transformation are Chipping Barnet, Golders Green, North Finchley and Burnt Oak.

Exciting Burnt Oak project takes next step

The library at Burnt Oak is at the centre of an exciting new project taking shape in the west of the borough. As part of the council's efforts to provide a first class customer service to all residents of Barnet, the library at Burnt Oak will be revamped to include a state-of-the-art library and a new customer service centre.

Consultation has just finished with residents and traders in the area, on what they want to see included in the new building. A total of 1,000 questionnaires were distributed to homes, and

were available at the council's existing customer centres. At the same time, an online consultation was being run through the council's website.

The positive results show that 67 per cent of respondents would use the new centre and 84 per cent would be able to reach it in 20 minutes or less from home. Council Tax, housing advice and Housing Benefit services were the top options for which services should be offered at the new centre, and this information is being used to make sure the new building will meet the needs of residents and customers.

Plans to renovate the building, in Watling Avenue, are already well underway and the library will be closing temporarily from April to July 2008 to allow the work to take place. Architects' plans were displayed to residents at an exhibition in February.

To find out more about the plans for Burnt Oak, keep checking the council's website at www.barnet.gov.uk.

Access to the internet and a quiet atmosphere make libraries the perfect place to do homework



People of all ages can find a good book at their local library



Are you looking after someone else's child?

If you are fostering a child privately, we need to know



If you are looking after someone else's child, you need to get in contact as the council want people who are fostering children privately to register and get support.

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) is placed in the care of someone who is not their parent or close relative through a private agreement made between their parent and a carer, for four weeks or more. We are also asking professionals who come into regular contact with children and young people – such as teachers, doctors and youth workers – to alert the council.

To find out more about private fostering or to register, please visit www.barnet.gov.uk/private-fostering or call **020 8359 4066**.

Additional details about private fostering can be found at the British Association for Adoption and Fostering's (BAAF) dedicated website: www.privatefostering.org.uk

Make life easier - pay your Council Tax by Direct Debit!

Want to save yourself time and effort? Then why not switch your monthly Council Tax payments to Direct Debit?

Barnet residents are being urged to follow the example of over half the UK's bill paying population who have already made the switch.

Direct Debit is the simplest way to pay your bill – it saves time, is more convenient and gives you peace of mind as payments are made automatically, ensuring bills are never forgotten.

It also means that you don't have to phone the council every month or queue up at the cash office, or send a cheque. There are no

postage costs or Post Office payment fees either.

We all lead increasingly busy lives and paying your bills by Direct Debit with us will give you one less thing to think about.

When you sign up to pay by Direct Debit, you'll have a choice of six payment dates each month - 1, 5, 10, 15, 20 or 25. As a Direct Debit payer, you can also choose to spread your annual Council Tax bill over 11 monthly instalments if you wish, instead of the standard 10 instalments.

To sign up, please call **020 8359 2608** and have your bank details ready. There's no paperwork, so it's quick and easy, but you're fully protected by the Direct Debit guarantee.

Alternatively, you can download a form from our website -

www.barnet.gov.uk/council-tax - or use the form in your Council Tax payment booklet.

A Direct Debit instruction can be cancelled at any time.

Are you a carer?

If you provide care for a family member, partner or friend because they are ill, frail or have a disability or other health condition, then you are a carer. It is estimated that there are 28,000 people caring for family or friends living in Barnet.

The government's health and social care policy places increasing reliance on care being provided in the community rather than in residential and nursing homes. This is because it is generally people's preference to stay at home as long as possible.

More treatment and care options are being offered at home or within the local area which is increasing the caring role of family and friends. This unpaid caring role is emotionally and physically demanding, leading to social isolation, financial problems, stress and ill health for carers.

In recognition of the importance of the carer's role, Barnet is developing ways to identify more carers within the borough, raise the profile of carers, increase access to breaks for carers, help plan for an emergency and provide more information, advice and services.

We have recently launched a new Carers Assessment which helps to better identify carers' needs, including how a carer can be supported at a time of crisis. From the Carers Assessment, and in partnership with the carer, we can identify what sources of help can support them to continue their role.

Depending on the carer's circumstances, this could involve access to services such as breaks, home-based support, health information or a carer's Direct Payment, which could help pay towards creative solutions to improve their own quality of life. The assessment could also lead to specialised support from voluntary sector organisations.

The Carers Assessment form can be downloaded from Barnet Online, or requested from either Adult Social Services, Barnet Carers Centre, the Carer's Nurse or other local organisations. You can also ask any of these organisations to help you complete the form.

If you would like to find out more about carers' issues and services available, please contact Barnet Council on **020 8359 2000**, visit Barnet Online (**www.barnet.gov.uk/carers**) or contact Barnet Carers Centre (**www.barnetcarers.org**) on **020 8343 9698**.

Last chance to have your say in capital vote

Whoever you decide to vote for in the London mayoral and Assembly elections on 1 May, you will not be able to make your mark unless you register to vote by 16 April.

That's the deadline for London residents to get in touch with their electoral registration office – unless you're already registered.

Here in Barnet, it couldn't be easier to make sure you are on the electoral register. You can get in touch with us by phone, email or by visiting our website.

Anyone over 18 and a UK, EU or Commonwealth citizen has the right to vote in elections. As well as the obvious advantage of being able to have a say in local and national democracy, being on the electoral register also helps you when applying for credit, loans and mortgages.

To find out more about registering to vote, or to register, call **020 8359 5577**, email **ero@barnet.gov.uk** or visit **www.barnet.gov.uk/electoral-register**.



Find out what advice and support you could receive as a carer in Barnet

Do it online

Barnet's website has been classified as being in the 'Top Twenty' local authority sites in 2007 by the SOCITM Better Connected survey team - but did you know just how much you can do by visiting www.barnet.gov.uk?

Check out the list of services and links below that are just a couple of clicks away:

- **paying bills** – www.barnet.gov.uk/online-payments - pay your Council Tax, business rates, housing rent and even parking tickets safely, securely and in the comfort of your own home
- **reporting problems** – www.barnet.gov.uk/online-services-forms - report a range of problems, from noise nuisance to overflowing litter bins, through the website. Visiting this page also allows you to print off a range of forms, request publications or log a Freedom of Information request
- **check planning applications** – www.barnet.gov.uk/planning - find out all the details of planning applications in your street or town and look up archived applications from the last 20 years
- **visit the library** – www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries - you can access the online library catalogue to see what books, CDs and DVDs are available in your local library and renew items you already have at home
- **look up maps** – www.maps.barnet.gov.uk – interactive maps of the borough can direct you to places of interest, bus routes and more
- **find out how to register births, marriages and deaths** – www.barnet.gov.uk/registeroffice - important information on how to officially register important events with the authorities are available here
- **learn about local democracy** – www.barnet.gov.uk/councillors - find out who your local councillors are, and



Visit Barnet Online and explore

when you can meet them and discuss issues or problems. A schedule of council meetings is available at committeepapers.barnet.gov.uk/democracy

- **apply for jobs** – www.barnet.gov.uk/jobs-careers - all council vacancies are advertised through Barnet Online, and you can also connect to www.barnetjobs.org.uk – a service run by Barnet's Local Strategic Partnership and listing Barnet-based jobs, through the council's jobs homepage
- **find entertainment and arts listings** – www.barnet.gov.uk/whats_on - add your own listings and find out what else is happening in the borough.

These are just some of the many services available through Barnet Online. To browse the site and find out just how much you could do, all you need to do is log on to your home computer or visit a library, where internet access is free for members, type in www.barnet.gov.uk and explore.



Access a range of council services from the comfort of your own home

Historic images of Barnet available online

If you've ever passed an interesting building or memorial in Barnet that has made you wonder about its origin, the Local Studies Centre is the place to start.

However, for those who prefer to do research from the comfort of their own home, it is now possible to view over 500 images online.

The centre now offers people the chance to look at images of the borough, dating back to the 19th century, by visiting www.barnet.gov.uk/archives.

The free resource includes some rare images, such as paintings and photographs from artists like Agnes Holgate, Childe Pockock and Herbert Norman, as well as some beautiful landscapes painted when the borough was still agricultural. It is also excellent for school projects and family historians.

The Local Studies Centre holds a wealth of information about the borough in different formats. You can find the centre in Daws Lane, Mill Hill.

Keeping up the standards

Would you like to play an important role for the council in helping to maintain our high standards of governance?

If you become an independent member of the Standards Committee, it will be your job to assist in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors. You will also consider allegations of wrongdoing by councillors, and decide if they have breached the councillors code of conduct.

The Standards Committee is made up of both councillors and independent members of the public. The council is seeking applications from local residents to sit on the committee from May 2008 as independent members.

New legislation means that the Standards Committee will get new powers. It will be able to receive and deal with complaints concerning councillors' conduct, such as alleged failure to register or declare financial interests or allegations of unauthorised disclosure of confidential information.

The role of an independent member comes with a small annual allowance – but primarily you will be rewarded with the opportunity to take an active role in helping to ensure the highest standards of conduct from Barnet's councillors.

Anyone interested should fill in an application form, available from Donna Knight-Olds by calling 020 8359 7156 or emailing donna.knight-olds@barnet.gov.uk. Selection will be through the normal process of shortlisting and interview.

What's on in Barnet during March and April?

Leisure/Pastimes

Something That I'll Never Really See: contemporary photography from the Victoria and Albert Museum (V and A)

Every day 12pm – 4pm

artsdepot, Tally Ho Corner, North Finchley, N12 0GA. Don't miss the chance to see highlights from the V and A's collection of contemporary photography, which includes work by leading artist David Hockney as well as iconic images such as Nick Knight's photograph of Naomi Campbell. Further info: info@artsdepot.co.uk. Cost: free.

Finchley Common

26 March 7.45pm

St John's Church Hall, Friern Barnet Lane. An illustrated talk by John Heathfield. Free light refreshments provided. Cost: free to members, £2 non-members.

A day in the life of a National Trust area manager

31 March at 1.30pm

John Keble Church Hall, Deans Lane, Edgware. A talk by Ian Wilson. Cost: free for National Trust members, £2 for visitors.

History of the Women's Institute

23 April 7.45pm

St John's Church Hall, Friern Barnet Lane, N20. An illustrated talk by Dorinda Digins to the Friern Barnet and District Local History Society. Free light refreshments. Cost: members free, £2 for non members.

Music

Barnet Symphony Orchestra spring concert

9 March

St Michael's Church, Flower Lane, Mill Hill. An evening of music including Bizet, Mozart and Schubert. Tickets: £8 adults, £5 children.

Brahms – Ein Deutsches Requiem

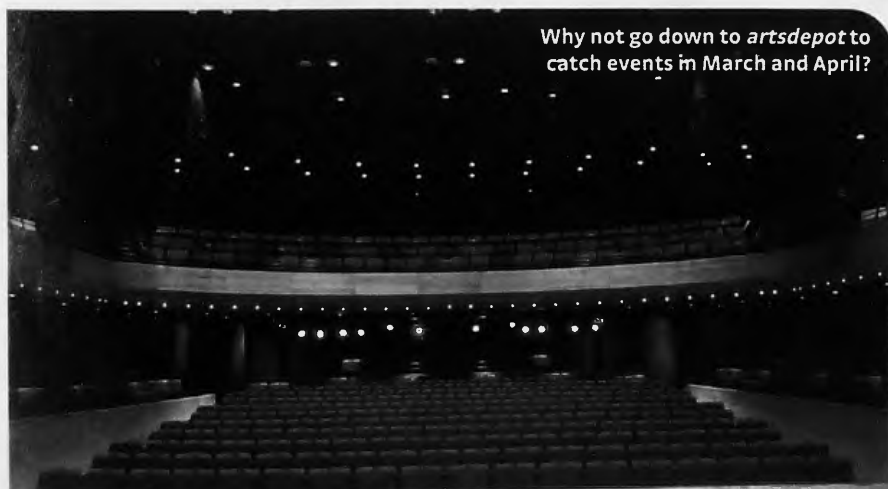
15 March

St Michael's Church, Flower Lane, Mill Hill. The London Pro Arte Choir perform Brahms' German Requiem Op. 45. Cost: £12, concessions £10.

The London Swingfonia

9 April 7.30pm

artsdepot, Tally Ho Corner, North Finchley. An evening of entertainment by the big band. Further info: 020 8369 5454 or www.artsdepot.co.uk. Cost: £16, concessions £14.



Why not go down to artsdepot to catch events in March and April?

Council meetings – dates for your diary

Meetings are open to the public and are generally held at the Town Hall, Hendon starting at 7pm, unless otherwise stated.

The Residents Forums (which start at 6.30pm) meet at a variety of venues around the borough, and details can be found online, on our posters or by contacting the Democratic Services team on 020 8359 2031. Members of the public can ask to speak at most meetings. Further information can be obtained by contacting Democratic Services.

March

- 3 Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 4 Council
- 5 Chipping Barnet Area Planning Sub-Committee; Hendon Area Planning Sub-Committee
- 6 Finchley and Golders Green Area Planning Sub-Committee
- 10 Finchley and Golders Green Area Environment Sub-Committee; Chipping Barnet Area Environment Sub-Committee; Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee
- 11 Finchley and Golders Green Residents Forum
- 12 Hendon Residents Forum
- 17 Chipping Barnet Residents Forum; Standards Committee
- 19 Planning and Environment Committee; Audit Committee
- 25 Cabinet Resources Committee
- 31 Special Committee (Constitution Review); Hendon Area Planning Sub-Committee

April

- 2 Finchley and Golders Green Area Planning Sub-Committee; Chipping Barnet Area Planning Sub-Committee
- 3 Cabinet
- 7 General Functions Committee
- 8 Resources, Performance and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 9 Planning and Environment Committee
- 14 Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 15 Council
- 17 Tackling Crime and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 22 Cleaner, Greener, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 23 Supporting the Vulnerable in our Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 24 First Class Education and Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 28 Cabinet Resources Committee; Hendon Area Planning Sub-Committee
- 29 Chipping Barnet Area Planning Sub-Committee; Finchley and Golders Green Residents Forum
- 30 Hendon Residents Forum; Finchley and Golders Green Area Planning Sub-Committee

Meet... your members

Note: All codes are 020 unless otherwise indicated.

Brunswick Park Ward

Lynne Hillan (Con)

8446 5954
cllr.l.hillan@barnet.gov.uk

Andreas Tambourides (Con)

8368 5417
cllr.a.tambourides@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Second Saturday every month,
Osidge Library, Brunswick Park
Road, N11
10.30am – 12 noon

Lisa Rutter (Con)

8445 3829
cllr.l.rutter@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Last Saturday every month,
Osidge Library, Brunswick Park
Road, N11
2.30pm – 4pm

Burnt Oak Ward

Claire Farrier (Lab)

8959 7908
cllr.c.farrier@barnet.gov.uk

Linda McFadyen (Lab)

Deputy Leader of the Labour
group
8364 8782
cllr.l.mcfadyen@barnet.gov.uk

Charlie O-Macauley (Lab)

07796 284110
cllr.c.omacauley@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Saturdays, Burnt Oak Library,
Watling Avenue, HA8
10.30am – 12noon

Childs Hill Ward

Jack Cohen (LibDem)

8446 7940
cllr.j.cohen@barnet.gov.uk

Monroe Palmer (LibDem)

Liberal Democrat Group Leader
8455 5140
cllr.m.palmer@barnet.gov.uk

Susette Palmer (LibDem)

8455 5140
cllr.s.palmer@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

First Thursday every month,
Childs Hill Library, Cricklewood
Lane, NW2
7 – 8pm

Colindale Ward

Danish Chopra (Lab)

8449 9046
cllr.d.chopra@barnet.gov.uk

Gill Sargeant (Lab)

8455 1070
cllr.g.sargeant@barnet.gov.uk

Zakia Zubairi (Lab)

8959 4091
cllr.z.zubairi@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Saturdays, Grahame Park Library,
The Concourse, Colindale, NW9
10 – 11am

Coppetts Ward

Mukesh Depala (Con)

8365 3614
cllr.m.depala@barnet.gov.uk

Kate Salinger (Con)

8368 1329
cllr.c.salinger@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

First Saturday every month,
Friern Barnet Library, Friern
Barnet Road, N11
10.30am – 12noon

Second Saturday every month,
Hollickwood School, Sydney
Road, N10
1.30 – 3 pm

Barry Rawlings (Lab)

8445 6416
cllr.b.rawlings@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

First and third Saturday every
month, Peter Le Poer Church,
Albion Avenue, N10
10.30am – 12noon

Other Saturdays, Friern Barnet
Library, Friern Barnet Road, N11
10.30am – 12noon

East Barnet Ward

Terence Burton (Con)

8368 8264
cllr.t.burton@barnet.gov.uk

Robert Rams (Con)

8446 7291
cllr.r.rams@barnet.gov.uk

Joanna Tambourides (Con)

8361 9154
cllr.j.tambourides@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

First Saturday of each month,
New Barnet Community Centre,
48-50 Victoria Road, New Barnet,
EN4
10.30am – 12noon

Third Saturday of each month,
East Barnet Library, 85 Brookhill
Road, East Barnet, EN4
10.30am – 12noon

East Finchley Ward

Andrew McNeil (Lab)

cllr.a.mcneil@barnet.gov.uk

Alison Moore (Lab)

Leader of the Opposition
(Labour group leader)
8343 0306
cllr.a.moore@barnet.gov.uk

Colin Rogers (Lab)

8444 7150
cllr.c.rogers@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Saturdays, East Finchley
Neighbourhood Centre, Church
Lane, East Finchley, N2
10 – 11.30am

Edgware Ward

Helena Hart (Con)

8371 0658
cllr.h.hart@barnet.gov.uk

Joan Scannell (Con)

8959 5921
cllr.j.scannell@barnet.gov.uk

Richard Weider (Con)

8958 0640
cllr.r.weider@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Last Tuesday every month,
Edgware Library, Hale Lane,
Edgware, HA8
5.30 – 6.30pm

Finchley Church End Ward

Michael Freer (Con)

Leader of the Council
(Conservative group leader)
8359 2059
cllr.m.freer@barnet.gov.uk

Eva Greenspan (Con)

8203 1598
cllr.e.greenspan@barnet.gov.uk

Daniel Thomas (Con)

cllr.d.thomas@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

First Wednesday every month,
Finchley Church End Library,
Hendon Lane, N3
7 – 8pm

Garden Suburb Ward

Andrew Harper (Con)

8201 9527
cllr.a.harper@barnet.gov.uk

John Marshall (Con)

8445 2597
cllr.j.marshall@barnet.gov.uk

Jazmin Naghar (Con)

8458 2466
cllr.j.naghar@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Fourth Monday every month,
Fellowship House, Willifield Way,
NW11
6 – 7pm

Golders Green Ward

Dean Cohen (Con)

07887 778509
cllr.d.cohen@barnet.gov.uk

Melvin Cohen (Con)

8209 0166
cllr.m.cohen@barnet.gov.uk

Christopher Harris (Con)

07949 592512
cllr.c.harris@barnet.gov.uk

Contacting your MPs

Chipping Barnet

Theresa Villiers

Office: 163 High Street, Barnet, EN5 5SU
Tel: **020 8449 7345**

Finchley and Golders Green

Dr Rudi Vis

Office: 38 Church Lane, East Finchley, N2 8DT
Tel: **020 8883 0411**

Hendon

Andrew Dismore

Office: St. George's Lodge, 79 The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4 4AX
Tel: **020 8202 2122**

Greater London Assembly

Member for Barnet and Camden

Councillor Brian Coleman
Office: City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London, SE1 2AA
Tel: **020 7983 4367**

Surgery details:

Second Sunday every month, Golders Green Library, Golders Green Road, NW11
2.15 – 3.15pm

Fourth Sunday every month, Hendon Sports Centre, Marble Drive, Brent Cross, NW2
12noon – 1pm

Hale Ward

Jane Ellison (Con)

07976 257999
cllr.j.ellison@barnet.gov.uk

Brian Gordon (Con)

8931 5062
cllr.b.gordon@barnet.gov.uk

Hugh Rayner (Con)

8958 3364
cllr.h.rayner@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

First Thursday every month alternating between Edgware Library, Hale Lane, Edgware, HA8, and Mill Hill Library, Hartley Avenue, NW7 (call 8958 3364 for locations and times)

Hendon Ward

Maureen Braun (Con)

Mayor
8906 0447
cllr.m.braun@barnet.gov.uk

Anthony Finn (Con)

8202 9689
cllr.a.finn@barnet.gov.uk

Matthew Offord (Con)

Deputy Leader of the Council (Conservative group deputy leader)
8202 5319
cllr.m.offord@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

First Monday every month, Action Point, Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4
6 – 7pm

High Barnet Ward

Duncan Macdonald (Lib Dem)

8344 2674
cllr.d.macdonald@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Second Saturday every month at Chipping Barnet Library, Stapylton Road, Barnet, EN4
3.30pm – 4.30pm

Bridget Perry (Con)

8441 5683
cllr.b.perry@barnet.gov.uk

Wendy Prentice (Con)

8364 9249
E: cllr.w.prentice@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Third Saturday every month, Chipping Barnet Library, Stapylton Road, Barnet, EN4
10.30am – 12noon

Mill Hill Ward

Wayne Casey (LibDem)

Deputy Leader of the LibDem Group
8906 8189
cllr.w.casey@barnet.gov.uk

Jeremy Davies (LibDem)

8381 0089
cllr.j.davies@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Saturdays, Mill Hill Library, Hartley Avenue, NW7
10am – 12noon

John Hart (Con)

8381 0083
cllr.j.hart@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Selective Tuesdays, Mill Hill Library, Hartley Avenue, NW7
6 – 8pm

Selective Saturdays at Canada Villa, Pursley Road, NW7
10am – 12noon

Ring for dates.

Oakleigh Ward

Sachin Rajput (Con)

8381 0096
cllr.s.rajput@barnet.gov.uk

Marina Yannakoudakis (Con)

8445 8175
cllr.m.yannakoudakis@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Third Saturday every month, Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone, N20
10.30am – 12noon

Brian Salinger (Con)

8368 1329
cllr.b.salinger@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

First Saturday of every month at Friern Barnet Library, Friern Barnet Road, N11
10.30am – 12noon

Totteridge Ward

Brian Coleman (Con)

8349 2024
cllr.b.coleman@barnet.gov.uk

Richard Cornelius (Con)

Deputy Mayor
8445 5886
cllr.r.cornelius@barnet.gov.uk

Caroline Margo (Con)

8371 9312
cllr.c.margo@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Third Saturday every month, Barnet House, 1255 High Road, Whetstone, N20
10.30am – 12noon

Underhill Ward

Fiona Bulmer (Con)

8344 2672
cllr.f.bulmer@barnet.gov.uk

Daniel Webb (Con)

8349 2256
cllr.d.webb@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Third Saturday every month, Chipping Barnet Library, Stapylton Road, Barnet, EN4
10.30am – 12noon

Anita Campbell (Lab)

8440 2703
cllr.a.campbell@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

First and third Saturday every month, Chipping Barnet Library, Stapylton Road, Barnet, EN5
2 – 3pm

West Finchley Ward

Ross Houston (Lab)

8343 7451
cllr.r.houston@barnet.gov.uk

Kath McGuirk (Lab)

8209 1462
cllr.k.mcguirk@barnet.gov.uk

Jim Tierney (Lab)

8346 3359
cllr.j.tierney@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Saturdays, 331 Ballards Lane, North Finchley
10 – 11.30am

West Hendon Ward

Julie Johnson (Lab)

8203 3531
cllr.j.johnson@barnet.gov.uk

Agnes Slocombe (Lab)

8202 4074
cllr.a.slocombe@barnet.gov.uk

Ansuya Sodha (Lab)

8959 6035
cllr.a.sodha@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Saturdays, West Hendon Community Centre, Marsh Drive, West Hendon, NW9
10.30am – 12noon

Monday 19 November, Hendon Library, The Burroughs, NW4

Woodhouse Ward

Geof Cooke (Lab)

8446 8407
cllr.g.cooke@barnet.gov.uk

Anne Hutton (Lab)

8883 0996
cllr.a.hutton@barnet.gov.uk

Alan Schneiderman (Lab)

8731 9680
cllr.a.schneiderman@barnet.gov.uk

Surgery details:

Saturdays, 331 Ballards Lane, North Finchley,
10 – 11.30am

Four star rating is 'excellent' news

It's official – your council is now recognised as among the best in the country.

Every authority in the UK is independently assessed and awarded a star rating. Barnet is now classed as a four star council – the highest rating possible.

Back in 2006 we only had two stars but no other council as big as Barnet has improved so much so quickly and we were one of only two authorities of our size to move up to the maximum rating this year.

The Audit Commission, which judges all councils, picked out several key areas for special mention.

Progress on our ambitious regeneration programme was praised. The first families have moved into new homes at Grahame Park, residents have seen the exciting plans for the Stonegrove and Spur Road estates and a planning application is shortly expected for the massive redevelopment of Brent Cross and Cricklewood.

Our work to offer greater choice and independence to those receiving care has brought about improvements to the way we provide social services and support the most vulnerable members of the community.

Keeping Barnet clean, green and safe is a priority for the council and the Audit Commission noted that our efforts to keep the borough's streets clean were paying off and that our close co-operation with other organisations had played a part in cutting crime.

Leader of the Council Mike Freer said: "It is fantastic news to be told that we are doing an excellent job for the borough and offering real value for money across the full range of services we provide.

"But of course we won't be resting on our laurels and will be working hard to ensure we continue to improve. For example, we are developing innovative plans to allow customers to contact the council in a way that suits them and will be fighting hard to make sure we get the improvements to Barnet's infrastructure that we need as we develop as a successful suburb."

Check out religious teaching syllabus

A new framework for teaching religious education in Barnet is now available for parents to access on the internet.

It was compiled by the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), an independent organisation that advises the council on all issues connected to the teaching of religious education in schools.

The new syllabus was agreed in late 2007 by SACRE – which has representatives from a number of different faiths as well as teachers and local councillors – and can now be accessed at www.barnet.lgfl.net.

As well as agreeing the syllabus, SACRE also produces resources for use in religious education lessons and representatives visit schools to give talks on their respective faiths.

To get in touch with SACRE or to find out more, email the chairman Bernd Koschland at nisraf@compuchange.co.uk, Anna Sallnow, RE Consultant, on annasallnow@btinternet.com or the clerk Janet Robinson to janet.robinson@barnet.gov.uk.

Borough's children doing us proud

Last year's exam results, recently released by the Government, show Barnet's GCSE and A level results are some of the best in the country.

The impressive results ranked Barnet Council as seventh best local authority for GCSE results with 59.7 per cent of pupils receiving five A* to C grades, including English and maths - 13 per cent more than the national average of 46.7 per cent.

A level results also came in the top ten with the average points scored per entry coming in at 216.4 compared to the national average of 207.5 and ranking the council sixth best performing local authority in the country.

The results, which are published every year by the Government, give an in-depth analysis on the 149 local authorities in the country. Schools which have done extremely well include Queen Elizabeth's School, Barnet - the best performing school in the borough with a 261.9 average score per A level entry. St Michael's Grammar in North Finchley and Henrietta Barnett in Hampstead Garden Suburb also had extremely impressive results at A level.

Friern Barnet and St James Catholic High schools ranked in the top 100 most improved schools in the country and Hasmonean was listed in the top 100 for value-added performance.



Celebration time: a student is delighted at her results – Barnet is among the best in the country for GCSE and A level grades