

YOUR FREE NEWSPAPER
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BARNET COUNCIL

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EFFICIENCY PROTECTS SERVICES



The root of learning

Councillor Anne Jarvis, Chair of Education Committee, joins the reception class at Tudor School, Finchley for a bulb planting session. The session was designed to help make the children aware of their environment both at school and at home, and how they can improve it.

and trees for life



Children from Holly Park Junior School in Friern Barnet brought summer colours back to an oak tree in Friary Park. Throughout November they worked with Barnet Council's Arts Office and a local textile artist, creating designs on silk for National Tree Dressing Day.

Pictured from left to right with their designs are Elena Attanasio (8) and Laura Eddlington (9).



Whitings Hill Open Space in Barnet came alive to the sounds of digging on Sunday 3 December when hundreds of local residents joined the Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Susette Palmer, in planting the first 400 trees of a community woodland. Barnet Council has linked up with the Barnet Society and the Watling Chase Community Forest Project to turn parts of Whitings Hill, which is owned by the council, into a woodland area.

SERVICES

Your council saved enough through economy and efficiency measures last year to protect residents from the worst of a £14m cut in spending the Government is demanding.

Major services will be protected - and it is almost certain Barnet will not be hoisting Council Tax Bills by the 10 per cent expected by the Government.

Despite the Government's decision to cut back on what your council can spend, it will protect front line services.

"Our efficiency and economy work over the last two years has paid off - we saved millions of pounds for the people of the borough which will help us soften the blow of Government cuts next year," said Councillor Joan Ryan, Chair of

ECONOMY SAVINGS BENEFIT ALL RESIDENTS

Policy and Resources Committee.

"Because we have been prudent, protected services while cutting down on bureaucracy and saved millions, we are able to support spending next year by over £4.5m from reserves.

"This will still leave over £10m to cushion us against any savage cuts next year and for years to come. We must continue to make our economy and efficiency drives pay off while protecting services

and the Council Tax payers of the borough," added Councillor Ryan.

"Our four-year corporate plan sets the agenda for service delivery in Barnet. There will be no stop-go approach no matter what the Government does to cut local authority spending," she added.

Despite the Government's £14m cut in what Barnet needs to spend, all major front line services will be protected.

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True grit beats the weather

The first of the winter snow hit Barnet last December but Barnet's gritting lorries had already been out in force following severe weather warnings from the MET office.

During 1995 the council installed a new salt barn at its Mill Hill depot for the mixture of sand and grit sprinkled over roads and pavements to prevent ice forming.

While residents were safely tucked up in their beds, the gritting lorries were out by 5am each day.

The council's true grit teams will be on permanent standby to tackle the ice and snow and protect the borough's roads.

Without this team, many of the roads in the borough would come to a standstill during bad weather.



Up since dawn... Jim Graham (left) and Bob Scarfe (right), one of Barnet's gritting teams.

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PROTECTING YOUR SERVICES

continued from page 1

The council will spend up to £240m next year - the maximum amount before the Government steps in with 'capping' measures to stop councils breaking the limits it sets.

Within the money available, the council will be pledging to safeguard schools and its continuing drive for more nursery school places, protecting the environment and supporting the voluntary sector.

Need

"We will make sure all services are targeted right

at the heart of need - where it counts," said Council Leader Councillor Alan Williams.

"We are determined that within the money the Government is allowing us to spend we will continue to improve and expand services.

"We are not going to pass on Government cuts. The people of this borough know what services they need. The Government is cutting local services which means we have to work harder and be ever more innovative and imagina-

tive to give the people of this borough what they need, want and deserve."

Education

"Even with these massive £14m Government cuts we will continue to develop and improve education in Barnet," added Councillor Williams.

The council will step up the drive for economic regeneration.

"Economic development is vital for us all - we want to see more businesses creating more jobs - with those in these local jobs spending money in our borough adding to the economy and benefiting us all.

"I hope and expect that within the available budgets things like economic development, our recreation, leisure and arts areas, our parks and open spaces can be further improved and developed.

"With this council, the people of the borough have a say in how whatever money is available is spent. That money, our money, will

work for us all in our schools, social services, in our parks and open spaces - everywhere," added Councillor Williams.

Money is being saved by targeting areas for economy and efficiency.

Efficiency

"Without our efficient, value for money drive this year, services would be facing cuts running into millions.

"No services will suffer as a result of the Government's decision to cut our spending. We are continually finding ways of doing things better," added Councillor Williams.

Ministers have decided Barnet only needs to spend £234m against the council's own estimates of nearly £249m to maintain services at the same level as this year.

The £240m limit, the maximum the Government will allow Barnet to spend before it is 'capped' and faces penalties, still leaves a shortfall of nearly £9m in what the council needs.



Youth to the rescue

On a cold autumn evening Mrs Marina Simpson of Grahame Park thought she would never be discovered when she fell while out walking her dog on Grahame Park. Luckily young people visiting Barnet Council's Grahame Park Youth Centre discovered her, called an ambulance and got help.

"I cannot thank the children enough. They stayed with me until the ambulance arrived and then took my dog home," said Mrs Simpson. Mrs Simpson is now recovering at home after an operation at Barnet General Hospital on a fractured hip.

Pictured visiting Mrs Simpson in hospital are from left to right, Dean Lewis (13), Kellie Dickson (10) and Shaun Burnett (14).

BARNET COMMUNITY NEWS

The **Ham & High** have been contracted to sell and produce the London Borough of Barnet's own free newspaper - the **Barnet Community News**.

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It's a world in miniature

Seeing was believing at Barnet Council's Church Farmhouse Museum in Hendon over Christmas, when residents had the chance to see the world from a very different angle.

Over 25 dolls houses of every shape and size were on view, some of which had been lent to the museum by residents.

The exhibition was another success for the museum, with hundreds of residents having their own private viewing of this miniature world.

The next exhibition - Carved Classic Model Ships by local resident George Fantides - starts on 3 February and runs until 17 March. Fans Through the Ages runs from 6 April to 2 June.

Our picture shows eight year old Charlotte Bayley who lent her own dolls house, which she made with her mother, to this fascinating exhibition.

CLAIM YOUR RIGHTS

Housing benefit rules change

There have been important changes to the Housing Benefit rules from last month. These changes affect anybody renting their home from a private landlord and claiming housing benefit for the first time on or after 2 January 1996, or those receiving benefit who move to a new address or cease to receive benefit for more than four weeks.

The changes will not normally apply if your

landlord is a housing association or a charity or voluntary organisation giving support or supervision.

Before agreeing to rent a property it will be possible to find out how much of the rent would be eligible for benefit. This is not the same as how much benefit you will get. That will depend on your financial circumstances.

You will be able to get a Pre-Tenancy Determination form from the

council's Fenella, Action Point and other council service points and other organisations like the Citizens Advice Bureaux. You complete this form, get your landlord to sign it and return it to the council's Fenella finance offices.

The form will normally then be sent to the Rent Officer at Torrington House within two days. The Rent Officer will make a decision as to what is an appropriate rent for your home and will tell you, the landlord and Fenella of his decision.

If a pre-tenancy agreement has been reached for your home within a year you will be told by Fenella of the maximum rent payable for benefit purposes for the accommodation.

Under the previous scheme certain vulnerable groups, such as families with children and some pensioners, may have received housing benefit at a higher rate for their accommodation because of their personal circumstances.

From January the rules have changed and there will be no extra protection for these groups, although for existing claimants benefit will continue to be assessed using the rents currently allowed until either you move or there has been a break in entitlement of more than four weeks.

Under the new scheme

the maximum rent allowed in a benefit calculation will be the average of the cost of similar sized properties in the same area. If you choose to live in a slightly better than average home, or one at a higher than average cost, it is unlikely that you will receive housing benefit to cover the full cost.

There will be some extra help that will be available in exceptional circumstances to reduce hardship by way of a discretionary award. The amount of assistance the council will be able to give is controlled by the Government.

Each case will be looked at on its own merits.

Those claiming for the first time are now able to appeal to the Rent Officer if they disagree with their decision on rent, which could not happen before. When the rent is set if it is a lower figure benefit will be reduced.

Appeal rights against the level of benefit awarded remain the same. There are two stages to any appeal.

At neither stage of the review process can a discretionary award be made if the council did not have allocations in this budget at the time of the initial decision.

Further details of the changes to the scheme and the Government booklet about the changes are available at Fenella.



Breakfast makes day

Breakfast fit for a king, queen or even a Barnet pupil was the order of the day at Woodcroft Junior School in Edgware during National School Meals Week.

Councillor Jo Salisbury, Chair of Barnet Council's Direct Service Organisations Executive Committee, whose catering section provide the breakfast, joined the children at the beginning of the school day.

TeamBarnet Catering provide meals to schools throughout the borough, as well as day centres, staff canteens and residential homes.

Our picture shows little Eman Abasia, age nine, starting her school day by tucking into rice crispies and baked beans.

Entryphones boost security

Your council has identified 31 blocks of flats which could benefit from entryphones and is sending out questionnaires to tenants.

The council plans to send the questionnaires to blocks across the borough which might benefit from improved security.

All sheltered and high-rise blocks now have entryphones and the

council's Housing Consultation Forum agreed they could be a valuable addition to the security of flats.

"Once again we have listened to what our residents want and this survey is proof of the value of our Housing Consultation Forum meetings," said Councillor Allan Turner, Chair of Housing Committee.



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SCHOOLS IN A CLASS OF THEIR OWN

An inspectors' report has awarded top marks to Barnet's schools.

Education watchdog 'Ofsted' (Office for Standards in Education) gave its verdict in the first annual report to look at education throughout the borough.

Teams of inspectors put to the test primary and secondary, nursery and special schools across Barnet before reaching their findings.

Praise

They praised the consistently high standards reached in reading, writing, maths and science adding that these were often better than the national average.

They were impressed by the quality of teaching and the positive attitude of youngsters in school who worked hard and took up the challenge of learning with enthusiasm.

They applauded the top quality leadership and management by staff at all levels and welcomed the close links between schools and the wider community.

"We are proud of the

high standard of achievement in all our Local Authority schools which this report has highlighted," said Councillor Anne Jarvis, Chair of the Education Committee.

"It is a tribute to the hard work and support given by parents, governors and staff all of which is crucial to give our youngsters a first class education in a caring environment," said Councillor Jarvis.

Inspectors reached their conclusions after conducting an exhaustive programme of interviews with pupils, staff, parents and governors in fifteen schools. They spent many hours observing lessons in the classrooms and put students' work and exam results under the spotlight.

"Barnet is pleased with these results but we are not complacent - there is still much to be done," said Councillor Jarvis.

Under-funding

"Government under-funding of schools is a serious problem and all the signs are that it will get worse.

"On top of increased demands and rising costs the budget forecast for next year is not likely to be met in full and I am afraid we will probably suffer a cash shortage for the second year running.

"We are firmly committed to high quality education for all in Barnet but this requires serious investment if we are to maintain the standards parents and children expect and deserve," added Councillor Jarvis.

SCHOOL BEEF OFF MENU

Barnet Council Education Chair, Councillor Anne Jarvis, has called for beef to be taken off the menu for school dinners 'until all the facts are known and parents have had their say'.

"The confusing messages from scientists and the Government are naturally causing great concern among parents and their schools.

"Until we have firm

Energy conservation in Barnet was given a further boost when councillors gave the green light for major projects.

Following its pledge to give residents a clean and safe local environment, Barnet introduced a rolling programme of energy saving schemes covering all the council's land and buildings. The benefits are ploughed back as investment in future schemes.

High on the priority list is converting heating systems from electricity to gas-fired, lowering costs and helping clean up the

INVESTING IN A GREEN FUTURE

environment

Typical of projects covered by the programme are schemes to raise the standard of insulation in schools and council buildings.

Other schemes plan to install time switches for lighting systems, energy saving devices for computers and extensive double glazing.

"The council is showing the way forward on energy efficiency and making a real contribution to the environment," said

Councillor Andrew Dickie, Chair of the Economic Development and Land Executive Committee.

"By caring about pollution and waste and taking a close look at energy needs, we have proved that it is possible to create more healthy surroundings and save money at the same time," added Councillor Dickie.

The programme will cost £80,000, all paid for by savings made on earlier projects.

information that beef is safe for our young people it must be removed from the school meals service.

"We are demanding that the Government is frank and honest with the people of this country and spells out in clear terms the implications of mad cow disease and the consumption of beef products, particularly for the young.

"It is appalling that the Government has allowed

this confusion and fear to develop," said Councillor Jarvis.

Even before the latest scare, the council was responding to the wishes of head teachers and parents and removing beef products when asked to do so.

To compensate for the removal of beef products, menus were extended and the number of vegetarian dishes increased.

"The removal of beef-

based foods from our school menus is an interim measure while we seek the views of parents and head teachers and await the findings of definitive research.

"We will reconsider the introduction of beef into our schools once we have the results of consultation with parents and have been able to study reports from the Government," added Councillor Jarvis.

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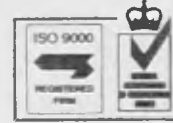
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SIXTH FORM DRIVERS ON ROAD TO SUCCESS

Shocking statistics prove that young drivers, especially men, are more likely to have a serious accident in a car compared to those over 25.

To try to prevent this happening to the borough's young residents, Barnet Council's Barnet Education Business Partnership and the RAC has teamed up with the Metropolitan Police and the Association of British Insurers to educate local sixth formers on the rules of the road.

Courses have been run to teach local sixth formers about:-

- the law and driving
- the need for proper training
- the responsibility of vehicle ownership
- accident risks
- hazard perception of new drivers and knowledge of the Highway Code

To put into practice all they had learned, teams from five local schools - Queen Elizabeth Girls, Whitefield, Christ's College, Finchley Catholic and Mill Hill County - joined up at the Metropolitan Police Training School in Hendon for a competition to find out if they could cope in a crisis.

They all had to deal with everything from simulated accidents to changing a car tyre.

Our picture shows winners Mill Hill County School being presented with their RAC sponsored trophy by the Mayor of Barnet Councillor Susette Palmer.

CRACKDOWN ON RACIST ATTACKS

Your council is demanding the police, the voluntary sector and the whole community work as one to crack down on racist attacks and other violence in the borough.

"The police cannot do it alone - and this council certainly cannot stamp out violence alone.

"We must mobilise the whole community to be aware of the insidious creeping evil which is racism and racial attacks -

and we must all make it quite clear it will not be tolerated in our borough," said Council Leader Councillor Alan Williams.

"Recent racial attacks in Colindale shame the whole community," says Councillor Williams.

The council has confirmed its commitment to working for and insisting on racial harmony in the borough.

"We thank the police for their efforts in stamping out this problem

wherever it occurs and welcome the multi-agency support panel which is being set up to support those who suffer at the hands of racists.

"Every resident in this borough of ours must be able to live free from fear of attack - and every individual, organisation and official body working towards that goal will have our wholehearted support," added Councillor Williams.

Filling windows

In a Christmas double, youngsters from Edgware Infants School did their bit to brighten up Edgware town centre - and keep fly-posters at bay as well.

They took over a vacant shop window in the High Street and filled it with their own art work.

It was the first time empty shops in Edgware had been used by local schools for exhibitions.

"This new initiative cuts fly-posting and gives a positive message about our talented youngsters," said Councillor Andrew Dickie, Chair of the Economic Development and Land Executive Committee.

Our picture shows little Jodie Stephens from Edgware Infants School with her picture of worms.



JOBS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

The council's Mill Hill Depot was swamped with job-hunting residents when Barnet held its first-ever Job Fair. From kitchen managers to road masons, parking attendants to electrical engineers, there was something for everyone who wanted to work in the council's TeamBarnet Direct Service Organisations.

"The borough is keen to recruit local people from all sections of our diverse community, including residents with disabilities," said Councillor Linda McFadyen, Chair of Personnel Executive Committee.

WAR MEMORIALS RESTORED

Barnet's War Memorials Initiative nearly reached its target of restoring all ten of the war memorials in the borough by Remembrance Day last November.

Those working with the initiative, including Barnet Council, are now pulling out all the stops over the next few months to raise enough cash to complete the four remaining borough memorials in New Barnet, Mill Hill, Finchley Village and Totteridge as well as Edgware in the London Borough of Harrow.

Over the last 18 months the group have worked tirelessly to clean and restore the ten memorials in the borough and Edgware in Harrow.

This work has only been made possible by donations from the public and grant aid from the council.

"It is a tribute to the generosity of residents that we have been able to finish work on six of the memorials," said Max Caller, Chief Executive of Barnet Council and Hon Secretary of the Barnet War Memorials Initiative.

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Leader of Barnet Council, Councillor Alan Williams, pulls out the winning ticket in the special Christmas draw at your council's thriving Watling Market in Burnt Oak. The lucky winner was D. Russell from Edgware who got £50 in gift vouchers.

With Councillor Williams is Shirley Tester, a member of the Watling Market Committee.

More affordable homes drive

Your council is planning to provide residents with affordable homes to meet an expected future lack of housing.

The council has decided to use a report it had carried out by the London Research Centre to help map out its future housing and planning policy.

Among the findings of the report were:

- A total of 9,200 households need a new home. Almost half need one bedroom homes while 26 per cent require two bedrooms.
- 4,000 households suffer from overcrowding.
- About 650 homes lack basic facilities.
- 700 homes are in serious need of repairs.

The problems are made worse by private property prices in Barnet being well above the London average. The report estimated 4,900 families needing a new home cannot afford to buy in Barnet.

The total amount of affordable rented housing which will become available over the next four years is predicted at 6,250 but the need is expected to be 9,450.

That means there will be 3,200 families who will not be housed unless extra homes are provided.

Barnet Council is using the findings as the basis for plans to tackle overcrowding and people living in homes too big for them.

The council is committed to getting more affordable homes in the borough and this target will influence planning decisions in future.

"The council is committed to trying to provide affordable homes to all residents who need them in the borough. This report gives us information which will help us plan to provide homes for those in need in future," said Councillor Allan Turner, Chair of Housing Committee.

ACTION ON CLAIMS

The council is tightening up the rules to force contractors working for Barnet to settle insurance claims quickly if they cause any damage to residents' property.

Under government rules councils must tender out many of their services to the private sector leading to work often being done by outside contractors.

If Barnet's in-house teams cause any loss or damage to residents'

property while doing a job, the council can take immediate action and settle the claim directly. Not so with a private contractor.

Private contractors use their own insurance companies and this has led to long delays in dealing with claims causing a lot of anxiety and distress to residents.

Now Barnet is calling for swifter action to settle claims and is warning all contractors of their responsibility towards residents

A tougher line is being taken with violent partners in the home by your council. The council is also adopting new policies to give greater help and support to the victims of domestic violence.

The wording in council tenancy agreements now says the council will take action to evict anyone who it believes puts their partner at risk because of actual or threatened violence.

The council launched its new crackdown on the abusers in the home after hearing cases were on the increase.

National and local research shows a significant rise in the level of domestic violence and it is estimated that one in four women in a

The contract to manage all four housing areas in the borough has been won by TeamBarnet which swept aside the competition with a bid offering 'higher quality - at a lower price'.

The news comes as welcome relief to tenants and leaseholders who feared that outside contractors might come in to manage their homes under government rules which force councils to offer all services to the lowest bidder.

TeamBarnet came out on top in the bid to manage the borough's homes after presenting a package put together with the help of the residents themselves.

when things go wrong.

"The old system simply was not good enough and had to be changed," said Councillor Nicholas Kissen, Chair of the Compulsory Competitive Tendering Committee.

In future contractors will be given fifteen days to reply to claims for compensation and the council will monitor cases at every stage to ensure that they are being properly dealt with.

HOUSING... HOUSING... HOUSING...

CRACKDOWN ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

relationship are or have been victims.

Not reported

Surveys suggest as few as one in 20 women report incidents of violence in the home.

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of victims in private homes.

The council listened to the views of the council's Housing Consultation Forum and the multi-agency

Domestic Violence Forum before drawing up its new action plan.

Instant help

All victims who approach the council's housing department will be dealt with quickly, efficiently and with understanding.

Council staff will ensure all victims of domestic violence will be interviewed by someone of the same sex and interpreters will

be offered where needed.

Council officers will be trained to help victims prepare sworn affidavits to prove domestic violence where other evidence is not available.

Your housing staff will ensure information is asked for from any voluntary group which might be involved, for example Barnet Women's Refuge.

Time targets will be set for staff dealing with domestic violence cases and these will be monitored.

TeamBarnet will manage homes

Awarding the contract, councillors paid tribute to residents whose views and ideas played a vital role in the success of the bid.

Winning the contracts for the four areas guarantees that local staff who know the residents will provide the services residents themselves have said they want.

Tenants and leaseholders were able to play a full part at every stage of the tendering process.

Over twenty public meetings were held and these were followed by surveys and wide-ranging market research all designed to listen to the views of residents and put together a realistic value-for-money bid which responded to their needs and demands.

High on the list of

priorities for the tenants was a demand for more information and closer consultation on issues affecting them. The new contracts will deliver this.

Newsletters, improved monitoring of repairs and panels of residents to check that the high standards promised are met - all become part of the new deal for tenants and leaseholders.

"This is good news for our tenants and leaseholders. It lifts the threat that outside contractors with no special interest or knowledge of the borough could take over this important local service," said Councillor Jo Salsbury, Chair of DSO (Direct Service Organisations) Committee.

"It is the policy of this council to keep our

services in-house whenever possible, but it is also our policy to give high quality, value-for-money services and TeamBarnet is both," she added.

The four housing teams are Barnet, Finchley, Edgware and Hendon. The five year contract starts 1 April 1996.

Pick of the bunch

The Spires Shopping Centre in Barnet proved they were the pick of the bunch when the Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Susette Palmer, presented the London in Bloom Cleary Trophy for Best Floral Shopping Centre to manager Philip Corrigan.

The awards follow the highly successful Barnet in Bloom competition run by the council each year.



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.

3 February - 17 March

Exhibition 'Classical Ships'. Created by George Fantides, a collection of carved scale model ships and a detailed miniature ancient port. Church Farmhouse Museum, Greyhound Hill, Hendon, NW4. Tel. 0181-203 0130

7 February, 7.30pm

Finchley Art Society. Practical demonstration 'Using Caran D'ache' by John Birch (bring paper, brush and water). Also 6 March. 7.30pm Demonstration 'Landscape in Oils' by Peter Coombs. Cary Room, Trinity Church Centre. Details, 0181-445 6835

12 February, 7.30pm

National Lottery Talk. Barnet Council's Arts Development Service has invited The London Arts Board to give a talk on how to apply to the National Lottery for improving arts facilities. Hendon Library, The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4. Further information 0181-359 3154

TeamBarnet Leisure. Barnet Copthall Centre, Hendon, NW4

Sports Development - children's courses. 19-23 February, multiactivity programme for ages 4-7 and 8-13. Spring Half Term after school course tennis, football, cricket, badminton. A range of courses for adults and children is available all year round. For details contact Sports Development on 0181-203 3788.

15 February & 21 March 7.30pm

Barnet Federation of Tenants' and Residents' Association Meeting. Cheshir Hall, Foster Street, NW4

21 - 24 February, 2.30pm & 7.30pm

Play 'Old Mother Hubbard' at Harlequin Theatre Club, Hartley Hall, Flower Lane, Mill Hill. Details tel. 0181-959 2344

12 - 16 March, 8pm

A thriller 'Wait Until Dark' by Frederick Knott. Incognito Theatre Group, Holly Park Road, Friern Barnet. Details, tel. 0181-368 0202

14 - 16 March, 8pm

Play 'The House of Bernada Alba' by Frederica Alba. Performed by Good Companions Amateur Dramatics Society at John Keble Hall, Deans Lane, Edgware. Details tel. 0181-959 6234

17 March, 10.30am

10Km Road Race and 2Km Fun Run in aid of The Mayor's Appeal. Fun Run is in Barnet Copthall Centre, 10Km is a fast two lap course starting and finishing in the Stadium. Sponsorship forms are available for both events. Individual and team prizes. For details and entry forms contact Race Organiser on 0181-203 4187.

The Old Bull Arts Centre, 68 High Street, Barnet EN5 5SJ

has regular performances in The Theatre and Studio, with special events on Sunday afternoons for children and also runs practical classes and an educational programme. For further information phone the Box Office on 0181-449 0048

North Circular Sailing Club

Fancy trying sailing in Barnet? Just come along any Saturday from 1pm onwards. For details phone Bill Diamond on 01494-772100

Barnet Music Education Services

have started a new Midweek Music Centre for junior school age pupils at St Mary's School, Finchley, N3. There is a Wind Band (woodwind and brass) and a String Group (violins, cellos and double basses) for pupils of minimum Grade 1 standard. Details from the

Music Office on 0181-359 3111

Hendon Football Club's Community Programme.

Organised weekend activities for boys and girls aged 5-16. Saturday morning soccer school for 5-11 yrs. Three youth football teams. Other community activities include Bingo, Whist drives, Over 60s club, Keep Fit aerobic classes, Ladies darts team. Enquiries or to receive the club's monthly 'Whats On' call Graham Etchell (Football) 0181-201 9494 or Pat Hunt (Social) 0181-455 9185

Walks/Activities with the Barnet Parks Rangers.

For more information tel. 0181-359 5091
11 February, 2pm
 Winter bird and plant life at Welsh Harp. Bring binoculars. Meet Woodfield Park, Cool Oak Lane, West Hendon

17 March, 10am

5 mile ramble around Mill Hill Village and Totteridge Valley. Discover the abandoned Mill Hill to Edgware underground line. Meet at The Three Hammers, corner of The Ridgeway/Hammers Lane, Mill Hill

14 April, 2pm

See the bluebells of Arrandene, Mill Hill, learn some folklore and superstitions associated with the plants found on this site.

Annual BT Swimathon

Barnet Copthall Pools were last year's top fund raiser and want to do even better. The event is swimming 5000m either individually or as a team and raising money through sponsorship. For details and application form contact Deirdre Donlevey on 0181-203 4187.

Fancy dress and theatrical costumes for hire for one week periods in return for a small donation in aid of Stepney B'Nai Brith charity. For details phone Sharon 0181-959 3016 or Barbara 0181-202 9026.

Rotary

Rotary is a worldwide organisation of over 1.2m members in 154 countries with over 90 years' service to humanity. It is made up of business and professional people who meet regularly for fellowship, undertake charitable and humanitarian projects at local, national and international levels. Rotary encourages honesty and fairness in all walks of life and works towards peace and understanding. There are a number of Rotary clubs in the local area looking for members. Further information can be obtained by contacting Reg Mudd, Rotary, 56 Station Road, London N3 2SA.

Barnet Chamber of Commerce - Forthcoming Events

5 February, 6pm for 6.30pm

In association with Middlesex University and Demon Internet, exploring business benefits of the Internet. Middlesex University Business School, Hendon. To book fax 0181-343 3455

14 February, 9.30am-4.30pm

NLCC Seminar - How to Sell Your Way to Success in 1996.

20 & 27 February, 19 & 26 March

Barnet Network Lunches

20 February

Attending from Barnet Council, Cllr Alan Williams, The Leader of the Council, Cllr Rudi Vis, the Chair of the Budget, Financing and Performance Review Executive Committee, Max Caller, the Chief Executive and Jeremy Jaroszek, the Director of Finance to meet representatives of non-domestic rate-payers to discuss the proposed budget at The Town Hall, Hendon. If you wish to attend please contact the Chamber for information.

6 March, 12.30pm

In association with Millennium Motor Holdings plc, inviting you to prepare early for the millennium. To book fax 0181-343 3455

Please phone 0181-343 3833 for more details.

Your council committees at work

List of Committee Meetings at The Town Hall, Hendon for the period 5 February - 30 April 1996

5 February
Housing Committee (Special Budget Meeting)

6 February
Council Meeting

7 February
Grants Committee

8 February
Economic Development and Land Executive Committee (Special Budget Meeting)

13 February
Development and Protection Committee (Special Budget Meeting)

13 February
Area Development and Protection Sub-Committees

14 February
Education Committee (Special Budget Meeting)

15 February
Public Works Committee (Special Budget Meeting)

19 February
General Executive Committee (Special Budget Meeting)

19 February
Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee (Special Budget Meeting)

20 February
Social Services Committee (Special Budget Meeting)

21 February
Budget, Financing and Performance Review Executive Committee (Special Budget Meeting)

26 February
Policy and Resources Committee (Council Tax Meeting)

26 February
Children and Families Consultation Forum (Annual Conference). 10am-1pm.

28 February
Development and Protection Committee

4 March
Housing Committee

5 March
Education Committee

5 March
Community Care Consultation Forum (Annual Conference). 2-5pm.

7 March
Council Mayoralty Meeting

7 March
Council - Council Tax Setting Special Meeting

11 March
Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee

12 March
Social Services Committee

13 March
Grants Committee

14 March
Compulsory Competitive Tendering Executive Committee

14 March
Direct Service Organisations Executive Committee

14 March
Education Consultation Forum

18 March
Family Care Sub-Committee

19 March
Area Development and Protection Sub-Committees

21 March
Economic Development and Land Executive Committee

25 March
General Executive Committee

26 March
Public Works Committee

27 March
Personnel Executive Committee

28 March
Budget, Financing and Performance Review Executive Committee

2 April
Development and Protection Committee

8 April
Housing Consultation Forum

17 April
Policy and Resources Committee

18 April
Compulsory Competitive Tendering Executive Committee

18 April
Direct Service Organisations Executive Committee

23 April
Area Development and Protection Sub-Committees

24 April
Inspection Advisory Panel

30 April
Council Meeting



Disabled Access



Loop system

BLUEPRINT FOR A BETTER BARNET

COMMUNITY TO HAVE SAY ON REVITALISING BOROUGH

Residents, businesses and the voluntary sector are being asked to have their say on plans to take even further the council's economic blueprint for the future. Building on the successes of last year, the plans for the coming twelve months tackle the problems of high unemployment, a decline in traditional high street shopping centres and many sectors of the local economy falling behind

the rest of the country.

"This council is determined to use all its muscle - planning powers, education and training, traffic, environment and many others - to help business and the community tackle together the real deprivation which exists in many parts of the borough," said Councillor Andrew Dickie, Chair of Economic Development and Land Executive Committee.

Plans are on the drawing board to regenerate Cricklewood and West Hendon with the whole community being urged to have a say on the way ahead.

"We are committed to consultation - we want to hear what businesses, residents and the voluntary sector think of these plans. We need their ideas and support to make our plans for a new and brighter future for us all a reality. We need the commitment of the whole community," added Councillor Dickie.

"Our new strategy and plan opens the way for a successful partnership with the whole community and the proof that problems seen in the past as insurmountable can be conquered," added Councillor Dickie.

The new blueprint for a better Barnet builds on the drive to revive town centres, reduce disadvantage, improve skills training and transport by spearheading action on tackling deprivation.

The whole community is working with the council to breathe new life, hope and prosperity into our town centres.

The Town Centre Forums set up by the council have become action, agenda setting workshops leading to instant improvements for the communities they serve.

The three town centre forums already playing a major part in building a better Barnet are working with the council to highlight local problems and ways of solving them.

The forums, for Barnet Town Centres, Edgware, Burnt Oak and Mill Hill and Golders Green and Temple Fortune are already playing a major role with the council in creating the local environment people need, want and deserve.

Members of the forums have come up with short and medium-term plans to tackle local problems.

These plans have been

Working with horses

A riding centre where disabled people receive experience of working with horses has been given the go-ahead by your councillors.

The council wants cash backing for the project from the National Lottery, BT, Eastern Electricity, the European Social Fund and other sources.

The Stables Horse Activity Centre at Barnet Horse Fair Field will give people with disabilities the chance to gain experience of working with horses.

An average of 25 people currently use the service.

Breathing new life into town centres

backed up with 'walkabout' fact-finding missions with members of the forums and council officers seeing at first hand the work that needs to be done.

This close co-operation between the council and the forums has already led to major developments.

These partnerships at work have already seen East Barnet traders erecting Christmas lights under a matched-funding deal with the council. Barnet College students and members of the forum have worked together to design local welcome signs for High Barnet. New Barnet and East Barnet.

This idea could now be extended with the students working with the town centres to design new street furniture.

Swift action has followed requests for new litter bins in Edgware and there has been a crack-down on unsightly fly-posting followed by displays of work by local art students in vacant shop.

Within weeks, a new initiative to see empty flats above shops offering affordable accommodation will see local families

moving into their new homes.

At the next round of meetings of the forums the partners in this drive for a better Barnet will discuss their plans for a crack-down on graffiti, new ideas for town centre landscaping, floral displays, tree planting programmes, advertising campaigns to give the centres their own identity, more litter bins, seats and guard rails.

"The forums have come forward with their own ideas to improve the local environment and breathe new hope, life and prosperity into our town centres.

"We always said that the council and its officers do not always know best - that local people must have a say in improving and protecting their town centres.

"The work being carried out and the plans for the future prove that this partnership at work approach really works," said Councillor Andrew Dickie, Chair of the Economic Development and Land Executive Committee.

£100,000 help for learning disability

Over £100,000 will go to three projects to help people with learning disabilities find work thanks to your council.

The cash injection is earmarked for three schemes boosting jobs and training for Barnet people with special needs once the European Social Fund matches the council's input of £50,650.

The projects to benefit are:

■ Pathway Employment Service, a voluntary organisation offering training, work experience and jobs, will get £7,160.

■ The Recycling Workshop, a joint initiative by the council and the Richmond Fellowship Workschemes, gets £40,228. It provides jobs for three full-time and four part-time people with learning disabilities.

£50,000 FOR ADVICE SERVICE

People with disabilities will benefit from a £50,000 cash injection to the Barnet Advocacy Service from Barnet Council.

The council has agreed to continue to support the service for the next two years.

The council has a contract with CHOICE to provide an independent advocacy service for

Barnet residents, which began in October 1994 and has decided to renew it.

"The advocacy service has been one of the key achievements in social services over the last year," said Councillor David Williams, Chair of Social Services Committee.

"It helps us provide residents with, among

other things, advice on services and their rights and we plan to develop advocacy further this year," he added.

The advocacy service is open to anyone who uses social and health services in Barnet.

CHOICE, based in Colindale, is independent of statutory and voluntary organisations and is owned and managed by

service users.

Professional and voluntary advocates provide advice and help to any disabled Barnet resident who contacts them or is referred to them.

Priority is given to the most vulnerable people, including those with learning disabilities, mental health problems or with HIV or AIDS.

MAKE A DATE TO DISCOVER YOUR RIGHTS

Your council, often in collaboration with the Benefits Agency, holds regular benefit advice surgeries and advice days in various locations throughout the borough to help those in need find out about their rights.

We are holding advice sessions at the locations and times set out below.

Advisors will be available to give advice on: Housing and Council Tax Benefits Education Awards Council Tax and Community Charge collection and recovery

1st and 3rd Tuesday of month, United Reform Church, Chesterfield Road, Barnet. 9.30am-11.30am

1st and 3rd Tuesday of month, The Valley Centre, Dollis Valley Way, Barnet. 12.30pm-2.30pm

2nd and 4th Tuesday of month, Mill Hill Employment Services. 2.00pm-4.00pm

3rd Tuesday of month, Sangam Advice Centre, 210 Burnt Oak Broadway. 2.30pm-4pm

1st and 3rd Wednesday of month, Benefits Agency Office, Raydean House, 15 Western Parade, Barnet 9.30am-3.30pm

2nd and 4th Wednesday of month, Benefits Agency Office, Middlesex House, 29-45 High Street, Edgware 9.30am-3.30pm

Thursday, every week, The Housing Office, Stag House, 94 Burnt Oak Broadway 2.00pm-4.00pm

1st and 3rd Thursday of month, Finchley Employment Services, 40 Ballards Lane, Finchley 9.00am-12noon

2nd and 4th Thursday of month, Hendon Employment Services, 2a Rundell Crescent, Hendon 9.00am-12noon

Friday every week, The Housing Office, 17 The Concourse, Grahame Park Estate 10am-12noon

Friday every week, The Housing Office, Hyde House, The Hyde, Colindale. 2.00pm-4.00pm.

23 February Asda Benefit Advice Day, Asda Burnt Oak, 10am-3.30pm

At a glance

On your bike

As part of Barnet's commitment to expanding the London Cycle Network residents could soon be cycling from Stanmore to Edgware along a specially made path.

The Government has given £50,000 towards this proposed cycle route in the borough. The council will extend the A41 Edgware Way cycle route in the north-west of the borough to Stanmore Station in Harrow.

CD Roms for libraries

The council will be hiring out CD Roms at its libraries. The council has agreed to loan out CD Roms to library users backed up by a technical support hotline number offering advice.

CD Roms are disks containing information, graphics and sound loaded on to personal computers.

Tree watch call

The council needs the help of its residents in Edgware and Burnt Oak. The council's tree warden service wants to hear from anyone who would like to help keep an eye on the borough's trees.

Residents can help the service by becoming community tree wardens and reporting to Barnet Council any trees in their area which need attention.

Anyone interested can contact Rhodri Jones in the Tree Section on 0181-359 4448.

Bridge club

Bridge is coming to Barnet Council's Copthall Pools. Social rubber bridge is for residents who can already play the game but who do not want to compete at a high level.

Between 1.30pm and 4pm every Wednesday at Copthall Pools, Great North Way (entrance off Page Street), Hendon, residents young and old can join in for just £2.50 including refreshments.

For information contact the Sports Development Officer on 0181-203 3788.

Helpers wanted

Barnet Parent Partnership is calling for volunteers to join its team of trained advisers for parents with children who have special education needs.

Parents often do not know that help is available - and even when they find it, can be faced with confusing language and a bewildering array of options.

Helping parents through the minefield of jargon is only part of the service on offer. They listen to parents and give independent and confidential advice and support as well as explaining how the special education needs system works.

MORE HOMES FOR BARNET

A partnership between the council and a housing association could mean 95 new homes for the borough. The council and the Notting Hill Housing Trust want to buy the empty former Ministry of Defence homes to house families and the homeless.

There are 11 four-bedroom houses and 84 two-bedroom flats at the Inglis Barracks site in Curry Rise, Mill Hill, which have been empty since April this year.

For the first five years up to half of the homes will be used by retired or redundant service people.

The rest of the homes will house council tenants and after five years the council can put people in the service homes when they become empty.

The flats are in good condition but work would need to be done on the estate layout, common areas and installing new windows and noise insulation.

The joint council and housing trust scheme will also create 11 four-bedroom homes for families on the housing list.

Bigger cash grants

A generous increase in grants to tenants to create new homes is being introduced by the council.

The council wants to make greater use of the Trade Down Scheme to encourage people who live in houses too big for them to move into smaller homes.

The council has increased the maximum grant available from £1,000 to £4,000. Tenants get £1,500 for the first bedroom and then £1,000 for each extra bedroom gained by the council in the move. A £500 bonus is available if you move from a three or four bedroom to a one bedroom home or bedsitter.

DAY IN LIFE OF YOUR DOG WARDEN

Being Barnet Council's dog warden is not just about finding stray dogs and returning them to their owners. From educating young children about looking after their pets to visiting old people's homes, for David Stone, the council's dog warden, every day is different.

The dog warden service was set up in April 1992 when Government legislation put the responsibility for stray dogs in the hands of local authorities. Key duties of dog wardens are to enforce the dog bye-laws in the borough's parks and gardens and on the streets.

David is based at the state-of-the-art dog kennels in Cool Oak lane, West Hendon, one of the best equipped in London. With facilities for a number of dogs, including exercise paddocks and a kitchen, the kennels offer a safe refuge for

the large number of dogs which are brought in.

"I see my work as more of an educator than a dog catcher. Although we deal with a lot of strays, most of them are quite calm, and are just looking for their way home or a good meal," said David.

"Much of my time is spent visiting schools and teaching the children about good dog ownership. On most occasions I take along one of my dogs.

"I take a video along called 'It's Too Late for Tessie' which tells the story of a stray dog. I also stress the need for



Charter for Success

Putting the emphasis on quality and what the public want has helped Barnet Council win a prestigious Charter Mark from the Government.

The council tax and benefits service made its mark with the Quality Service Guarantees initiative. The council also set up benefit surgeries closer to people's homes and used a winning formula combining care with efficiency.

Pictured with the Charter Mark award at The Town Hall are Council Leader Councillor Alan Williams, Chair of Budget, Financing and Performance Review Executive Committee Councillor Rudi Vis and officers of the council.

"Only the best will do for our residents and this Charter Mark award proves it and demonstrates the efficiency of the council," said Councillor Vis.

"Our Quality Service Guarantees helped us win this Charter Mark. We asked residents what they expected from our service, set high standards and we said what we would do if we failed to meet them," he added.

Barnet Council's firm but flexible approach to collecting local taxes has resulted in an impressive record which is above both the national and the London averages.



proper collars with identity tags and give advice on feeding and general care," he added.

If a dog is brought in, Barnet Council holds it for seven days, after which it becomes the property and responsibility of the council. If it is not claimed by then it is sent to the Wood Green Animal Shelter or Battersea Dogs Home for re-homing.

Allowing their dog to stray can cost residents a lot of money. While the dog is kept by Barnet, it costs £10 to take it to the kennels if the warden can identify the dog and contact the

owner, £15 if they cannot. It then costs a further £10 a night.

"We want to try to stop people allowing their pets to become latch key dogs and wander the streets.

"It can cost residents £75 if they do not claim their dog for seven days. The council has on a number of occasions taken residents to court. If they continue to allow their dogs to stray they can face fines of up to £5,000 or a prison sentence.

"Stray dogs can be a nuisance and even the best behaved dog, if cold and hungry, will be anti-social.

"I work closely with all the local police stations, which regularly tell me about strays they come across," added David.

Because David often has to deal with dogs which have been involved in road accidents he has been trained in basic first-aid and travels the borough in a specially-equipped animal ambulance.

David is pictured with his own dog, Shep, which he took in after finding him as a stray. Shep is a regular visitor to schools and old people's homes where David gives talks on the work of the dog warden.



OUR HIGH KICKING CHAMPION

It takes hard work and dedication to be a National and European Champion plus a World Championship contender and local Hampstead Garden Suburb resident Raymond Park is all three.

Five hours a day, five days a week are spent practising the ancient martial art of Wushu. Wushu is a demonstration sport, originating from China, which is a mixture of gymnastics and fighting techniques using broad swords, the hands and cudgel (stick).

Ray is only 21 but is

already a National and European Champion. At the World Championships held last August in the USA, he came second for both sparring and the broadsword and third in the cudgel event. Unfortunately Ray was one point from taking gold but vows to take the honours next time.

Teaching

He started martial arts at the age of eight following in the footsteps of his father, a keen Bruce Lee fan. He funds his training and travelling by teaching both gymnastics at

Barnet's Hendon Youth Sports Centre and doing extra jobs such as paper rounds. He has also received grant aid from the Milly Aphthorp fund.

International

Ray has competed all over the world including China, Turkey, USA and Malaysia. He hopes to train in China with the professionals before both the European Championships and the Commonwealth Games in 1998.

Our picture shows Ray (right) training with Alaistair Monthieth (left).

Protecting residents from rogue traders has given Barnet's front line Trading Standards team a hectic time.

New laws on metric weights and measures as well as Sunday trading legislation helped create a huge demand for Trading Standards services.

In six months last year the team checked a record number of premises, exceeding its own targets. They are on the look-out for any firm dealing with Barnet's residents which flouts laws designed to protect consumers or breaches fair trading rules.

Random Visits

Over 7,000 Barnet businesses are liable to random visits by Trading Standards officers and the team aims to call on over 30 per cent of them every year.

Shops and businesses which pose the highest potential risk to the community are treated as priorities and visited more often.

And it is not just customers who turn to Trading Standards for advice. Traders too need protection from unfair competition as well as help to make sure that when new laws are brought in they under-

Watchdogs tackle trading standards

stand the changes and get them right.

"This is a front line service which most people only hear about when things go wrong or horror stories hit the headlines," said Councillor Jack Cohen, Chair of the Development and Protection Committee.

Daily Vigilance

"But it is constant day by day vigilance by our staff all the year round which is responsible for keeping up standards in our shops, factories and offices.

"Barnet Council takes a leading role in safeguarding the interests of both consumers and traders ensuring residents get the quality goods and services they have a right to expect," said Councillor Cohen.

In six months last year Trading Standards officers visited over 25 per cent more businesses in the Barnet 'quality crack-down' than in the year before.

Across the borough

these spot checks ranged from calls on businesses offering credit schemes, to illegally overloaded lorries, from petrol pump fuel gauges to the scales in the greengrocer's shop.

More than two-thirds of all requests for help and advice from residents and businesses were answered within 24-hours.

"There are powers to enforce Trading Standards legislation which we will always use if we have to. However, our job is to succeed through advice and persuasion to ensure the best possible standards and protection for all our residents," said Councillor Cohen.

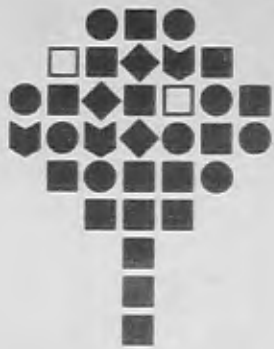
Working in Partnership

The council is working in partnership with residents and the business community to boost standards across the borough.

"Tell us when you are cheated - tell us when you get a rough deal." This is the message to residents.

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North Finchley, London, N12 9PN



Children at Barnet Council's Blessed Dominic School, Grahame Park, had a sneak preview at the beginning of January of a new giant road safety book called *On the Move*, which was launched nationwide by the AA (Automobile Association) on 10 January. Our picture shows pupils from Year Five (Age Ten), getting a sneak preview of the book, *On the Move*.

Figures add up to even better services

Calls to Barnet Council from residents are being dealt with quicker than ever.

An impressive 93 per cent of calls to the council's switchboard were answered within 25 seconds between July and September last year, 10 per cent improvement on the previous three months.

Latest council performance figures also show that 72 per cent of calls were answered within 10 seconds.

This good service record is partly due to the new direct dial system introduced by the council last year.

At the same time the

number of calls to the council switchboard is rising because of better customer care and the development of services throughout the borough.

Among the success stories which spell an excellent service for families are record-breaking performances in school admission and housing benefit appeal hearings set within 15 days of being lodged - the 100 per cent performance showing a 10 per cent increase on last year.

There was also a 98 per cent satisfaction rating with people from ethnic minorities for the council's translation and interpretation service.

PACE-SETTING BARNET HELP FOR VULNERABLE

Barnet's Appropriate Adult Panel, one of the first of its kind in Britain, has just finished a year long experiment working with youngsters and people at risk in police stations across the borough.

The Panel, a sub-group of the council-led Metropolitan Police and Barnet Community Consultative Group, was formed to ensure the best interests of any "vulnerable person" in custody are met during

police interviews.

"Vulnerable people", including juveniles or those with mental health problems, should be interviewed while in police custody with a responsible adult present such as their parents or a social worker.

On some occasions this is not possible and this is where the Panel comes in. Appropriate adults, who have general knowledge of Criminal Law such as the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1994, and

other police procedures, sit in on interviews.

The Panel has worked so well, the Home Office have expressed an interest in their work and both MIND and Revolving Doors, who represent the mentally-ill, are keen to use the Panel as a model.

Anyone interested in becoming an appropriate adult should contact the Secretary, Barnet Appropriate Adult Panel, The Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4.

Community services for people with mental health problems are getting a £484,170 cash boost from Barnet Council

The council will spend the cash on supporting or extending services to people with severe mental illness in the borough.

The council pays 30 per cent of the costs with Department of Health grant aid making up the rest.

Service users, carers, the voluntary sector, the health agency and the health care NHS trust were consulted before it was decided where to spend the money.

The 19 projects to be supported include:

- Appointing a specialist social worker to work with older people with mental health problems or people of any age suffering from dementia.
- The Moxon Street

Enterprises Community Workshop, which helps people with mental health problems find work.

■ Support for the extension of Mind in Barnet's counselling service.

■ Concessionary travel permits for people with disabilities caused by mental illness.

"Once again we have shown our commitment to

helping all sectors of the community, particularly the most vulnerable," said Councillor David Williams, Chair of Social Services

"The council is also pleased to be working closely in partnership with voluntary organisations, service users and the health agency to provide the help people want and need."



Barnet's tribute

The annual Remembrance Sunday service and parade took on a special poignance in this fiftieth anniversary year of the end of the Second World War.

Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Susette Palmer, led the borough's tribute to the dead of two world wars when she laid a wreath at Hendon's War Memorial at the Burroughs.

Other wreaths were laid by representatives of youth and veterans organisations before marching past The Town Hall where the Mayor took the salute.

Similar services were held at war memorials across the borough.

Ham&High Supplements 95/96

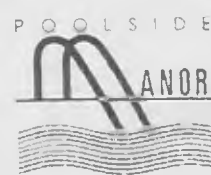
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Barnet Council and the Friends of Ramat Gan played host to an official delegation last November from our twin town in Israel.

The Ramat Gan delegation spent a busy week looking at the work of the various departments in the council, visiting local businesses and industry, touring the Middlesex University campus in Hendon and seeing the work being done in the Cricklewood Initiative area in the south of the borough. Focus of the visit was economic development and developing business links.

Barnet has been twinned with the town since 1976. Ramat Gan is an industrial and business centre.

Our picture shows Ramat Gan's Deputy Mayor Councillor Moshe L Meron talking to members of the Barnet Chamber of Commerce during the delegation's visit to the Chamber's new headquarters in Hendon.

£100,000 Parks investment

The council is spending over £100,000 to improve facilities at borough parks and beat vandalism.

After a major consultation exercise which asked residents for their views, the council has decided to open a new cafe in Hendon Park and improve a large number of public toilets in the borough.

The council will spend over £40,000 on improving standards to toilets at: Bittacy Hill Park, Cherry Tree Woods, Childs Hill Park, Edgwarebury Park, Oak Hill Park, Scratchwood, Sunny Hill Park, Victoria Park and Highlands Gardens.

A further £60,000 will be spent on work to improve toilets in Princes Park, Lyttleton Playing

Fields, West Hendon Playing Fields, Tudor Recreation Ground and Clitterhouse Playing Fields.

At Tudor Recreation Ground the council will refurbish the toilets in the cricket pavilion and keep the golf toilets open for golfers only.

Already closed toilets at Stonegrove Park will be demolished.

Winning TeamBarnet

Your council's lawyers are the latest department to join the growing list of in-house teams who have successfully beaten off the competition to win contracts for vital services.

The Compulsory Competitive Tendering Committee has awarded the first 'white collar' contract, Legal Services, to TeamBarnet.

Legal Services supply the borough with an important and complex range of services involving every aspect of the council's work.

Under Government rules all councils are forced to seek outside bids for some of this work from private firms.

Better Quality

"Legal Services have worked hard to win this contract and even in this difficult area have put in a bid which offers better quality at a lower price than any of their competitors," said Councillor Jo Salisbury, Chair of DSO (Direct Service Organisations) Committee. The contract begins on 1 April.

The council's own in-house workforce has also won back the contract for street cleaning it lost four years ago under the previous administration.

Local jobs for local residents

Quality Guarantee

Now working under the new name 'TeamBarnet' their bid beat off the competition - including the current contractor - winning the contract which started on 1 January this year and runs for five years.

"Our 'Quality Service Guarantee' lays down for all to see our commitment to provide a clean and safe environment," said Councillor Salisbury.

TeamBarnet will also be responsible for clearing autumn leaves, weeds, fly-tipped rubbish, bird mess, litter and recycling centres.

The team will respond throughout the year to residents' requests to remove litter and refuse from roads, pavements and public carparks as well as regularly emptying

over 2,000 litter bins across the borough.

The council's own workforce has also beaten off the competition to win the contract for maintaining parks and open spaces in the North and East of the borough.

The four-year contract runs from 1 January this year.

Reaping the benefit from the new contract will be 'Area 9' taking in the whole of Totteridge, Hadley, East and Friern Barnet and Brunswick Park. The team takes over grass-cutting throughout the area and will be responsible for clearing and maintaining roadside verges, sports grounds, public parks, school and housing estate grounds as well as planting shrubs and flowers.

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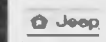
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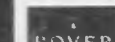
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**QUALITY AWARD FOR
STRUCTURAL TEAM**

Hard work has paid off for the council's Structural Section in the Environmental Services Directorate who have been awarded the internationally recognised quality standard ISO 9001.

The Structural Section makes sure any building built in the borough, both public and private, meets construction standards.

It also carries out structural surveys on council buildings.

The team, led by Chief Engineer Niranjan Sehmi, has been working since June last year with Derek

Young, Quality Manager in the Environmental Services Directorate, towards the standard.

In May last year the section were put through their paces by a quality assurance assessor from the British Standards Institute.

Holding ISO 9001 means the section's management practices and service conform to international standards.

The section joins the TeamBarnet Sign Shop and the Customer Care Unit who have also received the same quality award.

More housebound and elderly people in Barnet will benefit from even more services from Barnet's mobile libraries.

The council will visit 11 new locations and 200 extra people.

After asking residents what they wanted, the council is going to provide extra services. Video hire, postage stamps, greetings cards, stationery and local history items will be on offer to the elderly and housebound in addition to books, cassettes and CDs.

The 11 new homes to benefit from mobile library visits are: Merrivale in East Road, Burnt Oak; Michael

**More services from
your mobile libraries**

Sobell Day Centre in Limes Avenue, Golders Green; Geoffrey Parker House in Edgware; Beach Lodge in Hendon Lane, Finchley; Aphorp Lodge in Brunswick Park Road, Brunswick Park; Weston Court in Farnham Close, Friern Barnet; Northwood

Rest Home in Gloucester Road, New Barnet; Sunridge Court in the Ridgeway, Friern Barnet; Magnolia Court in Granville Road, High Barnet, and Elm Park Lodge in Elm Park Road, Church End.

"This council is

committed to making the best use of its resources to provide a quality service for all Barnet residents, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable," said Councillor Katherine McGuirk, Chair of Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee.



It was worth all the effort... Tom Harland, BSI QA Director of Sales and Development, presents the ISO 9001 standard to Councillor Stan Cross, Chair of Public Works Committee, and Niranjan Sehmi, Chief Engineer Structures Section.

LIGHTING THE WAY



Council Leader, Councillor Alan Williams helps turn on East Barnet village's Christmas lights. Barnet Council helped the traders bring the town to life during the Christmas period by funding their lights display to the tune of £2,000. Each town centre in the borough was given £2,000 towards putting up their Christmas lights, helping to make Barnet one of the brightest boroughs on the map.

Our picture shows Councillor Alan Williams (left) and Philip McCriskin (right), Chairman of the East Barnet Traders' Association.

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 Monday every month 8-9pm
St Stephen's Church Hall, Bells Hill, Barnet
Every Saturday 10am-12noon
104 East Barnet Road, East 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

COLINDALE WARD

Ellis Hillman (Lab) 202 7792
Gill Sargeant (Lab) 455 1070
David Williams (Lab) 343 1082
1st Saturday every month 2-3pm
St. Augustine's Church (small lounge),
Grahame Park, Colindale, NW9

EAST BARNET WARD

Usha Chopra (Lab) 449 3231
Anne Jarvis (Lab) 449 9001
Richard Soer (Lab) 441 0170
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

Julian Czarny (Con) 958 6999
Malcolm Lester (Con) 349 2595
Joan Scannell (Con) 959 5921
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
of the week or through the Chipping Barnet
Conservative Association Tel. 449 7345

GARDEN SUBURB WARD

Frank Davis (Con)
Mohammed Khamisa (Con) 458 1996
Roy Shutz (Con) 883 1205
c/o Finchley & Golders Green Conservative
Association or write to 20 Connaught Drive,
London NW11 6BJ
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 and
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
New Barnet Residents' Association, 48-50 Victoria Road, New Barnet
Tel. 441 7044

HALE WARD

Andrew Dickie (Lab) 906 2807
Every Saturday 10am-12noon
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

Edward Bunn (Con) 906 2793
Anthony Finn (Con) 202 9689
Fred Poole (Con) 203 0813
Contact councillors direct or Hendon
Conservative Association
Tel. 959 1446

MILL HILL WARD

Wayne Casey (LD) 203 8189
Jeremy Davies (LD) 202 6105
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
Victor Usher (Con) 445 4248
Contact councillors direct or Chipping Barnet
Conservative Association
Tel. 449 7345

WEST HENDON WARD

Nicholas Kissen (Lab) 200 9861
Gina Marks (Lab) 959 0525
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



Barnet's answer to Baywatch take gold

The council's lifeguards are the best - and that's official. Cophall Pools were host to the national lifeguard championships, with Barnet's team up against another 25 teams from around the country, all experts in saving lives.

The event was split into four areas:- 1, written exam on health and safety and leisure facilities, 2, life-support incidence, where the teams had to identify what was happening in a specific life-saving situation, 3, customer care and first aid, and 4, the final practical exam where the four members of the team had to deal with a drowning incidence, a body on the bottom of the pool and a difficult customer.

All the exams tested the team to the limit in dealing with every possible situation working in a busy leisure centre can create.

At the end of the day Barnet's team came top, coming 1st in the written exam and 2nd and 3rd in two others.

The competition is open to all local authorities and they beat teams from north-east Derbyshire and Cowdenbeath in Scotland to take the honours.

Our picture shows (left to right) Helen Paszyn, Anna Stevens, Ron Taylor and Peter Proto, with their trophy.



Jemma Mitcham, first dan black belt, who trains at Barnet Council's Hendon Youth Sports Centre, took first place in the fourth south London invitational Karate Championships. She won the Kata (set forms) division at the event held in Lewisham.

Young art to go on display

Talented young artists are being invited by the council to get their work displayed in public buildings in the borough.

Artists aged between 18 to 30 living, studying and working in the borough are invited to submit paintings, drawings or small sculptures to the Apthorp Fund for Young Artists.

Those works selected by a panel of art experts will be bought and put up in hospitals, day centres, schools, youth centres and other places.

The fund was set up two years ago by the trustees of the Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust

to encourage and support young artists in their final year of formal arts studies or those who have begun careers as professional artists. Prices paid for work chosen range from £250 to £2,000.

Artists can put forward two works in any medium except photography. Work should be sent to The Hyde Room, Chipping Barnet Library on 26 or 27 April.

For further details and an entry form send an A5 stamped addressed envelope to the Arts Office, Educational Services, Friern Barnet Lane, N11 3DL or phone 0181 359 3152.

Allotments get new

improvement

Allotment holders will get what they asked for when the council carries out improvement work at three Barnet sites.

Your council listened to what local allotments representatives wanted before deciding what to do.

Allotment holders at Friern Barnet Central, Barfield and Rathbone sites will all benefit following consultation and the green light from the Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee.

Rathbone Allotments, off Oakleigh Road North in Whetstone, will be boosted by a new community building if planning permission is granted, plus a secure

machine store and new boundary fences.

Steel palisade fencing and a car park will be provided at Friern Barnet Central Allotments, near Crescent Road, Friern Barnet.

Benefits for Barfield Allotments in Barfield Avenue, Whetstone, will include new security fencing and the planting of thorn boundary hedges.

an improved trading hut and a car park.

It was agreed that £40,000 from the sale of the former allotment site at Brunswick Park Road will be spent on the highest priority work, with the cash spread equally between the three sites.

The priority work starts in February or March and should be completed by June or July.

FOUR NEW PLAYGROUNDS

Children will soon enjoy four new modern playgrounds. The council's Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee has given the go-ahead to new play areas at Percy Road, Finchley, Rushgrove Park in The Hyde, Riverside Walk Open Space in Barnet and Princes Park in Golders Green.

The four sites join two new playgrounds an-

nounced in September by the same committee for Colindale Park and Stonegrove Park, as the council spends a total £290,000 on new play facilities for youngsters.

Families in each area were asked by the council what they wanted in the new playgrounds and their best ideas were incorporated in the designs.

"We have once again asked what local people wanted in their play-

grounds and have tried to match their needs," said Councillor Katherine McGuirk, Chair of Recreation, Leisure and Arts Committee.

Fun-loving youngsters will be able to use their imagination and enjoy themselves on equipment they can slide, swing and climb on. All playgrounds will have safe surfacing for children to protect them from accidents.



People with learning disabilities were given certificates by athletics stars at the end of a successful course at Barnet Cophall Stadium. The course gave youngsters and adults the chance to try events including the long jump, javelin, shot, discus and high jump.

International athlete Ashia Hansen, the Women's British and Commonwealth triple jump record holder and Kenny Killane (pictured above, left), the Paralympic 100 metres gold medallist and the first athlete with learning disabilities to get the MBE, handed out certificates of achievement.

The course was the result of a partnership including the Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust, Barnet Mencap, TeamBarnet Leisure and the Barnet Sports Forum.