

Community news

MARCH 1998

ISSUE No. 16

 **BARNET**

LONDON BOROUGH

BUDGET SPECIAL

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STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...

**Barnet's
budget at
a glance**

- An extra £11 million is to be ploughed into education. Projects in the pipeline include two more nursery classes, literacy and numeracy programmes, a comprehensive service for under 8 year olds, two new Action Points and a Trust to spearhead the development of the new Arts Centre.

- Nearly half a million pounds is earmarked for a detailed strategy to improve community safety and tackle crime. This will mean new lighting for park footpaths and better safety protection for the home.

- More than £800,000 will go on improving the environment. Local Agenda 21 areas will be expanded enhancing parks and weekend noise patrols improved.

- Support for the voluntary sector continues through expanded grants - up £100,000 to almost £4 million.

- Town Centres get a £500,000 boost as part of an ongoing programme of regeneration which has already had a profound impact.

- The means testing of pensions received by war veterans and their widows is to end, a new shopmobility scheme will be launched, a second Community Care Fair is to be staged, more help given to young people and families in need and work will start with health authorities on hospital discharge arrangements to reduce waiting lists.

EDUCATION GETS BUDGET BOOST

Barnet is to plough an extra £11 million into education in the coming year in a budget geared to raise standards and widen opportunities.

Education accounts for the biggest slice of expenditure by Barnet Council. This year Barnet will spend a record £140 million.

High on the list of priorities for the coming year is the council's continuing drive to increase nursery places with two more classes due to join the nine already opened.

"The nursery programme has been welcomed by parents and youngsters across the borough who are getting the start in life they deserve and have a right to expect," said Councillor Jarvis, Chair of the Education Committee.

Improving literacy and numeracy will get a boost from new courses, summer schools and the setting up of a Family Literacy Centre.

Three two-week summer schools will provide places for 120 ten and eleven year olds giving them a chance to raise their performance in English, maths and information technology.

New initiative for early years education will bring

**BUDGET
BOOST**

together education and social services to provide a comprehensive service for under 8 year olds.

Ten new out-of-school clubs will be developed and there are new plans to provide for youngsters during school holidays.

The future of the highly successful Parent Partnership Scheme bringing help to parents of children with Special Educational Needs is secured following the decision that it is now to be permanently funded.

Funds have also been set aside to provide additional space to cope with rising pupil rolls and keep class sizes to a maximum of 30 for 5, 6 and 7 year olds.

OFFICIAL

SAFETY MATTERS

Barnet Council, in partnership with the Metropolitan Police and Middlesex Probation Service, is launching a Community Safety Strategy geared to cutting crime.

A crime profile of the borough has been prepared by Crime Concern for the Barnet Police and Community Consultative Group and key agencies and voluntary organisations were asked for their views.

Anti-social behaviour such as flyposting or neighbour disputes, street drinking or vandalism are among the most common activities that cause residents concern.

The physical environment also has a major impact on how people feel. Vandalism and graffiti are key factors and the Strategy highlights working with schools; reducing the opportunity for people to destroy public property and focusing on areas such as transport, parks and play areas in an on-going programme as a way to reduce this area of crime.

Barnet has one of the largest multi-cultural communities in London and tackling racial and

religious harassment is one of the key elements in the Strategy.

As with any community drugs and alcohol are widely available. Statistics prove that a high incidence of crime can be directly related to abuse of drugs and alcohol. The Strategy's objectives to reduce this type of crime include reducing the acceptability and availability of drugs and alcohol to young people, reducing the health risks for all residents and supporting the work of the Drug and Alcohol team in the borough.

"The Strategy has been put together with the help, advice and support of many local agencies, the voluntary sector, the police and probation service. This partnership is the key to making sure the Strategy is effective in reducing crime and the impact it has in the borough to promote a safer borough for everyone," said Councillor Alan Williams, Leader of Barnet Council.

Copies are available from police stations, probation offices and the Action Points, libraries and public buildings of Barnet Council.

Fenella staff "helpful"

A recent survey of 254 of the 1,200 customers who visited the caller office of the Customer Services Division at Fenella, Babington Road during one week has given very positive results on the standard of service that they received.

The customer's enquiries varied from questions about housing benefit entitlement, queries on Council Tax and Business Rate bills to applications for student grants. One customer wanted to know how to get their rubbish bins emptied.

● 98 per cent of the customers questioned found that the staff at Fenella were helpful, with 89 per cent describing them as very helpful. 96 per cent were satisfied with the service provided including 85 per cent who said that they were very satisfied with the service received.

● We would not normally expect a customer to wait for more than 10 minutes to be seen at Fenella. 83 per cent of the customers taking part in the survey were seen within this time, with 55 per cent being seen on arrival at the office. We are working all the time to find ways to ensure that all customers are seen within 10 minutes of their arrival at the office.

In 1993 an appointment service was introduced for people who wished to ensure that they do not have to wait in the office to be seen. Any resident who has a query regarding their housing benefit, council tax or student grant can telephone the office to arrange an appointment. 88 per cent of those surveyed who had made an appointment were offered one within one working day of telephoning. If you have a specific query relating to benefits, local taxation or student grants and wish to take advantage of the appointment system please telephone the relevant section on the direct line telephone number which will be given on any bill or letter that you may have received. If you have a general query and would like to make an appointment to discuss it please telephone 0181-359 2326.

Barnet Council plants 4,800 bulbs per week

IT'S A BUDGET FOR THE FUTURE

Barnet's Council Tax settlement is firmly aimed at protecting the future prosperity of the borough for all residents. The council's budget for the coming year continues the promised investment in high-quality, value-for-money services maintained through good management and careful control of the borough's finances.

Cuts in Council Tax Benefit

From 1 April 1998 important changes are being made to the Council Tax Benefit scheme limiting the maximum Council Tax Benefit to the Council Tax payable on a band E property. This will mean that people living in properties that are in bands F, G and H for Council Tax will be assessed for benefit as if their property was in band E.

Many people living in these higher banded properties who have previously received benefit, giving a reduction in their Council Tax bills, may no longer qualify. People who are in receipt of Income Support or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, who have had their full Council Tax bill paid by benefit will, from 1 April 1998, have to pay the difference between the charge for their property band and that for a band E property.

A council tax payer living in band H property will have to pay at least £8 per week toward their Council Tax from 1 April 1998, even if they qualify for the maximum Council Tax benefit payable. Even if you are affected by the changes and cannot receive full benefit you may still be entitled to some reduction in your bill and should still complete an application form if one is sent to you or you are on a low income and will have difficulty in paying the bill.

If you are affected by these changes and find that you have difficulty paying your Council Tax bill please contact the Council Tax section on the direct line telephone number on the bill to discuss ways in which you may pay as soon as possible. The council would not want you to incur additional costs caused by action being taken against you to recover the debt.

Councillors have approved a Band D Council Tax rate of £728.07.

With central government sticking to inherited spending plans, Barnet's Council Tax bills were already set to rise by at least 7 per cent.

On top of this came a large increase of nearly 25 per cent in local contributions to the costs of the Metropolitan Police - more than £70 on the Band D rate.

"More than £14 of the Council Tax increase goes directly to the Metropolitan Police. This extra money - the first real extra resource for the police for many years - will allow the police to invest directly in front line services to support our initiatives on crime reduction and community safety. Local residents will welcome this," said Councillor Alan Williams, Leader of the Council.

"We were faced with tough choices and have responded to the demands of residents who expect this council to take wise and responsible decisions on their behalf.

"The message from residents is that they want us to improve the services the council already provides.

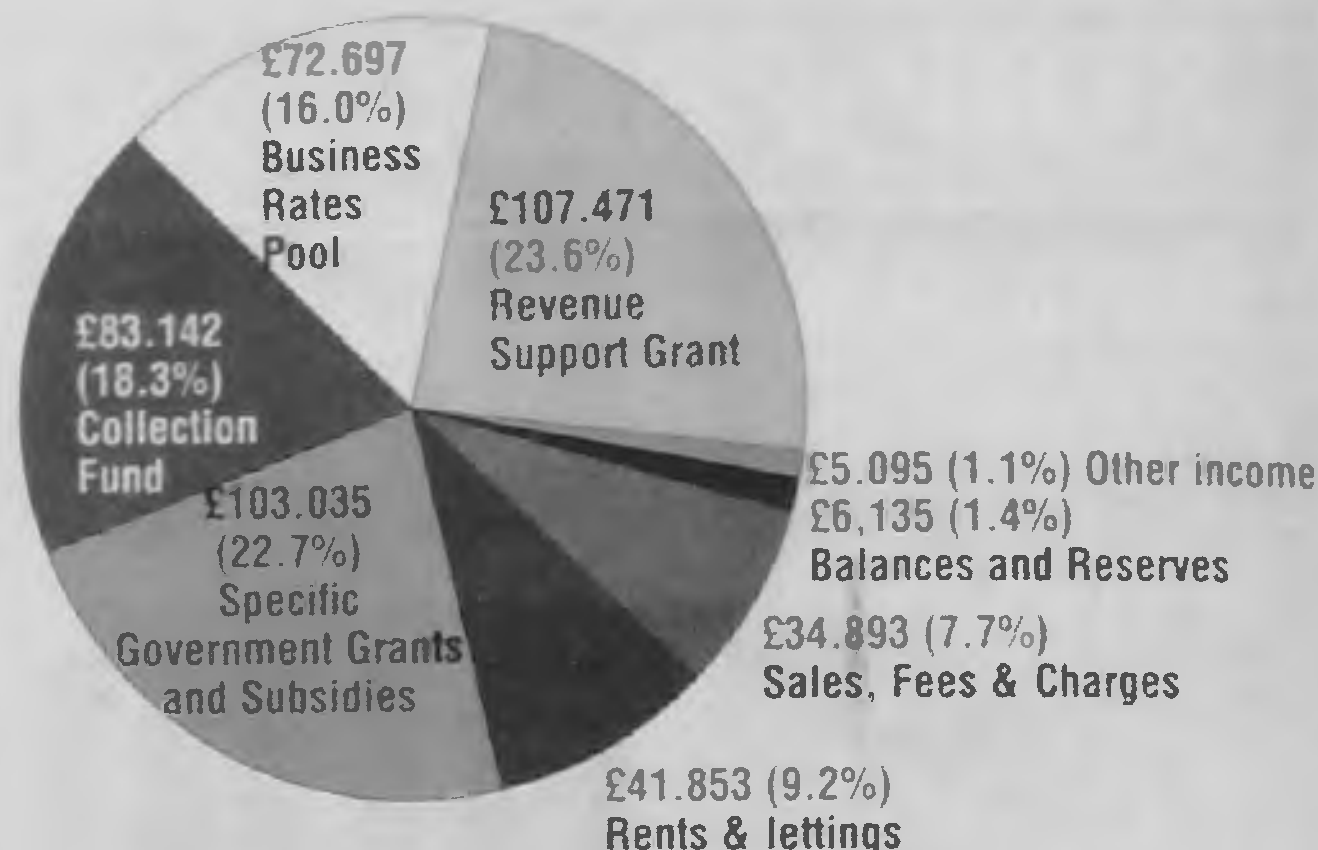
"This means spending up to the limit government rules allow. To spend less would mean we would get less next year. That is the simple truth. That would result in severe cuts in services next year and in all future years when needs and demands will be even greater. The choice is as stark as that.

"This council will not mortgage the future prosperity of the borough for short term gain," said Councillor Williams.

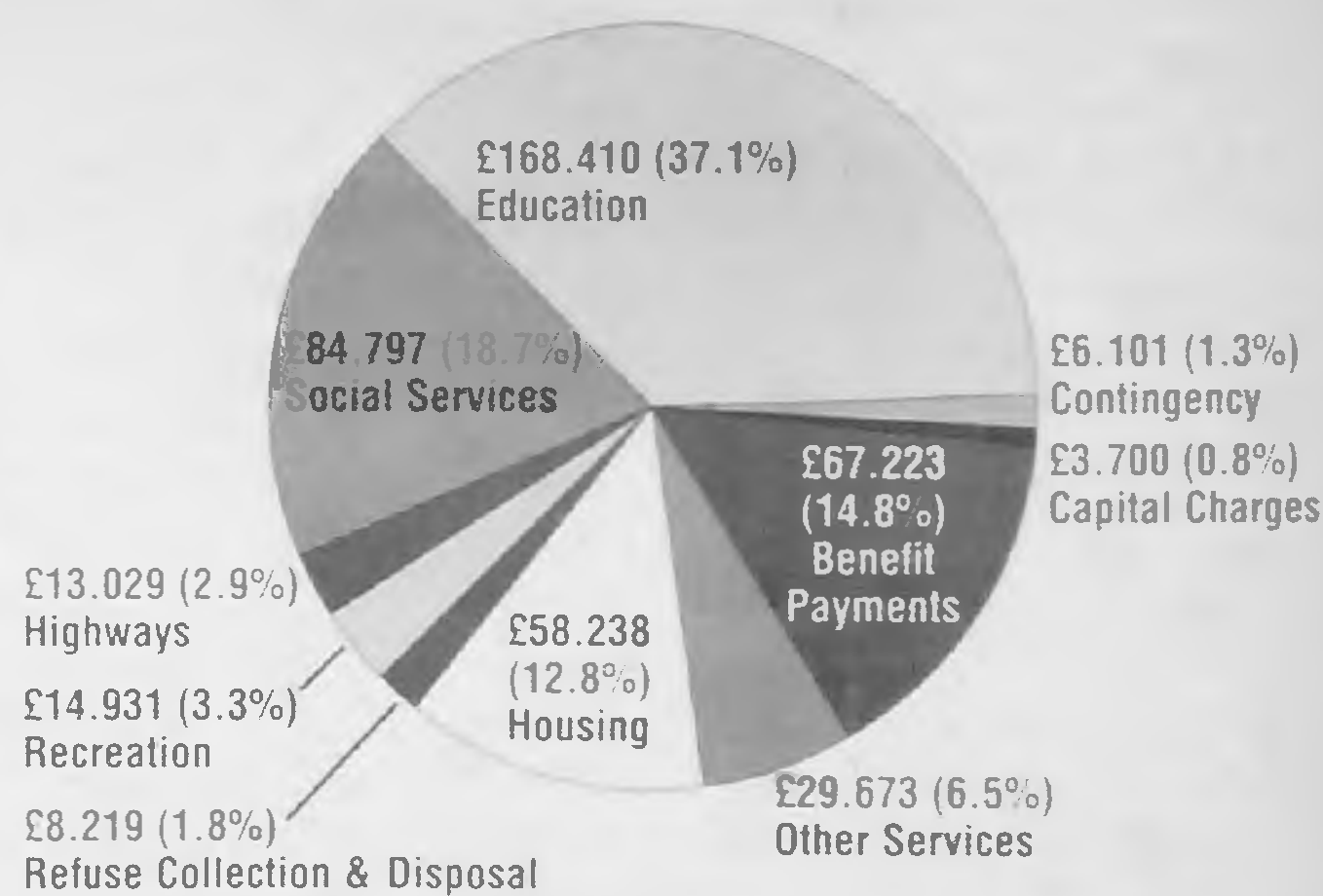
Barnet has again used nearly £5 million of reserves, the result of good house-keeping and businesslike management of resources, to keep the percentage Council Tax increase below double figures (9.46 per cent).

The council continues to hold some funds in reserve to cushion future spending levels and any unforeseen liabilities which may arise.

Income of the council in £m 1998/99
Total income £454.321m



Gross service expenditure in £m 1998/99
Total expenditure £454.321m



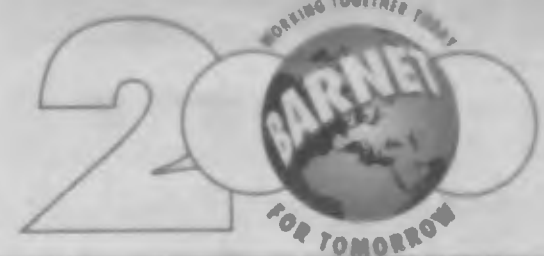
Council Tax Valuation Bands 1998/1999

Band	Council Tax (£)
A	485.38
B	566.27
C	647.18
D	728.07
E	889.87
F	1051.66
G	1213.45
H	1456.14

Barnet Council opens 2 new nursery schools every year

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Getting a good start



Whitefield School got a heaping helping of praise from Minister of Public Health, Tessa Jowell and Under Secretary for Education, Estelle Morris.

The Ministerial duo congratulated the school for achieving high standards in health education as part of the Health Promoting Schools Initiative run jointly by Barnet Council and Barnet Health Authority.

The top government Ministers visited the school's Breakfast Club before launching the government Green Paper "Our Healthier Nation", spelling out a new national public health strategy.

Whitefield School's Breakfast Club serves over 60 breakfasts a day to students and staff in a friendly, informal atmosphere.

The club has been generously backed by local businesses and is now sponsored by the Barnet Education Business Partnership and run by a rota of teaching staff who volunteer their services.

During the Ministerial visit, the local branch of the National Westminster Bank guaranteed the continued sponsoring of the club with a £3,000 donation.

"The benefits the school has gained from this single initiative have been numerous," stressed Head Teacher Barbara Howse.

"Our students join in with the staff, eat healthy breakfasts, chat and work together in a warm and friendly atmosphere and get the working day off to a good start."

CRACKDOWN ON CRIME

COUNCIL ACTS

Barnet's crackdown on crime has moved into top gear. Working with the police and community organisations, Barnet is set to take a tough line on those who commit crimes or behave in a way that is likely to cause trouble.



Determined: Council Leader, Alan Williams

The council is spearheading major initiatives to cut crime with practical new schemes to replace broken fences, remove graffiti, tackle noisy parties and improve lighting on estates.

"We are determined to take tough action against anyone involved in crime and violence and will not tolerate antisocial behaviour in Barnet," stressed Council Leader, Alan Williams.

"We are determined to work closely with local communities and the police to make sure that anyone who commits a crime in our patch is caught and

punished," he added.

Elderly people are particularly vulnerable and suffer much distress from the fear of crime.

In a bid to tackle this, Barnet Council has introduced a new scheme to improve the security of such residents' homes.

New locks, spyholes and strengthened doors will make homes safer and reduce the chance of burglaries.

"Everyone should feel safe in their own home," said Councillor Williams. "We're determined to make sure they do."

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Barnet is to get a £146,000 government cash grant to help reduce class sizes in the borough's primary schools.

This means Barnet will be able to speed up its own programme of cutting primary class sizes to 30 or below throughout the borough.

Barnet Council is one of only ten London authorities to get the extra cash which comes from a special £22 million government fund designed to reduce class sizes nationwide.



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LEAGUE TOPPERS

The latest league tables for primary schools show Barnet once again above the national average in all subjects particularly in English and mathematics.

New figures published give results school-by-school for eleven year olds who have reached the end of their final year of primary school.

These 1997 National Curriculum assessments summarise the achievements of children in English, mathematics and science.

Results in all subjects for many schools in Barnet are better than those achieved in 1996.

For the first time these results are being published locally and Barnet has produced a free booklet, available in libraries and Action Points, giving a summary of the results and how to use them.

Parents who are considering which school to send their children to are reminded not to rely simply on league tables.

"Parents should visit the local schools in their area, talk to the Headteacher and staff and find out at first hand what the school offers,"



Barnet children: above average in all subjects, particularly maths and English.

stressed Councillor Anne Jarvis who chairs the Education Committee.

"Barnet Council publishes a detailed guide to all its primary schools and the schools will help parents with prospectuses, governors' annual reports and inspection reports."

PASSPORT TO LEISURE



The grin says it: Barnet's new Passport to Leisure means more fun for everyone.

Barnet is to pilot a scheme for a 'Passport to Leisure' allowing residents discount prices at a huge range of council and privately run leisure and sport facilities, restaurants, shops and tourist attractions.

A "Passport to Leisure" voucher booklet will be distributed to all households in Barnet giving opening times and special offers at council-run facilities as well as other leisure attractions involved in the pilot.

The booklet will contain a "Barnet Card" which will need to be presented to obtain discounts or redeem vouchers.

It will also tell families how to get additional cards for other adults in the household as well as further discounts for those on low incomes.

The pilot scheme will advertise a series of selected "one off" special offers to encourage those not currently using facilities to do so.

"Residents gain as the scheme opens up new opportunities for all ages to find out about and make better use of what's on offer within the borough," said Councillor Katherine McGuirk, Chair of the Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee.

GROWING ON BARNET



Barnet Council started an on-going programme three years ago to plant over 2,000 trees and shrubs every year until the year 2000.

To launch the initiative children from Manorside and Tudor schools in Finchley helped plant young saplings, including hawthorn, hazel, field maple, rose, holly and willow, in earth which had been removed during the building work at the

Finchley Lido site which was put into the Glebelands Open Space behind the site.

Throughout the last three years the council has planted new trees in streets, open spaces, parks and gardens.

It has also planted bulbs and shrubs in schools, beside roads and on roundabouts.

The planting of shrubs and trees is in line with Barnet's commitment to both Local Agenda 21 and its 'Greening the Borough' initiative.

ON YER BIKE

Barnet has a number of footpaths which can now be used by both pedestrians and cyclists. Some paths are specifically separated into two halves, one for cyclists and one for pedestrians. A white line shows which side each should use and a distinctive sign is placed where cyclists or pedestrians join the path. The sign is circular with a light blue background. It clearly shows a pedestrian and a cyclist separated by a vertical line, indicating which side of the path each should use. Some paths are shared by both cyclists and pedestrians with no line separating each user. Once again a circular sign with a blue background is placed where either pedestrians or cyclists join the path. This sign has the cycle symbol on top and the pedestrian one underneath.

L'CHAIM

Barnet is to celebrate this year's 50th anniversary of the State of Israel with a programme of events and activities to emphasise the borough's links with the country.

"This will be an opportunity for all sections of the community to celebrate and commemorate an event which had such profound significance for so many of our residents and which will help strengthen the existing ties between the borough and an often troubled corner of the world," said Councillor Helen Gordon, Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee.

Barnet already has a very active Town Twinning arrangement with Ramat Gan, which lies close to the capital Tel Aviv.

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COUNCILLOR FRANK DAVIS

Councillor Frank Davis who represented Garden Suburb Ward has died aged 77.

Frank Davis had been Mayor of the former Finchley Council 1963-64, and Deputy Mayor of Barnet 1993-94.

He first became a councillor on Finchley Borough Council in 1956 and remained until Finchley Council merged with the new Barnet Council in 1965.

He served as a councillor on Barnet Council between 1965 and 1971 returning in 1990 as Conservative member for Garden Suburb Ward.

He twice stood for Parliament, in Finchley in 1966 and Acton in 1968.

He played a major part in forcing an amendment to the Representation of the People Act which until then prohibited the names of political parties appearing on ballot papers.

He was a barrister and a Justice of the Peace, educated at London Polytechnic and Gray's Inn.

His interests in education

led him to governorships of a number of schools including Henrietta Barnett, Christ's College and Brooklands. He was also a Governor of Tel Aviv University.

He was a supporter of youth football, a keen horticulturist and enjoyed travelling. He was a founder of Wingate Football Club and Chairman of the Finchley Wingate Youth Trust.

"Frank Davis will be remembered as a loyal and dependable colleague by his friends across the political spectrum.

"He had a tremendous sense of humour and was a conscientious councillor.

"He will be missed by many members on the council and in the wider community," said Max Caller, Chief Executive of Barnet Council.

He celebrated his Golden Wedding in 1995 and leaves his wife, Irene, and two sons. Frank Davis is also survived by his 97 year old mother.

His funeral took place at Bushey Jewish Cemetery.

MORE FOSTER CARERS NEEDED FOR CHILDREN

There are currently 180 children looked after by the London Borough of Barnet. The majority of these are being cared for by foster families with the support of family placement social workers.

Research has shown that children and young people generally do better when they grow up in families rather than care (children's homes). Barnet is committed to offering every child the option of a caring foster family - if they are unable to stay in their own families. Over the past year the number of children placed in residential care by Barnet has fallen from 32 to 20.

Children and teenagers need carers who come from families and backgrounds like their own so there is a constant need for a wide variety of people. Currently the family placement team are looking for carers who have got a spare room, time and energy and commitment to working with children and their families.

Training and generous allowances are available (and it is worth noting that these are not considered an "income" and rarely affect benefit).

If you might be interested or would like more information why not give Family Placements Team a ring on 0181-359 4560.

LITTER BUSTERS



The council's own hard-hitting litter busting squad in action.

THE PRINCE AND THE SCHOOLGIRL

A road safety jacket designed by a Barnet schoolgirl has won a special commendation in the Prince Michael Road Safety Awards 1997.

Sheetal Majithia from Mill Hill County High School first approached Barnet Council's Accident Prevention Unit with the jacket for young children which she had designed as part of her Technology "A" Level project.

Officers were so impressed with the design and the work which had gone into it the Unit entered Sheetal for the 1997 Prince Michael Road Safety Awards.

At a special award ceremony at the Savoy Hotel Sheetal was presented with a highly commended certificate in the technology section for her design by Prince Michael of Kent.

Her design will now be marketed by the organisers of the award ceremony and passed on to a number of clothing companies for possible manufacture.

The Accident Prevention Unit are keen to hear from any local clothing manufacturers who are interested in producing the jacket. They can be contacted on 0181-906 8028.

TROLLOPE UNVEILED

A new blue plaque in honour of novelist Fanny Trollope has been unveiled at 'Grandon', Hadley Green, Barnet.

Although she is now largely overshadowed by her son Anthony, Fanny Trollope was a hugely popular writer and novelist in her own right in the 19th century.

She wrote 41 books taking a wickedly satirical look at early Victorian life and counted Charles Dickens and Mark Twain among her admirers.

Fanny Trollope lived and wrote some of her best work during the 1830s in the house on Hadley Green which is now to be commemorated with the blue plaque.

She was born in Bristol in 1779, the daughter of a country parson, and died in Italy in 1863. Her son Anthony was born in 1815.

The ceremony was performed by Councillor Katherine McGuirk, Chair of the Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee.

Barnet Council is backing the Tidy Britain Group's National Spring Clean campaign throughout the month of April which aims to raise awareness of the problem of litter.

The council needs the support of businesses, schools, community groups and voluntary organisations in helping them to hit home the fact that if we did not create litter in the first place our streets, parks and open spaces would be better, cleaner and safer places to be.

A considerable amount of public money is spent on cleaning up litter every year and National Spring Clean highlights the fact that everyone is responsible for creating litter.

McDonald's are sponsoring a litter clothes and jewellery competition for schools and local sports celebrities will be taking part in the National Litter Relay Race.

A successful Clean Barnet Day was held last year during the council's Environment Week and Barnet aims to co-ordinate a number of local events and activities to link in with the national campaign (*see Grahame Park picture below*).

Last year, over three million people throughout Britain took part in National Spring Clean.

If you want to do your bit and take part in the Spring Clean campaign by either organising your own event or joining in with the council's events please contact Tamsin Greulich, Health Promotion Officer at Barnet Council on 0181-359 4717.

Groups organising their own spring cleaning activities may qualify for refreshments at local McDonald's restaurants.



TALLY HO

CITIZEN BARNET

The dream of a new arts centre for the borough in North Finchley has taken a major step closer to becoming a reality.

The arts centre at Tally Ho Corner would be the borough's biggest ever arts initiative, providing an improved new venue for music, theatre and dance and an art gallery.

Councillors at full council meeting in February unanimously gave the go-ahead to set up a Trust to manage and develop the scheme.

The arts centre would stage major productions and provide a home for arts groups presently using inadequate premises or forced to perform outside the borough.

The feasibility study commissioned last September suggested the centre should have a 600 seat auditorium which could increase to 700, a 200 seat studio theatre, workshop and education facilities and possibly a library and archive.

The council will put in a bid for three quarters of the costs of the estimated £11.4 million project to the National Lottery, with the rest of the money coming from partnership funding.

A citizens panel has been set up by Barnet Council to provide a fast track feedback so the council can find out what local people think about its services and life in Barnet.

Over 10,000 Barnet residents were invited to become members of Barnet's Citizens Panel and more than 1,500 people wrote back and said they were interested. This excellent response meant that it was possible to select 1,000 people who together closely resemble the population of the borough.

The final panel includes men and women of different ages and from different ethnic and social backgrounds, from all areas of the borough.

At the moment the panel does not include anyone under the age of 17, but the council is currently looking at ways to address this. The council is also keen to make sure the panel continues to represent the views of "ordinary" people so panellists will be replaced after a certain period of time.

Every panel member has agreed to fill in a questionnaire up to three times a year, while some are also willing to take part in

group discussions, face-to-face interviews or telephone interviews to look at some issues in more depth.

The first questionnaire went out at the beginning of March and will cover a variety of issues including the quality of shopping areas; the community and environment; traffic, transport and parking and the quality of the refuse, recycling and street cleaning services. Panellists will also be asked to identify their priorities for Barnet and comment on their personal experiences of contacting the council. The results of the first survey will be published in May this year.



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INVESTING IN PEOPLE

Barnet Council has become the largest local authority in the country to gain a national Investors in People (IiP) award.

The council is also the first and largest London borough to achieve IiP status for the council as an integrated whole rather than on an individual departments basis.

"This is a significant achievement for Barnet Council and shows we are committed to having suitably trained and highly motivated staff in the borough," said Max Caller, Chief Executive of Barnet Council.

"Individual members of staff enjoy the advantages of becoming better qualified and more effective at doing their job.

"Gaining this award is only the beginning not the end of the process and we will continue to work actively to develop all our employees both white collar and blue collar. Among the initiatives which have contributed to winning this accolade are the council-wide audit of management skills we conducted and an appraisal system tailor-made for our manual workers," he added.

Getting the IiP award is a particular achievement for a large and diverse organisation with a wide range of white-collar and blue-collar staff which includes planners, refuse collectors, finance officers, solicitors, social workers and librarians.

The Investors in People award is a national standard for training and development and Barnet had to provide evidence it met 23 different standards of good practice, which were tested by an independent assessor carrying out interviews with staff.

SAFETY

Barnet Council is providing £553,000 worth of new road safety measures to protect local families and help prevent accidents.

TREE WARDENS

Barnet Council's Community Tree Warden Scheme wants to hear from any resident who can help keep an eye on the borough's trees.

Barnet is known as being one of the greenest London boroughs and boasts a huge and varied tree heritage with thousands of trees in parks, open spaces and lining the streets.

For further information residents should contact the council's Tree Section at 1255 High Road, Whetstone, London N20 0EJ on 0181-359 4490.

BARNET BABES GET THE BEST



SUMMER READING

Summer 1998 will see the opening of Barnet's first Summer Literacy Schools.

Three separate two week schools will operate:

- a 60 place summer school for pupils in Year 5 (10 year olds) based at Barnet College (Russell Lane site) will run from 3 - 14 August. The scheme for pupils identified as needing a boost with their reading and writing will offer a rich programme of both language work and sporting and creative activities. The scheme will run in conjunction with the Barnet College 'Wizzkids' summer programme. Pupils will be nominated by their primary schools and the scheme, including transport, will be provided at no cost to parents.
- two 30 place summer literacy schools will operate for pupils transferring to secondary schools in September 1998, one will be based at Ravenscroft for pupils transferring to Ravenscroft, the other at Whitefield for pupils transferring to Whitefield. These two summer schools are part of other national 'Standards Fund' initiative and will offer a similar range of activities, with particular focus on boosting reading and writing standards.

Pupils transferring to Ravenscroft and Whitefield will be identified by their primary schools and invited to attend.

The three schemes will involve trained teachers, classroom assistants, voluntary agencies, youth workers and parents working closely together to provide a stimulating programme of activities.

Barnet Council is currently seeking sponsorship from the business community to support these activities.

Barnet's youngsters (seen above and below) make the most of their vital early years, learning, eating and playing.

Youngsters between the ages of four and eight will benefit from a new, comprehensive Early Years package. The Early Years Development Plan will secure high quality education for all four-year-olds and integrate this with child care and family support until and beyond the age of eight.

A new post of Head of Early Years will be created to take charge of the programme which will draw on the skills of both the borough's Educational and Community Services.

The Development Plan was prepared by a multi-agency Early Years Partnership whose brief was to draw up a positive and radical programme bringing together providers from different sectors to integrate education with day care.

The initial aim is to provide a quality education place free of charge for every four-year-old by September this year.

Barnet's programme of building two new nursery classes a year will extend this provision to all three-year-olds.

The plan will also provide family back up and help for children in need as well as out of school and holiday activities for children under eight.

Providing parents with information about the new service will be a key priority and a special Early Years helpline will be set up.

The Early Years Service will be mainly concerned with commissioning services - council as well as voluntary and private - rather than providing them but their role will be essential in ensuring standards are checked and maintained and the right service reaches those most in need.

"Barnet has long recognised that a good early education is the key to creating the foundations of a prosperous future for the next generation," said Councillor Helen Gordon, Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee.

"The Early Years Plan takes this further and sets up a comprehensive service which will provide for the many other needs of the youngest members of the community and their parents throughout these important formative years.

"I thank and congratulate all those who lent their expertise and help in putting together this radical plan and look forward to seeing it develop further in the years ahead," added Councillor Helen Gordon.



COME FISHING

A popular local fishing area is to get a new look and new management following a council decision to turn the Leg of Mutton Pond into a public facility for the benefit of anglers and wildlife.

The pond, in Moat Mount Local Nature Reserve, is one of only two angling ponds in the borough.


The pond is rich in wildlife including the rare plant blue waterspeedwell as well as being a breeding ground for water fowl, dragonflies and damselflies.

Improvements for the site will include marking out 15 specially marked angling positions and a survey of the fish stock with new stock being added if needed.

The northern end of the pond will be a no fishing area and signs will give details of the wide variety of wildlife to be seen on the site.

There will be a small charge for fishing permits and angling will be controlled and policed by Parks Patrol Officers as well as several volunteer wardens who have shown interest in protecting the site.





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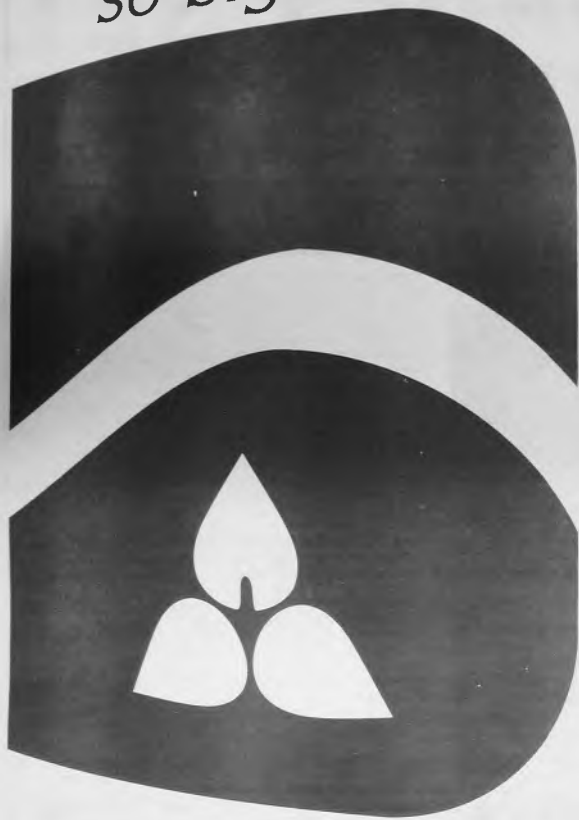
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Hendon NW4 1PS
0181 457 9900

The 4th Annual 10km and 2km Fun Run takes place on Sunday 15 March at Barnet Copthall Stadium, hosted by TeamBarnet Leisure and supported by Barnet and District AC. The 10km race is a two lap, fast, flat course and promises a great start to the 98 road racing season for club athletes and new runners alike. All finishers will receive T-shirts and there is a range of attractive spot prizes.



The 2km Fun Run takes place in an enclosed, off-road area and is an ideal event for novices and children alike. Fancy dress is optional and there will be a prize for the most original entry.

All entrants can raise money for The Mayor of Barnet's Appeal, The Alzheimer's Disease Society. Contact 0181 457 9900 for details.

TeamBarnet Leisure need swimmers to sign up for



BT Swimathon 98 and help raise £1.5 million for Marie Curie Cancer Care and a host of other charities. Swimmers can take part at one of two pools, Barnet Copthall Pools or the Finchley Lido.

There will be eight sessions at Barnet Copthall Pools and three sessions at the Finchley Lido. Why not sign up now, have fun, get fit and help charity.

Contact 0181 457 9900 or 0181 343 9830 and get your entry pack and training programme now.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



WHAT'S ON

We welcome contributions to the What's On column. Write to: The Editor, Community News, Barnet Council, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BG. We reserve the right to shorten entries and no responsibility can be accepted for the accuracy of information supplied for the column.

Until 26 April

Goal! Football in Barnet borough. An exhibition of past and present, kit, trophies, photographs, programmes, team mascots, plus videos of important games. Church Farmhouse Museum, Greyhound Hill, Hendon, NW4. Tel. 0181-203 0130

The Bull, Theatre, Gallery, Studios

Until end of April '98, A Festival of Celtic Arts and Culture.

Drama: 26 Mar, Man Act 'Heaven and Call Blue Jane'; 1 Apr, The Bull Youth Theatre 'Green Onions'; 2 Apr, The Bull Theatre Workshop Company 'The Cards of the Gambler'; 4 & 5 Apr, Live Theatre 'For the Crack'; 22 Apr, Mind the ... Gap 'The Big Picture'; 9 May, Red Shift Theatre Co. 'The Aspern Papers'.

Dance: 21 Mar, Nina Rajarani Dance Creations 'Independence'; 25 Mar, Kulyter Dance Theatre 'Paper Back'; 18 Apr, Angus Peter Campbell & Frank McConnell; 23 Apr, East Barnet School in partnership with The Bull, 'Ghosts, Ghouls and Magic Goats'; 24 Apr, The Kiran Ratna Company 'Mahabharata Mabinogion'; 25 Apr, Clerkinworks 'Centenary Knees-Up'; 7 & 8 May, Common Ground Sign Dance Theatre 'Answer Me with Silence' and 'Verse for Two'.

Comedy: 22 Mar & 26 Apr, Celtic Comedy Club.

Music: 28 Mar, Elephant Talk; 3 Apr, Sine E; 9 Apr, Fernhill; 19 Apr, Bert Jansch.

Children's Shows: 22 Mar, Little Angel Theatre 'The Selkie Bride'; 29 Mar, Taffy Thomas & Steafan Hannigan 'Tall Tales and Wild Piping'; 5 Apr, Pop-Up and Birmingham Repertory Theatre 'Cuckoo Time'; 26 Apr, Edinburgh Puppet Co. 'Cinderella'.

14-17 Apr, 11am-4pm, Animal Magic, a Celtic Easter Holiday Project for children aged 4-8 using a variety of skills, games and stories.

For details of the above listings contact The Bull, 68 High Street, Barnet EN5 5SJ. tel. 0181-449 0048

26 March, 7.30pm

Barnet Borough Confederation of Tenants and Residents Association Meeting, Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley

28 March 7.45pm

Hendon Music Society presents Sorrell String Quartet. Programme Schubert: Quartet in E flat D 87; Mendelssohn: Quartet in A minor Op 13; Brahms:

Quartet in B flat Op 67. Also 25 April, Angela Brownridge (pianist) 'A Tribute to George Gershwin'. Programme includes the Songbook, the Preludes, arrangements of the overture to Girl Crazy and the Ballet 'Primrose'. Trinity Church, Hodford Road, Golders Green. Tickets £9.50 (children £5, conc. £7.50) For details phone 0181-203 2355

29 March

Friends of Victim Support Barnet, 10km Sponsored Walk. Meet 9.30am Oak Hill Park, opposite St. Mary's Church Hall, Church Hill Road, East Barnet. To check details & for sponsorship form phone 0181-447 0497

30 March

Sotheby's Vintage Car & Motorcycle Auction. Automobilia, vintage motorcycles and classic cars on display under the wings of the aircraft. Royal Air Force Museum, Grahame Park Way, Hendon, NW9. **Also 9 Apr,** Eston Youth Band Concert, musical entertainment; **11-12 Apr,** Model Show, boats, planes, trains and automobiles of all shapes and sizes; **8 May,** Veterans' Day, to commemorate the contribution of WWII Service Veterans (On the anniversary of VE Day, the Museum will offer free entry to veterans of all three services and one guest if pre-register, phone 0181 200 1763); **16-22 May,** Museums Week, theme 'Food', special offers and activities; **24-25 May,** Emergency Services Weekend, a spectacular programme of live demonstrations and displays from the Emergency Services;

25-31 May, Schools Half Term, hands-on activities. Please check beforehand to confirm dates, times and schedule by phoning Marketing Dept. 0181-200 1763

30 March-1 Sept

Exhibition 'Surviving the Holocaust with the Russian-Jewish Partisans'. **Also 31 March,** 8pm, Talk 'The Rothschilds - History and Reminiscences' by Alex Rosenzweig (admission £2, Museum Friends £1). Jewish Museum, Sternberg Centre, 80 East End Road, Finchley. Tel. 0181-349 1143

2 April, 8pm

The Council of Christians and Jews, Golders Green/Hendon Branch, talk by Dr Judith Mae Parker, Deputy Director Gender Affairs Department, Gender and Youth Affairs Division, on her work at

the Commonwealth Secretariat. For programme details phone 0181-458 2030

Easter Fun for children in Barnet libraries

8 April

Spring rabbits (for under 7s), Church End Library, 2-3pm, Fluffy lamb mobiles (for 5-12 yrs), free tickets from Grahame Park Library, 2-3pm, Great Easter Egg Hunt (for all ages), East Barnet Library, 2.15-3.15pm

9 April

Make an Easter card (for under 7s), Friern Barnet Library, 10.30-11.30am; Spring into Spring: stories and craft activity fun for 5-11 yrs, Hendon Library, 2.30-3.30pm, Easter bunnies and chicks: a special story-time with crafts for under 7s, North Finchley Library, 2.30-3.30pm; Great Easter Egg Hunt (for all ages), Osidge Library, 2.15-3.15pm

14 April

Stories and Easter crafts (for all ages), free tickets from East Finchley Library, 2.15-3.15pm

15 April

Spring crafts for 5-10 yrs (wear old clothes), Burnt Oak Library, 2.30-3.30pm; Chicks in a basket (for all ages), East Barnet Library, 2.15-3.15pm; Easter chicks (for under 8s), free tickets from Mill Hill Library, 2-3pm

16 April

Paper flowers (for 7s and over), free tickets from Edgware Library, 2.30-3.30pm; Spring into Spring: stories and craft activity fun for 5-11 yrs, Golders Green Library, 3-4pm; Chicks in a basket (for all ages), Osidge Library, 2.15-3.15pm

17 April

Spring into Spring: stories and craft activity fun for 5-11 yrs, Childs Hill Library, 2.30-3.30pm; Spring rabbits (for under 7s), South Friern Library, 2.30-3.30pm

The regular programme of story-times and drop-ins for under 5s, their parents and carers, continues as usual throughout the holiday. A leaflet with details is available from all libraries.

8 April

'Hertfordshire Turnpike Trust' lecture by Clive W Clarke. Also, 13 May, 'Ye Have the Poor Always With You', lecture by Dr Kate Thompson. Barnet and District Local History Society. For details phone 0181-440 8066

16 April, 7.30pm

Barnet Branch of the London & North Middlesex Family History Society, 'Heirlooms and Ancestors' mini talks by members at Lyonsdown Hall, Lyonsdown Road, New Barnet. Group meets 3rd Thurs of the month (except Dec). For details phone 0181-449 1553

24 April, 1-3pm

Barnet Cultural Marathon Festival (as part of Flora London Marathon Festival) at Cophall Stadium, Great North Way NW4. At Opening Ceremony a piece of sculptural artwork will be paraded round the track by school children involved in its creation with school bands providing the music. 2km Fun Runs - children, parents, teachers, grandparents, helpers and any members of the local community are invited to take part. The run will start and finish in the stadium. Dance/drama - schools or groups contributing work based on the Ancient Greeks, myths and legends or Greek folk dancing. Fun Team Activities including wacky races and fun activities on the track for school teams. For details phone 0181 359 3152

9 May, 1.30pm

Family Holiday Association Fete, Central Square, NW11. Various stalls, magic show, roundabout, grand auction and more. For details phone 0181 455 1777

10 May, 2-6pm

Fifth Church End Festival, Avenue House Grounds, East End Road, Finchley. Local charities involved. Bouncy castle, go-karts, fun train, variety of stalls. For details phone 0181-346 7316

12-16 May, 7.30pm

Manor House Hospital Operatic Society presents Emmerich Kalman's 'The Gypsy Princess' at The Institute, Hampstead Garden Suburb, Central Square, NW11. Box Office, 0181-346 3244

25 May

38th Barnet Carnival at Barnet Elizabethan Rugby Football Club, Playing Fields, Byng Road, Barnet from noon onwards. For details phone 0181 449 6084

Rock/Blues Concerts Sunday nights

at The Torrington, Lodge Lane/High Road, North Finchley. For details phone 0181-445 4710

Watling Pensioners Luncheon Club

Lunch for pensioners who are members of Watling Community Association

(£2.50 annual membership) every Tues, Wed and Thurs at Watling Community Centre, 145 Orange Hill Road, Burnt Oak 12.30 - 1.30pm. An ambulance (provided by Barnet Council) is available to pick up disabled passengers on Tues. The lunch costs £1.70p, to book phone Albert Lacey on 0181-952 6620

British Epilepsy Association

(Barnet Branch) meets 3rd Monday of the month (except Aug) from 7.30-9.30pm at Trinity Church Centre, Nether Street (Tally-Ho end), North Finchley, N12. Also Sun 17 May, sponsored walk for Epilepsy and 17-

24 May, Epilepsy Week, various events. This group is for those with epilepsy and their families and friends. For details, phone 0181-444 4453 or 0181-445 8724

Walks/Activities with Barnet Leisure Services and CMS

For more information and meeting points phone 0181-359 3052

29 March, 9-11am

Woodland birds in springtime. 2km guided walk in Oak Hill Woods Local Nature Reserve with London Wildlife Trust.

19 April, 10am-1pm

The Folly and Dollis brooks circular walk.

26 April, 2-4pm

See the courtship and breeding rituals of birds who live on the water at the Welsh Harp

26 April, 2.30-4.30pm

Ramble along the old railway nature sanctuary with the London Wildlife Trust. See the flowering wild cherries trees

29 April, 10am-12noon

4km stroll through the Totteridge Valley with forested walks and Darlands Lake Nature Reserve.

10 May, 10am-12.30pm

Loop the LOOP. Come along and enjoy section 16 of the LOOP (London Outer Orbital Path). Discover the grassland of Barnet and some of the fascinating history of Hadley on the way to Cockfosters.

16 May, 1-5pm

Coppetts Wood and Glebelands Woodland Festival. Join in a variety of woodland-based activities in this local nature reserve in the historic Finchley Common. Woodland crafts, orienteering, a treasure hunt, pond dipping and guided walks are all available for the enjoyment of all the family. Guided walks leave at 2pm, 2.30pm and 4pm.

31 May, 2-4pm

Explore the secrets of the long abandoned Mill Hill to Edgware railway line with the London Wildlife Trust. This is one of the best sites in Barnet for slow worms and they will be out of hibernation.

9 June, 10.30am-12.30pm

Through the heart of Hadley. Enjoy the contrasting habitats of Hadley Green and Common as you stroll through the grassland and woods.

28 June, 10am-12noon

Discover Darlands Lake and learn about its ecology. Amble on for a taste of historical Mill Hill and back across the Totteridge Valley

Barnet Chamber of Commerce - Forthcoming Events

For the latest information on events please contact Peter Starling or De Cavanagh on 0181-343 3833

Your council committees at work

List of Committee

Meetings at The Town Hall, Hendon for the period

23 March 1998 to 19 May 1998.

Commencing 7pm unless otherwise stated.

23 March
Family Care Sub-Committee

24 March
Development & Protection Sub-Committees

25 March
Personnel Executive Committee

26 March
Budget, Financing & Performance Review Executive Committee

31 March
Public Works Consultation Forum

1 April
Policy & Resources Committee

2 April
Barnet Town Centre Forum (venue to be confirmed)

7 April
Recreation, Leisure & Arts Consultation Forum

8 April
Development & Protection Committee

20 April
Golders Green & Temple Fortune Town Centre Forum (venue to be confirmed)

21 April
Council Meeting

22 April
Edgware, Burnt Oak & Mill Hill Town Centre Forum (venue to be confirmed)

23 April
Finchley Town Centre Forum (venue to be confirmed)

28 April
Development & Protection Sub-Committees

19 May
Council Annual Meeting



Disabled Access



Loop system

COUNCILLORS' SURGERIES

Telephone Numbers: all codes are 0181- unless otherwise indicated. No appointments are needed for those councillors holding regular surgeries. At Bank Holidays, surgery times may change. Please ring beforehand to check.

Political groups are indicated in an abbreviated form (Lab) = Labour (Con) = Conservative (LD) = Liberal Democrat

ARKLEY WARD

Anita Campbell (Lab) 440 2703
Pam Coleman (Lab) 449 6254
Linda McFadyen (Lab) 440 6254

1st and 3rd Saturday every month 2-3pm
Chipping Barnet Library
3 Stapylton Road
Barnet

BRUNSWICK PARK WARD

Don Goodman (Con) 368 0383
Rene Palmer (Con) 368 7800
John Rawles (Con) 368 3522

2nd Saturday every month 10.30am-12noon
Monkfrith Boys' Club, Osidge Lane, N14
(Tel. 449 7345 - Chipping Barnet
Conservative Association)

BURNT OAK WARD

Rosemary Carney (Lab) 959 6757
Allan Turner (Lab) 952 2106
Alan Williams (Lab) 906 0576

Every Saturday 10.30am-12noon
Burnt Oak Library, Watling Avenue, Edgware

CHILDS HILL WARD

Jack Cohen (LD) 445 3981
Jonathan Davies (LD) 203 6690
Susette Palmer (LD) 455 5140

1st Thursday every month 7-8pm
Childs Hill Library, 320 Cricklewood Lane, NW2
2nd Tuesday every month 4-5pm
Kent Hall, Westcroft Estate, NW2

COLINDALE WARD

Danish Chopra (Lab) 449 3231
Gill Sargeant (Lab) 455 1070
David Williams (Lab) 343 1082

1st Saturday every month 10-11am
Grahame Park Library,
The Concourse,
Colindale

EAST BARNET WARD

Usha Chopra (Lab) 449 3231

Anne Jarvis (Lab) 449 9001

1st Monday every month 7-8pm
New Barnet Residents' Association
48-50 Victoria Road, New Barnet
Every Saturday 10am-12noon
104 East Barnet Road, East Barnet

EAST FINCHLEY WARD

Helen Gordon (Lab) 444 2761
Joan Ryan (Lab) 444 6400
Rudolf Vis (Lab) 444 4051

Every Saturday 10-11.30am
Neighbourhood Centre, Church Lane, N2

EDGWARE WARD

Malcolm Lester (Con) 349 2595
Joan Scannell (Con) 959 5921
Anthony Spencer (Con) 958 4867

Contact councillors direct or Hendon
Conservative Association
Tel. 959 1446

FINCHLEY WARD

Eva Greenspan (Con) 203 1598
Barbara Langstone (Con) 445 5443
Leslie Sussman (Con) 346 6775

Contact councillors direct or Finchley and
Golders Green Conservative Association
Tel. 445 4292

FRIERN BARNET WARD

John Carter (Con) 343 4005
Brian Salinger (Con) 368 1329
John Tiplady (Con) 445 5734

Contact councillors direct by telephone 7 days
a week or through the Chipping Barnet
Conservative Association Tel. 449 7345

GARDEN SUBURB WARD

Mohammed Khamisa (Con) 203 5519
Roy Shutz (Con) 883 1205

Contact councillors direct or Finchley & Golders
Green Conservative Association Tel. 445 4292

GOLDERS GREEN WARD

Melvin Cohen (Con) 346 2550
John Hedge (Con) 203 0137
Michele Moulin (Con) 203 2895

Contact councillors direct or Finchley &
Golders Green Conservative Association
Tel. 445 4292

HADLEY WARD

Mark Hayball (Con) 0956 343070
Liz Mammatt (Con) 361 9720
Kanti Patel (Con) 446 6639

3rd Saturday every month 10.30am-12noon
Chipping Barnet Conservative Association,
163 High Street, Barnet Tel. 449 7345

Liz Mammatt 1st Saturday every month 10.30am-12noon
Community Centre, 48-50 Victoria Road, New Barnet
Tel. 441 7044

HALE WARD

Andrew Dickie (Lab) 906 2807

Every Saturday 11am-12.30pm
Mill Hill Library, Hartley Avenue

Leslie Pym (Con) 959 5484
Sheila Scott (Con) 906 0825

Contact councillors direct or
Tel. 959 1446
Fortnightly on Mondays 6.30pm
Hendon Conservative Association,
2 Apex Parade, Selvage Lane NW7 3JT

HENDON WARD

Anthony Finn (Con) 202 9689
Fred Poole (Con) 203 0813
Andrew Sherling (Con) 202 8630

Contact councillors direct or Hendon
Conservative Association
Tel. 959 1446

MILL HILL WARD

Wayne Casey (LD) 906 8189
Jeremy Davies (LD) 959 6261
Sheila Gottsche (LD) 959 3990

Every Saturday 1-2.30pm
Mill Hill Library, Hartley Avenue
Last Saturday every month 12noon-1pm
Canada Villa, Pursley Road, Mill Hill

ST. PAUL'S WARD

Kitty Lyons (Lab) 346 6843
Katherine McGuirk (Lab) 346 8255
Jim Tierney (Lab) 346 3359

Every Saturday 11am-12.30pm
331 Ballards Lane, Finchley

TOTTERIDGE WARD

Kevin Edson (Con) 446 8343
Victor Lyon (Con) 446 4423

Contact councillors direct or Chipping Barnet
Conservative Association
Tel. 449 7345

WEST HENDON WARD

Nicholas Kissen (Lab) 200 9861
Gina Marks (Lab) 202 1719
Agnes Slocombe (Lab) 202 4074

1st and 3rd Saturday every month
10.30am-12noon
West Hendon Clinic, West Hendon Broadway
(entrance in Perryfield Way)

WOODHOUSE WARD

Stan Cross (Lab) 444 9178
Mel Packer (Lab) 361 4540
Jo Salisbury (Lab) 444 4482

Every Saturday 11am-12.30pm
331 Ballards Lane, Finchley

COMMUNITY NEWS Barnet Council, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon NW4 4BG
Editorial, design & production Barnet Council, Press & Public Relations Unit

Please telephone the 24-hour hotline number 0181-359 2325 with any comments or suggestions you have about Community News or if you have a problem with its delivery. Please leave your name and a contact number with your message.

THE BEST OF BARNET



Three sisters who won an impressive haul of ten medals between them during a national youth contest were officially presented to the Mayor of Barnet at a full council meeting.

Dawn, Avril and Tanya Clark from Brooklea Close, Colindale, achieved their family success story for the borough at the national finals of the National Association of Young People's Clubs athletics contest in Wales.

Dawn, 18, came first in javelin, second in 400 metres and third in the long jump, twin sister Avril, 18, came third in the 100 metres and third in the shot and Tanya, 17, came second in 800 metres and third in the 1500 metres.

They also got a second place medal each because they represented the Middlesex Young People's Clubs' team which came second in the

team event.

The talented trio are active members of the Grahame Park Youth Centre, playing a wide range of sports including basketball, football and rugby.

During the summer they entered the Middlesex Young People's Clubs' finals and took the team shield for their age group in athletics.

"These three sisters have completed an outstanding achievement and Barnet can be proud of this family," said Councillor Agnes Slocombe, Mayor of Barnet.

"For them to win ten medals like this at a national contest is a great success story both for themselves and the Grahame Park Youth Centre and an inspiration for young people in Barnet, particularly young women, who want to get involved in sport," she added.

BLOOMING MAGIC

The best of blooming Barnet. That's what the judges will pick in this year's Barnet in Bloom Competition.

Categories include: front gardens, container gardens (last year's winner, Mrs Celia Hill, seen right), Best Bloomin' Pub and the best town centre.

This year's competition is sponsored by The Spires Shopping Centre, The Finchley Society and The Co-operative Retail Services Ltd.

All entries must be in by 19 June. For further information - or an entry form - please contact Mrs Pauline Varnals, Barnet in Bloom, Barnet Council, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BG.



ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Following the success of last year's first-ever Environment Week Barnet Council is organising another week between 12 - 18 July. Residents will be able to take part in a range of events with the emphasis on 'Promoting a Healthy Environment'. These include:

- Car exhaust testing
- Business awareness meeting
- Organised litter picks
- Open day at Barnet Countryside Centre
- Energy saving demonstration
- Events in parks and open spaces
- Sustainable gardening demonstration
- Bike rides
- Health walks

Barnet wants to get as many residents and community groups involved to make the week even more successful than last year. Anyone who wants to take part or has an idea for an event please contact the council's Local Agenda 21 Officer Judith Orr on 0181-359 4664.

Twice a year - in June and October - over 3,000 square metres of spring or summer flowers are planted by Barnet Council at various local sites.

The ground is prepared and fertilised for a number of different sorts of "bedding" such as geraniums, marigolds, busy lizzies and petunias.

Sites include Edgwarebury Park in Edgware, The Town Hall, Hendon, Avenue House and Victoria Park in Finchley, Friary Park and Old Court House Recreation Ground in Barnet.

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**24 hours a day
365 days a year**

From street lighting to parking control, refuse collection to street cleaning and road safety to recycling, these high profile front-line services are provided by Barnet Council 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The work undertaken by the council's teams touch the lives of every single resident in the borough and as part of Barnet's continuing commitment to providing high-quality, value for money services a budget of nearly £20 million has been earmarked for public works next year.

One of the many areas the council is focusing on improving the accessibility for all Barnet's residents to public transport.

"We will continue to make the roads of Barnet safer through traffic calming measures and our programme of road and pavement repairs will focus on improving the whole character of the street scene and pedestrian environment," promised Councillor Stan Cross, Chair of the Public Works Committee.

With over 80 recycling sites throughout Barnet, normally within two miles of any resident, recycling bottles, paper, magazines, clothes, shoes and cans has never been easier.

"We have done much to encourage residents to recycle

and this has been reflected in the popularity of the council's first-ever door-to-door recycling scheme launched at the end of 1995.

"This year we are spending £200,000 on helping local groups fund their work on Local Agenda 21," added Councillor Cross.

As well as continuing to improve the services provided year-in, year-out, Barnet is also spending nearly £1 million on a number of new initiatives.

"All of this committee's services touch the lives of every single resident in this borough. Roads, pavements, trees, drains, car parking, community safety, lighting, transport, the environment or refuse collection all have an impact on residents.

"From improving our town centres to helping to regenerate Cricklewood and West Hendon, improving lighting on footpaths to planting over 2,000 new trees a year, Barnet Council is committed to making sure its services meet the needs of everyone in the borough," added Councillor Cross.

BARNET: A POPULAR PLACE FOR BUSINESS

Barnet Council plants two trees a day

The Cyprus Popular Bank is the latest company to recognise the benefits of doing business in Barnet. Last year the borough was recognised by a major survey to be the best place in London to do business.

The Popular Bank, part of the huge HSBC group, is to target its expansion on North Finchley. The Bank recognises North Finchley as an ideal environment for its growth and will be opening a new branch and administration centre in April 1998.

New leisure developments at Finchley and retail investment across the borough have also resulted in millions of pounds being invested in the borough in recent months. Further proposed developments at Cricklewood and West Hendon, Barnet and North Finchley also demonstrate that investor confidence in Barnet is very high.

Barnet Council has also invested in the borough itself. With over 4 million square feet of retail floorspace in the borough - the second largest for any London borough - the council is investing £1 million on town centre improvements. In addition, over the next three years the council plans to invest an extra £2 million. This will include proposals for pedestrianisation in North

Finchley and to introduce town centre management across the borough. A major Arts Centre is also proposed.

Barnet has much to offer the discerning investor. As well as providing an important strategic location it also boasts a highly skilled workforce and is home to many of the country's best performing schools. It also has an excellent range of leisure facilities and, uniquely for a London borough, some very attractive countryside. Add to that a helpful local authority and it soon becomes apparent why Barnet is such a good choice for business.

Barnet Council is able to offer a unique service to companies considering moving into the area. A customised support package recognises that no two businesses are alike, each having different needs. The council listens to what the customer wants and then responds.

If help is wanted in identifying appropriate premises the council can help. If accommodation is needed to recruit advance staff it can also help. Whatever the need, whether it is information on local suppliers, an introduction to key contacts or identifying sources of capital finance the council offers a helping hand.

"We welcome new business" said Councillor Andrew Dickie who chairs the Economic Development and Land Executive Committee. "Our close working relationships with our partners in north London mean that we can help companies choose the right business location and progress their business plans quickly and effectively."

Any company considering relocating or investing in Barnet should contact the council's Economic Development Unit on 0181-359 2862

VOLUNTARY GROUPS GAIN BUDGET BOOST

Barnet Council will be providing almost £4 million of funding to voluntary groups in 1998/99.

Barnet libraries: 4 million items are borrowed each year

Priorities include maintaining and improving standards in education, crime reduction and community safety, creating a sustainable healthy environment, working together to support those most in need, rebuilding our economy and community support and investment.

"The council will continue to promote an active and well-resourced voluntary sector in Barnet and we greatly appreciate the vital work voluntary groups do in our community.

"We will also focus on those organisations which are local, well-managed and can demonstrate high quality services and user involvement," said Councillor Jim Tierney, Chair of Grants Committee.

The council will also support after school clubs, breakfast clubs and holiday playschemes which provide good quality supervised activities and out-of-school learning opportunities for school-age children in areas of disadvantage.

Barnet Council serves 1,300 meals on wheels each day

£4.4M BOOST FOR SOCIAL SERVICES

Barnet Council is spending £4.4 million more on social services this year.

The council will continue to develop its Barnet Care 2000 policy, encouraging partnerships with other agencies in a bid to provide seamless care for the most vulnerable.

Focusing on improving care and resources at a neighbourhood level, the council will support self-help and the greater involvement of local people in their own communities.

Major priorities include providing services for children, young people and families in need and working with health authorities on hospital discharge arrange-

ments to reduce hospital waiting lists.

The council will launch another Shopmobility scheme in one of the borough's shopping centres, to follow up its successful initiative at Brent Cross.

There will be a second Community Care Fair, bigger and better than last year's successful event, to promote the wide range of statutory, voluntary and private services available to residents.

"We will continue to develop new initiatives to meet the changing needs of our community, working closely with the health service, voluntary groups and carers to provide quality social services for the most vulnerable in our community," said Councillor Pam Coleman, Chair of Social Services Committee.

- An Early Years service will be developed to integrate education and child care.
- A new Respite Credit Service will be created to enable people to receive respite care at times which best suit their needs.

- People with disabilities will be able to buy their own care under the Direct Payments Scheme, giving greater choice and independence

- Extra night staff will be employed at residential homes to improve the quality of care for older people.

- Two new play coordinators will be employed to build on existing out of school provision and to develop ten new out of school clubs in areas of need.

The council will continue to work to increase welfare benefit take-up in the borough, ensuring everyone who receives social services help has a benefits check so they do not miss out.

THREE NEW HOMES A WEEK – THANKS TO BARNET COUNCIL

WAR PENSIONS PLEDGE KEPT

Barnet has kept its pledge to war veterans by abolishing the system which means-tested their pensions.

From now on the council will ignore the entire amount of pension received by war veterans and their widows when calculating housing and council tax benefits.

Now pensioners will be able to keep all their pension without losing out on benefits.

"This council will never forget the debt we owe to our war veterans," stressed Chair of the Budget,

BUDGET BOOST

Financing and Performance Review Executive Committee, Councillor Linda McFadyen.

"We are proud and delighted that prudent management of the council's finances now allow us to restore benefits to our war pensioners in full," said Councillor McFadyen.

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