

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

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issue 32 July/August 2008



**Lucky for some -
Barnet's 13th
children's centre
opens**

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Production details

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Message from the Leader

The election of a new Mayor of London on 1 May has sent a clear message that the suburbs of London have spoken. As a council we look forward to engaging with the new Mayor and his team to ensure a fair deal for residents and businesses over the next Mayoral term. This new partnership working with the Mayor on strategic issues of importance to the people of Barnet will provide long-term benefits as we continually work towards our vision of creating the most successful and attractive city suburb in the country.

As part of our vision to create a vibrant place for people to live and work, investment into our libraries has formed part of our infrastructure programme. I am delighted to announce that communities in both Chipping Barnet and Edgware will now benefit from state-of-the-art libraries after both recently reopened following extensive refurbishments. Users of these libraries will now benefit from new furniture, bookshop style shelving and wi-fi internet access. You can read more on our libraries programme on pages eight and nine.

Our Primary School Capital Investment Programme, an ambitious scheme to provide Barnet with high quality, purpose-built, sustainable new schools to support improved educational achievement for the children of the borough, has moved forward with the announcement of Kier as preferred partner. Kier will, subject to planning permission, start work on the first project at Whittings Hill School in Underhill this summer with the school opening its doors to pupils in 2009. You can read more about this programme on page 12.

Ours is the vision of a successful city suburb and we continue to listen and provide for the needs of residents and businesses.



Thumbs up for council services



Nearly three quarters of respondents to the borough's annual residents survey have said that we are doing a 'good job'.

In total, 70 per cent of the 1,000 people questioned said that they were happy with the council and nearly 90 per cent are satisfied with their local neighbourhood.

The council carries out the survey every year to gauge residents' satisfaction with life in the borough.

In the last year the council has achieved 'four star' status – the highest possible ranking for local authorities from the Audit Commission – and this latest survey shows that you too have noticed the difference.

Refuse collection is one of the highest performing areas, with Barnet ranking well above the rest of London, while satisfaction has

improved significantly on last year along with public transport, repair of roads and pavements, and street lighting. A total of 65 per cent of the people surveyed also ranked recycling facilities as good, very good or excellent, but satisfaction with primary and secondary education has fallen four per cent since last year.

And compared with the rest of London, customers find it easier to get through to the council by phone and feel generally more informed.

Young people also got to have their say, with a further 260 under-18s being asked a series of questions about how they feel about living in Barnet. They listed their top three concerns as crime, bad behaviour and bullying, but ranked public transport and social services for children highly.

To find out more about the results of the survey, call us on 020 8359 7016 or email rosie.evangelou@barnet.gov.uk

Saying thankyou

The achievements of nearly 100 of Barnet's foster carers were recognised at an awards ceremony and celebratory dinner recently.

The event, held at Hendon Hall Hotel, was for full-time foster carers as well as carers who help young people through the council's short break scheme for children with a disability.

Awards were given to the carers by the Mayor of Barnet, Councillor John Marshall, to thank them for the length of time they had been fostering. A total of 44 households were awarded for fostering for more than five years, a further 14 for more than 10 years, three for 15-plus years of service and one for more than 20 years. Another couple, Judy and



David Buttrey, who were unable to attend on the night, have fostered babies and toddlers for the borough for the past 29 years.

One of the longest-serving carers was Jennifer Gayle. She said: "Having fostered for nearly 15 years, I could not think of any other job being so rewarding and fulfilling. Fostering has given me the opportunity to make a difference to children and young people's lives and contributed to my own personal development."

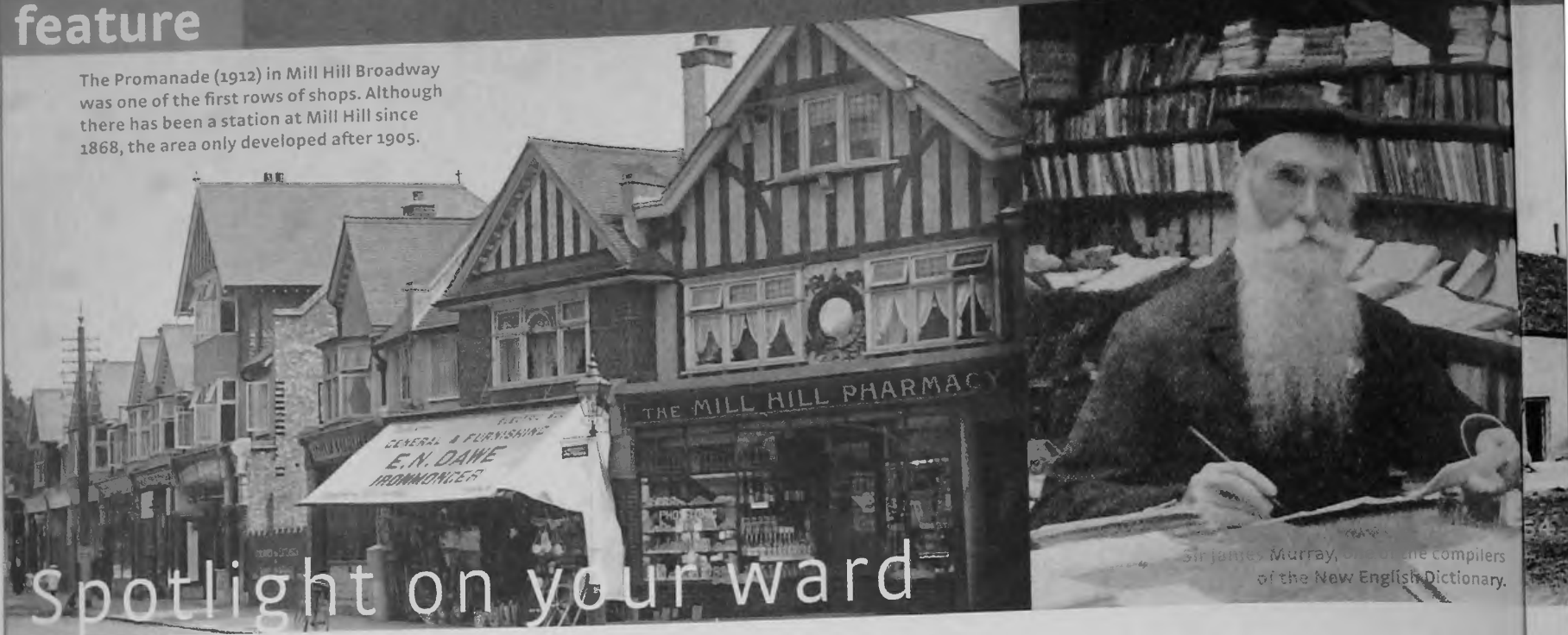
The Mayor said: "I was delighted to be able to pass on the borough's thanks to all of these carers who have dedicated years of their lives to help children.

"We are truly indebted to their kindness and openness that has helped hundreds of children over the past 20 to 30 years."

The council's fostering and adoption service helps to find temporary and permanent homes for children who cannot live with their own families. The service is always looking to recruit new carers to look after children and young people of all ages.

Foster carers need time, patience, energy and to enjoy working with children and young people. They receive a weekly allowance of up to £520 per child, 24-hour support and access to specialist services, a full training programme and the opportunity to complete an NVQ award. Anyone who wants to find out more should contact the recruitment and training team on 020 8359 6274.

The Promenade (1912) in Mill Hill Broadway was one of the first rows of shops. Although there has been a station at Mill Hill since 1868, the area only developed after 1905.



Spotlight on your ward

Mill Hill

In this issue we turn the spotlight on to Mill Hill, which is situated in the centre of the borough.

Although it's now a ward, Mill Hill was once a hamlet in the parish of Hendon. Originally known variously as Lothersleage, Lothersley, and latterly Lotharlie, the oldest documented use of the modern name Mill Hill (Myl Hylles), was in 1544 and describes a mill which was, until the mid 18th century, on Holcombe Hill.

Interestingly, the names of prominent local families found living in medieval times continued down to modern times in the names of roads. These place names include Daws (Daws Lane) and Page (Page Street). Burtonhole takes its name from the Burton family who lived in Mill Hill at the time of Henry VIII.

Mill Hill Barracks was opened in 1905 as the home and depot for the Middlesex Regiment. Famous members of the regiment include Lieutenant Walter Tull, a professional footballer and the first black officer in the British Army. Tucked along Partingdale Lane is Partingdale Manor. Built in the early 19th century it is a manor in name only.

Nearby is what was once the Cold War control centre, the place from which north London was governed in the event of a nuclear attack on London. It was built to withstand an atomic bomb, but became obsolete in 1958 as these weapons became more powerful, and is now a private home.

By far the largest building in the ward is the National Institute for Medical Research. It was constructed between 1937 and 1939, but was not officially opened until 1950. One of the oldest buildings in Mill Hill village is Rosebank. In 1678 Richard Haley, a local Quaker, had a meeting house built, which was active until the early 18th century. It is one of a number of weatherboard cottages, a style that was once common in this part of Middlesex. The Nichol Almshouses, at the top of Milespit Hill, have an inscription which reads: "These six Almes Houses were erected in ye year of our Lord 1696 a the sole charge of Thomas Nicoll of this Parish Gent".

Littleberries, an 18th century house nearby, was once the home of identical twins called the Perreau Brothers and their friend, a notorious prostitute named Caroline Rudd (under the name Mrs Perreau). They were condemned to death for forging bank notes and were duly executed in May 1775, but a little later Rudd was found not



Angel Pond and the surrounding cottages.



Did you know...?

- at 9.4 square kilometres, Mill Hill is Barnet's largest ward geographically
- more residents in Mill Hill walk or cycle to work than in any other ward in the borough
- the ward has the lowest number of residents who work in manufacturing
- at just over 21 per cent of all homes in the ward, Mill Hill has the second largest number of detached houses in Barnet.

* Figures taken from 2001 census.

guilty. Following that a Dr Dodd was also condemned for forgery, and there was a recommendation that he should be pardoned by George III, but the King's advisors recommended that "if your Majesty pardons Dr Dodd you will have murdered the Perreaus". From 1885 until October of last year the Sisters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul occupied the house.

Until the 1820s parishioners had to go to St Mary's, Hendon, to worship, a distance of some miles. However it became clear that the district would require a chapel of ease. William Wilberforce became the central benefactor in 1827. St Paul's, which is in the modest Commissioner Gothic style, was completed in 1830, and consecrated

in 1833. In 1869 Father Herbert Vaughan (later Cardinal Vaughan) started a missionary college at Holcombe House. The college moved in 1871 to the now familiar building with its 100-foot tower and surmounted with a 14-foot high statue of St Joseph by Baumeister of Munich.

Peter Collinson, the botanist, lived at Ridgeway House until his death in 1767. In 1807 it became Mill Hill School established for the children of non-conformists. Old boys of the school include Patrick Troughton (1920 - 1987) the second incarnation of Dr Who. One of its teachers, James Murray (1837 - 1915), helped compile the New English Dictionary.

What's in Mill Hill?

Parks

- Arrandale Open Space, Wise Lane. Facilities include: wildlife interest
- Bittacy Hill Park, Sanders Lane (children's play area, gardens, tennis)
- Mill Field, Ridgeway (wildlife interest)
- Mill Hill Park, Daws Lane. This is one of the council's 16 Premier Parks and holds the prestigious national Green Flag status. Facilities include a café, children's play area, gardens, basketball, bowling green, crazy golf, football, tennis and toilets

Allotments

- Daws Lane, Hartley Close
- Lawrence Street
- Sanders Lane
- Tretawn Gardens
- Wise Lane, Brookfield Crescent

Recycling bring banks

- Bunns Lane car park
- Daws Lane car park
- Mill Hill East Station, Bittacy Hill
- Pursley Road
- Wise Lane/Milespit Hill

Schools

- Copthall School, Pursley Road
- Dollis Infant School, Pursley Road
- Dollis Junior School, Pursley Road
- St Paul's CE School, The Ridgeway
- St Vincent's RC School, The Ridgeway

Other services

- Copthall Leisure Centre (swimming pool, athletics track and gym)
- Mill Hill Council Depot, Bittacy Hill
- Mill Hill Library, Hartley Avenue

Your councillors

As with all Barnet's 21 wards, Mill Hill has three elected members, or councillors, who have been elected by the ward's residents to represent them. Councillors are elected for four years at a time.

Councillor Wayne Casey (Lib Dem) has been a ward councillor since 1994.

Tel: 020 8906 8189

Email: cllr.w.casey@barnet.gov.uk

Councillor Jeremy Davies (Lib Dem) has served the ward since 1994. He is currently chair of the council's Audit Committee.

Tel: 020 8381 0089

Email: cllr.j.davies@barnet.gov.uk

Councillor John Hart (Con) was re-elected to the council in 2006. He previously served between 1982 and 1994.

Tel: 020 8381 0083

Email: cllr.j.hart@barnet.gov.uk

Meet your councillors

Barnet's councillors hold regular advice surgeries to give residents the chance to discuss any topics they wish to raise. You can meet councillors Casey and Davies every Saturday between 10am and 12noon at Mill Hill Library, Hartley Avenue, NW7 2HX. No appointment is necessary. Councillor Hart holds advice surgeries at Mill Hill Library in Hartley Avenue on selected Thursday evenings. Ring 020 8959 5182 for further information.

Say NO to abuse

It is the right of every adult to live in a safe environment free from abuse. But it is estimated that half a million older people suffer some form of abuse in the UK alone.



Barnet Council recognises that the protection of vulnerable adults is not to be ignored and strong partnership working through the Safeguarding Adults Committee has led to a number of successful prosecutions involving care workers, relatives and members of the public, resulting in abusers being held accountable for their behaviour. There have been four times more reported incidents in Barnet over the last two years. This is because more people are reporting concerns and helping prevent further abuse.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts - planned or unplanned. It may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. It may happen when a vulnerable adult is persuaded to enter into a transaction to which they have not consented or cannot consent.

It can happen anywhere - at home, in a care home, hospital or in public.

Abuse can take many forms:

- **physical abuse:** for example, hitting, pushing, shaking, over-medicating
- **sexual abuse:** for example, unwanted touching, kissing or sexual activity
- **emotional abuse:** including verbal abuse, humiliation or bullying
- **financial abuse:** for example, when someone takes money or belongings without asking
- **neglect:** for example, when care or support is not enough to meet the person's needs
- **discriminatory abuse:** being treated unfairly because you are different. For example, because of race, disability or age.

If you are worried about a vulnerable person being abused or neglected, please don't keep it a secret - report it!

In an emergency, call **999** if the person is in immediate danger, or needs medical treatment.

Alternatively contact:

- Barnet Council and ask for the duty social worker in Adult Social Services on 020 8359 2000
- Police Community Safety Unit on 020 8733 5159
- an inspector at the Commission for Social Care Inspection on 0854 015 0120.

No more secrets - please say something.

For more information about Safeguarding Adults visit Barnet Council's website at www.barnet.gov.uk/protection-of-vulnerable-adults.

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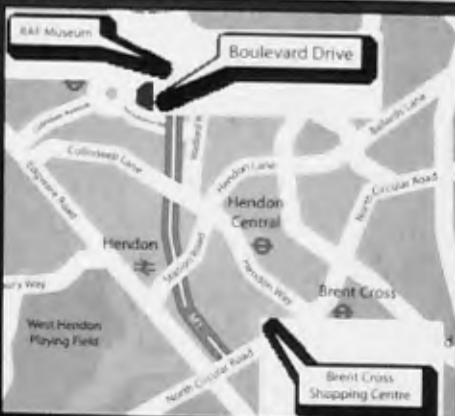
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Taste of adventure for Barnet youth

The Milly Apthorp Adventure Fund is currently looking for intrepid young people who need funding to be able to do voluntary work in the UK or overseas, or take on physical and adventurous challenges including Duke of Edinburgh Award schemes. The aim behind the fund is to support young people's personal development through taking on challenges and activities of an adventurous nature and to help young people realise the ambitions they often hold of helping others.



Girl guides from Barnet meet their Kenyan counterparts

Money is available from the fund for young people between the ages of 11 and 25 who are living, working or studying in the London Borough of Barnet and who, through personal, family or financial circumstances would otherwise not be able to undertake these experiences.

Examples of awards granted in recent years include helping children whose circumstances mean they rarely travel beyond London to take part in summer and winter adventure camps which build confidence through activities including mountain cycling, abseiling and hot air ballooning. Other applicants have wanted to give practical help to communities overseas, for example by rebuilding schools in Ghana and the Gambia – a daunting task which saw volunteers making the bricks for the perimeter wall and digging a vegetable plot for a training centre. The fund particularly welcomes

applications from young adults with disabilities. It has recently funded several teenagers to go to a Butlins holiday camp where they took part in activities with their able-bodied peers.

Councillor Lynne Hillan, Cabinet Member for Community Services, said: "These awards give young people the chance to broaden their horizons in a way that for reasons of their circumstances may otherwise simply not be possible. I encourage people to take up the opportunity offered by the Milly Apthorp Adventure Fund and see what help the fund can provide for young people who are ready to take on a challenge."

Individuals, groups and schools can find out more and apply for funding from the trust which is administered by Barnet Council by writing to the Grants Unit at the London Borough of Barnet, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP or telephoning 020 8359 2092.

Because green matters

The Mayor of Barnet, Councillor John Marshall, opened another successful Green Matters week at Brent Cross Shopping Centre last month. Now in its third year, the council aimed to use the event to promote initiatives including reducing household waste and increasing recycling, as well as more environmentally friendly ways of getting about the borough, such as cycling.

Council staff were on hand to give practical advice about what the council is doing to protect the environment, including publicising the free one-to-one cycle training that is available through the council for adults wanting to improve their cycling skills and gain confidence in riding their bike. This training is done by nationally qualified instructors and takes place around residents' local roads and parks, and can be tailored to people's specific needs. There are 150 places available.

If you missed out on the event and want to find out more about the cycle training available, then you can call Ilias Ioannou on 020 8359 7103 or email road.safety@barnet.gov.uk

Counterfeit vodka warning

Consumers in Barnet are being warned about possible counterfeit vodka, after Barnet Trading Standards officers seized fake bottles of Glen's vodka on sale at several different premises in the borough.

Some of the bottles seized were of a higher alcoholic strength than that shown on the label. As a precautionary measure the advice from the Food Standards Agency is not to drink the vodka, as in the past counterfeit vodka has been found to be harmful to health. If you are suspicious about a bottle you have purchased, contact Consumer Direct on 0845 04 05 06, who will pass details to the relevant Trading Standards authority.

On the seized bottles in Barnet, the labelling appears to be self-adhesive and is askew. Genuine Glen's Vodka has labels applied which produce a distinctive glue pattern on the back of the label with horizontal lines approximately 2mm apart.

Are you aged four to 12?

If so, take part in the Summer Reading Challenge.

Taking place between 12 July and 13 September, children are encouraged to read at least six books as part of Team Read. For every book read they receive a sticker which goes in a special Team Read folder, along with other rewards including medals and a special kit bag.



For those who want more of a challenge, there is also the Premier League initiative, which involves completing an additional five challenges on reading, writing, ICT, craft and a physical activity.

Children who complete both Team Read and Premier League will be presented with a Premier League reader certificate and a special DVD voucher.

The theme for this year's challenge, which runs annually across the country, is sport, and libraries across Barnet are running exciting events to support it.

For more details contact Hannah Richens on 020 8359 7779 or email hannah.richens@barnet.gov.uk



A new chapter for

The much anticipated programme to improve the borough's libraries reopened their doors to the community.

The council's Library Strategy, agreed by Cabinet in July last year, proposed significant investment into the borough's libraries to bring them up to date and in tune with residents' needs.

In total over £1.2million will be invested in Burnt Oak, Chipping Barnet, Edgware, Golders Green, Hendon and North Finchley libraries to create Leading Libraries.

And the public are already beginning to benefit. Self service machines allowing users to take out books, CDs and DVDs without the need of staff, and new improved layouts with bookshop style displays have been added to highlight the different resources available – making it easier for visitors to navigate.

All the libraries now benefit from a new computer system that helps make the best use of stock resources, and with activities for children and young people more popular than ever we are setting up youth panels, linked with Barnet Youth Board, to co-ordinate activities run by, and for, young people.

For information on how to get involved in activities at your local library email: hannah.richens@barnet.gov.uk

So what work has taken place so far...

A month of special events kicked off the reopening of Chipping Barnet Library as it became the second library to be given a major refit.

Activities were planned around the theme of 'Mind and Body', which was one of the focuses under the National Year of Reading initiative.

The official opening of the enhanced library in Stapylton Road by the Mayor, Councillor John Marshall, was followed by a 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' storytime for young children, as well as reflexology, Indian head massage and baby massage.



About our libraries

In total there are 16 libraries across Barnet, plus a mobile library and home library service, all providing the local community with lending and reference books, books for children, large print books, books on tape and books in foreign languages.

In addition, all our libraries provide CD and DVD rental, as well as computer facilities for public use whether it is to access the internet, send emails, work on documents, or learn new IT skills.

We also have an extensive range of subscription resources available online including newspapers and more than 300 online reference books, many of which are accessible from home through our 24/7 Reference Library.

We hold a variety of events for all age groups that range from Baby Rhymetime for babies to explore sounds and movement, to the more traditional reading groups where members discuss the latest novels.

Our library staff are always happy to help so visit one of our libraries soon – you'll be surprised at what they have to offer!



Barnet libraries

ugh's libraries is well underway as the first two

Other events included basic rugby skills coaching, an introductory workshop for adults on how to run a reading group and a Playstation competition.

Users of the library are now able to enjoy a completely remodelled and truly 21st-century facility.

Earlier in the month, Edgware Library also reopened its doors with a day of activities kicked off by the previous Mayor, Councillor Maureen Braun.

The event included local historians talking about Edgware, the under fives being entertained with stories, and Bollywood dancers closing the day.

Creating a first-class service in Burnt Oak

Burnt Oak Library is temporarily closed to allow development into a new customer service centre and a new leading library for the area.

The £1million-plus renovation will transform the library into a 21st-century building (pictured above) which will provide a customer service centre where residents can access services including housing benefits and Council Tax advice, as well as a brand new library.

The project will see the 40-year-old building turned into an open-plan facility with a totally remodelled interior.

The building will also be equipped with wi-fi technology for wireless internet access and will include a self-service centre for library users to check their items in and out.

The library, based in Watling Avenue, closed in April 2008 to allow the work to take place and is due to reopen in August.

For more information on the transformation at Burnt Oak Library, visit www.barnet.gov.uk/burnt-oak-project

Join your library and WIN an iPod nano

If you're not a library member take this voucher down to your nearest library. Not only will you be able to sample some of the free services available but you'll also have a chance of winning an iPod nano.

With a range of books, magazines, daily newspapers, CDs, DVDs and free internet access, our libraries are a resource you cannot be without.

Please note: To join you will need to provide identification with your name and address. A parental signature is required for all children under 16 years of age.

For staff use:

Name: _____

Library membership number: _____

iPod draw ends September 2008

Standards Committee takes on new role

A new-look and larger Standards Committee has had its first meeting since welcoming new members and being granted new powers in May.

The committee's main role is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct across the council. As part of this they will now deal with any complaints about councillors breaching their Code of Conduct.

Six councillors and seven independent members make up Barnet's Standards Committee. The "independents" are members of the public, and five were appointed after a recent advertising campaign.

The new independent members are Michael Barber, Jeremy Collick, Ron Rosenhead, Deborah Sanders and David Sparrow. Bernd Koschland was reappointed as an independent member and will be the chairman of the committee this year. Stephen Ross, another independent member who continues on the committee, will be vice-chairman.

All the independent members have professional and other relevant experience that prepares them for making important decisions, and have a good working knowledge of local authorities and the public sector.

Two councillors from each of the political groups represented on the council make up the rest of the committee. They are Councillors Jack Cohen, Claire Farrier, Monroe Palmer, Joan Scannell, Agnes Slocombe and Andreas Tambourides

One of the committee's current pieces of



Setting standards – the independent members of the panel

work is an ethical well-being 'health check'. This has involved a survey of councillors and staff from across the council about their views on the council's 'ethical governance' as well as reviewing the council's key governance documents and holding focus groups with residents.

A work plan has been agreed for the next year, which will also see the committee review the current codes of practice for the licensing and planning committees.

To find out more about the work of the Standards Committee, visit www.barnet.gov.uk/standards-committee

Tom takes his seat

Tom Davey has been elected as Barnet's newest councillor.

He took his seat in the council after winning a by-election for the Mill Hill ward in May.

The seat was previously held by Jane Ellison, who resigned from the council earlier this year.



Remember to recycle

Are you doing your bit? It's over three years now since recycling paper, glass bottles and jars, food tins and drink cans became compulsory for Barnet residents. Unless you live in a flat – in which case you are encouraged to recycle what you can – you must put these items out in your black box for recycling and not in your bin. The council has increased its monitoring of recycling and as a last resort may prosecute you.

Recycling rates across the borough reached a high this year of over 30 per cent. As well as the items that must be recycled, residents can also put in their box aerosols, car batteries, engine oil, aluminium foil, household batteries, mobile phones, shoes, textiles and yellow pages. Later this year, the council will be adding to the number of materials it collects. So look out for further details soon.

Lucky for some – 13th children's centre now open

Another children's centre has opened in the borough, bringing the total number to 13, just three years after the initiative started.



Children's Centres provide a range of childcare services, as well as being a place for parents to find out health information, and search for jobs and training.

Parents can use the centres to access specialist services, such as those for children with disabilities, and access the local Childminding Network. Parenting workshops and drop-in groups are also run at a number of centres.

The latest centre, in Childs Hill, held its official launch in May and is now fully open to the public.

But Children's Centres are just part of the programme of activities and services offered through the 'extended schools initiative' to assist parents. Breakfast book clubs and a range of after-school extra curricular classes, as well as a host of holiday schemes, are now available at schools across Barnet.

Councillor Fiona Bulmer, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, said: "We are very fortunate in Barnet to have a wide range of high quality services for local children.

"Children's Centres provide many different services and support for parents and, along with the extended schools initiative, mean that local children across the borough can have a full and varied weekly programme of activities while parents can find a new network of friends and be given help and assistance on healthcare and employment issues."

For more information on centres, and to find your nearest one, visit www.barnet.gov.uk/children-centres

Full list of children's centres in Barnet:

- **Barnfield.** Tel: 020 8952 6026
- **Bell Lane.** Tel: 020 8203 3115
- **Childs Hill.** Tel: 07917 242754
- **Coppetts Wood.** Tel: 020 8883 2985
- **Fairway.** Tel: 020 8359 3730
- **Hampden Way.** Tel: 020 8368 2131
- **Newstead.** Tel: 020 8359 3460
- **Parkfield.** Tel: 020 8359 3590
- **St Margaret's.** Tel: 020 8449 5466
- **Stonegrove.** Tel: 020 8959 4417
- **The Hyde.** Tel: 07817 110001
- **Underhill.**
Tel: 020 8359 3440/020 8440 2691
- **Wingfield.** Tel: 020 8359 3510

Council left counting the cost

The council has been left with a hefty bill by irresponsible dog owners training their pets to fight.



In total 36 trees in Hendon Park have been damaged by dogs encouraged to attack them to strengthen their neck muscles, sharpen their teeth and give them a more aggressive appearance.

The total cost to date, if the council removes and replaces all the trees that have been killed or severely damaged, is in excess of £30,000.

The council has now placed metal guards around the trees being targeted most often, but there are in excess of 500 trees in Hendon Park making it impossible to place guards around every one.

Councillor Andrew Harper (pictured left), Cabinet Member for Environment, says: "This is almost beyond belief – I have never seen anything like this before.

"Our trees and parks are there for the enjoyment of all and this is being spoilt by a small group of people.

"What makes me even angrier is the amount of money the council is spending to prevent this ridiculous practice."

Anyone who witnesses dogs and their owners damaging the trees should contact the Hendon Safer Neighbourhoods team on 020 8721 2979.

Webwatch

Want to find out what's new on Barnet Online this month? Then visit www.barnet.gov.uk to find out about:

- summer activities (www.barnet.gov.uk/holiday-activities)
- did you know that a new system has been introduced for reviewing planning applications and appeals details, as well as works to tree applications? Visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/planning-applications

Major milestone for ambitious new schools project

Barnet Council's ambitious plans to renew its ageing primary schools have taken a big step forward with the signing of the contract for Whittings Hill – the first of the schools selected for rebuilding.

The school at Underhill will be gradually demolished and replaced by a state of the art building, due to open its doors to about 420 children in 2009, and provide extended use of its facilities for both the school and the community.

It will be a "green" school using several forms of renewable technology to aid energy conservation and meet some of its energy needs.

Whittings Hill will be built by Kier London, the company selected from a final shortlist of three who competed to produce the best and most value for money designs.

The contract for the work was signed by Barnet's Mayor, Councillor John Marshall, who also steered through the schools project in his previous role as Cabinet Member for Investment in Learning.

Councillor Marshall said: "This is the first of our new schools and it will provide firm foundations on which children can build their further success. It will provide the children of Underhill with a great start in life."



Whittings Hill is one of six schools which form part of the Primary Schools Capital Investment Programme, now renamed "Building Successful Schools" in recognition of its new, wider role, taking responsibility also for the new East Barnet Secondary School, and three other primary schools.

Architects have submitted plans for the new East Barnet Secondary School, which is to be rebuilt on a combined site at Chestnut Grove when its upper school is relocated from Westbrook Crescent.

Subject to planning permission, it is hoped that preparation work will start on site this summer and construction of the new buildings will be completed in 2010. The new school will cater for 1,350 students.

The council has been working closely with its architects to ensure that the new school building provides high quality internal and external design, and is as environmentally-friendly and sustainable as possible throughout. The move will provide high quality sports facilities, which will also be open for community use.

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What's on in Barnet during July and August?

Arts

BGA Art Exhibition

29 July – 9 August (closed 3 August) 10am – 7pm

Pennefather Hall, Christ Church, St Albans Road, Barnet, EN5 4LA. Barnet Guild of Artists' annual exhibition of members' work. Admission: free.

Leisure/Pastimes

Puzzled?

Until 14 September

Church Farmhouse Museum, Greyhound Hill, Hendon, NW4 4JR. Young and old, we all enjoy a challenge. "Puzzled?" shows some of the ways in which we seek to bemuse ourselves for fun: link puzzles, magic tricks, word games, sudoku, jigsaws, Rubik's cubes, and many more. The exhibition also includes a brief history of mazes as a background to the one recently laid-out in the museum garden – the only maze open to the public in Barnet.

For further information and opening times, call 020 8359 3942.



Jewellery workshop for adults

5 July 10am-4pm

Museum of Domestic Architecture and Design (MoDA), Middlesex University, Cat Hill, Barnet, EN4 8HT. Join artist Brenda Coyle for a creative day exploring the ancient technique known as Millefiori (meaning thousand flowers).

Cost: £40/£32 conc. To book in advance call 020 8411 4394 or email:

moda@mdx.ac.uk

The Society of Genealogists and its library

17 July 7.30pm

Lyonsdown Hall, Lyonsdown Road, New Barnet. The Barnet branch of London Westminster and Middlesex Family History Society talk by Sue Gibbons. Come and find out what resources the SoG holds for family historians. Bookstall, branch library and refreshments available. All welcome. Cost: members free, visitors £1.

Barnet Play Day

6 August 11am to 4pm

Friary Park, Friary Road, N12 9PD. Open to children of all ages. Circus skills, arts and crafts, football, bouncy castles, police, fire and ambulance services and much more. Cost: £1. Email: info@barnetplay.org for more details.

Cirque Depot

18 – 20 August

artsdepot, Tally Ho Corner, North Finchley, N12 0GA. *artsdepot* brings back the Big Top with the return of its circus summer school. Try your hand at stilt walking, juggling or being a clown! For further details and to book call: 020 8369 5454 or log on to: www.artsdepot.co.uk

A day in the life of a National Trust Area Manager

31 August 1.30pm

John Keble Church Hall, Deans Lane, Edgware, HA8 9NT. Edgware and District National Trust Centre present Ian Wilson. Refreshments available. Cost: free for NT members; visitors £2.

If you would like your event to be considered for inclusion in Barnet First, please visit: www.barnet.gov.uk, and add your event details to the "What's On" page.

Council meetings – dates for your diary

Meetings are open to the public and are generally held at Barnet House, High Road, Whetstone, starting at 7pm, unless otherwise stated.

The Residents Forums (which start at 6.30pm) meet at a variety of venues around the borough, and details can be found online, on our posters or by contacting the Democratic Services team on 020 8359 2031. Members of the public can ask to speak at most meetings. Further information can be obtained by contacting Democratic Services.

July

- 1 Hendon Area Planning Sub-Committee; Chipping Barnet Area Planning Sub-Committee; Finchley and Golders Green Area Planning Sub-Committee
- 8 Planning and Environment Committee
- 15 Council
- 21 Tackling Crime and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 22 First Class Education and Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 23 Supporting the Vulnerable In Our Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 28 Cabinet Resources Committee
- 29 Finchley and Golders Green Area Planning Sub-Committee; Chipping Barnet Area Planning Sub-Committee; Hendon Area Planning Sub-Committee
- 30 Resources, Performance and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 31 Cabinet

August

- 4 Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 6 Planning and Environment Committee
- 7 Cleaner, Greener, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 26 Chipping Barnet Area Planning Sub-Committee; Finchley and Golders Green Area Planning Sub-Committee

Temporary closure of Hendon Town Hall

The Civic Suite at Hendon Town Hall in The Burroughs has closed for refurbishment.

In March this year, councillors agreed a project to upgrade the civic areas of the building, which comprise the Council Chamber and public gallery, the Mayor's Parlour, committee rooms 1, 2 and 3, the group rooms and offices, and reception area. In addition to upgrading these rooms, other improvements will be achieved including:

- a new Disability Discrimination Act – compliant lift providing access to all areas of the first floor, including the public gallery to the Council Chamber
- a new civic function room – The Heritage Room – which will also be used by registrars to conduct ceremonies. Some of the council's civic memorabilia will be displayed in this room
- a completely open reception area providing new small private meeting rooms.

The work is due for completion before the council's annual meeting in May 2009.

During the closure, all council meetings will be held at Barnet House, High Road, Whetstone. For further details, check the council's website – www.barnet.gov.uk

Your councillors

Councillors represent the interests of ALL residents. Their political party is given for your information. You can write to councillors at: North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London, N11 1NP. All codes are 020 unless otherwise indicated.

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Key: Lib. Dem = Liberal democrat T = telephone M = mobile telephone F = fax E = e-mail

Meet the Mayor

Barnet's 44th Mayor has taken office



Councillor John Marshall, who represents Garden Suburb ward on the council, took over from Councillor Maureen Braun at the Annual Council Meeting in May.

He was first elected to the council in 1998, having previously served on Ealing and Aberdeen councils.

Councillor Marshall was born in London and educated at Harris Academy in Dundee, Glasgow Academy and St Andrews University in Scotland and gained an MA Honours degree. He worked in stockbroking from 1970 until 1999 before becoming a financial journalist with Shares magazine – a job he continues in to this day.

He was MEP for London North between 1979 and 1989, serving on the European Parliament's delegations to Cyprus and to the Knesset. He was the MP for Hendon South between 1987 and 1997, serving as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Security between 1990 to 1992, and the Leader of the House of Commons between 1992 and 1995. He also stood as the Conservative candidate for Finchley and Golders Green in the 1997 and 2001 general elections.

He is divorced with two sons – Will (aged 28) and Tom (25). In his spare time Councillor Marshall enjoys bridge, reading biographies, spectator sports, the theatre and taking part in sponsored walks – he has completed over 30 walks for the North London Hospice.

His Mayoress for the year will be Rosie Daniels and his chosen charities are Chai Cancer Care in Hendon and Barnet Carers Centre in Finchley.

The Deputy Mayor for 2008/09 is Councillor Mukesh Depala and his wife Sadhana will act as Deputy Mayoress.

If you want to find out more about the Mayor, or invite him to your event, visit www.barnet.gov.uk/barnet-mayor

Plans for the future

It's been a successful year for the council but as always we are looking towards the future and ways to improve the quality of life for residents.

The Corporate Plan allows us to do this by setting out our vision for the next four years.

This includes having council policies in place, but also continuing to work on projects with a range of partners including the Primary Care Trust and police to ensure we are also dealing with social issues.

What are we focusing on?

- we are improving street and environmental cleanliness, building on our premier parks and townkeepers already in place
- reducing CO2 emissions and generally working towards a 'greener' Barnet
- rolling out our Choices for Independence programme, allowing more supported adults to directly purchase and arrange their own care and support arrangements
- working in partnership with targeted services to support children and their families, and continuing to enhance services in our schools so they remain some of the best performing in the country.

If you would like more information on what we have planned for the future, visit www.barnet.gov.uk/corporate-plan.

Our corporate priorities

- A bright future for children and young people
- Clean, green and safe
- Supporting the vulnerable
- Strong and healthy
- Barnet – a successful city-suburb

Annual report published

The council has published its annual report for the last financial year, which sets out how it has made a difference to you and your community over the last 12 months.

The report gives a detailed breakdown of what the authority has done to work towards achieving its five corporate priorities – a brighter future for children and young people; clean, green and safe; supporting the vulnerable; Barnet – a successful city-suburb; and strong and healthy.

It also talks about working with other organisations – like the police and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to improve quality of life and tackle some of the issues that residents have made their top priorities, like reducing crime.

Looking to the next 12 months, we want you to get involved and engaged with us to tell us where we should be going next. For more information on how you can do this, visit www.barnet.gov.uk/consultations.

Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council, said: "Our annual report details the financial performance of the council over the last 12 months, and demonstrates the open and transparent way in which the council works to make a difference to your community.

"I hope you will be able to take the time to read it and find out everything we are doing to improve your quality of life by working towards our five corporate priorities."