

barnet first

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

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Keeping it clean

page 8



A message from Councillor Victor Lyon,

Leader of Barnet Council

On pages 12 and 13, you can read more about where your council tax went last year. When this year's council tax demands are sent out they will be accompanied by a letter from me showing exactly how the figures have been calculated and what the money pays for. The figures will include the precept from the Mayor of London (Greater London Authority), over which we have no control.

The cost of providing services is rising at a higher rate than the income Barnet receives and last autumn I wrote to every household to ask whether you would be prepared to pay more council tax or to have certain services reduced. The vast majority who responded favoured a small increase in council tax with a reduction in services.

I would like to thank everyone who responded and reassure you that we have listened to what you told us. When planning the budget for next year we have scrutinised everything the council does to ensure financial prudence and value for money and at the beginning of March, we will asking councillors to approve a budget that focuses on improving the services we provide whilst keeping April's council tax rise to minimum.



Councillor Victor Lyon
Leader of Barnet Council

firstthingsfirst

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Graffiti whitewashed

Town centres are now looking better than ever as the council's efforts to clean them up have led to a fifty per cent reduction in graffiti in just six months.

The vast majority of graffiti in town centres has successfully been removed in less than 24 hours of it being reported, which has helped to discourage offenders. Persistent offenders tend not to return to areas where they know their graffiti will be removed by the following morning. This also makes identifying new graffiti easier as it is taking place on a 'blank canvass', which helps the council and police with their investigations.



Graffiti removal crew in action

Achieving a 50 per cent reduction in graffiti in town centres is just the start. The council actively pursues graffiti vandals and is increasing its focus on graffiti removal in neighbourhood and park areas as part of the clampdown.

New residents take up residence!

The first residents have moved in to their new homes on a former Ministry of Defence site in Finchley which has been transformed into a development of affordable housing for rent and sale.

Built on the site of a former Territorial Army Centre, Glebelands Close includes 55 new homes which will be rented through Metropolitan Home Ownership (MHO), and 16 homes to be sold for shared ownership. There are also 76 privately-owned homes.

All of the affordable housing was funded by the council and the Housing Corporation and was made available to local people. The vacancies for rent and shared ownership were advertised through Home Connections, the council's Choice Based Lettings Service which gives local people the chance to choose where they would like to live.

Before the residents started to move in, Barnet Council officers, local councillors, representatives from the Metropolitan Housing Trust Group and from Barratt Homes were given the chance to look around the properties.



Feeling at home. Barnet councillors, officers and other interested parties pay a visit to Glebelands

Supporting people to live independently at home

Two new schemes to help residents live more independently in their own homes have been launched by the council.

The Safer Homes Scheme, developed with and funded by the police, aims to prevent burglaries by offering free:

- safety and security checks of people's homes
- installation of security measures including locks and bolts, chains, door viewers and outside lights
- repairs for doors and windows and garden clearances so that the properties don't look vulnerable
- awareness training for vulnerable people and those who work with them.

Essential work to enable older and disabled residents to return home from hospital or residential care, or to prevent hospital admission, can be carried out under the Returning Home Scheme. This includes:

- rearranging or removing furniture to create space
- clearing rubbish or clutter to prevent falls
- cleaning
- electrical and heating work
- repairs to doors and windows
- security improvements.

To check whether you or someone you care for is eligible for the schemes telephone the council on **020 8359 7487**.

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Sport becomes science

Football was put on the school curriculum for a month at both Northside Primary School in North Finchley and Holy Trinity CE Primary School in East Finchley.

Year five pupils took part once a week in special lessons that formed the Primary Sport Science (PSS) programme. Fun and interactive classes linked science and PE, so that the pupils could relate sports activities with learning about the body.

After a theory lesson, the children put their new knowledge into practice, with training from qualified football coaches. The youngsters discovered which bones and muscles are used when kicking a ball and how a footballer's diet is different from someone who does not exercise. Safety issues, and the importance of warming up and cooling down were also learnt. Most importantly, the children developed an understanding of the benefits of sport and exercise in leading healthy lifestyles.

Football fanatics: Northside pupils Sofia Charalambous, Riya Sachdev and Mlungisi Mabuza are awarded their certificates



News in brief

Teaching children to lead a healthier lifestyle

A local school has been recognised for creating a healthier environment for children to learn in.

Barnet Hill was recently presented with an award by the council's Healthy Schools Team to mark its completion of the Barnet Healthy Schools Project.

Staff, parents and children worked together to improve the school's outdoor environment, equipment and resources.

Outdoor climbing equipment was bought and the school focused on teaching the children team games. After school clubs, including dance, football, and gymnastics were also set up.

Since the project was launched, many of the children have developed their physical activity and there has been a significant improvement in their behaviour.



Playground friends at Barnet Hill school

The school has also recently elected a number of its pupils as "Playground Friends".

The group of young children can be distinguished at playtime by the yellow bibs that they wear. Their role is to encourage pupils who are on their own to get involved in play activities with others.

They also look for signs of children being bullied and report incidents to teachers and staff.

Personalised learning gets the go ahead

The education service is working with partners to examine the benefits of personalised learning.

The scheme, which has been funded by the government, will link up schools, libraries, colleges and the council to make it easier for students of all ages to access their work, no matter where they are in the borough – hence the

name "personalised learning".

Barnet and Brent are the only two councils in the whole country taking part in the trial. As part of the project, a number of the borough's schools are working to see how teaching and learning can be improved by tying up computer systems across learning establishments.

News in brief

£1 million new facilities open at Finchley Lido

New health and fitness facilities at Finchley Lido Leisure Centre are now officially open for use.

Over £1 million has been invested in the centre to provide an air-conditioned gym with 80 pieces of equipment, a fully-equipped, wooden sprung dance studio, a new sauna, new and refurbished changing rooms, new consultation rooms for fitness assessments, and a new reception area.

The council has entered into a long term partnership with leading leisure trust Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) to manage and develop the borough's sports and leisure centres. The partnership aims to offer first class leisure facilities at a price everyone can afford, with major investment in excess of £6.5 million being carried out at venues across the borough.



Council Leader Victor Lyon celebrates the opening of Finchley Lido with Mark Sesnan, MD of GLL.

Bookworms benefit from Ottakars donation

Eleven local schools have benefited from a donation of books worth £4,000 from Ottakars.

Two secondaries - Queen Elizabeth's Girls' and The Ravenscroft - both received a selection of fiction and reference books from the local

store, while infant and primary schools - Barnet Hill, Christ Church CE, Cromer Road, Foulds, Grasvenor Avenue, Livingstone, Underhill Infants, Underhill Juniors and Whittings Hill - have been given a mixture of picture books and general fiction.

Athletics are on track at Cophall



Refurbishment plans are on track at Barnet Cophall

Refurbishment plans for the athletics track at Barnet Cophall Stadium will now pick up pace following the council's successful bid to Sport England for a grant of £97,500.

The grant will fund half of the work with the remaining costs funded by the council. The 400 metre, eight lane track, and high jump, javelin, pole vault and long/triple jump run ups will all be resurfaced.

The new track will give a boost to the stadium users which include Shaftsbury Barnet Harriers and local schools. Work is due to take place this summer.

Bryan Smith, a member of the committee that is overseeing the improvements said: "We were delighted to receive the news that the application had been successful. The improved track will encourage more first class meetings and help to reinstate the stadium as a facility that hosts major athletic championships."

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Holocaust memorial



The Cantorial Choir performing in 2004

People from across the borough congregated at the Memorial Garden, Hendon Park, Queens Road for the annual Holocaust Memorial Civic Service on Sunday 23 January.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps, following what is considered by many as, the most devastating massacre of the 20th Century.

The theme for the service was Survivors, Liberation and Rebuilding Lives. There were readings from survivors, performances from local schoolchildren and addresses from community and religious leaders and senior representatives from the council.



Entrance to Hendon Park Memorial Garden

Regeneration will improve the suburbs



Major regeneration schemes will take place in Barnet

A new strategy to ensure Barnet's unique character is protected and enhanced whilst accommodating the growth expected over the next 10 years as a result of major regeneration schemes has been launched by the council.

The "three-strand" approach to planning and regeneration is based on the principles of "protection", "enhancement" and "growth" and will guide all

new development in the borough to 2016.

Barnet is home to attractive green open space, conservation areas, excellent schools, housing of choice and neighbourhoods where people want to live and work. This strategy will ensure that new development enhances the borough's unique character and improves the quality of life for all its residents, rather than adversely affecting it.

Pay parking fines online

Parking tickets can now be paid online.

The new service, which has been introduced as part of the council's commitment to making as many services available to residents on-line as possible, can be found at

www.barnet.gov.uk/pay

People using the new

payment method will need to have the penalty charge notice number and vehicle registration to hand. The payments service which also allows people to pay their council tax, rent or even general invoices on-line, uses encryption technology so personal banking information is completely secure.



Coming up roses - Madina's winning picture

Art flies to France

Paintings from three young Barnet artists will be put on permanent display in public buildings in the borough's French twin town of Chaville, a suburb of Paris.

Competition winners Alketa Xhafa Mripa (24) from Colindale, Monica Haddadd (28) from Mill Hill, and Adam Hahn (25) from Edgware had their work selected from 26 entries and were awarded a prize of 1000 Euros each.

The judging panel included three representatives from Chaville: Geneviève Mercury, the Chaville councillor in charge of international relations; André Bongibault, Director of Chaville's art school; and Françoise Hirtz from the Chaville friends of Barnet.

Geneviève Mercury who presented the prizes said: "It was very difficult making the final decision as the quality of all the artwork was so high and there were many pieces of art that we liked."

Earlier this year, young artists were invited by the council to submit their work for the competition. The scheme reciprocates the awards given to artists in Chaville in 2002 by Barnet Council.

Young people in the picture

An exhibition of photographs taken by a group of 10 to 13-year-olds and parents/carers will be on display at the artsdepot from 17 February.

The 10 photographers, who included young carers, some young people with disabilities and refugees, were all given cameras to record a day in their lives as part of a London-wide photography project organised through Barnet Children's Fund.

The pictures have already

been displayed at the Viewpoints exhibition at City Hall and will be on show at the artsdepot in North Finchley for a week.

The display will include "Cinderella Roses," taken by a young refugee called Madina. Madina's picture, which she says displays all the stages of a life, was named one of the three overall winners in the competition. Madina won a digital camera and some photography vouchers.

Looked after children celebrate

The achievements of Barnet's looked after children and young people were celebrated at a fun packed event.

The young people helped plan the day which included a presentation of certificates, a range of activities, speeches and an exhibition of art and poems by the looked after children about inspirational people.

The Mayor of Barnet,

Councillor Wendy Prentice, presented the certificates to 40 of the 170 eleven to twenty year olds being honoured. The certificates marked achievements in education, personal development, sport and art over the past year. These included a young woman from Kosovo who arrived in England just over two years ago and managed to pass 11 GCSEs.



Alketa with her winning piece

day in the life of...

A refuse crew

Whatever the weather, at 6am, whilst most of the borough's residents are fast asleep, the council's dustmen and women hit the streets. Barnet First went in search of a crew to find out what it's like getting up on a cold, wet morning to help make Barnet a cleaner place to live.

"The best things about being a refuse collector are that we work together as a team, we work outside, we get to meet people and we're doing something to help keep the borough clean," says Steve Welsher, a dustman of 20 years, who is also a Barnet resident. "The most testing aspect is the weather but we take each day as it comes and treat it as a challenge."

Steve Welsher, Martin Catlin and Chris Nicker have worked together as a refuse crew for four years and in that time have

The crew from left to right: Martin Catlin (loader driver), Steve Welsher (loader) and Christopher Nicker (loader)



emptied over 1,560,000 bins but in total they have clocked up over 42 years service with the council's refuse department.

Collecting waste is a 'task to finish' job which means that the crew receive a set wage but don't finish work until all the bins on their patch have been emptied. Usually, their working day is over by mid afternoon but occasionally they have to stay much later to finish their round, for no extra pay.

"We start at 6am," Chris says. "Some roads take longer than others to clear depending on the number of houses and estates. We do two or three drops to the tip a day. We all know what we're supposed to do and we get on with it."

"The introduction of wheelie bins means it's more hygienic than it used to be," Steve adds. "There are fewer black bags for animals to chew up so it's a cleaner job and we get less stress on our backs because the wagon does the lifting."

Martin is the driver and helps his two colleagues load and empty the bins. We asked him if there was anything residents could do to make the work easier.



Barnet's domestic refuse is collected using 26 tonne Refuse Compaction Vehicles

"We try not to block the roads when people are rushing to work but if I could change anything about the job it would be to make some of the other road users more patient. It's nice when people appreciate that we're doing our job and not holding them up deliberately," he replies.

Refuse facts

- Approximately 132,000 domestic bins are collected in Barnet each week
- Over 150,000 tonnes of rubbish is collected in Barnet each year
- On average Barnet's domestic refuse service miss no more than 1 out of every 5000 bins collected
- On average each resident pays approximately 77p a week for their refuse collection

Rubbish goes global to help those in need

Barnet's residents are some of the most conscientious consumers in north London. Over the last few years, the amount of rubbish recycled has steadily increased from around 12 to over 20 per cent of household waste and from April, the council is aiming to recycle 30 per cent of the borough's rubbish.

When people think of recycling, most assume that paper is pulped and metal is melted down before reuse but this is not the whole story. Many of the borough's unwanted items are re-used by people who need them. Here's how you can help.

Home help

Used engine oil should be poured into a sealed container and placed next to your Black Box. The oil is reprocessed into low-grade fuel for burning in generators which can be found in schools and hospitals.

Unwanted but re-usable furniture can be taken to the council's recycling centre at Summers Lane where it is collected by ReStore Community Projects, a charity which provides furniture for use by people on low incomes.

Paint is also collected at the centre. It is donated to community groups and used



Carpentry students at the Kabras Disabled Centre in Malava, Kenya, using Workaid tools.



ReStore Community Projects is one of the charities that benefits from recycling in Barnet

by the council to cover unsightly graffiti in the borough.

The developing world

Building, woodworking and garden tools that are handed in at the centre are given to Workaid, a charity which repairs them before sending them overseas. Most end up in East Africa, where they are used by people from some of the world's most disadvantaged communities.

Shoes collected from Black Boxes, whether in pairs or individually, go to businesses that supply footwear to the developing world, as do bicycles and some of the

clothes collected at the recycling centre.

Mobile phones collected from Black Boxes are prepared for use in the developing world and Eastern Europe. The last batch of phones were given to a Barnet youth group, who were raising money for their out of school club by collecting phones for the developing world.

Want to know more?

For more information about recycling visit www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling

020 8359 7400

Barnet First

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

Action Points can also be contacted by:

Telephone: 020 8359 4000

Fax: 020 8359 2197; Minicom: 020 8203 8942

Email: info.centre@barnet.gov.uk

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

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KEVIN EDSON (Con)

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3rd Saturday every month, Barnet House, 1255
High Road Whetstone, N20, 10.30am-12noon

VICTOR LYON (Con)

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
(CONSERVATIVE GROUP LEADER)
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High Road Whetstone, N20, 10.30am-12noon

UNDERHILL WARD**FIONA BULMER (Con)**

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Association, 163 High St., EN5, 10.30am-12noon

ANITA CAMPBELL (Lab)

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cllr.a.campbell@barnet.gov.uk
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Library, 3 Stapylton Rd., EN5, 2-3pm

PETER DAVIS (Con)

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Association, 163 High St., EN5, 10.30am-12noon

WEST FINCHLEY WARD**KITTY LYONS (Lab)**

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KATHY MCGUIRK (Lab)

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10-11.30am

JIM TIERNEY (Lab)

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10-11.30am

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Drive, NW9, 10.30am-12noon

AGNES SLOCOMBE (Lab)

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

ANSUYA SODHA (Lab)

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10-11.30am

MARK LANGTON (Lab)

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North Finchley, N12, 10-11.30am

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10-11.30am

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DR RUDI VIS
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(020) 8883 0411

HENDON

ANDREW DISMORE
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Hendon, NW4 4AX
(020) 8202 2122

GREATER LONDON ASSEMBLY

MEMBER FOR BARNET AND CAMDEN
COUNCILLOR BRIAN COLEMAN
City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London, SE1 2AA
(020) 7983 4366

Council tax - where

On 1 March the council will meet to decide how to prioritise its spending for the forthcoming year and how much council tax every household in the borough will need to pay.



Educating children of Barnet

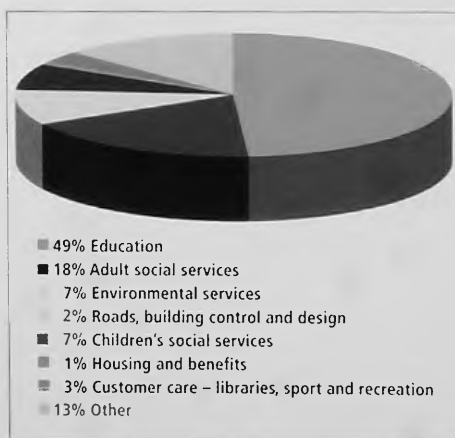


One of 300 road improvement schemes carried out last year

The decisions that it will take will affect the lives of everyone in the borough. They depend on a number of different things, including how local people have suggested the council spends its money. Barnet First looks at where the council's money goes and how the views of local residents help decide this.

Barnet Council is a multi-million pound organisation. Last year it spent over £0.7 billion net providing a whole range of services to the borough's residents, from meals on wheels through to rubbish collection.

About 65 per cent of its income came from the Government and 35 per cent from council tax.



But how does the council work out what services it should

provide and how much these are likely to cost?

"In 2003, following consultation with local people and businesses, we published a plan setting out our priorities for the next five years," says Victor Lyon, Leader of Barnet Council.

"These include providing a first class education service; tackling crime; supporting the vulnerable; repairing the borough's roads and pavements and developing a cleaner, greener Barnet," he adds.

"Each year we send every household in the borough a questionnaire to find out how

re your money goes

residents think we should spend the money we receive to help meet these aims, and what level of council tax they would be prepared to pay."

Consultation

Last autumn, just under 8,000 questionnaires were returned. Of these, 52 per cent of people said that they were prepared to pay an increase in council tax rather than have dramatic cuts in services. Most of those who were prepared to pay an increase wanted the increase to be kept to three per cent.

"Balancing the council's books is extremely complex," says Victor Lyon. "Our aim is to provide the best possible council services at the least cost to local residents and businesses. The problem we face is that in the last few years the council's costs have risen much faster than the rate of inflation, particularly those involving care of vulnerable people. This means that in order to keep the council tax rise to a minimum we have had to find savings."



In 2003 residents said that they wanted the council to prioritise resurfacing the



boroughs roads and pavements; the education of children with special needs; CCTV; and services for older people.

Increased CCTV

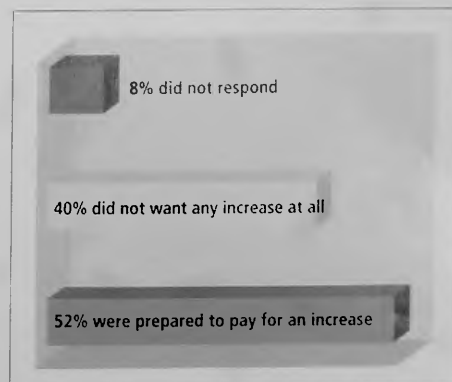
The results speak for themselves. Despite its resources being limited by increasing costs, by the end of March, the council will have carried out over 300 road improvement schemes; begun implementing a strategy to improve the education of children with special needs; increased CCTV coverage by 50 per cent; and provided new services for older people such as Apthorp Lodge, a purpose-built, state of the art care home that was recently opened as part of a six-year programme to improve residential care facilities for older people.

Last autumn residents said again that they wanted the council to prioritise education for children with special needs. They also said that they wanted the council's priorities to be resurfacing residential pavements; home care for older people and working with young

people to minimise them becoming involved in or victims of crime.

Victor Lyon confirms that the views of local people have played a large part in setting the budget he will be asking the council to approve on 1 March.

"We believe in putting customers first. Once again, we've listened to what local people have told us," he says. "Next year's proposed budget focuses on meeting the needs of Barnet's school children and most vulnerable residents, enhancing the borough's appearance and good housekeeping. We will also make sure that we prioritise spending on the services people have said are most important."



A growing pastime

Barnet's 4,000 allotment holders are a dedicated bunch. Many of them have been cultivating their greens on the same plots for years. But as interest in organic produce is growing, more and more young people are donning their wellies and going in search of the good life. Barnet First talked to some of the borough's most devoted gardeners.



Peter Goodall has been cultivating crops on the same plot for 20 years.



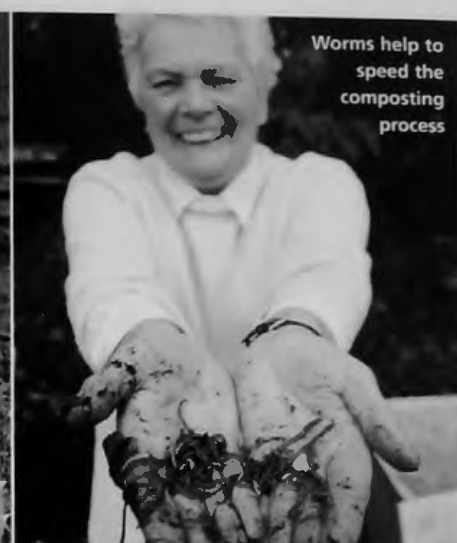
Tempesta Vittorio is proud of his potatoes



Fruitful results – the community at Lawrence Street has planted a 32 tree orchard



Bob Green pulls a prize parsnip



Worms help to speed the composting process

Growing a five foot marrow is no mean feat, but Tempesta Vittorio just uses Barnet soil and good old-fashioned compost to cultivate the chicory, beans, potatoes, tomatoes, grapes, chick peas and marrows on his allotment in East Finchley.

Tempesta came to England from Italy in 1955 and worked as a chef for 35 years until a problem with his shoulder forced him into early retirement. The exercise he gets tending his plot helps ease the pain in his shoulder and provides more than enough vegetables for him, his family and his friends.

Tempesta is one of the many allotment holders who live outside the borough and travel to Barnet to tend their plots.

Some neighbouring boroughs have very few plots and waiting lists of eight years for allotments but in Barnet there are usually spare allotments available.

Save money

At eighty-seven, Vice President of the local allotment federation, John Wingate is one of the Barnet's oldest allotment holders. John has had his patch since 1966. "All the exercise and fresh air I get from working on the allotment keeps me going and the vegetables I grow save me and my family money," he says. "There's a fantastic atmosphere on our site and it's great that lots of younger people are now taking up plots".

At Lawrence Street in Mill Hill, allotment-holders, residents and local schoolchildren have joined forces to plant an orchard of 32 fruit trees on part of the site that was neglected.

Everyone's at it

In the past, allotments were dominated by men but over the years this has changed. "About half our holders are women and we've got a few families," Ros Morgan, secretary of Lawrence Street's committee explains. "People don't only grow things to eat. Some have leisure gardens with flowers and shrubs."

For Bob Green gardening is a family affair. His enthusiasm for cultivating parsnips has rubbed off on his son Kevin who has his own plot on the same site. Even Bob's ten year old grandson James has been bitten by the bug and he helps out on the family plots whenever he can.

Allotment facts

- Barnet has around fifty allotment sites, most of which have their own water supply, parking facilities and toilets. All sites are secure and on many, seeds and fertilizer can be bought more cheaply than in the shops.
- The size of an allotment is measured in poles and rent is paid per pole. A standard size plot of 9m x 27m is equivalent to 10 poles. From 1st April the annual rent will be £5 per pole for Barnet residents and £10 per pole for non-residents. There is a 50 per cent reduction in rent for all plot-holders aged 60 years and over for the first 10 poles.

Want to know more?

If you're interested in renting your own plot you can call the council on 020 8359 7384 or Ted Green at the Barnet Federation of Allotments and Horticultural Societies on 01707 876075.



John bakes with friends

A class act

When you walk through the gates of Livingstone School in New Barnet, it looks like every other primary school in the borough.



Pupil's pictures decorate the walls and groups of children practice country dancing, while others prepare for playtime. But Livingstone is not like every other school in the borough, it is unique – the only mainstream school that is additionally resourced to teach children who have an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD).

Livingstone opened as a resourced school for children with autism spectrum disorders in 2001 and it currently caters for 15 children from reception

class through to Year 6.

The children have their own classroom where they receive specialist support although the ethos of the school is for them to spend as much time as possible in mainstream classes with their peers.

Parent Lee Shea says that being able to attend a mainstream school has made a world of difference to his seven-year-old autistic son John.

John joined Livingstone straight from a mainstream nursery.



“To lose contact with ordinary children would be a disaster – he has learnt so much from his peer group”

“It was a natural progression,” says Lee, who is a parent governor at the school.

“John built relationships with children he went to nursery with. They have a sense of responsibility towards him as much as he has a long term relationship with them.

“He is mixing with his typical peers and learning from his normal class friends. I don’t think that would have happened if he had gone to a special school.

Lee hopes that John can move on to a mainstream secondary school in the future.

“To lose contact with ordinary children would be a disaster – he has learnt so much from his peer group,” he adds.

The majority of the ASD pupils at Livingstone are boys – autism is a condition that affects boys more than girls. They travel

from throughout the borough to attend the school.

Social Skills

The children spend much of their time working on social skills such as sharing, turn taking and communicating with their peers.

Louise Robinson, who leads the support for pupils with autism spectrum disorders at the school says: “Our children here are very tolerant and understanding. They are really excellent role models.

Three more children with autism spectrum disorders will leave Livingstone this summer and, Louise says, they are all expected to join a mainstream secondary school.

“It would be detrimental for them to go to a special school now – they have made so much progress here.”

Such is the success of the provision at Livingstone School that Barnet Council’s new Special Educational Needs Inclusion Strategy for 2004-08 includes a commitment to develop provision at another mainstream primary school within the borough as well as continuing to support all mainstream schools teaching pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.

Autism – facts and figures

■ Children with autism spectrum disorders have difficulty with social skills and relationships and may have other learning difficulties.

■ Boys are at least four times as likely to have an autistic spectrum disorder as girls

■ There are 260 pupils with a diagnosis of an autistic spectrum disorder attending schools and early years centres in Barnet

what's on

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

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

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

Barnet First Magazine, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4 4BG, fax: 020 8359 2677 or email: susan.segar@barnet.gov.uk

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



Church Farmhouse Museum

Greyhound Hill, Hendon NW4. Open Mon.-Thurs. 10am-1pm and 2-5pm; Sat. 10am-1pm and 2-5.30pm; Sun. 2-5.30pm. Admission free. Phone 020 8203 0130.

26 February-10 April Understanding Wedgwood

The exhibition celebrates the 50th Anniversary of the Wedgwood Society, London, by displaying fine examples from over 250 years of this famous Pottery, and with a particular focus on Wedgwood's often under-rated wares from the 20th Century.

Until 6 February The Explosive History of Fireworks exhibition

Until 10 February I Never Saw Another Butterfly

To mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2005, an exhibition of drawings and writings by children caught up in the horrors of Europe in the 1930s and 1940s.

► Leisure/Pastimes

19 February and 2 April Salsa Live!

Dancing to a sizzling Latin band. Class 7.30pm (£2 plus admission). Live music and dancing 8.30pm to late. Admission £9.50/£7.50 conc. Chicken Shed Theatre, Chase Side, Southgate, N14. Box office: 020 8292 9222

20 February Snowdrop Outing

Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society's 'Snowdrop Outing' to West Wycombe Park, Bucks. Cost £14 (not including pub lunch). For more details/booking form call 020 8455 0455.

25 February Quiz Night

Light-hearted fun quiz. Make a team of family and friends, and book a table. Individual players can join a Chicken Shed team. Starts 7.30pm. £36 per table (teams of up to 6 players) or £6.50 each. Includes light snacks. Chicken Shed Theatre, Chase Side, Southgate, N14. Box office: 020 8292 9222.

Tai Chi Classes.

Mondays and Wednesdays 8-10.30pm. All levels. St. Edward Church Hall, Golders Green, NW11. £7. Phone 020 8458 9842.

Salsa and Merengue dance classes

Mondays, 7-8pm. Salsa and Merengue dance classes at Barnet Multicultural Community Centre, Algernon Road, NW4. £5 per class. For more details phone 07745 200397.

Meditation and yoga classes

The Vishva Bharati organisation hold free meditation and yoga classes. All abilities and ages are welcome. Classes are taught by qualified Jain nuns. Meditation classes held Mondays to Fridays 7-7.45am; Saturdays and Sundays 8-9am. Specific health yoga classes: Mondays: yoga for high blood pressure 11am-12noon. Tuesdays: yoga for back pain 11am-12noon; yoga for work tension relief 7.15-8.15pm. Wednesdays: yoga for diabetes 8-9am; yoga for high blood pressure 9-10am; yoga for work tension relief 7.15-8.15pm. Weekend classes by appointment. Classes held at 22 Oxgate Gardens, NW2 6EB. For more details phone 020 8452 0913 or email: jvblondon@yahoo.co.uk

Volunteers needed

Barnet Garden Project has been on the move to Archfields Allotments, 195a Great North Way, NW4 1PP (near Cophall Stadium) and is looking for more volunteers (subject to interview) and to create a Friends of Barnet Garden Project/Market Garden to work in a support and advisory capacity. For more details or to visit please contact Eric (project coordinator) on 07919 837113 or by email: eric.hess@tiscali.co.uk

Memory Lane Singing Club

meets Fridays 11.30am-1.30pm at St. Mary's Church Hall, Finchley N3. A chance to improve your singing, make new friends and perform for the community. Beginners are welcome. For more details phone 020 8458 4508.

Yoga

London School of Yoga founded by Melissa Berkovi and sponsored by The Prince's Trust. Uniformed, graded and syllabus-led, it also caters for pregnant women and the over 50s. Classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays 6.30-7.30pm, 7.35-8.35pm, 8.40-9.40pm at Cophall School, Mill Hill, NW7. £30 for the first month. Call 0870 446 0205 to book.

► Arts

artsdepot

5 Nether Street, Tally Ho Corner, North Finchley N12 0GA.

4 February, 8.30pm

Die Winterreise

Mark Padmore (tenor) and Roger Vignoles (pianist) perform Schubert's song cycle 'Die Winterreise'.

15 & 16 February, 8pm

All of Me

Australia's physical theatre company Legs on the Wall performs 'All of Me' a powerful piece of acrobatic theatre.

3 March, 8.30pm

Curry Tales

Rasa Theatre presents 'Curry Tales'. Ace cook Rani Moorthy with her spicy stories and masala mania encourages audiences to eat what she cooks.

F-IRE collective

winners of the 2004 BBC Jazz Award for Innovation (6 February, 7pm, Norma Winstone with Robert Mitchell and Julian Siegel; 6 March, 7pm, Johnny Philips and Oriole touring their new album 'Song for the Sleeping' their style bringing together the music of West Africa, Brazil and Europe in unexpected ways; 10 April, 7pm, Méta Méta and Timeline with their own brand of Afro-Cuban funk). Book in advance for all three sessions and receive a free F-IRE CD.

For more details about these listed events and other theatre, dance, music, comedy and spoken word activities, exhibitions, courses and classes at artsdepot phone the Box Office on 020 8369 5454 or log onto www.artsdepot.co.uk

Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture (MoDA)

Middlesex University, Cat Hill, Barnet EN4 8HT. Open Tues.-Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 2-5pm (Closed 25-29 March incl.). Tel. 020 8411 5244. Free entrance. www.moda.mdx.ac.uk

The two exhibitions 'Woven Splendour' (Italian textiles from the Medici to the modern age) and 'Telling Tales: what museums really do' continue until 20 March.

5 February, 10.30am-4pm
Italian Design in the Twentieth Century
A study day. £20/£12 conc.
To book phone 020 8411 4394.

17 March, 7-8pm
MoDA's textile historian examines the relationship between the Silver Studio and Liberty & Co. at the turn of the century and during the 1930s. £5/free to Friends of MoDA (includes wine and nibbles). Please book in advance. Phone 020 8411 4394.

3-6 February
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
Garden Suburb Theatre performs 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe', adapted from C S Lewis, at Henrietta Barnett School, Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb, NW11. Phone 020 7723 6609 for bookings/enquiries.

12 February, 7.45pm
Finchley Chamber Choir and Finchley Chamber Orchestra Concert.

Also 19 March, 7.45pm
Finchley Chamber Orchestra Concert - A Gala Tchaikovsky Evening.
7.45pm. Trinity Church, Nether Street, N12. Adults £10/£7 conc. For programme details/tickets phone 020 8440 1899.

20 February
Sculpture Exhibition
Frances Segelman sculpts Dennis Wilson (ex-Arsenal Goal Keeper). All Saints' Arts Centre, Oakleigh Road North, Whetstone, N20. For more details of this and other activities at the arts centre phone 020 8445 8388.

26 February, 7.45pm
Hendon Music Society presents Noriko Ogawa and Kathryn Stott, piano duo. £14/£12 conc. Also 19 March, 7.45pm. 'The Guildhall Strings', £12/£10 conc. John Keble Church, Deans Lane, Edgware. Young people in full-time education up to age 22 FREE, courtesy of Cavatina Chamber Music Trust. For programme details / to book phone 020 8203 2355.

► Talks

8 February, 8pm
The Silk Road
Hendon and District Archaeological Society presents a lecture 'The Silk Road' by Dr Susan Whitfield. Also 8 March, 8pm. 'The Pinner Chalk Mines' lecture by Ken Kirkham. £1 charge for lectures for non-members. Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley, N3. For more details phone 020 8340 7434.

15 March, 7.30pm
Going for Gold
Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society presents an illustrated talk 'Going for Gold', designing a garden for Chelsea, by Marney Hall. Fellowship House, Willifield Way, NW11. Members free/non-members £2. For more details phone 020 8455 0455.

► Under 18s

Le Club Francais offers fun French Clubs for ages 3-11
An opportunity to introduce children to French in a relaxed and natural way through educational games, songs and stories, worksheets and crafts. Clubs run during school terms after-school or Saturday mornings. Holiday courses at Easter and in the summer. For more details call Claire Murat on 020 7681 0695 for Finchley, Golders Green, Hendon or Belinda Philips on 020 8444 2906 for East Finchley, Muswell Hill, Crouch End.

Tales from the Shed
4 February to 19 March
9.30am and 11.15am on Fridays and Saturdays. Interactive performances for the under 5s (older siblings welcome). Adults £5/£4 conc. Children £3.50/£2.50 conc. Chicken Shed Theatre Company, Chase Side, Southgate, N14. Phone 020 8292 9222.

Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture
Middlesex University, Cat Hill, Barnet EN4 8HT. For more details about the events listed below phone 020 8411 5441.

Half Term holidays For ages 5-12
15 February make and decorate your own bandage-style plaster-cast Venetian face mask; **16 February** design and make a banner with your own coat of arms; **17 February** weaving with paper and ripped fabric to create your own bag or box. Sessions 10am-noon, repeated 2-4pm. Tickets: £5 per session, payable in advance.



Clown

artsdepot
5 Nether Street, Tally Ho Corner, North Finchley, N12 0GA.
Box Office: 020 8369 5454.

16-20 February, 12noon and 3pm.
Children's theatre company Travelling Light presents a magical show without words, based on Quentin Blake's charming tale 'Clown' which won the International Bologna Ragazzi Prize in 1996. Once-loved toys now lie in a dustbin but the little cloth clown is undaunted. He will overcome all setbacks and dangers to get them a new home - once he's found his feet, of course. For adults and children aged 3 and over. Tickets £6.

16-18 February
artsdepot is running a series of workshops inspired by 'Clown' and Quentin Blake where children can learn cartoon and caricature techniques. Ages 3-4 2-2.45pm and ages 5-7 4.15-5pm. £3.

16-18 February, 11am-3pm
Half Term Drama School for ages 8-12.
Try out a range of performance techniques including physical theatre, singing and much more. A chance to perform to family and friends at the end of the course. £65.

For ages 8-13
18 February, 10am-4pm
learn and use different techniques to create your own silk painting. Tickets: £15/£13.50 for Arts Club members, payable in advance.

6 March, 2-4.30pm
Mesh works for the whole family. No need to book just drop-in. £1 donation per child payable on the day.

► Miscellaneous

The Friends of Montclair
The twinning organisation between the London Borough of Barnet and the township of Montclair, New Jersey, USA aims

to foster cultural, educational and social links between the two communities. If you would like details about this group and/or are interested in becoming a member phone 020 8361 8978.

9 March
No Smoking Day
Barnet Stop Smoking Service offers FREE information, advice and support in group sessions, one-to-one with local pharmacists and a Stop Smoking Midwife. If you would like to Stop Smoking call FREEPHONE 0800 32 82 784. To find out about events on and around No Smoking Day in Barnet call 020 8201 4808.

Top marks for primary schools

Barnet's primary schools are among the very best performing in the country, according to test results.

The Key Stage 2 achievement and attainment tables place the borough as the fourth best local education authority in the whole of England.

The results, published by the Department for Education and Skills, are based on the Key Stage 2 tests in English, maths and science that were sat by 11-year-olds in May last year.

In Barnet, three schools achieved a perfect aggregate score of 300 (a 100% pass rate in each subject) – Hendon's Independent Jewish Day School

and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Junior School, and St Paul's Church of England Primary School in Mill Hill.

Overall, the borough's 74 primary schools recorded an average aggregate score of 255 compared to the English average of 237. Last year, the borough average was 248.

The borough's top improver was Barnet Hill School, which increased its aggregate score from 156 in 2003 to 248 this year.

Councillor John Marshall,

Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning, says: "This is an excellent achievement by Barnet's primary school children and their teachers.

"The council is committed to ensuring that the borough's children receive a first class education from an early age.

"These results show that we are succeeding in that objective.

"However we are not complacent and will still be working hard to improve our score again this year."

Hendon Preparatory School

An independent co-educational day school for children aged 3-13.

A mixed ability intake that celebrates multi-culturalism and academic success.

- Excellent record of preparing children for Mill Hill, Harrow, Channing, Highgate, North London Collegiate, Aldenham and St Margaret's School (including scholarships)
- Very favourable ISI Inspection Review in March 2004
- Broad and balanced curriculum including Music, Art, Design Technology, Sport and Drama
- Small class sizes
- Warm friendly atmosphere
- Very good facilities dedicated to Science, ICT, Music and Art
- Excellent Pastoral Care and Learning Support
- Bursaries awarded at Headmaster's discretion

We invite you to arrange an appointment to visit the school or request a prospectus, please contact us at

20 Tenterden Grove,
Hendon, London NW4 1TD
info@hendonprep.co.uk

For further details, to arrange your visit and to see our facilities, contact us on:

Tel 020 8203 7727

Fax 020 8203 3465

Email: info@hendonprep.co.uk

www.hendonprep.co.uk

A member of IAPS and Asquith Court Schools