

# barnet first

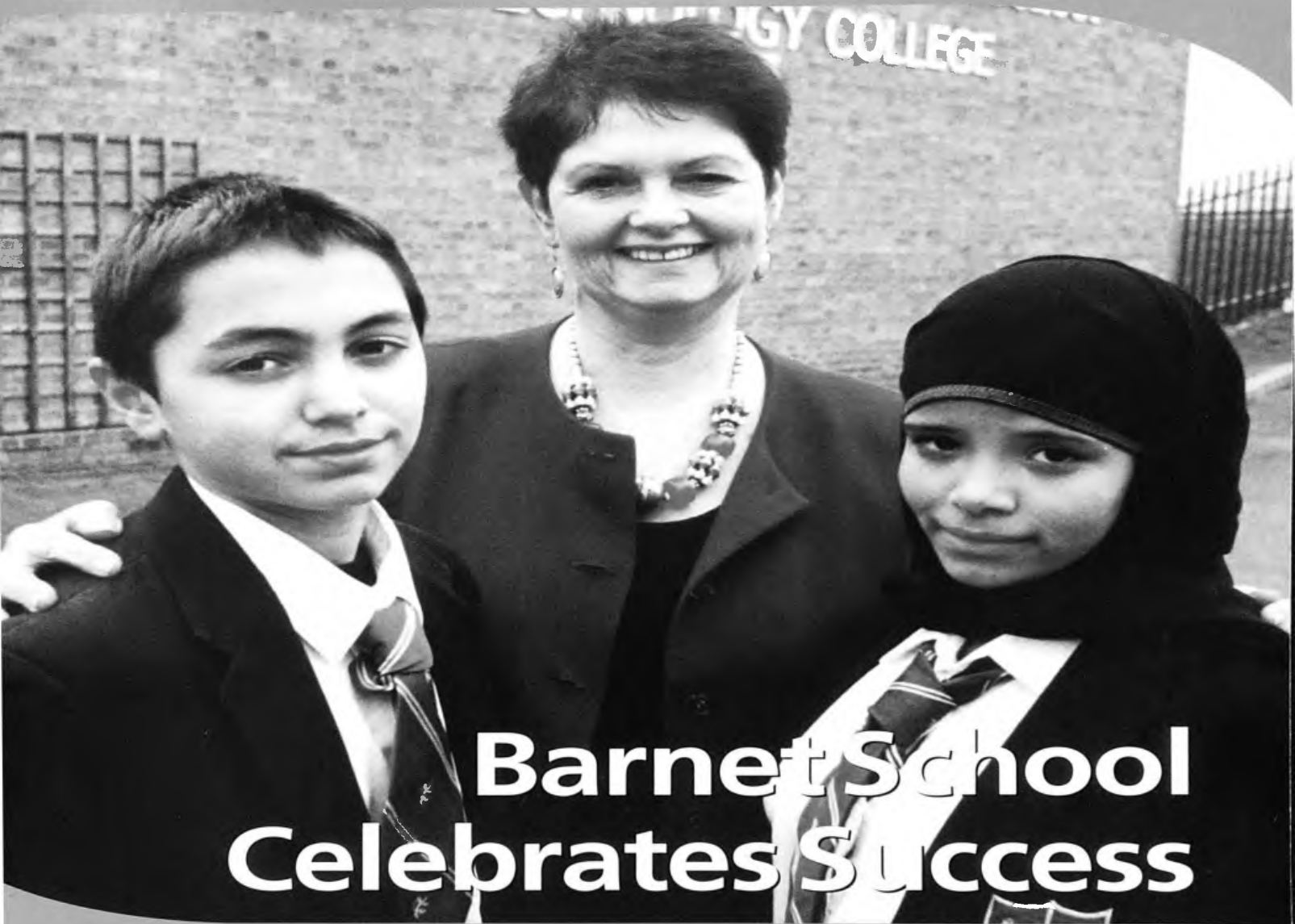
**BARNET**  
LONDON BOROUGH

**FREE** of charge

**Issue 3**

**March-April 2003**

[www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk)



## **Barnet School Celebrates Success**

**Local Heroes Recognised - page 8**  
**CCTV Launched - page 17**

## A message from Councillor Victor Lyon, Leader of Barnet Council

**B**eing in public office often involves making difficult decisions and balancing next year's council budget has been no easy task after the council was handed the worst financial settlement possible from the government.



In line with our pledge to put the community first, we remain committed to providing a first class education for all the borough's children, supporting the vulnerable and making sure our environmental and street based services are amongst the best in London.

To minimise the impact that government underfunding has on our schools and front line services we have had no choice but to raise council tax and to make efficiency savings in other areas of the council.

On a brighter note, I am delighted that results achieved by Barnet's GCSE students are once again amongst the best in the country and that two more of our secondary schools, Ravenscroft and Christ's College, have achieved specialist status. The government's education watchdog OFSTED has also praised our Education Development Plan, which will help us work with schools to raise standards even further.

Finally, we want to know what you think of Barnet First. So take the time to enter our competition on page 3 and let us know what you want to read about in future editions of your council magazine.

**Cllr Victor Lyon,**  
Leader of Barnet Council

# first things first

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# Council agrees budget and council tax rise for 2003/04

**In a bid to plug the gap left by government underfunding while maintaining key services, Barnet Council has been forced to raise the average Band D council tax bill by 22.75% in 2003/04.**

The council was faced with a huge shortfall on next years budget when it received the worst financial settlement possible from the government – the increase of 3.5% was the minimum that the government could have given Barnet and the lowest for any council in the country.

At the same time, the government told Barnet that it must increase its funding to schools by £14 million next year while giving the council an overall budget increase of only £13million – to spread across all of its services.

In order to balance next year's budget, take account of government underfunding and to protect education – one of Barnet's key objectives – the council has decided to increase the schools budget by £13million, make £11million of efficiency savings across the council and also to raise council tax.

Despite these difficult circumstances, the council has also decided to increase funding for Looked After Children by £6.5million and Special Educational Needs by over £2million next year.

Barnet's Band D council tax bill will rise from £741.50 in 2002/03 to £910.21 in 2003/04, an increase of £168.71. An increase in the Mayor of London's precept will mean a further

£224.40 is also added to council tax bills.

Many councils in London are facing significant council tax rises next year because of area cost adjustment, which has switched government funding away from the South East.

Barnet's financial position was made worse by a number of other issues including:

- ▶ Losing out on £7million of funding because of the census figures released by the Office of National Statistics, which showed a reduction in Barnet's population of 30,000.
- ▶ The increase in National Insurance contributions payable by employers will cost the council an extra £1million next year.
- ▶ A £2.2million increase in London-wide levies.
- ▶ A £4.4million increase in the employers' contribution to the teachers' pension scheme.

The budget proposals for 2003/04 were agreed by a meeting of the full council on 4 March.

Council Leader Victor Lyon said: "This has been a very difficult budget to balance. We have minimised the damage that the government's settlement, which has shifted much needed resources away from London to other parts of the country, could have done to our schools by making efficiency savings in other parts of the council and by raising council tax."

## Barnet First prize draw

**T**ell us what you think about Barnet First and enter our free prize draw. To enter simply fill in this questionnaire and return it to the address below. We have three prizes to give away sponsored by Holmes Place Health Clubs. Each prize consists of:



- ▶ Three months Holmes Place membership (branches in either Hendon, Elstree or Cricklewood)
- ▶ Six results based training sessions and
- ▶ A Holmes Place Health Club goody bag.

**1) Overall what do you think of Barnet First? Please tick one of the following:**

- Excellent  
 Good  
 Average  
 Poor  
 Very Poor

**2) What do you like about Barnet First?**

**3) Is there anything you dislike about Barnet First?**

**4) What could we do to further improve the magazine?**

**5) Any other comments?**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut out and return this questionnaire to:  
 Barnet First Readers Competition  
 Room 46, Town Hall, The Burroughs  
 Hendon, London, NW4 4BG

# inbrief

## Barnet library service gets a new set of wheels

A new mobile library launched by Barnet Council will ensure even those people not living near to a permanent library continue to have access to first class library services.

The new vehicle, which replaces one that is ten years old, was unveiled by Barnet's Cabinet Member for Community Development Cllr Peter Davis when it visited Homefield Close sheltered housing complex in East Finchley.

### Want to know more?

Call Trida Little on

020 8359 3166

Barnet Council's new mobile library decorated with illustrations by famous artist Quentin Blake



The mobile library – one of two which operate in the borough – has a wheelchair lift and is fully equipped for people with disabilities.

Decorated with illustrations by acclaimed artist Quentin Blake it houses a similar range of services residents could expect to find in the borough's main library buildings.

## Transport boost for the borough's disabled people

A new deal brokered by the council is set to bring more freedom to disabled residents in the borough who find it difficult or impossible to use public transport.

For the first time it will be possible for residents to use Transport for London's black cab scheme as well as Barnet's own local mini-cab service.

This should greatly increase the number of vehicles which disabled people can call upon.

Councillor Maureen Braun, Cabinet Member for Social Services, has welcomed the new scheme. She said, "This is good news for the borough's disabled. Barnet is acutely aware of the problems faced by many disabled residents in using public transport and is determined to ensure they have access to the transport they need."

Those who take part in the Taxicard scheme buy vouchers at a nominal fee and pay towards their journeys according to the distance travelled. Taxicard users will also have access to Freedom Passes.

### Want to know more?

Contact Transport for London on

020 7484 2929

## Freedom Pass

The Freedom Pass, which allows free travel on London's buses, tubes, trains and trams for Barnet's elderly and disabled, is getting even better.

From 1 April, men as well as women will now be eligible for travel concessions at 60 instead of 65 and

### Want to know more?

Older people should apply for a pass at their local post office while people with disabilities should contact the council's Assisted Travel Section on

020 8359 4131

# inbrief

disabled people will be able to use their passes 24 hours a day bringing them into line with concessions offered to blind people.

Concessions to the elderly will continue to work from 9.30am on trains and 9.00am on buses and tubes. Barnet, together with all the other London boroughs, pays for the Transport for London run scheme which this year will cost £170 million. The passes are valid for two years and nearly 47,000 Barnet residents will benefit.

## Hit the fun road to fitness in 2003

Around 100 Barnet residents decided to get their blood pumping and get fit when they took part in the tenth Rockport Mile Day at Cophall Stadium.

The event, run by Fitness for Life – a scheme funded by Barnet Council and Barnet Primary Care Trust - gives residents the chance to determine their level of fitness.

All those taking part had to do was walk a timed mile. In line with the 'Rockport' fitness test system their age, gender, weight, finishing heart rate and time were then taken into account and participants were given a score indicating just how fit they were.

### Want to know more?

For information on getting more active call Fitness for Life on

020 8202 6458

## Kung Hei Fat Choy!



Traditional Chinese dragon dancing at Oriental City!

Happy New Year – or Kung Hei Fat Choy - to you all! February 1st was the start of the Chinese New Year – and this year is the Year of the Ram. As Barnet is home to the largest Chinese community in London, the celebrations were the most exciting and colourful than anywhere else in London! At the Oriental City Chinese Centre, the Barnet Chinese Community Association treated shoppers to traditional New Year celebrations including a Lion Dance (pictured) – which is said to bring good luck to every place in which it is performed.

## Borough Guide

The latest full colour edition of the Barnet Borough Guide is just out packed with up-to-date information on everything you need to know about the borough from schools and job opportunities to local history and leisure. An A to Z index gives residents and visitors details on the work of the council and the services it provides. Copies of the Barnet Borough Guide are available free from local libraries and council Action Points.

## Barnet shows the way on green spaces

Barnet has been showcasing its pioneering approach to creating new urban green spaces.

Delegates from all over the country who attended a special open day heard presentations on working with local people to turn previously derelict land into community areas like Clarefield Park in Cricklewood. Visitors were also taken to the Welsh Harp reservoir and shown how the borough uses open spaces for health initiatives such as walking programmes for residents.

Barnet has received 'Beacon Status' for the way in which it is improving the borough's urban green spaces. Under its Beacon Status scheme the government identifies councils that are centres of excellence and from which other council's can learn.

### Want to know more?

Call Barbara Austen on

020 8359 2116

## Disability organisations get their say

Barnet Council's Cabinet Equalities and Social Inclusion Committee has elected to have a representative from local disability groups to assist in making major decisions. The committee makes decisions on a whole range of equality and social issues, and representatives with a wealth of different experiences assist in the decision making process. Councillor Katia David, Cabinet Member for Equalities and Social Inclusion said: 'The best way to ensure our commitments are implemented is to have someone representing the disability movement in Barnet on our committee – I am delighted with this decision.'

## Anne Frank captures the heart of Barnet residents

**W**hen twelve-year-old Anne Frank started keeping a diary, she could never have known the impact it would still be making on our lives almost sixty years later. To commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day, Barnet Council secured a visit by the Anne Frank : A History For Today Exhibition to Brent Cross Shopping Centre. Hundreds of people visited the exhibition, which explored the lives of Anne and other Holocaust survivors, as well as looking at some of the issues facing youngsters today – such as racism, human rights and



Eva Schloss, Anne Frank's stepsister speaks of her experiences of the Holocaust



The Mayor of Barnet presents Narinder with a bowl of commemorative snowdrops

tolerance.

The exhibition also included a special section dedicated to the life of London teenager Stephen Lawrence, who was brutally murdered in a racist attack.

The Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Joan Scannell opened the exhibition with Big Brother celebrity Narinder. There were also guest appearances by Nicky Gavron, the Deputy Mayor of London, and Anne Frank's stepsister, Eva Schloss.

Anne Frank : A History For Today tours the UK throughout the year, and if you'd like more details about the exhibition and where it will be appearing, then you can look at their website on [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)

## Residents pay tribute

Nearly a thousand people attended a service to mark Holocaust Memorial Day at Hendon Park on 26th January. The Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Joan Scannell and Councillor Peter Davis, Cabinet Member for Community Development and Youth Services, joined residents and representatives from a variety of religious and disability groups to remember the victims of the Holocaust.

Taking part in the service were the London Cantorial Singers and pupils from Moss Hall Junior School and Copthall Secondary School. They were joined by local Holocaust survivor Lady Jakobovits, who spoke of the extraordinary experiences of herself and her family – and their remarkable struggle for survival.

After the service, Lady Jakobovits was joined by local schoolchildren to launch Barnet Council's Children of the Holocaust Memorial Project. The aim of the project is to plant enough snowdrops, over time, across the borough to represent the lives of the 1.5 million children who lost their lives during the Holocaust.

You can see images from the Holocaust Memorial Day, and find out more information about the Holocaust by looking at the Community section of the Barnet Council website at: [www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk).

## Children of the Holocaust Memorial Project

In memory of the 1.5 million children who lost their lives during the Holocaust, Barnet Council has launched the Children of the Holocaust Memorial Project. The aim of the project is to plant, over time, enough snowdrops to represent the life of every child that died.

If you'd like to establish your own special memorial garden, then you

can register your details on the Barnet Council website:

[www.barnet.gov.uk/snowdrop](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/snowdrop). Certificates will be issued to all those who contribute to the project and we will be keeping a running total of the exact number of snowdrops that have been planted across the borough. There will also be regular updates on how to maintain your garden, along

with handy hints and tips from expert gardeners.

### Want to know more?

If you'd like more details about the project, then you can get further details from Renae Randle at Barnet Council on 020 8359 2339 or e-mail: [renae.randle@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:renae.randle@barnet.gov.uk)

# New Grahame Park Police Office

**In a bid to beat crime and reduce the fear of crime Barnet Police have established a new base in the heart of Grahame Park.**

**B**arnet's community beat officers moved into their new headquarters last February.

The media, members of the public and local dignitaries were invited to attend as Chairperson of the Grahame Park Residents Association, Mr Eyo Nkune, MBE, and Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir John Stevens officially opened the new police base.

The renovation project has received financial backing from the government funded Communities Against Drugs - Barnet (CAD-B) project and is the latest successful partnership scheme undertaken by Barnet Police and Barnet Council.

By locating the police office in the heart of the community Barnet Police want to impress on the local community that a high visibility presence will be maintained in the area to target drug dealers and anyone else involved in illegal activities.

This central base for the west side of the borough will allow officers to have briefings at the beginning and end of each shift and enable them to access facilities that will help them to carry out essential administrative duties more efficiently. This in turn will maximise the amount of time officers

spend out on patrol.

The patrols will operate from the new office on a daily basis between 8am and midnight. The 17 community beat officers undertaking them will be made up of one Inspector, two sergeants, and 14 constables and cover home beats around Burnt Oak Edgware, Mill Hill, West Hendon and the Grahame Park estate itself.

Superintendent Simon O'Brien said "This converted business premises will allow officers to regularly patrol the area from the office. Such close contact with the local community will enable officers to form links with people they meet when out on duty. It is hoped that these links will encourage local residents to inform police about the activities of drug dealers in and around the estate."

The launch of the new police base is the latest project from the innovative Real Time Community Change initiative. Although the office will not be manned full time, the local community can be reassured by the frequent daily police patrols from their new base on the Grahame Park Estate. Members of the public will still be encouraged to attend Colindale Police Station for general enquiries.

## Hear here

One in seven of us suffer hearing loss and Barnet Council, together with the Primary Care Trust, are helping with some innovative new services.

The Barnet Hearing Advice Service offers home visits by trained volunteers to NHS hearing aid users giving hearing aids their six monthly service, advice on how to use them and information on other sources of help in the borough.

It runs drop in sessions for servicing and retubing NHS hearing aids at Hendon Clinic and Finchley Memorial Hospital as well as visiting and giving talks on hearing aids and hearing loss to day centres, community and social groups.

The council also provides equipment to aid your hearing at home, for example equipment to help you hear the TV or your doorbell.

It employs a specialist worker who supports people with significant loss of both sight and hearing and there are a number of lively and informative lip reading classes and social groups across the borough.

### Want to know more?

Or to order one of the soon to be published information packs for deaf and hard of hearing people call Denise Swain on 020 8359 3664 or Minicom 020 8359 3623 or e-mail [denise.swain@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:denise.swain@barnet.gov.uk)

► This year's winners collect the awards from the Mayor of Barnet (from left to right) Kurt Weinberg, David Ford, the Mayor of Barnet, Daulat Jiwa, June Briveau and Ann Ray

**Congratulations to the five Barnet residents who are this year's Civic Awards winners**



## Barnet recognises local heroes

The annual Barnet Civic Awards recognise the local people who make an outstanding contribution to the local community – often without recognition. As usual, there was an enormous number of nominations and it was an incredibly difficult task to find just five worthy winners. However, at the ceremony in January, the following individuals collected their awards:

**Ann Ray** has worked with Homeless Action in Barnet (HAB) since it started in 1997. She helped establish a drop-in centre that provides food and clothing to the homeless, and helped put together a rehabilitation service that works to put homeless people back into society by helping them get

homes and jobs.

**David Ford** is the Vice Chair of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers in Barnet, and co-founder of the Friends of Brook Farm Open Space which looks to prevent unsociable activity in the area such as flytipping, pollution and graffiti. The group also organises environmental and social events, as well as establishing working parties to tackle much-needed work in the area.

**Daulat Jiwa** has been working since the mid-eighties to improve and enrich the lives of Asian women in the UK. She established Barnet Asian Women's Association which provides local Asian women with a meeting point, and helps them to learn new skills. The association also works

closely with social workers to provide support for women with domestic problems and advice on mental health problems.

**Kurt Weinberg** fled Nazi Germany during the Second World War and used his experiences as a refugee to establish the Nansen Village in Woodside Park. The ethos of the village is to further humanitarian ideals by enabling individuals from different backgrounds to meet and exchange ideas, beliefs and experiences.

**June Briveau** formed The Friends of Barnet Hospital after a road accident ended her career as a special needs teacher. The group organises events to raise much needed funds for equipment and runs a shop within Barnet Hospital. June also runs a social club for the elderly, works for the Good Neighbours Scheme – which offers a variety of services from shopping for the elderly to driving people to hospital, and chairs the Barnet Old People's Welfare.

## Get on your bike for charity

Summer's nearly here and it's time to think about getting in shape! So if you fancy getting fit as well as raising money for charity, Barnet Council may have the answer!

The Mayor's Charity is looking for riders to take part in their annual Charity Cycle Ride around the beautiful Barnet and Hertfordshire countryside. The ride will take place on Sunday April 13th 2003, and all the money raised will go to the Mayor's Charity Appeal which is helping local people with diabetes and cancer.

This isn't a race – and everybody is welcome to come along and take part. There are two routes that riders can take part in, and both take a circular route that will begin and end in Barnet. The first route of thirty miles goes across cycle tracks, country lanes and back roads between Barnet and Stanborough Lakes in Hatfield. But for those that feel thirty miles is a little daunting, there is a second option of ten miles – which may be a little easier on the legs!

There are several refreshment stops en route and participants will be accompanied by members from the Barnet Cyclists Club. There will also be

a mobile bicycle mechanic on hand just in case of any technical problems!

Children under the age of sixteen must be accompanied by an adult throughout the whole ride, and everyone wishing to take part must register in advance. For registration details and more information, contact Nick Baker at the Accident Prevention Centre on 020 8906 8028.



You pedal and I'll take the lead! Just two of the contestants in last years charity cycle ride

## Up for a challenge

Across the borough people have been organising their own events to raise money for the Mayor's Charity Appeal. A basket ball match held recently between Barnet councillors and council staff raised nearly £1,000 – and there are dozens more events planned for this year.

All the money raised will go to supporting local people with diabetes and cancer – and all the funds stay in the borough.

If you'd like to organise your own event, then you can get further details from the Mayor's pages on the Barnet Council website, or contact Lorna Minney in the Mayor's Office on 020 8359 2010 or e-mail [lorna.minney@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:lorna.minney@barnet.gov.uk).

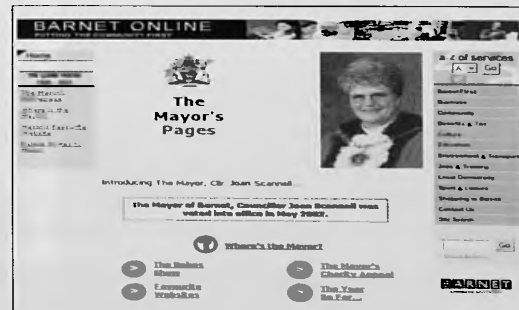
## Mayor invites residents to get surfing

**For those of you who have never met the Mayor of Barnet Councillor Joan Scannell, you might like to know that she's now only a mouse click away!**

By visiting the Barnet Council website – [www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk) – you can use the navigation tools to take you to the 'Mayor's Webpage'. There you can see pictures of events she has recently attended as well as finding out where she'll be in the future.

There's also a special section dedicated to the 'Crown Jewels' of Barnet entitled 'The Robes Show' which features the mayoral chains, maces and robes that accompany the Mayor on her official functions.

You can also find out where to take part in the latest events to raise money for the Mayor's Charity Appeal, and find out which websites she loves to visit when she gets a well-earned day off!



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## Meeting the needs of Barnet's Pensioners



The Pension Service local service runs drop-in surgeries at the following locations in Finchley, Hendon and Edgware. Pension Service staff will be on hand to offer claims help as well as general entitlement advice.

**The Green Man Community Centre**  
Strawberry Vale, East Finchley, N2  
(Every 1st and 3rd Monday  
of the month from 2:00pm to 4:00pm)

**Barnet Multicultural Community Centre**  
Algernon Road, Hendon NW4  
(Every Tuesday: 1:00pm to 3:00pm)

**Edgware Community Hospital**  
Edgware Road, Middlesex, HA8  
(Every Friday: 10:00am to 12:00pm)

Additional surgeries are also available by appointment.

Please call us on **0845 60 60 265**

Putting the Community First

**BARNET**  
LONDON BOROUGH

## Become a member of Barnet Consumer Support Network (CSN)

Representatives of the Voluntary Sector involved in providing or funding consumer information and advice, and those from gateway agencies are invited to join us in helping to improve consumer access to expert and accurate legal advice.

Barnet consumers need *your* help.

By linking together all those involved in consumer advice we aim to:

- Provide a fair trading environment
- Improve the quality of goods and services
- Encourage good practice
- Encourage constructive negotiation (alternative dispute resolution)

**For further information** contact: Gary Edel,  
Moderator, Barnet CSN on **020 8359 6038**

[www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk)



# OPEN EVENTS

### AS/A LEVELS Preview Evening

**GRAHAME PARK CENTRE**  
24 June, 4.30 - 8pm

**WOOD STREET CENTRE**  
26 June, 4.30 - 8pm

### ACCOUNTING, BUSINESS, LAW, MANAGEMENT, MARKETING, SECRETARIAL

**RUSSELL LANE CENTRE**  
6 - 8pm

13 May 11 June  
3 July 19 Aug

**GRAHAME PARK CENTRE**  
5 - 7pm  
20 May  
25 June

### CHILD CARE & EARLY YEARS EDUCATION, CARE NURSING, SOCIAL WORK

**RUSSELL LANE CENTRE**  
11 June, 6 - 8pm

**GRAHAME PARK CENTRE**  
8 April, 6 - 8pm  
24 June, 2 - 4.30pm

For a prospectus call: **020 8266 4050/4046/7**  
or **020 8275 2816/7**



**Barnet  
College**

[info@barnet.ac.uk](mailto:info@barnet.ac.uk)  
[www.barnet.ac.uk](http://www.barnet.ac.uk)

# Think Green

**W**ith 28 million tonnes of waste being produced every year in the UK, residents who live in Barnet flats are being urged to help the environment by using a service that makes recycling easy.

As part of the council's bid to create a greener borough, the Flats Recycling Service offers residents living in medium and high-rise flats the chance to recycle all their paper, glass and cans by using special recycling containers placed near their homes.

Over 55 estates have already signed up to the scheme which is provided by Barnet Council in partnership with ECT, the UK's largest community recycling organisation.

Mr Simmonds, a resident from Mulberry Close flats who already uses the scheme said: "A lot of us have been thinking about how we could do our bit for the environment but, because of elderly residents within our block, we needed a service which was easy to reach and easy to use."

Conquering the rubbish mountain. Barnet's flats recycling scheme is helping residents cut down on waste.



"A man from ECT came along to explain exactly how the Flats Recycling Scheme worked; he took our advice on where the containers should be put and they sent leaflets to every flat to let us know what we could and couldn't recycle."

"I wasn't sure how much people would use the service but within the first week we were recycling so much, we had to ask for extra containers."

"And the service has also proved popular because the containers are emptied every week - so they don't overflow - and they are difficult to vandalise."

Do you think that your flats might benefit from the Flats Recycling Service? If so, then call ECT on 020 8371 3670 or email: [info@ectrecycling.co.uk](mailto:info@ectrecycling.co.uk)

To find out more about recycling in Barnet see the council's website at: [www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk)

## What can I Recycle?

### The flats based service collects:

- ▶ Glass - green, brown or clear bottles and jars
- ▶ Paper - newspapers, magazines, junk mail, telephone directories
- ▶ Tins and cans - food tins and drinks cans

### The Recycle from Home service collects:

- ▶ Glass bottles and jars
- ▶ All cans and tins
- ▶ Newspapers, magazines, junk mail, telephone directories
- ▶ Aluminium foil
- ▶ Textiles and shoes
- ▶ Engine oil
- ▶ Car and household batteries
- ▶ Yellow pages
- ▶ Mobile phones

If you do not have a black recycling box, or live in a flat, ring the hotline 020 8371 3670 and arrange for a regular collection.

You can also take household waste for recycling to the Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre at Summers Lane, N12.

# True grit

Barnet Council's gritting crews were congratulated for their massive effort clearing roads during the severe weather conditions in January.

Council Leader Cllr Victor Lyon, Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Brian Coleman and Chief Executive Leo Boland personally thanked officers at a visit to Mill Hill Depot.

During the snowstorms many residents experienced long delays in getting home. The council's entire fleet of nine gritting lorries (one of the most modern in London) were mobilised within twenty minutes of the Met Office warning and the borough's 147 miles of main roads were gritted before the snow fell two hours later. Also, staff commenced gritting Barnet's main roads the night before in anticipation of the extreme weather.

It was a real team effort as crews operated the gritting machines more or less without a break for two days keeping major routes and then side roads clear. Crews only stopped for lorry refuelling and restocking of salt.

Gritting teams also worked in very long shifts ensuring pavements around public places such as schools, hospitals and day care centres were kept free of snow and ice.



True grit. Barnet Council's Chief Executive Leo Boland (left) Council Leader Victor Lyon and Cabinet Member for the Environment Cllr Brian Coleman (third from right) thank the council's gritting team for their efforts during this winter's bad weather.

**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 020 8359 2000

Visit the council's website at [www.barnet.gov.uk](http://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: Hendon Town Hall Chipping Barnet Library Edgware Library Golders Green Library

**Action Points can also be contacted by:**

Telephone: 020 8359 4000 Fax: 020 8359 2197

Minicom: 020 8203 8942

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**Contacting your local Councillor**

(Surgery appointments are not necessary.

At bank holidays, surgery times may change so please ring beforehand to check)

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## School celebrates ten years of success

London Education Minister Stephen Twigg's recent visit to the Compton School marked the school's tenth anniversary and was recognition for an outstanding OFSTED report last year, the renewal of its 'Beacon Status' and an invitation to apply for 'Advanced School' status which brings with it the possibility of further funding.

Consistently oversubscribed since it opened the school is currently undergoing a £4.7 million expansion programme.

Teresa Tunnadine who has been at the Compton School since it was opened in 1992, first as deputy headteacher and for the last four years as headteacher, is delighted with the progress that has been made.

She said: "This has been a real team effort. We are fully staffed with outstanding specialist teachers in all areas again. We also have delightful, mature and very hardworking pupils and supportive parents and Governors. These are essential ingredients for a successful school. We all look forward to the next ten years, which we know will bring even more success."



Proud headteacher of Compton Technology College Teresa Tunnadine with two of her pupils

# Play! launched

**Play! – a major interactive Children's Art Festival has been launched with the help of Barnet school children.**

**T**he festival which will celebrate all aspects of children's play and feature just about every art form imaginable is being organised by Barnet Council's Arts Service in partnership with the authority's Early Years team and Artsdepot

In the six month run up to the main event at Friary Park on July 13 adults and youngsters will get the chance to meet and learn from artists in a series of workshops, residencies and road shows being staged throughout the borough.

The first of these, marking the launch of the 'Play! Children's Arts Festival', saw pupils from St Paul's Primary School in Mill Hill working with children's author and illustrator Jenny Bent.



Pupils from St Paul's Primary School in Mill Hill with children's author and illustrator Jenny Bent and Barnet Council's Cabinet Member for Community Development and Youth Peter Davis at the launch of the Play! Children's Arts Festival

**Want to know more?**

Call the Arts Service on

**020 8359 3152**

## Education Minister visits Barnet

London Education Minister Stephen Twigg has visited three of Barnet's secondary schools.

Mr Twigg was in the borough to present certificates to pupils at Cophall School in Mill Hill, unveil a new Connexions service at the Ravenscroft School and officially open the Compton School in Finchley as a Technology College.

The new Connexions Centre and Co-ordinator at Ravenscroft will provide an all embracing information and support service for 13-19-year-olds. It will offer advice on issues ranging from careers to extra-curricular activities as well as providing a forum for discussing personal issues.

As part of its new technology status the Compton School will receive up to £500,000 in additional funding over the

next four years. This will be used to improve technology facilities for pupils and this year the school has opened four more IT suites, including one for community use.



Barnet's Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Lifelong Learning Lynne Hillan with London Education Minister Stephen Twigg who opened the new Connexions Service at The Ravenscroft School on his recent visit to Barnet

## Education service puts best foot forward

**B**arnet Council is committed to providing a first class education for every child in the borough and making its schools the best in the country.

To make sure our schools maintain their current high standards and keep making progress, the council's education service is constantly looking at ways to improve the support it offers them.

Strategies for raising standards and for helping children with special educational needs as well as tackling the problem of improving school buildings are all areas currently under the microscope.

To help meet these challenges the council has been working closely with education consultants CAPITA. During the last six months a lot of progress has been made thanks to this partnership and this work will now be taken forward by the council's recently appointed Chief Education Officer Gillian Palmer.

An example of this progress has been the re-grading of the borough's Education Development Plan (EDP)

from a '5' to a much improved '3' by the Government's education watchdog OFSTED.

The EDP is the main blueprint all councils use for working in partnership with schools to raise standards. OFSTED commented that Barnet's EDP was a 'sound plan with good features'.

Other areas of progress include the development of a code of practice for the relationship between the council and schools and significant improvements in Information Technology, which have seen all schools contactable by e-mail for the first time.

Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Lifelong Learning Cllr Lynne Hillan said: "The progress we are making shows our commitment to offering first class support to all our schools and also the value of using the expertise provided by CAPITA."

### Want to know more?

Contact Martin Baker on

020 8359 3922

## Barnet GCSE students get top marks in league tables

Results achieved by Barnet's GCSE students are amongst the best in the country.

Latest performance tables show that pupils' average exam results are the third best in London and seventh in England.

Nearly 60 per cent of students achieved five grades GCSE's at grades C or above – well above the national average of 51.5 per cent.

This also marks a 3.3 per cent improvement on last year's figures and compares to a 1.5 per cent national improvement.

Although many of the borough's top performing schools are selective the latest league tables from the DfES show that the majority of Barnet's other schools also managed to improve the performance of individual pupils given their previous levels of attainment.

## Barnet appoints new Chief Education Officer

Barnet Council has announced the appointment of a new Chief Education Officer.

Gillian Palmer has been Chief Inspector and Assistant Director for Education at Hammersmith and Fulham since 1997.

She will be working closely with headteachers as well as school staff, governors, parents and children to make sure the challenges facing the borough's education service are met and that all Barnet's children continue to receive a first class education in first class schools.

Looking forward to her new job Gillian, a former primary and special educational needs teacher, said: "I am delighted to be joining Barnet. I am impressed by Barnet's strong commitment to providing the best possible education for children in the borough, a commitment that I share.

"The high standards achieved already provide a firm base on which we can build so that Barnet is recognised for its excellent schools and services."



Gillian Palmer

# Barnet launches equality blueprint

**B**arnet Council has updated its Equalities Policy and sent a strong message out to the community – that racism and prejudice will never be tolerated.

The launch of the Policy in January was an exciting event with pupils from Copthall School performing on steel drums, Holly Park School children on African Drums and Moss Hall Infants Choir serenading visitors. An enormous number of people from across the borough attended the event – from employers and residents, to workers and volunteers.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Victor Lyon and Councillor Katia David, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Social Inclusion, praised the numerous groups across the borough that contributed to the Policy, which spells out the equalities guide for staff, residents and council service users.

Local organisations such as Barnet

Youth Against Racism, Disability Action, Barnet Voluntary Services Council, Barnet Multicultural Centre and the council's Black Staff Support Group have all contributed to the Policy. They were also given the opportunity to talk about the importance of the new Equalities Policy and their experiences of dealing with diverse communities within the borough.

The newly launched Barnet Equality Policy will be used as a reference point for council staff, employers, councillors, unions and residents. Along with a Statement of Commitment from Barnet Council, it provides guidance on issues concerning equality within the local community.

## Want to know more?

To get a copy of the Equalities Policy contact Wendy on 020 8359 3880 or e-mail [wendy.earle@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.earle@barnet.gov.uk).



Pupils from Copthall School entertain visitors on steel drums



Pupils from Holly Park School Prepare for another session on their African drums!



Shadow Home Secretary Oliver Letwin MP gets a demonstration of the new CCTV control centre in action

**The war against crime in Barnet has been given a powerful boost with the opening of the council's state-of-the-art CCTV control centre.**



Working for a safer community: Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Brian Coleman visits Barnet's new CCTV Control Centre

# Crime busting CCTV control centre opened

Last month Shadow Home Secretary Oliver Letwin MP unveiled the crime-busting system at a special ceremony attended by the Mayor, Cllr Joan Scannell, Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Brian Coleman and senior officers from the council and local police.

The system in Hendon is expected to significantly improve crime prevention and detection. The 24-hour centre will provide a dedicated link to local police. It will also support the council's Neighbourhood Wardens in their clampdown on anti-social behaviour.

The scheme will monitor Barnet Council's network of cameras currently located in Golders Green, Edgware, North Finchley and East Barnet town centres, the Grahame Park estate in Colindale and the Granville Road estate in Cricklewood.

Traders and local people have welcomed these surveillance cameras as an effective way of fighting crime and the fear of crime.

Staff at the new centre, which was commissioned at the end of last year, are able to watch high-quality images on large TV screens. Police will view incidents caught on camera in a separate review room.

Each CCTV Operator has received full training and undergone vetting

by the police and council.

Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Brian Coleman said: "This administration is determined to do everything it can to reduce crime and the fear of crime in the borough. CCTV plays an important role by both deterring and detecting the thugs, vandals and thieves that make everyone's lives a misery. The new control centre means we will be able to keep a round-the-clock watch on suspicious behaviour and call on the police quickly to respond to incidents. It will also help us to more effectively identify suspects and provide the crucial evidence police need to secure prosecutions."

Shadow Home Secretary Oliver Letwin MP said: "I am delighted to be unveiling Barnet Council's new CCTV control centre. In all too many parts of Britain, the criminals have won the battle for the streets. They are making life a misery for millions of people. This state-of-the-art centre will help to redress the balance here in Barnet and enable police to win back the streets for the ordinary, decent citizen."

## Want to know more?

Contact Tom Morrissey on 020 8359 4752 or e-mail [tom.morrissey@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:tom.morrissey@barnet.gov.uk)



Barnet's network of CCTV cameras are monitored 24-hours a day from the control centre

# Overview and Scrutiny

## your questions answered

**Councillor John Marshall, Chairman of the Council Policy Conference, answers your questions on overview and scrutiny committees and urges residents to play their part too**



**Q What are scrutiny committees?**

**A** They are the council's watchdogs, monitoring its performance, investigating major issues and making sure its policies deliver the quality services promised.

**Q What do they do?**

**A** They have a duty to challenge the decisions of Cabinet, the way the council's policies, services and finances are operating and report any problems to those whose task it is to put them right.

**Q What sort of things are scrutinised?**

**A** They scrutinise policy, service delivery, performance, finance and review major decisions. Rents paid by private

tenants, Barnet FC, provision of nursery places, home care, planning and the public are among nearly 60 issues currently up for scrutiny.

**Q Who sits on them and how do they work?**

**A** There are nine committees each covering different areas of the council's work. They have a rolling programme of topics to be investigated and can also tackle urgent issues whenever and wherever they arise. Councillors from all parties, co-opted residents and various experts serve on these committees.

**Q Isn't it just councillors policing themselves?**

**A** No, because independent people are included. For that reason they will work even better if more residents join in. They are an important way for residents and others to work in partnership with councillors. They hold the council to account and they meet openly and in public. Cabinet members are not allowed to sit on scrutiny committees.

**Q Why is it important for residents to play a bigger part?**

**A** The council spends more than £1 million a day of your money. By putting council decisions and policies under the microscope, scrutiny committees help to ensure that this is well spent and on the services residents want and need. This is vital to make our borough a better, cleaner, safer place in which to live and work.

**Q How do I find out more?**

**A** Check out the timetable for future meetings on the council's website, call the Scrutiny Office on 020 8359 2750.

# Talented artists rewarded

Four young artists from Barnet are among 12 from north London to be awarded prizes in a unique competition designed to give up and coming young talent a chance.

The Apthorp Fund for Young Artists, which was set up in 1993, aims to help artists preparing to try and make a living from their talent, by buying their work.

By offering to purchase selected efforts at prices ranging from £200 - £2,000 and arranging their long term display in public buildings, the scheme helps to establish a permanent collection by



Innocence Consumed by Peter de Santis - one of the winning entries in this year's Apthorp Fund for Young Artists

promising young artists while giving a wider audience the opportunity to see their work. A special award of £5,000 is paid for any work considered to be truly outstanding.

Ten pieces of artwork were selected for consideration in each of the borough's taking part - Barnet, Brent, Haringey, Enfield and Harrow - before a panel of judges selected the winners. The panel of judges included John Moores prize winner David Leapman.

The successful Barnet artists were Peter de Santis, Kristina O'Donnell, Katie David and Monica Haddad.

Before going on permanent display in public buildings across North London an exhibition of the winners' work will tour the following North London venues:

**Gallery Fore, 107 Fore Street, Edmonton, N18, March 19 - April 10**  
**The Bull Arts Centre, 68 High Street, Barnet, EN5, June 12 - July 1**  
**Fovea Studio and Gallery, 140 Vaughan Road, Harrow, HA1, July 5 - July 20**

## Want to know more?

Contact the Arts Service on

**020 8359 3152**

# Children's Information Service honoured

**B**arnet's award winning Children's Information Service (CIS) has been recognised at a special ceremony at the Guildhall in London.

The event marked the achievements of Children's Information Services from all over the country that have received the National Quality Award for Excellence.

At the ceremony leader of Barnet Council Victor Lyon was invited to speak about Barnet's CIS which is now regarded as a model for others to follow.

He emphasised that the service is now seen as "a one stop shop" where parents, careworkers, teachers, childminders and employers can obtain free, reliable, comprehensive information and guidance on all services available for children.

This includes everything from giving advice on pre-school places and childminders to advising about careers in childcare. The CIS also promote Working Families Tax Credit and family friendly policies to local employers.

The National Quality Award shows that Barnet's CIS is operating at a higher level than national standards set by the government. Performance in areas such as accessibility, equal opportunities and publicity are all taken into consideration.

Receiving the National Quality Award for Excellence in a period of just 15 months from December 2001 shows other local authorities how much can be achieved in a short period if there is

the will and professional input to do it.

The service is now manned by a well trained, permanent staff team, has its own web-site and leaflets and employs an outreach worker to target hard to reach groups in the borough. It also holds surgeries and information sessions throughout Barnet on what childcare and services are available for parents and carers.



Receiving the award (from left to right) Karen Ramshaw chief executive of National Association of Children's Information Services, Rachel Williams, Children's Information Service, Cabinet Member Councillor Lynne Hillan and Council Leader Victor Lyon

The Leader of Barnet Council, Victor Lyon said: "Making sure parents know where to go to receive the best quality childcare available when they return to work is just one example of the valuable service provided by the CIS.

"The National Quality Award is recognition for all the hard work carried out by staff which has seen Barnet's CIS gain a reputation for excellence, offering information on much more than just childcare."

## Want to know more?

Call 0800 3898312; e-mail [childrens.info@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.info@barnet.gov.uk); visit [www.barnet.gov.uk/education/childrens-info](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/education/childrens-info) or minicom 020 8359 3624

## Cutting Back



Plane trees – nice to look at but a nightmare for some!

These trees may look nice enough – but for some people they can be a nightmare!

Traditional Plane trees have sprouted up all over London and they have been in this country since the sixteenth century. The reason they flourish so well is that that they aren't bothered about air pollution and can grow very quickly – even in the most difficult conditions. However, left out of control they can cause havoc as their roots sprawl under buildings and their branches sprout over roads.

Throughout April, Barnet Council will be undertaking extensive tree maintenance work across the borough. Originally these trees were managed by a method called 'pollarding' which meant that they were cut well back and kept very small. They didn't look good afterwards and often resembled a stump, but grew back into large trees very quickly.

When the council start their programme of tree maintenance this spring, workers will be trimming the Plane trees in a different way. Instead of dramatically chopping them back, they will return the trees back to their original size to help conserve them for future enjoyment. This also means that the trees won't grow back so quickly, and that the need to cut them back will be reduced.

The majority of affected trees are on the main routes through the borough – Finchley Road NW11, High Road N2 and N12 area, and work will be carried out quickly to minimise any disruption through those areas.

## Cash help for disadvantaged children



### children's fund

Vulnerable children and their families in Barnet will soon be able to benefit from a £700,000 Children's Fund government grant.

The Children's Fund is a national programme designed to provide additional resources over and above those already provided. It targets the voluntary sector, community and religious groups and gets them to work in partnership with local councils.

The aim is to tackle child poverty among the 5 to 13 year olds within families before it becomes a way of life.

The fund was set up to plug gaps and complement existing services. It will be used to enable vulnerable children and young people to play a full role in their communities, support their parents and families, promote their health and well being and reduce youth crime.

The Family Welfare Association will lead the scheme on behalf of the council. The funding is due to be released in April.

# Fostering update

**T**he latest figures from Barnet's hugely successful fostering campaign show a 250 per cent increase in enquiries from people who would like to become foster carers in the nine months since the campaign began.

Like every other part of the UK Barnet has a shortage of foster carers. In the past this has meant children being sent out of the borough away from their schools, friends and extended family, to receive the care they need.

Barnet's response has been to cut the bureaucracy and make it easier for local single people or couples from all

cultural backgrounds to come forward and experience a challenging and rewarding experience.

Local people have already responded well to this appeal but more carers are needed.

Potential carers will have access to high quality advice and information from the start and be able to join a mutual support network.



### Want to know more?

Call free anytime on

**0800 389 8740**

# The council closes in on fraudsters

Barnet Council is clamping down on those who fraudulently claim benefits – thanks to its very own Anti-Fraud Investigation Service.

Over the past twelve months, over fourteen people within the borough have been taken to court for benefit fraud – and there are a number of cases still in the pipeline. Prosecution for fraud often results in a prison sentence.

### Want to know more?

Fraudulently claiming benefits is theft – and if you wish to report someone you think may be receiving benefits they are not entitled to then call the Fraud Hotline on 020 8359 2007. All calls are treated in total confidence.

# Our man in North Finchley



**T**own keeper Paul Cursons is the man making sure North Finchley shopping area is clear of problems.

Working closely with traders and local people, Paul is leading the fight back against graffiti vandals and litterbugs in the area.

He is ready to respond quickly to any environmental problems he spots or reported to him.

To help him deliver the goods Paul has priority access to one of the council's new high-tech sweeping machines, designed to vacuum up larger pieces of rubbish.

Paul said: "People want their town centre clean and tidy and I'm doing my very best to make sure it is. I'm out and about in the town centre every morning



North Finchley Town Keeper Paul Cursons getting to know local traders with Neighbourhood Management Officer Sue Gaye

Out and about with North Finchley Town Keeper Paul Cursons

- if you see a problem, let me know so that I can make sure it's cleared."

## Cleaner borough

Barnet's town centres are being cleaned up like never before as the council continues to roll out the town keeper scheme across the borough.

In February Colindale became the latest town centre to benefit from this popular scheme which is keeping shopping areas and surrounding streets graffiti and litter free.

It follows the unveiling of the Cricklewood town keeper service in December last year. Whetstone will be the eleventh town centre to get the clean up treatment when the scheme is launched later this month.

Town keepers carry out early morning patrols of their patch sorting out repairs or arranging for them to be done.

They are equipped with the very latest in cleaning equipment and a specially programmed mobile phone ensuring fast access to Barnet Council cleansing and repair services.

Barnet's town keepers service also work closely with neighbourhood management officers on removing abandoned vehicles and taking enforcement action against graffiti vandals and litterbugs.

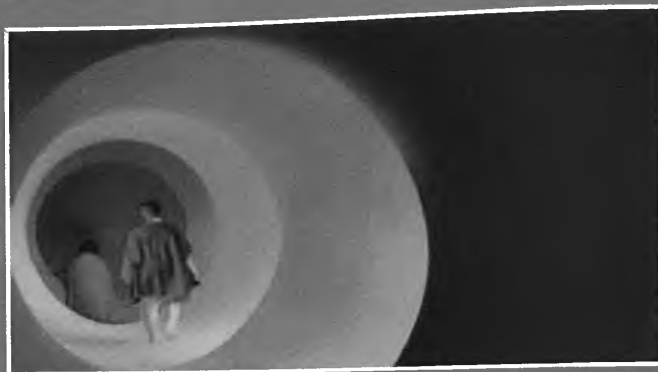
Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Coleman, who launched the Colindale scheme, said: "Our introduction of town keepers has been a great success. They are improving the appearance of town centres making life better for shoppers, workers and people enjoying a night out."



Colindale streets get a thorough clean up

# Countdown to arts depot

artsdepot, the brand new arts centre development at Tally Ho Corner in North Finchley, is now just over a year away from opening its doors to the public for the first time.



Colourscape at the Play! Festival

The Bull Arts Centre in High Barnet will be moving into artsdepot at the beginning of 2004, and is currently planning a programme of events to take place there from May 2004. In the meantime, artsdepot will be running The Bull from this April, and continuing to provide a wide range of theatre, dance, arts education, comedy, children's shows and music to regular and new audiences.

As well as the packed programme at The Bull, artsdepot will be involved in events happening around the Borough of Barnet which will offer opportunities for residents to become more involved in arts activity in the run up to artsdepot's opening.

Just one of the highlights that artsdepot will be involved with this spring and summer is the Play! Festival on Sunday 13 July which will offer a fun packed and creative day for all the family in Friern Barnet's Friary Park. Look out for Colourscape, a huge interactive podlike structure, which will be descending on Barnet for ten days in July as part of Play!

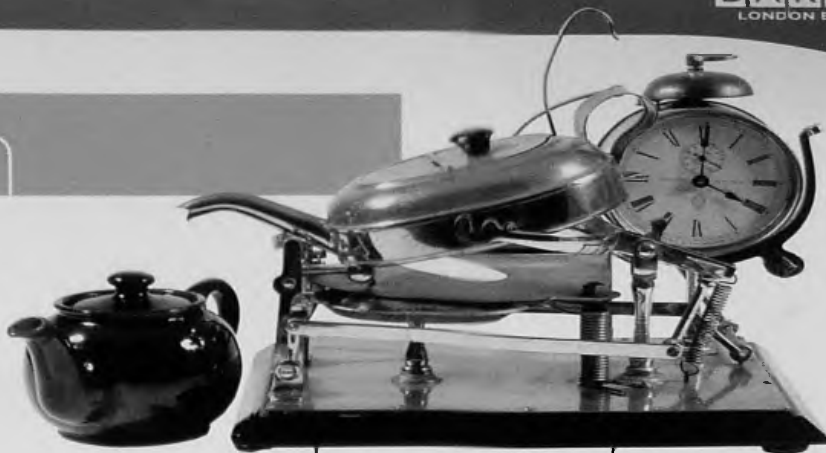
artsdepot will provide two brand new theatre spaces, one with 400 seats and the other with 150 seats, suitable for a wide range of live performance, alongside a dedicated gallery, rehearsal and studio spaces. This is a major development for north London, located in the heart of your Borough. We hope that you will get involved with the run up to opening and that we can welcome you through the doors of artsdepot in just over a year from now!

artsdepot has just launched a fantastic new sponsorship scheme called Buy a Brick which gives commercial companies the opportunity to reach around 150,000 people per year in a unique and innovative way. Businesses can invest in the future of the arts in North Finchley by buying an eye catching resin brick. Each brick incorporates a chosen object and the company's name or logo and will be part of a prominent wall located in the main public entrance foyer of artsdepot.

For more details of how to get involved with this exciting project for north London visit our website at [www.artsdepot.co.uk](http://www.artsdepot.co.uk) for up to date news, or call 020 8359 2325 to register on our mailing list.

# what's on

## Weird and Wonderful Contraptions:



Everyday Gadgets 1800-1950. Amazing social, domestic and workplace labour-saving devices from the Collins family collection. Also Hendon's Hidden History: Work by Hendon & District Archaeological Society. Forty years of excavations in the old village of Hendon. On until 1 June 2003 at Church Farmhouse Museum, Greyhound Hill, Hendon, NW4. Open Mon-Thurs 10am-12.30pm and 1.30-5pm; Sat 10am-1pm and 2-5.30pm, Sun 2-5.30pm. Closed Fri.

**Free admission.**

Planning a local event? Want free publicity? Barnet First can help you. We'll publicise it on this page (space permitting) and also put it on Barnet's website ([www.barnet.gov.uk](http://www.barnet.gov.uk)). Send details to Susan Segar, Barnet Council, Public Affairs, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon NW4 4BG, fax: 020 8359 2677 or email: [susan.segar@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:susan.segar@barnet.gov.uk)  
The next issue of Barnet First is out in May.

Girls Soccer Sessions (ages 12-16) start from 25 March on Thursdays, 6.30-7.30pm at Edson Sports Centre, Pavilion Way, Edgware, Middx. HA8 9YA. £2 per session. Also Barnet Cophthall Women's Football Club (ages 14 upwards) trains every Tuesday and Thursday. Matches played on Sunday. Interested players please phone Lou Panteli on 07941 396964 or email: [BarnetCophthall@aol.com](mailto:BarnetCophthall@aol.com)

Hampstead Garden Opera presents Offenbach's 'The Tales of Hoffmann'. Upstairs at The Gatehouse Pub, Highgate Village, N6 7 30pm (Sundays 4pm) 27-30 March & 3-6 April. Box Office 020 8340 3488.

Lyric Theatre presents 'Shhh', A Mothers Day Special! A delightful multi-sensory show for the very young (6 months-3yrs) and exhausted parents that explores the magical, mystical and chaotic world of bedtime (Puppetry, music, live performers) 30 March, 11.30am, 1pm, 3pm, 4.30pm (4 performances) The Bull, 68 High Street, Barnet EN5 5SJ. Box Office 020 8449 0048. Visit website [www.thebull.org.uk](http://www.thebull.org.uk) for details of Theatre, Dance,

### Music, Comedy & Spoken Word, Community and Children's events at The Bull.

30 March 2pm Maureen Lipman introduces a special screening of Polanski's film 'The Pianist' Followed by an open discussion with special guests. Tickets £10/£8 conc. From 11 April, 'Open Hearts' a new Dogma 95 film from Denmark, from April 25 'Liya-4-Ever' the new film by Swedish director Lukas Moodyson Phoenix Cinema, 52 High Rd., East Finchley, N2 9PJ. Box Office: 020 8444 6789. For full programme details phone Information Line: 020 8883 2233 or see website: [www.phoenixcinema.co.uk](http://www.phoenixcinema.co.uk)

Barnet Plus is a social club for ages 18-36. Regular Sunday evening meetings in the upstairs function room of the Bull & Butcher pub, 1277 High Road, Whetstone, N20. Cost £1.60. Enquiries to 020 8361 2827 or [info@barnetplus.com](mailto:info@barnetplus.com) Part of a network of similar groups. See [www.barnetplus.com](http://www.barnetplus.com)

Choi Kwang-Do is a new form of martial art that improves your health and equips you with effective street self-defence skills.

Practical, easy to learn and suitable for men, women and children. Taught in a safe and positive environment at Hendon School, Golders Rise, NW4. Tel. 020 8248 9346 or email: [hendonckd@yahoo.com](mailto:hendonckd@yahoo.com) to arrange a FREE introductory lesson.

Re-enactment weekend 5 & 6 April. Stunning civil war re-enactments, living history areas and war displays. Also Easter Egg Hunt 14-25 April. Follow the clues correctly and the prize could be yours! For more details of these and other events at RAF Museum, Grahame Park Way, NW9. Tel 020 8205 2266/8358 4849.

'What is Popular Fiction?' 8th Annual Middlesex University Literary Festival. Multi-million selling authors, literary agents and publishers mix with students and literary hopefuls. All the events at the festival, including writing workshops, are free and are open to anyone who loves reading. 8 and 9 April, All Saints Centre, White Hart Lane, London N17 8HR. For more information contact organiser Adam Raooof on 020 8202 0982.

Choices for Grahame Park is organising a jobfair to take place at the Orions Primary School (Grahame Park NW9) on Wednesday 16 April from 3-7pm. Many major employers will be represented, offering current job opportunities and training programmes to local residents, workshops and individual help will be available to anyone looking for work, or just thinking about returning to work, and everyone is welcome. Contact Fiona Macintosh on 020 8357 4621 for further details.

Mill Hill Jazz Club meets Wednesday evenings around 8.30pm at The Three Hammers Pub, Hammers Lane, Mill Hill, NW7. Every last Saturday of the month is party night with a top live band. For more information phone Paul Amsterdam on 020 8958 4824 or email: [amsters@pamusic.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:amsters@pamusic.freereserve.co.uk) or see website: [www.millhilljazzclub.co.uk](http://www.millhilljazzclub.co.uk)

'An Experiment with an Air Pump' by Shelagh Stephenson. Directed by David Longstaff. This play is set over two time periods 1799-1999. The cellar of the house reveals a dark secret buried for 200 years. 5-10 May, Incognito Theatre, Holly Park Road (behind Health Centre), Friern Barnet, N11. Tickets 020 8361 8310

The Da Capo Concert Band rehearses every Wednesday, 8-10pm, and plays a variety of music. New members always welcome. All Saints Arts Centre, Oakleigh Road North, Whetstone, N20. £3.50 per week. For more details phone Barnet Music Services

020 8359 3111 or email: [mefanieatterbury@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mefanieatterbury@yahoo.co.uk)

Garden Suburb Theatre presents 'Separate Tables' Terence Rattigan's play about events that shatter the calm of a genteel residential hotel. 8-10 May, 8pm, The Institute, Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, NW11. Tickets £7/£5.50 conc. Box Office 020 7723 6609.

Finchley Chamber Choir with an orchestra of period instruments perform the Mass in B Minor by Bach. 10 May, 7.45pm, Trinity Church, Nether Street, Finchley, N12. Tickets from Celia Bangham, Tel. 020 8446 6151.

Golders Green Rapidplay is the UK's longest-running rapidplay chess tournament. Each player has 30 mins for all their moves. You don't have to be a member of a chess club. 4 sections from beginners to grandmasters with players ranging in age from 6-96. Meets every month £15 on the day, £13 by email. Run by Adam Raooof of FIDE (World Chess Federation) Arbiter and former Captain of the English Olympiad Team. For more details: phone 020 8202 0982, email: [adamraoofsubscribe@topica.com](mailto:adamraoofsubscribe@topica.com) or see website: [www.circuit.demon.co.uk](http://www.circuit.demon.co.uk)

Finchley & Friern Barnet Operatic Society presents Barry Manilow's 'Copacabana' at the Millfield Theatre, Silver St., Edmonton, N18. 7.45pm, 29 April/3 May (Sat mat 3pm) For tickets and more information phone 020 8482 6923.

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