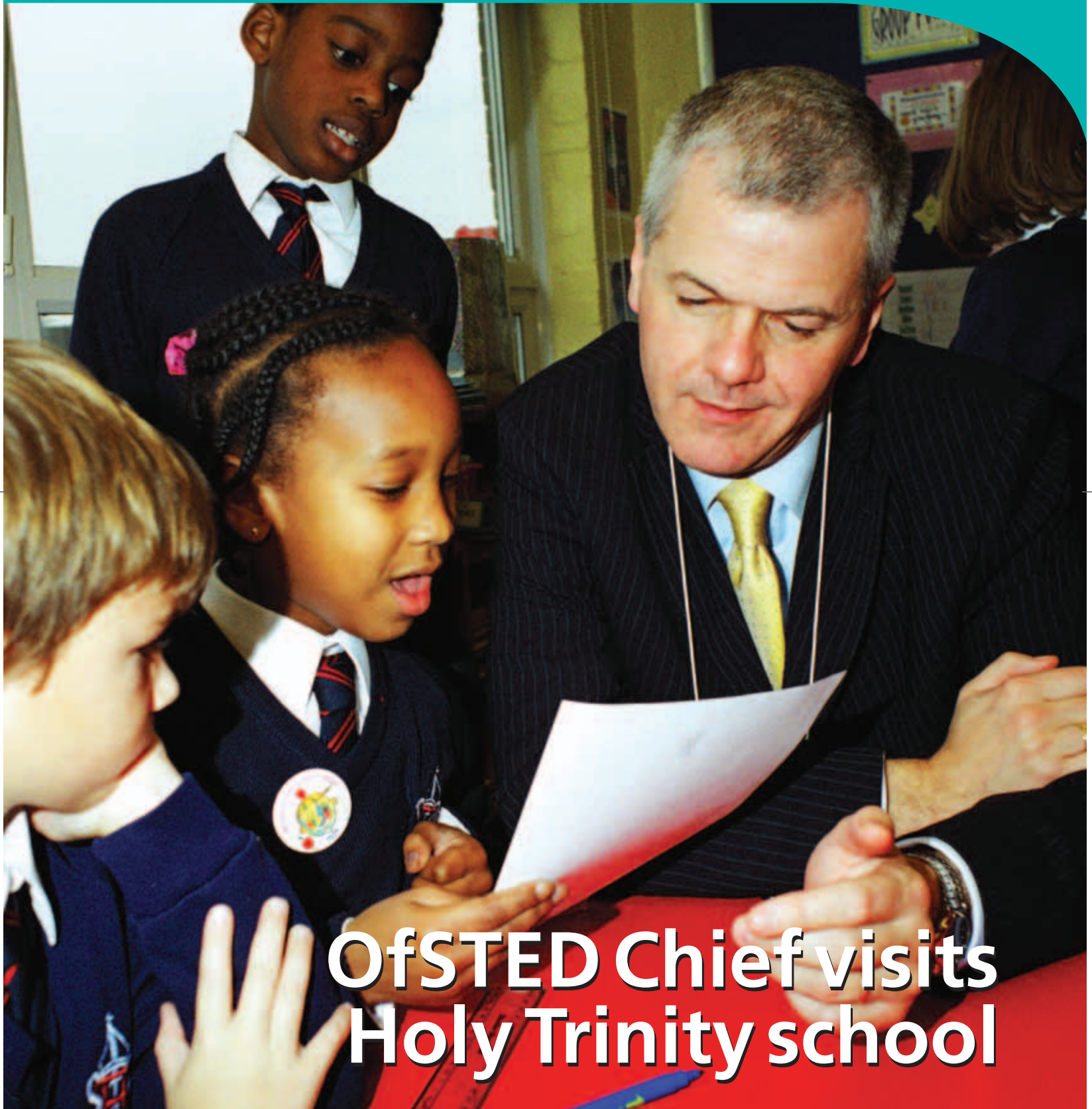


# barnet first

**BARNET**  
LONDON BOROUGH

FREE of charge Issue 9 FEB-MAR 2004



## OfSTED Chief visits Holy Trinity school

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2002-2003  
Improving Urban Green Spaces  
Libraries as a Community Resource  
2003-2004  
Community Cohesion

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

In this issue of Barnet First we outline the difficult decisions we face to balance next year's budget, following the very disappointing financial settlement the council will receive from the government, almost the lowest in London. We will have to make efficiency savings with final decisions to be taken in March, and it seems inevitable that services will be affected.

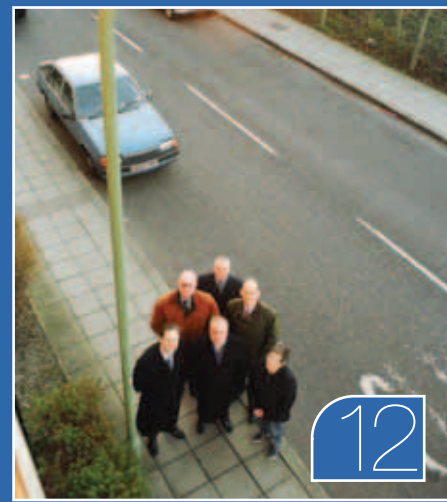
In line with our pledge to put the community first we have won over £27m for major new investment in street lighting and illuminated signs following a successful Private Finance Initiative bid. Barnet was one of only two successful borough's bidding for the funding, which will significantly help improve safety and reduce crime.

And finally, I am delighted to announce that our Social Services for children and adults have received an improved rating from the Department of Health's Social Services Inspectorate. Inspectors praised our drive to recruit foster carers which has reduced the number of children sent out of Barnet to be looked after and the time children spend on the child protection register. We have also received the best possible rating by government inspectors at OfSTED for the council's Youth Service which is responsible for the borough's youth centres, detached youth workers and education support initiatives.

**Councillor Victor Lyon**  
**Leader of Barnet Council**

# first things first

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# Inspectors praise Barnet's social services

**Major improvements made by Barnet Council's Social Services have been praised by Government Inspectors.**

The council's social services for children and adults have received a 'two star' rating (in a grading system of zero to three) from the Department of Health's Social Services Inspectorate (SSI).

This follows an inspection of the adults and children's social services and marks a significant turnaround in the fortunes of the children's service which received a 'one star' rating following a similar inspection in May 2001.

Giving Barnet's Children's Services a two star rating inspectors found that it now has 'promising' prospects. Last time around inspectors concluded that its prospects were 'uncertain.'

Areas singled out for praise include the council's drive to recruit more foster carers within the borough which has reduced the number of children being sent out of Barnet to be looked after.

Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Lifelong Learning Cllr Lynne Hillan said: "We are delighted

the progress we have made over the last year has been recognised by this report. This is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of our staff in providing the first class services that all the children in this borough deserve. We are striving to improve the service so that those children most at risk have the best opportunity to achieve their full potential and I am confident that this will be recognised by the SSI when they inspect our children's services again in March 2004."

Adult services also received a two star rating with inspectors finding that the council is 'serving most adults well with promising prospects for improvement.'

The SSI found that the service has improved across most areas and that its new management team is established and working well.

Cabinet Member for Social Services Cllr Maureen Braun said: "I am very pleased that we are continuing to provide first class care to some of the most vulnerable members of our community. We are confident that we can build on the progress we have made and obtain a three star rating next time."



Barnet First

## Barnet joins Adoption Consortium

**Barnet Council's Fostering and Adoption Team were joined by Barnet Mayor, Cllr Melvin Cohen (centre) and Cabinet Member for Social Services and Mayoress Cllr Maureen Braun (second from right) at Alexandra Palace for the launch of the North London Adoption Consortium (NLAC).**

The NLAC is a partnership of seven adoption agencies: the London borough's of Barnet, Haringey, Camden, Enfield, Islington and two voluntary agencies, Parents for Children and Norwood. It was formed to share skills, training and experience so children across north London are given the best possible opportunity of finding families that best meet their needs.

Over the last two years Barnet's Adoption Team has had great success in placing children for adoption and in recruiting adoptive families. The council needs to build on this good work and families are urgently required for children. The Adoption Service is particularly keen to hear from people who would be interested in taking older children, sibling groups, and from people within minority ethnic communities.

### Want to know more?

You can get more information about becoming a foster carer by calling 0800 3898740. To find out more about adoption call 020 8359 5705

## Barnet First

### Children perform in African extravaganza

Three hundred Barnet school children have taken part in an African music and dance spectacular at Alexandra Palace.

The performance was the culmination of work carried out by Barnet Music Education Service and World Muzikmakers from Zimbabwe, who joined forces to host music workshops at ten primary schools across the borough.

The workshops gave the children a colourful and exciting opportunity to explore African culture, while the Alexandra Palace extravaganza provided a fitting finale to Black History Month for the borough.



Barnet's Mayor Cllr Melvin Cohen meets pupils from Moss Hall Jr School who got into the spirit of the African music and dance spectacular at Alexandra Palace.

# News in brief

## Warning to Golders Green vandals

**Vandals have been sent another warning to stop their activities after surveillance by Barnet Council led to the conviction of two teenagers who had been attacking parking machines in Golders Green.**

The 16-year-olds were arrested by police after officers in the council's CCTV control room caught them interfering with the meters in September.

One teenager was given a six month referral order and the other sentenced to 18 months community service after pleading guilty to theft at Barnet Youth Court on Friday, November 7, 2003.

The arrests followed a sustained campaign of vandalism which saw a large number of the council's parking meters in Golders Green put out of action.

## Tackling fuel poverty in Barnet

**Barnet Council has hosted a special seminar to promote multi-agency working on tackling the misery of cold homes in the borough.**

Delegates from the health, voluntary and public sectors attended the event at Hendon

Town Hall. The seminar was organised by the Barnet Health and Social Care Partnership Board, a joint initiative between Barnet Council and Barnet Primary Care Trust.

The seminar aimed to raise awareness of fuel poverty issues and the help and advice that is available to vulnerable residents. For advice about grant aid you can call the council's energy efficiency officer on **020 8359 7435**.

## Electric blanket concerns

**Over 60 per cent of electric blankets currently being used could be dangerous.**

Those are the results of tests carried out by Barnet Council's Trading Standards officers.

A total of 31 electric blankets

were tested for free after residents were invited to drop them off at the borough's fire stations and other collection points. Twenty-one failed the safety checks.

Now the council's Trading Standards team are advising residents to have their electric blankets checked every year.

Contact Trading Standards on **02083594917** for further information.

# News in brief

## Asylum fraudster jailed

An Algerian asylum seeker who had his application refused and then used a false identity to claim fraudulently more than £9,000 of benefits was jailed for four months after action by Barnet's Anti-Fraud Investigations Team.

Mr Ali Nechat, 34, formerly of

Parade Mansions, Hendon, was sentenced at Hendon Magistrates Court to four months imprisonment after pleading guilty to two charges of obtaining property by deception.

He had bought a French ID card in the name of Abdelkader Benedallah and was using this fraudulently to claim Housing and Council Tax Benefit and Job Seekers Allowance.

## Beware of cowboy builders

**Barnet Council's Trading Standards officers are warning residents to guard against door-to-door cowboy builders and repairers, following a growing number of complaints.**

To avoid being stung by rogue traders residents should beware if:

- ▶ they insist on cash only
- ▶ they overstress any faults
- ▶ no paper work is given at all
- ▶ they seem reluctant to give a business name and address
- ▶ they are insistent on getting the cash immediately

Anyone who is offered building work in this way is advised not to take up the offer and immediately contact Barnet Council's Trading Standards office on **020 8359 2606**.

A list of reputable builders can be found on [www.barnet.gov.uk/trading\\_standards](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/trading_standards)

## Flytipping lorry seized

**Barnet Council is celebrating a victory in its war against illegal flytipping after a lorry suspected of being used by a gang of tippers was seized in a joint operation between the council's street enforcement service, the police and the Environment Agency.**

Vigilant refuse service staff working in Hendon reported the suspicious vehicle to street

enforcement officers.

The lorry was spotted on the A1 and reported to the police after it was established that the Environment Agency had issued a warrant for its seizure. The police stopped the vehicle on the M1 motorway.

Residents who spot vehicles tipping in unlikely locations are asked to contact the council's street enforcement service on **020 8359 7497** during office hours and **020 8359 2000** at other times. Alternatively, you can report the incident to the police.

Barnet First

## School pupils show their business acumen



Young entrepreneurs from The Ravenscroft School who won the Barnet Business Challenge

Pupils from The Ravenscroft School in Totteridge proved they had a head for business when they scooped first prize in the Barnet Business Challenge.

Organised by the Barnet Education Business Partnership, teams from schools throughout the borough had to demonstrate their business knowledge by applying their marketing skills to a hot topic of the day – in this case promoting diversification in British farming.

Industry professionals helped each team prepare a presentation and the expert tuition certainly paid off for the Ravenscroft team whose winning approach to promotion included a radio performance by rapper MC Strikey, aka pupil Priyesh Dusara.

The competition took place at McDonald's headquarters in East Finchley and the theme for this year's challenge was marketing.

## Barnet First

# Record road improvements

**A record number of roads are planned to be resurfaced next year and beyond as Barnet Council continues its road improvement programme to address the backlog of damaged highways.**

The council has earmarked over 400 roads for resurfacing and 125 for footway repairs.

The move follows the announcement that Barnet Council has successfully bid for extra cash from Transport for London for roads maintenance. Barnet will get over £3m to resurface main roads in 2004/05.

This financial year over 100 roads will be resurfaced, with more than 80 roads benefiting from the programme in 2002/03.

## Road safety improved in New Barnet

**Barnet Council has taken action to improve pedestrian safety and reduce congestion at an accident blackspot in New Barnet.**

Proposals have been agreed for the traffic lights at the junction of East Barnet Road and Approach Road to be removed and replaced by a mini roundabout.

The scheme will improve the flow of traffic at the junction and reduce the right-turn accidents out of Victoria Road.

Council leader Cllr Victor Lyon and Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Brian Coleman join parents and pupils from Frith Manor primary school's walking bus to mark the official launch of the smart signs



## Smart signs illuminate way to improved school safety

**For the first time vehicle activated or 'smart' signs are being used in the borough to improve road safety.**

Barnet Council has placed two of the signs close to Frith Manor primary school in Lullington Garth to warn drivers about excessive speeds. The signs display a 'slow down' message when a car goes over the pre-set trigger speed, measured by sensors.

Other road safety improvements for the school in Woodside Park include a widening of the footpaths, increased guard railing near the school crossing patrol and traffic island upgrades. Measures

such as speed tables and kerb-build outs that can lead to obstructive parking are being removed from Lullington Garth.

The scheme is part of Barnet Council's on-going programme of road resurfacing and maintenance. This year alone, the council is spending £7m on repairing roads and pavements.

Cllr Brian Coleman said: "These signs will alert drivers to the speed limit and encourage them to slow down. Along with the other initiatives we are putting in place, pupils at the school are now enjoying a much safer route to school."

# Holy Trinity caps year of success



HM Chief Inspector for Schools David Bell presents Holy Trinity Primary School with its National Quality Mark Basic Skills Award as Barnet's Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Lifelong Learning Cllr Lynne Hillan looks on

**A** fantastic 12 months for Holy Trinity primary school in East Finchley has been capped by a visit from Her

Majesty's Chief Inspector for Schools, David Bell.

The OfSTED chief, who was making his first visit to Barnet,

presented staff and children with a National Quality Mark Basic Skills Award in recognition of the school's outstanding achievement in the teaching of reading, writing and use of numbers.

Holy Trinity is one of only a few schools to have achieved recognition in this area and the award is the latest in a series of accolades it has received during the past year.

The school is the first 'Sporting Academy' for primary age children in the country and last November its excellence in sport was recognised when it was presented with a Sport England Activemark Gold Award by international sprinter Joice Maduaka.

The Basic Skills honour also follows an excellent OfSTED report, which hailed Holy Trinity as 'a very good school with some outstanding features,' and an Investors in People Award which was received by the school last July.

Headteacher Duncan Mills said: "The school is very proud of its successes and this latest award is a great boost for the staff who have all worked extremely hard to achieve it."

## Barnet Schools get top marks in league tables

**Barnet's primary schools are among the best in the country for improving children's reading, writing, science and mathematical skills, whatever their ability at entry.**

Latest performance tables show that Barnet is the seventh

best Local Education Authority in the UK for 'adding value' to the progress made by children between Key Stages One and Two.

This is the first time that the Government has published 'value added' performance measures

which aim to make a fairer comparison between schools who have pupils with different ability levels.

The tables also show that the average Key Stage Two results for Barnet pupils in English, Maths and Science are all above the national average.

Schools performing particularly well include the Orion School on Grahame Park which was ranked fourth 'added value' school in the country.

## 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](http://www.barnet.gov.uk) for information on all services including contact details and telephone numbers. For more detailed enquiries on council services call into one of our Action Points. The council has four Action Points at: 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](mailto:info.centre@barnet.gov.uk)

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<b>ANTHONY FINN (Con)</b> DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (CONSERVATIVE GROUP DEPUTY LEADER) (020) 8202 9689 cllr.a.finn@barnet.gov.uk 1st Monday every month, Action Point, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, NW4, 6-7pm	<b>KEVIN EDSON (Con)</b> (020) 8447 1910 cllr.k.edson@barnet.gov.uk 3rd Saturday every month, Totteridge Library, 109 Totteridge Lane, N20, 10.30am-12noon	<b>MARK LANGTON (Lab)</b> 07940 461 285 cllr.m.langton@barnet.gov.uk Saturdays, 331 Ballards Lane, North Finchley, N12, 10-11.30am
<b>MATTHEW OFFORD (Con)</b> (020) 8202 5319 cllr.m.offord@barnet.gov.uk 1st Monday every month, Action Point, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, NW4, 6-7pm	<b>VICTOR LYON (Con)</b> LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (CONSERVATIVE GROUP LEADER) (020) 8446 8253 cllr.v.lyon@barnet.gov.uk 3rd Saturday every month, Totteridge Library, 109 Totteridge Lane, N20, 10.30am-12noon	<b>ALAN SCHNEIDERMAN (Lab)</b> (020) 8731 9680 cllr.a.schneiderman@barnet.gov.uk Saturdays, 331 Ballards Lane, North Finchley, N12, 10-11.30am
<b>HIGH BARNET WARD</b>	<b>UNDERHILL WARD</b>	
<b>KATIA DAVID (Con)</b> (020) 8445 1410 cllr.k.david@barnet.gov.uk 3rd Saturday every month, Chipping Barnet Conservative Association, 163 High St., EN5, 2-3.30pm	<b>ANITA CAMPBELL (Lab)</b> (020) 8440 2703 cllr.a.campbell@barnet.gov.uk 1st and 3rd Saturday every month, Chipping Barnet Library, 3 Stapylton Rd., EN5, 2-3pm	
<b>KANTI PATEL (Con)</b> (020) 8446 6639 cllr.k.patel@barnet.gov.uk 3rd Saturday every month, Chipping Barnet Conservative Association, 163 High St., EN5, 2-3.30pm	<b>FIONA BULMER (Con)</b> (020) 8441 5258 cllr.f.bulmer@barnet.gov.uk 3rd Saturday every month, Chipping Barnet Conservative Association, 163 High St., EN5, 10.30am-12noon	
<b>WENDY PRENTICE (Con) DEPUTY MAYOR</b> (020) 8364 9249 cllr.w.prentice@barnet.gov.uk 3rd Saturday every month, Chipping Barnet Conservative Association, 163 High St., EN5, 2-3.30pm	<b>PETER DAVIS (Con)</b> (020) 8449 8968 cllr.p.davis@barnet.gov.uk 3rd Saturday every month, Chipping Barnet Conservative Association, 163 High St., EN5, 10.30am-12noon	
<b>MILL HILL WARD</b>	<b>WEST FINCHLEY WARD</b>	
<b>WAYNE CASEY (LibDem)</b> DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP (020) 8906 8189 cllr.w.casey@barnet.gov.uk Saturdays, Mill Hill Library, Hartley Ave., NW7, 10am-12 noon	<b>KITTY LYONS (Lab)</b> (020) 8346 6843 cllr.k.lyons@barnet.gov.uk Saturdays, 331 Ballards Lane, North Finchley, N12, 10-11.30am	
<b>JEREMY DAVIES (LibDem)</b> (020) 8959 6261 cllr.j.davies@barnet.gov.uk Saturdays, Mill Hill Library, Hartley Ave., NW7, 10am-12 noon	<b>KATHY MCGUIRK (Lab)</b> (020) 8346 8255 cllr.k.mcguirk@barnet.gov.uk Saturdays, 331 Ballards Lane, North Finchley, N12, 10-11.30am	
<b>SEAN HOOKER (LibDem)</b> (020) 8364 9309 cllr.s.hooker@barnet.gov.uk Saturdays, Mill Hill Library, Hartley Ave., NW7, 10am-12 noon	<b>JIM TIERNEY (Lab)</b> (020) 8346 3359 cllr.j.tierney@barnet.gov.uk Saturdays, 331 Ballards Lane, North Finchley, N12, 10-11.30am	

## CONTACTING YOUR MPs

### CHIPPING BARNET

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Office: 163 High St., Barnet, EN5 5SU  
(020) 8449 7345

### FINCHLEY & GOLDERS GREEN

DR RUDI VIS  
Office: 38 Church Lane, East Finchley, N2 8DT  
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### HENDON

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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

# Focus on the Corporate Plan

## Tackling crime



**T**he Corporate Plan is the council's road map for improving service performance over the next five years.

In the last edition of Barnet First we looked in detail at one of the five key priorities of the plan – repairing roads and pavements. In this issue we turn our attention to another key priority for the council – tackling crime.

At the heart of this work is the Community Safety Strategy, which sets out how we will work with the police and other local partners to make the borough a safer place to live, work and visit.

Our priority is to promote community safety in order to minimise the likelihood of people in Barnet being either the victims or perpetrators of crime. This will be done by reducing street crime, burglary, youth re-offending and the number of repeat victims of racially motivated crime and domestic violence.

We have already invested heavily in CCTV to deter and prevent crime. A mobile unit packed with state-of-the-art surveillance equipment is now patrolling Barnet's crime hotspots. This latest weapon in the fight against crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour follows the installation of more cameras in town centres and the opening of a new council CCTV control centre.

The 24-hour centre, which provides a dedicated link to local police, monitors Barnet Council's large number of cameras currently

located in Golders Green, Edgware, North Finchley and East Barnet town centres, Hampden Square in Brunswick Park, the Grahame Park estate in Colindale and Granville Road Estate in Cricklewood. The council has also agreed proposals to extend the council's network of static CCTV cameras to seven more town centres over the next three years.

Better street lighting also reduces crime and the fear of crime. Barnet has successfully bid for over £27 million from the Government for street lighting schemes to improve safety. The Private Finance Initiative funding will enable the council to replace all street lighting columns in the borough as well as large number of illuminated signs.

Maintaining law and order is vital for the stability of local communities. Community safety is a high priority for Barnet residents, and the council is taking action to protect the public from crime and anti-social behaviour.

### The five key priorities of the Corporate Plan are:

- ▶ A first class education service
- ▶ Tackling crime
- ▶ Supporting the vulnerable in our community
- ▶ A cleaner, greener Barnet
- ▶ Repairing roads and pavements

### Want to know more?

To get hold of a copy of Barnet Council's Corporate Plan telephone 020 8359 7022 or e-mail [claire.johnston@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:claire.johnston@barnet.gov.uk)

# Setting next year's council budget

The council will need to find many millions just to run its services at the same levels next year due to a government grant which only covers mandatory education spending, leaving no funding for any other council services.

Following further discussions with the Government an extra £1.6m will be provided, but this still leaves the council with many million pounds less than it requires to continue services at current levels.

The hard choices facing the council will inevitably affect the services it delivers. The implications are being worked through and the decisions will

be made on next year's budget in March 2004.

This is the second successive year the council has been faced with a huge shortfall on its budget. Last year it received the lowest settlement of any authority in the country – an increase of just 3.5%.



# Grants for those most in need

**Grants from Barnet Council are providing new opportunities and improved facilities to people most in need.**

An £8,500 grant to Cherry Lodge Cancer Care (CLCC) has been awarded towards the cost of expanding an outreach befriending service for people with cancer.

CLCC, based in Wood Street, Barnet, is a charity which offers a free service for cancer sufferers, their carers and family.

The befriending service can be a vital source of companionship,

emotional and practical support for people who may be feeling lonely or isolated because of their illness.

The council grant to CLCC is the latest one of many to benefit worthy causes in the borough.

At the end of last year, £15,000 was awarded to Old Barn Youth and Community Association and Barnet Play Association to build a new playworker training area.

These organisations provide play and out-of-school activities across Barnet for children - including those from areas of social and economic deprivation.

Barnet First

## Changes to licensing system



Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Health Cllr Brian Salinger addresses conference delegates

In preparation for the major shake-up in the licensing laws, Barnet Council hosted a special conference for the borough's leisure industry.

The Government's Licensing Act shifts responsibility for issuing liquor licenses from magistrates to local authorities and will bring major changes to the way pubs, clubs, bars, cafes, cinemas and theatres are licensed.

Along with the much publicised introduction of flexible opening hours for pubs and clubs, the legislation includes tough measures to tackle alcohol-related crime and disorder and nuisance behaviour.

When the Act comes into force next year the provision of public entertainment, including dancing, theatre and cinemas, and late-night refreshment will all come under a single licensing regime.

## Barnet First

# Barnet wins £27m for street lighting

**T**he council has been awarded £27.75m by the Department for Transport and Government Office for London for major new investment in the borough's street lighting and illuminated signs following a successful Private Finance Initiative (PFI) bid.

The funding will enable all existing lighting columns to be replaced and additional new columns to be installed. This will involve 21,000 columns in the next five years, and another 5,000 plus over the following 20 years. In addition 1,650 illuminated street signs will be replaced.

Barnet was one of only two successful London boroughs in

bidding for the PFI funding to significantly help improve safety and reduce crime. The PFI bidding started in March 2003, and the funding awarded will be provided over 25 years.

Improvements to the quality of lighting and signage will help the borough deliver four of its five key priorities – Tackling Crime, Supporting the Vulnerable in the Community, Repairing Roads and Pavements and a Cleaner, Greener Barnet.

Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Brian Coleman said: "I am delighted with the success of our bid which will support the delivery of our highways programme. Community safety is a



Councillors and officers celebrate the council securing £27m for street lighting improvements

major concern for our residents, and I am ensuring it is a top priority for the council."

## Unsung heroes honoured

**Five of the borough's unsung heroes were honoured when they were presented with Civic Awards by Mayor of Barnet Cllr Melvin Cohen at a recent ceremony in Hendon Town Hall.**

The winners of the awards were: Rupa Mistry, for contribution to the Sangham Community Centre; Karl Ruge, for service to many voluntary organisations; Wendy Taylor, in recognition of her commitment to fostering in Barnet; Premchand Salva, for his contribution and commitment to the Barnet Elderly Asian Group and other voluntary organisations and Alan Jobson in recognition of his work with young people.

## Top rating for youth service

**Barnet's Youth Service has been given the best possible rating by Government inspectors.**

In late 2002, an OfSTED inspection concluded the service was 'unsatisfactory' and not providing value for money. Now they rate it as 'good'.

Barnet's Youth Service is responsible for managing the borough's youth centres, detached youth workers and education support initiatives such as the Oasis project which caters for pupils 'at risk' of exclusion.

An action plan has seen staffing increased, more consultation with young people so the service provides what they

want and new initiatives to create more informal and formal learning opportunities.

Councillor Peter Davis, Cabinet Member for Community Development and Youth said: "Barnet's young people deserve youth services of the highest quality that meet their needs, tastes, and aspirations,".

"The council is committed to ensuring its youth service is one of the best."

### Want to know more?

Call Renae Randle on

**020 8359 4479**

## Improved customer information service launched

**Barnet Council has launched a new-improved first-stop-shop for residents who want information and advice about council and community services.**

Designed as the new name for the council's Action Point service, [first.contact@barnet](mailto:first.contact@barnet) will replace existing Action Point centres across the borough.

Launched at Hendon Town Hall in December, [first.contact@barnet](mailto:first.contact@barnet) will now be rolled out to Golders Green Library, Edgware Library, Chipping Barnet Library and Barnet House in Whetstone.

[first.contact@barnet](mailto:first.contact@barnet) is not just a simple rebranding of an existing service but an essential part of the council's commitment to putting the community first.

Improved computer technology will enable the council to improve the way it responds to enquiries made in person, by phone or via the web-site.

Staff will be able to monitor what issues are being raised regularly and this will better enable the council to

meet its priorities of providing a first class education service, tackling crime, supporting the vulnerable, repairing roads and pavements and creating a cleaner, greener borough.

Using [first.contact@barnet](mailto:first.contact@barnet) as both the new name for Action Point and [first.contact@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:first.contact@barnet.gov.uk) as the e-mail address for all council queries will also help Barnet present a consistent face to the public.

Cabinet Member for Value and Effectiveness Cllr Mike Freer said: "We are committed to providing first class customer care for all residents and [first.contact@barnet](mailto:first.contact@barnet) will help us further improve the way we do that. Not only will it help the council present a consistent face to customers, new computer technology will improve residents' access to services and information and speed up our response to their queries at the first point of contact."

### Want to know more?

Call 0208359 2277  
e-mail [first.contact@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:first.contact@barnet.gov.uk)



Barnet Council's Cabinet Member for Value and Effectiveness Cllr Mike Freer unveils the new [first.contact@barnet](mailto:first.contact@barnet) service.

Barnet First



Over 1500 snowdrop bulbs have been planted in Barnet's parks and schools in memory of children who died during the Holocaust

## Holocaust memorial day

The young and old of Barnet remembered on January 25 the universal tragedy of the Holocaust. They gathered for the annual Civic Commemoration Service in the Memorial Garden, Hendon Park, Queens Road.

Community and religious leaders, as well as senior representatives from Barnet Council attended. A full report of the service will be in the next Barnet First.

Over 1.5 million children lost their lives during the Holocaust. In 2003, Barnet Council established the Children of the Holocaust Memorial Project.

The snowdrop is the symbol of this project which aims to see, over time, the planting of 1.5 million snowdrops in memory of these children.

To date, over 1500 bulbs have been planted throughout the borough in parks and schools. Each school or household that plants bulbs will be issued with a participation certificate. Donations towards the project can also be made.

### Want to know more?

Call Renae Randle on

**020 8359 2339**

# what's on



The dramatic 'Milestones of Flight' exhibition, which explores the first 100 years of flight. Full of suspended aircraft, split level viewing, touch screen plinths, a time line wall and cutting edge screen displays. Also the fully restored Grahame-White Factory, one of the first ever purpose built aircraft factories in the UK. Also the exciting new Aeronauts Interactive centre and the collection of legendary aircraft.

**10 March, 7pm.**

A chance to see rare and exclusive footage from the archives of the RAF Museum. Free admission.

Royal Air Force Museum, Grahame Park Way, London NW9 5LL.

Phone **020 8358 4849**. Website [www.rafmuseum.org](http://www.rafmuseum.org)

Free admission and parking.

**Children's Shows**, Artsdepot at The Bull, 68 High Street, Barnet, EN5 5SJ. Box Office on **020 8449 0048**.

Children can earn the chance of free tickets for Little Depot shows by picking up a free wallet at the box office. Group bookings discount.

**8 Feb. 3pm.** Hand to Mouth - 'A Fishy Tale'. Ages 4+. £4.50; Half Term Show, **17-20 Feb.** 12noon and 3pm. Tiebreak Theatre - 'The Nightingale', their interpretation of the Hans Christian Andersen tale. Ages 4+. £5.25; **14 Mar. 3pm.** Quicksilver Theatre - 'Upstairs in the Sky'. Ages 3-5. £4.50;



**21 Mar. 3pm.** Half Moon Theatre - 'Ba Moo Yellow Dog'. Ages 2-5. £4.50; **28 Mar. 3pm.** Theatre of Widdershins - 'Rumpelstiltskin'. An authentic version of the Brothers Grimm's tale. Ages 4+. £4.50; **4 Apr. 3pm MAC** - 'The Elves and the Shoemaker'. Ages 3-8. £4.50



**7 February, 7.30pm. Quiz Night.** Tables of up to 8 people or arranged for you. QE Girls' School, Meadway, Barnet. Tickets £8 per person incl.

light supper. Bring your own drinks and glasses. Phone **020 8440 6418**.

**9 February, 3pm.** Barnet and District Local History Society. 'The History of the English public house' a talk by Graham Javes. **8 March, 3pm.** 'The End of the Line, the Story of the Railway Service to the GNL Cemetery' a talk by Martin Dawes. Wyburn Room, Wesley Hall, Stapylton Road, Barnet. Non-members 50p per talk. Phone **020 8449 6153**.

**10 February, 8pm.** Hendon and District Archaeological Society. 'London Burial Grounds' a talk by Dr. Roger Bowdler. Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley, N3. Phone **020 8340 7434**.

**12-14 Feb. 7.30pm and 14 & 15 Feb 3pm.** Hampstead Garden Suburb Theatre. 'BABE the Sheep Pig'. The Institute Theatre, Central Square, NW11. Box Office: **020 7723 6609**.

**14 February, 7.45pm.** Finchley Chamber Choir and Linden Baroque Orchestra. 'Masterpieces of the Baroque Era'. Trinity Church, Nether Street, Finchley N12. Box office **020 8446 6151**.

**18 February, 2.30pm.** '(Nearly) Sixty Years Through Your Eyes'. The Barnet Society looking forward to its Diamond Jubilee 2005. **11 March, 2.30pm.** 'Some Women I Have Married' a talk by Richard Selby. Wesley Hall, Stapylton Road, Barnet. Phone **020 8441 7175**.

**26 February, 8.30pm.** New Friends Social Group (for over 45s) meets at Oakleigh Park Tennis Club the last Thurs. in month. A wide range of activities. Phone **020 8440 4919**.

**28 February-23 May.** 'Local Treasures'. Spring exhibition of some of the historical documents and objects held by the museum and the Council's local studies and archives. 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**.

**29 February, 3pm.** The Anglo-Italian Circle of Barnet for all those interested in Italian culture. Meet in members' homes. Visitors welcome. Phone **020 8205 5611**.

**Learn to Samba** to the standard of a 'Passista' dancer. Also Samba-Reggae. **Thursdays 8-9.30pm.** Teachers have performed in shows and on TV. £5 per class/£3.50 conc. Phone **07968 151236** (after 7.30pm).

**Workshops for Children: 17 Feb. 10am-12noon.** Sand blasted window panels for ages 5-12, £5; **17 Feb. 2-4pm.** Geometric Collage for ages 5-12, £5; **18 Feb. 10am-12noon & 2-4pm.** Relief Plaster Tile Casting for ages 5-12, £7.50 per session; **19 Feb. 10am-4pm.** Stencilling for ages 8-13. Make your own '30s style design for a wall hanging or cushion cover, £12; **20 Feb. 10.30am-3.30pm.** Make your own '30s style jewellery using a variety of materials, for ages 8-13, £12. Tickets payable in advance. Phone **Richard Lumb at MoDA on 020 8411 5441** or email: [r.lumb@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:r.lumb@mdx.ac.uk)

**27 March, 10am-4pm.** 'A Life Less Ordinary'. Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live in a house that wasn't made of the usual bricks and mortar or to live on a boat

or travel the country in a caravan? This study day will take a look at alternative dwellings past and present, and the types of lifestyles that accompany them. Tickets £20/conc. £17. Optional buffet lunch £6.50. Advance booking required. Phone **MoDA on 020 8411 4394**.

**Until 28 March.** Exhibitions 'How to Live in a Flat - Modern Living in the 1930s'. Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture (MoDA), Middlesex University, Cat Hill, Barnet EN4 8HT. Open Tues.-Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 2-5pm. Free entrance.

**17 March, 7.30pm.** Finchley and District Philatelic Society. Auction Night - Bring items to sell and bid and buy. Carey Room, Trinity Church Hall, Nether Street, North Finchley. Phone **020 8444 3251**.

**North London and District Divorced and Separated Club meets every Tues. 8-11pm for a dance/disco,** also a social programme for those over 40 divorced, separated or widowed. Entry £2.50. Phone **01992 622798**.

**Flower Arranging Demonstrations.** Watch the experts and listen to their tales. £2.50 entrance. Designs are raffled. **2nd Tuesday (evening)** each month, Harwood Hall, Union Church, The Broadway, Mill Hill. Phone **020 8958 4124**.

**Finchley Children's Music Group.** Choirs for children of all ages to learn to sing and enjoy choral music. Opportunities to perform in concerts with world-class musicians. **Sunday afternoon** rehearsals in East Finchley. Phone **FCMG office on 020 8444 8418 (mornings)** or email: [info@fcmg.org.uk](mailto:info@fcmg.org.uk)

**English Country Dancing** fortnightly **Thursday. 7.45-10.30pm.** Harwood Hall, Mill Hill Broadway, NW7. Phone **020 8950 5756**.

Planning a local event? We'll publicise it free on this page (space permitting). Send details (including a contact number) to Susan Segar, Barnet First, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon NW4 4BG or email: [susan.segar@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:susan.segar@barnet.gov.uk) The next issue is out in April.

# Council pledges

## first class Education Service

**B**arnet Council has taken decisive action and implemented major improvements in its drive to create a first class education service.

The Local Education Authority (LEA), which is responsible for supporting school improvement and raising standards in education, was inspected by Government watchdog OfSTED in September last year.

Despite concluding that Barnet's Education Service was currently 'unsatisfactory' and that not enough progress has been made since the last inspection in 1999, OfSTED acknowledged that the LEA was now tackling its weaknesses and that its capacity to make improvements was 'satisfactory.'

The council had identified areas of

concern prior to the inspection and has already put in place a number of changes designed to improve the quality of services supporting the borough's schools.

These include a major restructure of the Education Service to provide more robust support for school improvement; a reduction in the number of children with special educational needs (SEN) who are educated outside the borough; increased provision for children with SEN locally and the introduction of a recruitment and retention strategy for teachers.

Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Lifelong Learning, Cllr Lynne Hillan said: "We are pleased that OfSTED has recognised that the challenges facing the Education

### Local knowledge wins prize

A Barnet First reader has won herself/himself £20 worth of Marks and Spencer's vouchers putting their local knowledge to the test in the last issue's Landmark competition. We asked you to identify three striking buildings from across the borough for entry into a prize draw. The correct answers were: Church Farmhouse Museum Finchley Lido and Friern Barnet Town Hall.

Mrs J.P Lorimer from Finchley was the first winning entry to be drawn and we hope she enjoyed spending her prize.

Service are now being addressed. Barnet's schools are amongst the best in the country and we are determined to ensure that our Education Service supports them effectively and helps them to continue to raise standards and provide all the borough's children with a first class education."

# Residents have their say on estate improvements

**Residents are being given the opportunity to shape the future of East Finchley's Grange Estate.**

The council is planning a major programme of improvements for properties there which will include fitting new bathrooms, kitchens and windows.

At a special consultation event at the Old Barn Community Centre residents were given the chance to view displays and give their opinions on what their priorities for improvements were.

As well as home improvements and housing services, views were sought on environmental issues

such as street lighting, open-spaces and community safety.

Volunteers were also recruited to form a steering group to draw up the improvement programme in more detail.

Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services Cllr Brian Salinger said: "We want to bring about sustainable improvements to the Grange Estate and we are committed to working with residents to achieve this and to bring everyone's property up to the Government's 'Decent Homes' standard."

### Want to know more?

Call area housing manager Kevin Turnpenny on

020 8359 5300

An unicyclist entertains residents at a special consultation event as they give their views on the future of the Grange Estate.



## Barnet First



Officers from the council's Environmental and Neighbourhood Service and ECT join the winners of the "Recycling – So Simple, It's Easy" competition

# Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre anniversary celebrated

**B**arnet Council held a special prize giving event to celebrate the two year anniversary of its Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre in North Finchley.

Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Brian Coleman presented the prizes to the winners of the "Recycling – So Simple, It's Easy" free

prize draw.

The draw was held to thank residents for their recycling efforts. In 2002-2003 Barnet recycled more waste – around 14,200 tonnes – than any other north London borough.

The site now recycles about 50% of the material it receives – good news for the council in its drive to meet the

challenging recycling targets it has been set. The site is run in partnership with ECT, the UK's largest community recycling organisation.

At the Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre you can recycle over 30 different materials including: bicycles, books, cardboard, engine oil filters, electrical items, fridges, furniture, garden waste, paint, plastic bottles, records, CDs, tapes, scrap metal, tyres and yellow pages.

Opening hours for the site are 8am to 4pm Monday to Saturday and from 9am to 4pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays. The site is closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Barnet Council and ECT also deliver a weekly doorstep recycling service to all households and a flats' recycling service for residents in medium and high-rise flats. The council is also rolling out its popular green garden waste collection service into more areas as part of its drive to increase the level of recycling in the borough.

For more information about recycling in Barnet, log on to the council's website at [www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling) or call the council's recycling hotline on **020 8359 7505**.

# Festive lighting boost

Grants from the council have paid for Christmas lights in town centres all over the borough. It also funded Diwali lights at the Sangham Centre on Burnt Oak Broadway and Eid festival lights in West Hendon.

This year the council has made a substantial investment in festive lighting in support of traders and religious communities.

The Mayor of Barnet, Cllr Melvin Cohen and Deputy Mayor Cllr. Wendy Prentice switched on the colourful lights.

Areas to benefit from grants for Christmas lights included Golders Green, Edgware and East Barnet.



Golders Green town centre was just one of many to benefit from grants for festive lighting