

barnetfirst

issue 62 July 2015



Opening the door
to a new home

See page 8

Leader's column

Contents

Leader's column	2
News in brief	3
Housing	5
Brent Cross/Cricklewood plans	6
Grahame Park regen	8
Joined up working	10
Our town centres	12
Consultations	14
Contact your councillors	15

Contacting your council

Corporate Customer Services

tel: 020 8359 2000

email: first.contact@barnet.gov.uk

Contact us and we will identify the correct service or person you are looking for.

Street-based services

tel: 020 8359 4600

Covering waste and recycling collection, holes in the road, abandoned vehicles and graffiti.

Parking enquiries

tel: 020 8359 7446

www.barnet.gov.uk/parking

Planning and licensing advice

tel: 020 8359 3000

Social Care Direct

tel: 020 8359 5000

Out of hours emergencies

tel: 020 8359 2000

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barnet.first@barnet.gov.uk

Or write to us

First Contact, London Borough of Barnet,
North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road
South, London N11 1NP

Privacy

Barnet has revised its Privacy Statement.
If you want to know more visit:

www.barnet.gov.uk/privacy

Barnet is a wonderful place to live, and I am proud to be a resident and represent the people who live here.

While protecting all that is good about Barnet – our parks and green space, fantastic schools and diverse community – we also need to plan for the future. We need to respond to our growing population so the borough continues to be a place where people aspire to live.

Our regeneration and growth plans will revitalise some of our most run down housing. It will create thousands of job and business opportunities, provide people with the ability to acquire new skills; and allow us to build new schools to give children the best start in life.

In this edition of Barnet First, you can read more about the latest plans for Brent Cross Cricklewood – the borough's largest development scheme. The development will bring 7,500 new homes, community facilities and thousands of new jobs over the life of the scheme with more than 8,000 created in the first five years. You can also hear from residents about their experiences of regeneration on some of our housing estates, and the modern homes and mixed tenure developments which are creating new communities.

We want residents to help themselves through finding employment. Our Welfare Reform Task Force has continued its excellent work to help those affected by the benefit cap into work. I'm pleased that we can widen out this support as a result of additional government funding. It will be used to provide additional schemes, targeted to help those who need it most. As a result of working with employers, local people are also benefitting from new construction apprenticeship and retail job opportunities.

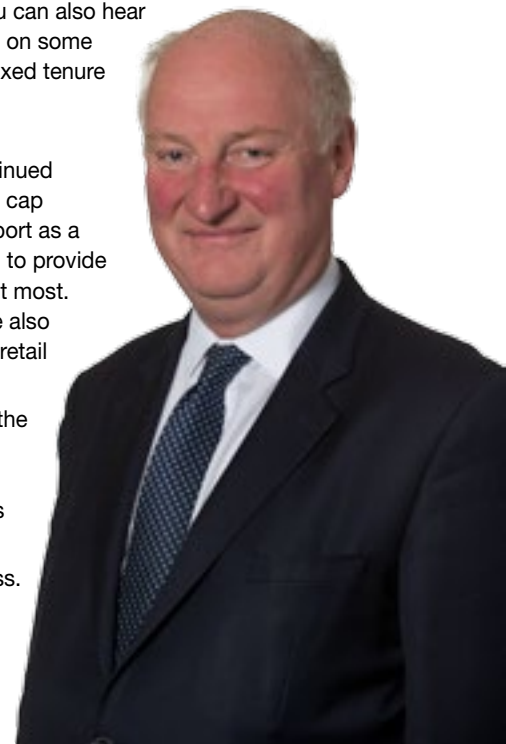
I understand that some people may be worried about the change that regeneration and development may bring. I am committed to leading it properly, maximising the benefits for the local community and keeping all that is good about the borough.

We'll keep you informed and involved as plans progress.

Yours



Richard Cornelius



news in brief

APPROVED

40 new council homes for Barnet

Building work has begun on 40 new council homes across six sites in Barnet.

The building work will be started and completed on a staggered basis with all sites finalised by Spring 2016.

Barnet Homes, the council's social housing managing agents, is organising the building of the new houses with appointed contractor Bugler Developments on behalf of the council.



The schemes are as follows:

Bedford Road, Mill Hill

Four new homes consisting of two 3-bed houses and two flats.

Brent Place, High Barnet

Five new homes consisting of two 3-bed houses and three 2-bed houses.

Haldane Close, Muswell Hill

Nine new homes consisting of 1 and 2-bed flats.

Green Lane, Edgware

Three new homes consisting of two 3-bed houses and a 1-bed bungalow.

Tarling Road, East Finchley

Nine new homes consisting of three 3-bed houses and six flats.

Wade Court, Muswell Hill

Ten new homes, consisting of 1, 2 and 3-bed flats.

51st Mayor of Barnet sworn into office

Councillor Mark Shooter has become the 51st Mayor of Barnet after being sworn into office during the annual meeting of full Council at Hendon Town Hall on 13 May.

Councillor Shooter's wife Melissa will be his Mayoress during his year in office and Councillor Alison Cornelius will act as Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Shooter grew up in Edgware before moving to Hendon, and has represented the Hendon ward since 2010.

During his mayoral year Councillor Shooter has chosen to support Chai Cancer Care in Hendon, having witnessed the valuable help and respite that they provide.



The new Mayor said:

"This is a tremendous honour and I am very much looking forward to meeting lots of Barnet residents, and I do hope that I will be able to encourage and inspire people to get involved in community matters. Barnet is one of the largest and most successful boroughs in London, and as Mayor I hope to make us proud of our successes."



Summer Reading Challenge 2015

This year's Summer Reading Challenge runs from 11 July to 5 September.

Summer Reading Challenge has teamed up with Guinness World Records – the global authority in record-breaking achievements and publisher of the annual Guinness World Records™ book – to establish a "Record Breakers" themed challenge.

It encourages children aged 4 to 11 to read just six books during their summer holidays. Children of all reading abilities can join in and they can read whatever they choose – stories, joke books, fact books, or even listen to audiobooks – it doesn't matter as long as they are borrowed from their local library.

After every two books they read, they get stickers and prizes and there's a certificate and a gold medal for everyone who finishes the challenge by reading all six books.

Register for free at your local library.

© Dave Warren Picture Team 2015 for The Reading Agency and with thanks to Southwark Libraries, Canada Water Library and the children from Alfred Salter Primary School



For more details, visit:
www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries





Cancer Prevention Campaign 2015

In Barnet, more than 1,400 people are diagnosed with cancer each year. But did you know that four in 10 cancer cases could be prevented by lifestyle changes?

The council recently teamed up with the Broadwalk shopping centre in Edgware to host a health day event which focused on raising awareness of healthy lifestyles and their contribution to cancer prevention.

During the event, local residents were given the opportunity to learn about the importance of healthy eating and its impact on cancer risk, as well as having the opportunity to speak to a professional nurse about any queries or concerns they had.

Further events will be taking place at the shopping centre, East Finchley Summer Festival and the Burnt Oak Multicultural Festival between June and November 2015 to promote the importance of healthy lifestyles and cancer prevention. An on-site nurse will be present, alongside other community health partners, for visitors who have concerns or questions about the disease.

Councillor Helena Hart, Chairman of the Barnet Health and Wellbeing Board, said: "Making healthy choices helps to keep us well and to prevent a whole range of conditions such as cancers. I'm very pleased that we have been able to build on the Cancer Pop Up shops last year and have the opportunity to provide information and support to residents."



Barnet's unsung heroes honoured at the 15th annual Civic Awards

The special ceremony, which was held at Hendon Town Hall in March, recognised 46 nominees for their hard work and commitment to our community.

Six of the nominees were judged to have made a special impact on Barnet civic life and were presented with a framed vellum in recognition of their hard work and achievements.

The six vellum winners
(pictured with former Mayor Councillor Hugh Rayner) were:

Nicole Duke
(for her tireless work for Barnet's Jewish community)

Richard King
(for his leadership work at East Finchley allotment site)

Peter Legate
(for his youth work in Stonegrove)

Mary O'Toole
(for her outstanding contribution to Noah's Ark Children's Hospice)

Jenny Thomas
(for 50 years service to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal)

Maureen West
(for 23 years service to Deans Way Neighbourhood Watch)



Housing – a plan for our future

Whether you are a home-owner, first time buyer, private renter or social tenant we know housing is a key issue for our residents.

The demand for housing is a challenge in Barnet, as it is throughout London. We are putting a range of schemes in place to meet the housing needs of our residents both now and in the future.

Increasing housing supply

To tackle the housing shortage we are building 20,000 new homes at our major growth and regeneration sites by 2025. This is the most in outer London, with roughly 40 per cent at affordable rates, (including shared ownership), for those who want to take a step from renting to owning.

The council is working with developers to ensure that growth is managed in a responsible way. For example, we know that Barnet's parks and open spaces are important to our residents, so creating new open space is central to one of our largest regeneration schemes in Brent Cross Cricklewood, which you can read more about on page 6.

We are committed to building 500 new council homes across the borough – the first in Barnet for over 25 years. We are looking at how surplus land can be used for council-led developments mixing private sale, affordable rented and shared ownership homes. Planning applications for the first three sites are to be considered shortly. We are also asking residents, developers and landowners to tell us about sites that could be used to meet our future housing needs. And we are delivering more housing now without the need for more land by helping owners of empty properties who wish to bring them back into residential use.

Regeneration of Barnet's housing estates

The regeneration of our largest social housing estates in Grahame Park (read more on page 8), West Hendon, Stonegrove/Spur Road (see page 13) and Dollis Valley will create 4,000 extra homes with a range of tenures to encourage mixed communities. This is already happening on the Stonegrove estate, which is now home to a thriving mix of existing social tenants, private renters and home owners.

New social tenants will be offered fixed tenancies so stock can be reallocated as people's circumstances change.

Maintaining quality in the private rental sector

As more residents are living in rented accommodation, we are also working to improve standards in the private rented sector. There are many decent properties available to let in Barnet from responsible landlords, but there is a lack of consistent quality.

We will support private renters by cracking down on irresponsible landlords. Part of our work in this area includes launching a consultation this month to get your views on how we manage Houses in Multiple Occupation (see page 14).

The council's Housing Strategy was due to be discussed by the council's Housing Committee on Monday 29 June.

For more information, visit:
www.barnet.gov.uk/regeneration



Brent Cross Cricklewood development picks up pace

The borough's largest development scheme took a major step forward earlier this year when the council selected its partner for the southern side of the Brent Cross Cricklewood redevelopment – Argent Related.

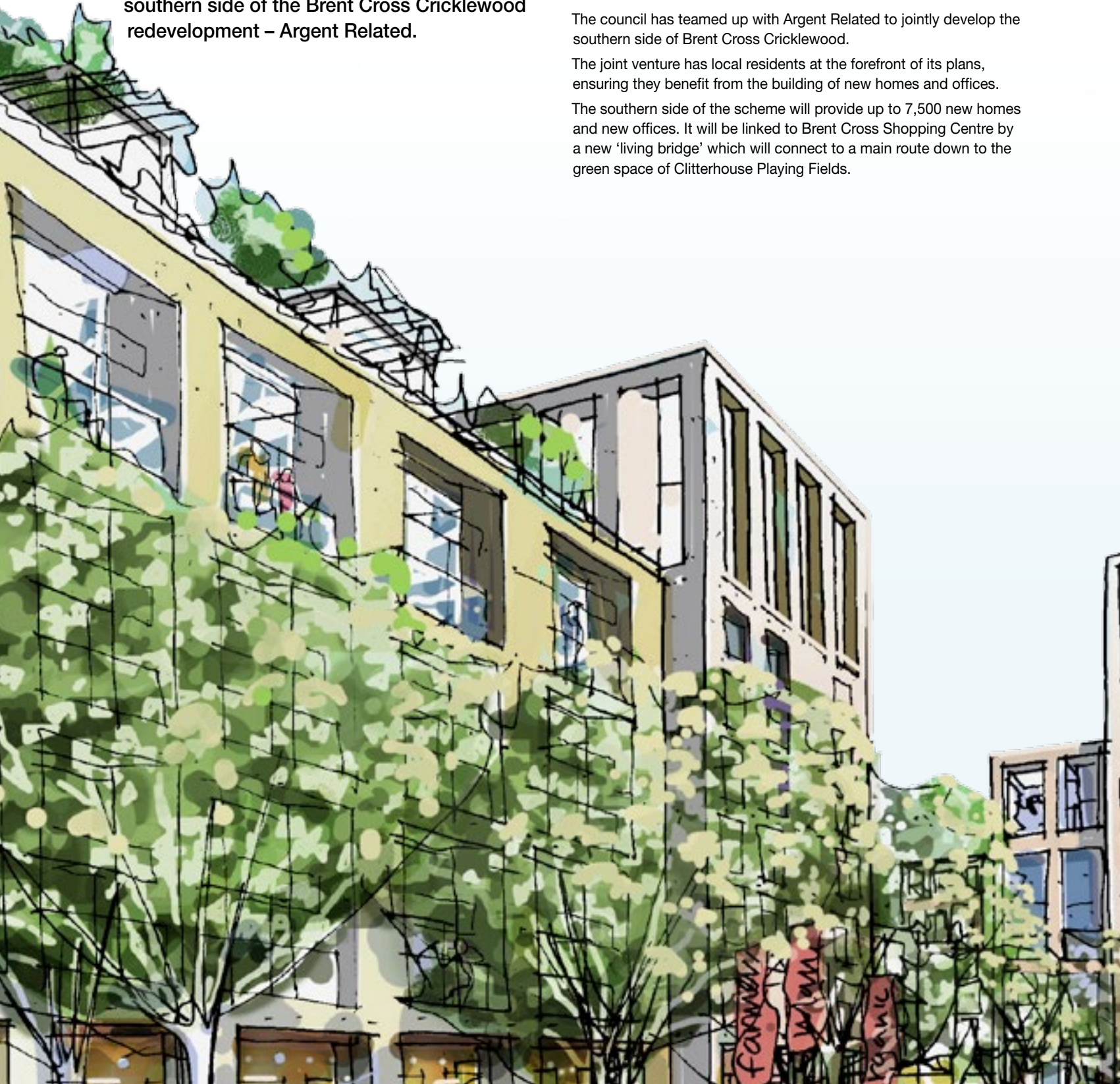
Over the next 25 years the area will be transformed to create up to 27,000 jobs, including 8,100 during the first five years of the masterplan, 7,500 new homes and new community facilities.

Southern side – Cricklewood

The council has teamed up with Argent Related to jointly develop the southern side of Brent Cross Cricklewood.

The joint venture has local residents at the forefront of its plans, ensuring they benefit from the building of new homes and offices.

The southern side of the scheme will provide up to 7,500 new homes and new offices. It will be linked to Brent Cross Shopping Centre by a new 'living bridge' which will connect to a main route down to the green space of Clitterhouse Playing Fields.



New schools and other facilities

As well as a new railway station, the overall redevelopment will provide a new Claremont Primary School and the rebuilding of Whitefield Secondary School and Mapledown Special School.

The possibility of expanding the preserved Old Farm Buildings next to Clitterhouse Playing Fields to become a community facility and green space, including the playing fields, is also being investigated.

Although there is already an approved masterplan for the southern development, Argent Related and the council are looking to work with local communities to ensure it's developed in the best possible way. It will begin exploring its vision with residents and workers later this year.

The Northern Site – Brent Cross

The northern part of Brent Cross will be redeveloped by Hammerson and Standard Life Investments, the owners of Brent Cross Shopping Centre.

The new vision for the centre, which will be unveiled later this year, will see the area transformed into a world class shopping venue as well as providing new day and night time entertainment and leisure facilities, including a cinema. The shopping centre will remain open throughout.

A detailed planning application for the new centre is expected next year with work scheduled to begin by early 2017. Within the first five years the project will create over 6,000 permanent new jobs, as well as 1,800 construction roles, supported by training and education programmes for local people.

Transport and parks

The developers of the centre will make a major investment in the surrounding transport infrastructure, with £200m spent on local roads and junctions to make it quicker and easier to get around, whether by public transport, walking or driving.

There will also be funding for a new bus station at Brent Cross – doubling the size of the current one – and forthcoming work at the underground station will provide step-free access onto the platform.

Another major investment will see a new mainline railway station to the north of the current Cricklewood Station (which will remain), meaning travellers can reach Kings Cross St Pancras in just eight minutes. Additional funding for the station has been secured from the government.

Meanwhile pedestrians and cyclists will benefit from new roads, bridges and green spaces linking areas on either side of the major roads and railways that divide the area.

The council has recently approved plans for 47 new homes on the Whitefield estate, and will shortly consider proposals for significant improvements to Clitterhouse Playing Fields and the creation of a new park at Claremont Open Space.

For more information, visit
www.barnet.gov.uk/cricklewood-brent-cross



Brent Cross job shop celebrating success

Dozens of local people have been able to find a job through the online Brent Cross Retail Job Shop launched last summer to ease access to retail jobs for local residents and encourage retail training, work placements and opportunities.

The vacancies can be accessed via Jobcentre Plus, www.brentcross.co.uk/jobs and www.jobs.barnet.com. A new portal will be launching soon.

To date, the Job Shop has listed 170 vacancies from 36 employers, and helped 47 Barnet-based jobseekers into work. The Job Shop continues to grow as vacancies arise and retailers seek to recruit.





Construction work in full swing at Grahame Park housing estate

Work is now well underway to transform the 1970s Grahame Park housing estate in Colindale with 3,000 modern homes.

Since work began in 2011, 533 homes have already been built. When complete, the scheme – one of the largest house building projects in Europe – will see the outdated blocks replaced with a mix of social and private new homes, shops, streets, gardens, community and health facilities and new parks.

To make the project possible, the council is working with a special company called Choices for Grahame Park, a subsidiary of the Genesis Housing Association.

The scheme, which will take about 15 years to complete, is central to plans for the wider redevelopment of the Colindale area.

The latest phase of rebuilding is now nearing completion with many families already moving into their new homes.

Among them are Elizabeth Ivkovic and her family who have been Grahame Park residents for more than 12 years.

In October last year Elizabeth, her husband, and three children, made the short move from their two bedroom council home to a newly constructed four bedroom house on the estate.

Elizabeth said: “When we saw the house for the first time I was really surprised at how generous the space was and I didn’t expect the quality of the work to be as good as it was.

“It’s made a huge difference to us all. Before my kids were sharing a bedroom and now they each have a room and there are no more tantrums.

“It’s just a healthy place to live, it is easy to manage and heat, it’s much more peaceful than living in the flat and I have a small garden which I love – I can see green from my living room now.”

Visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/grahame-park
for more information



Earn as you learn is a great incentive

The building of thousands of new homes across Barnet has led to an increase in construction apprenticeships for local people being created across the borough.

Over the last 12 months alone, 21 new apprenticeships in construction have started throughout Barnet.

These opportunities are the result of an employer brokerage scheme run by Re, a joint venture between Barnet Council and Capita, which has been working with local developers to encourage the use of apprenticeships.

A recent example of this success has been the appointment of two new apprentices at the Taylor Wimpey site in Millbrook Park – a local development of 2,174 homes that will offer 30 apprenticeships over the course of the build programme.

Ollie Norman, 23, from East Finchley, is working as an apprentice plumber at Taylor Wimpey's development on the site in Mill Hill East.

He started with the company last November having gained his Level 2 plumbing certificate and Level 2 gas certificate. He will shortly begin a course for his Level 3 gas certificate.

Ollie, who spends four days a week on site, with one day at college, said: "From day one Taylor Wimpey have looked after me.

"They are patient and walk through everything with me so I can understand the tasks that need to be done."

He added: "Earn as you learn is a great incentive for young trainees, and I plan to stay with Taylor Wimpey for many years."

Government research has shown that 85 per cent of young people who join as apprentices remain in employment, with 64 per cent staying with the same employer.

Visit: www.apprenticeships.org.uk
for more information



Apprentice Ollie Norman with Taylor Wimpey North Thames Project Manager Sebastian Czajka



“Using additional funding of £950,000 a further three new projects are being launched”

Members of the Welfare Reform Task Force, pictured left to right: Fatimo Okunnu, Andrew Potter, Beverley Kolawole, James Ricks, Yalini Shanmuganathan, Lydia Oyeniran, Shilpa Varsani and Will Rudling

Joined up working helps people into jobs

Since 2013 we have been working with staff from Barnet Homes and Jobcentre Plus to provide advice and support to families affected by the Benefit Cap.

The Welfare Reform Task Force, based at Barnet House, Whetstone, has successfully helped more than 600 people affected by the cap in finding work, as well as supporting those who want to move to do so.

Over the last 18 months the team’s work has been boosted by Future Path, an organisation providing coaching for those in need of support

with their mental health and employability. In the first nine months of the project, the service successfully helped 66 people into work.

Residents are referred to Future Path if they need extra motivational and psychological support in finding a job, as well as practical assistance such as setting job goals and applying for vacancies. The Task Force continues to be involved throughout, encouraging residents to stay motivated as well as providing advice on benefits, discretionary funds and housing.

Using additional government funding of £950,000 a further three new projects are being launched to support people into work, including opening a new jobs team in Burnt Oak called BOOST and providing help in encouraging young people into education and training.

“My confidence and self-esteem are much better and I love my job.” – Jess

Task Force Stats

- more than 600 people affected by the benefit cap helped to find work
- 66 people with mental health problems helped into work within nine months
- 164 people helped into more affordable accommodation

Working towards a brighter future

One person who has already benefited from the help of the multi-agency Task Force is Jess*, 30.

She was able to get all the help she needed under one roof, including a short term Discretionary Housing Payment to support her while she looked for work, as well as advice on her housing options and help to find childcare.

She says: “When I first started seeing the Task Force my circumstances were quite complicated. I’d moved several times to escape a difficult relationship and was living in temporary accommodation. I was also still mourning the loss of my father who had been my only family support. I hadn’t worked since 2005 and as a lone parent with four children I felt my work options were really limited. My confidence and self-esteem were very low.

“I was assigned a Future Path coach and we discussed the mental and emotional support I needed during my first visit, as well as my physical health issues, housing and childcare barriers. They referred me to counselling straight away and said they would take things step-by-step.”

After checking Jess’ CV, the Task Force identified the transferrable skills she had gained from being a mum. They mentioned an apprenticeship opportunity, which they thought would build up her confidence and develop her office skills in a supportive environment.

Jess added: “I successfully secured the apprenticeship role and began full time work in September 2014. With the team’s help I applied for Working Tax Credits and to the Crisis Fund for financial support for childcare during the first month.

As a result of my coach’s support and my apprenticeship role, my life has changed considerably. My confidence and self-esteem are much better and I love my job. I am financially better off and have moved out of temporary accommodation and into a lovely house. I’m proud of everything I have achieved and am enjoying the opportunities that work has given me.”

Residents looking for support with welfare reforms and Universal Credit can get in touch with the Task Force by telephoning 020 8359 2442 or following them on Twitter: @BarnetTaskForce

*name changed



Burnt Oak gets a BOOST!

The Burnt Oak Opportunity Support Team (BOOST), a multi-agency team supporting local residents to get into work, has been set up.

Consisting of staff from JobCentre Plus, benefits teams, Barnet Homes, youth services and Future Path health coaches, the team will offer advice, signposting and support. Drop into the library to find out more, or go down to the Community Outreach day on Saturday 25 July.

To get in contact tel: 020 8359 5600, visit BOOST Burnt Oak on Facebook or follow @BOOSTBurntOak on Twitter.

Supporting small businesses to succeed

Barnet has more businesses than any other outer London borough.

Most of these are small and micro businesses which are the backbone of the local economy: providing jobs, incomes, and helping to make Barnet an attractive place to live, work and invest in.

We are committed to supporting small businesses to succeed, and over the next year will be doing a number of practical things with our partners, including:

- working with schools and colleges to make it easier to recruit talented people locally, for instance through apprenticeship schemes
- making it easier to do business with the council as a local supplier
- introducing a one-stop shop to help businesses deal with planning, environmental health, trading standards and building control service
- encouraging businesses to get faster business broadband through the “Broadband Connection Voucher Scheme”. To find out more and apply, visit: london.gov.uk/broadband
- enhancing the council website with information to support businesses that want to grow.

We are also encouraging businesses that are eligible to take advantage of the Business Rate reliefs that are available to them.

To find out more about what we are doing to support businesses, visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/entrepreneurialbarnet



Keep an eye out in future editions of Barnet First for more information relating to our work to make Barnet the best place in London to be a small business.



Town centres in Barnet

Barnet's Town centres are the heart of the community, not just as a home for shopping, but also as a place for friends and family to meet and socialise during the weekends and evenings, as hubs for transport, and as places that people live.

As with other areas, our town centres are undergoing change as people spend more online, and use their time differently than in the past.

That's why we are supporting town centres to succeed and adapt.

To help do this we are:

- introducing free wi-fi in a number of town centres over the next year
- securing just over £4m of external funding since 2011 to invest in improving town centres, as we recently did with the “Outer London Fund” in North Finchley, Cricklewood and Chipping Barnet
- actively supporting Town Teams and local community groups to jointly plan changes to help shape their local areas
- responding to traders' feedback relating to parking in Mill Hill and High Barnet, and trialling new technology to help shoppers find a place to park.

Residents help transform estate

Rita Bowden and Val Lay (pictured) have helped to shape the regeneration scheme at Stonegrove and Spur Road – securing huge improvements for their fellow neighbours who live on the estate. Stonegrove is now home to a thriving new community which when fully complete will comprise a total of 937 homes.

The Stonegrove and Spur Road Partnership Board was set up in order to enable input to the regeneration scheme from the council, partners and residents. Rita is one of six residents who sit on the board, along with Chairman of the Housing Committee, Councillor Tom Davey.

“Without the board – and the residents sitting on the board – things wouldn’t have gone so well with the regeneration,” says Ms Bowden.

“To the credit of Barratt London (the developers), Family Mosaic (the housing partners) and the council, everybody was there to listen. They always kept us informed of what was going on with the regeneration. We didn’t get everything we wanted and there were a lot of frustrating moments but the board has done a lot of good.”

Val Lay is the vice-chair of the Partnership Board and also lives on the estate, “We asked for every property to have decent size balconies – which seems like an odd request but it was very important to us.”

The Partnership Board is set to be disbanded later this year but this is not the end of resident-led involvement within the area. Some Partnership Board members are trustees of the new Stonegrove Community Trust, which will manage the new Stonegrove Community Centre and Church. This new hub will be a lasting legacy of the regeneration project, supporting resident activity and engagement in the area. The centre is expected to be completed in Spring 2016.

“...everybody was there to listen. They always kept us informed of what was going on with the regeneration.”



Stonegrove and Spur Road

- 937 new homes being delivered by 2018/19 (42% affordable, 58% private sale)
- new roads and improvements to junctions between Spur Road, Green Lanes and Stonegrove
- skills and job training being provided for residents
- improvements being made to existing play facilities and open spaces.

What do you think of our leisure proposals?

The council is consulting on replacing two of the council's oldest leisure centres in the borough: Church Farm, East Barnet and Copthall in Mill Hill.

We want to hear your views on the proposed mix of facilities at the two centres and alternative site proposals for the re-location of Church Farm. The consultation runs until 16 September.

The council is committed to involving local residents in shaping their area and the services they receive, and your views will be used to shape the proposals before they reach the planning stage, then fed back to you through the council's consultation portal at engage.barnet.gov.uk

You can have your say by
visiting: engage.barnet.gov.uk



The council has recently published how it is acting on residents' feedback from the following consultations:

- proposals to federate the governing bodies of Brookhill, Hampden Way and St Margaret's nursery schools
- Barnet's draft Parking Policy
- Colindale Area Parks Improvements
- The Care Act in 2015.

For more information please go to "We asked, You said, We Did" at engage.barnet.gov.uk

Have your say on proposals for additional licensing for landlords

Well-managed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) play a key role in meeting the housing needs of Barnet's residents.

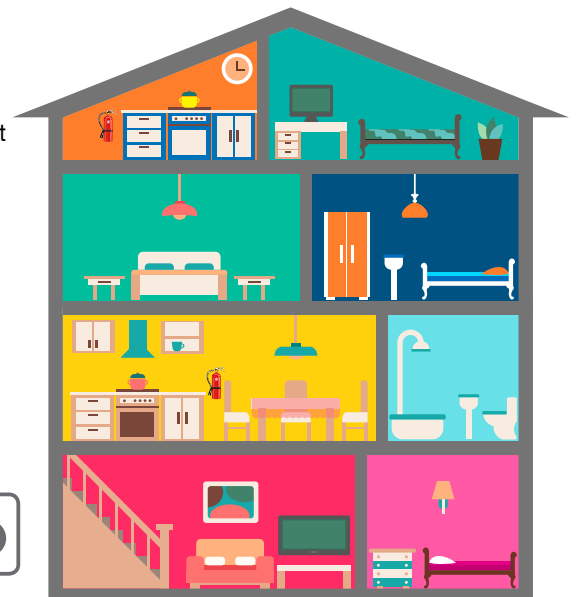
HMOs are properties occupied by different households as their main residence and include bedsits and flats.

There are many good landlords but there are those who do not maintain their properties, leaving tenants at risk.

The council already operates a licensing scheme for larger HMOs, but is now proposing to introduce a scheme for different types of HMOs. This will help us work together with more landlords to make sure that homes are safe.

We are also consulting on the withdrawal of permitted development rights which enable houses to be converted to small HMOs (with three to six unrelated residents) without planning permission.



You can have your say by
visiting: engage.barnet.gov.uk



contact your councillors



Brunswick Park

-  Cllr Andreas Ioannidis
cllr.a.ioannidis@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Kathy Levine
cllr.k.levine@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Lisa Rutter
cllr.l.rutter@barnet.gov.uk

Burnt Oak

-  Cllr Claire Farrier
cllr.c.farrier@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Ammar Naqvi
cllr.a.naqvi@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Charlie O-Macauley
cllr.c.omacauley@barnet.gov.uk

Childs Hill

-  Cllr Shimon Ryde
cllr.s.ryde@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Peter Zinkin
cllr.p.zinkin@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Jack Cohen
cllr.j.cohen@barnet.gov.uk

Colindale

-  Cllr Gillian Sargeant
cllr.g.sargeant@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Zakia Zubairi
cllr.z.zubairi@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Nagus Narenthira
cllr.n.narenthira@barnet.gov.uk

Coppetts

-  Cllr Pauline Coakley Webb
cllr.p.coakleywebb@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Reema Patel
cllr.r.patel@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Barry Rawlings
cllr.b.rawlings@barnet.gov.uk

East Barnet

-  Cllr Rebecca Challice
cllr.r.challice@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Philip Cohen
cllr.p.cohen@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Laurie Williams
cllr.l.williams@barnet.gov.uk

East Finchley

-  Cllr Arjun Mitra
cllr.a.mitra@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Alison Moore
cllr.a.moore@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Alon Or-Bach
cllr.a.or-bach@barnet.gov.uk

Edgware

-  Cllr Brian Gordon
cllr.b.gordon@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Helena Hart
cllr.h.hart@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Joan Scannell
cllr.j.scannell@barnet.gov.uk

Finchley Church End

-  Cllr Eva Greenspan
cllr.e.greenspan@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Graham Old
cllr.g.old@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Daniel Thomas
cllr.d.thomas@barnet.gov.uk

Garden Suburb

-  Cllr John Marshall
cllr.j.marshall@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Gabriel Rozenberg
cllr.g.rozenberg@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Rohit Grover*
cllr.r.grover@barnet.gov.uk

Golders Green

-  Cllr Dean Cohen
cllr.d.cohen@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Melvin Cohen
cllr.m.cohen@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Reuben Thompstone
cllr.r.thompstone@barnet.gov.uk

Hale

-  Cllr Thomas Davey
cllr.t.davey@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Hugh Rayner
cllr.h.rayner@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Kitty Lyons
cllr.k.lyons@barnet.gov.uk

Hendon

-  Cllr Maureen Braun
cllr.m.braun@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Anthony Finn
cllr.a.finn@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Mark Shooter
cllr.m.shooter@barnet.gov.uk


High Barnet

-  Cllr David Longstaff
cllr.d.longstaff@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Bridget Perry
cllr.b.perry@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Wendy Prentice
cllr.w.prentice@barnet.gov.uk




Mill Hill

-  Cllr Valerie Duschinsky
cllr.v.duschinsky@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr John Hart
cllr.j.hart@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Sury Khatri
cllr.s.khatri@barnet.gov.uk

Oakleigh

-  Cllr Sachin Rajput
cllr.s.rajput@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Brian Salinger
cllr.b.salinger@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Stephen Sowerby
cllr.s.sowerby@barnet.gov.uk

Totteridge

-  Cllr Richard Cornelius
cllr.r.cornelius@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Alison Cornelius
cllr.a.cornelius@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Caroline Stock
cllr.c.stock@barnet.gov.uk




Underhill

-  Cllr Paul Edwards
cllr.p.edwards@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Tim Roberts
cllr.t.roberts@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Amy Trevethan
cllr.a.trevethan@barnet.gov.uk

West Finchley

-  Cllr Ross Houston
cllr.r.houston@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Kath McGuirk
cllr.k.mcguirk@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Jim Tierney
cllr.j.tierney@barnet.gov.uk

West Hendon

-  Cllr Dr Devra Kay
cllr.d.kay@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Adam Langleben
cllr.a.langleben@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Agnes Slocombe
cllr.a.slocombe@barnet.gov.uk

Woodhouse

-  Cllr Geof Cooke
cllr.g.cooke@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Anne Hutton
cllr.a.hutton@barnet.gov.uk
-  Cllr Alan Schneiderman
cllr.a.schneiderman@barnet.gov.uk

* Councillor Grover was elected to the council following a by-election on 7 May

Council meetings

Tuesday 28 July, 7pm
Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs

For details of surgeries

tel: 020 8359 2000
email: first.contact@barnet.gov.uk
or write to us: Members' Room, Hendon Town Hall,
The Burroughs, Hendon

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