

The Barnet Society

Campaigning for a better Barnet

...for 75 years!



Past, present and future work in and around Chipping Barnet

Robin Bishop RIBA

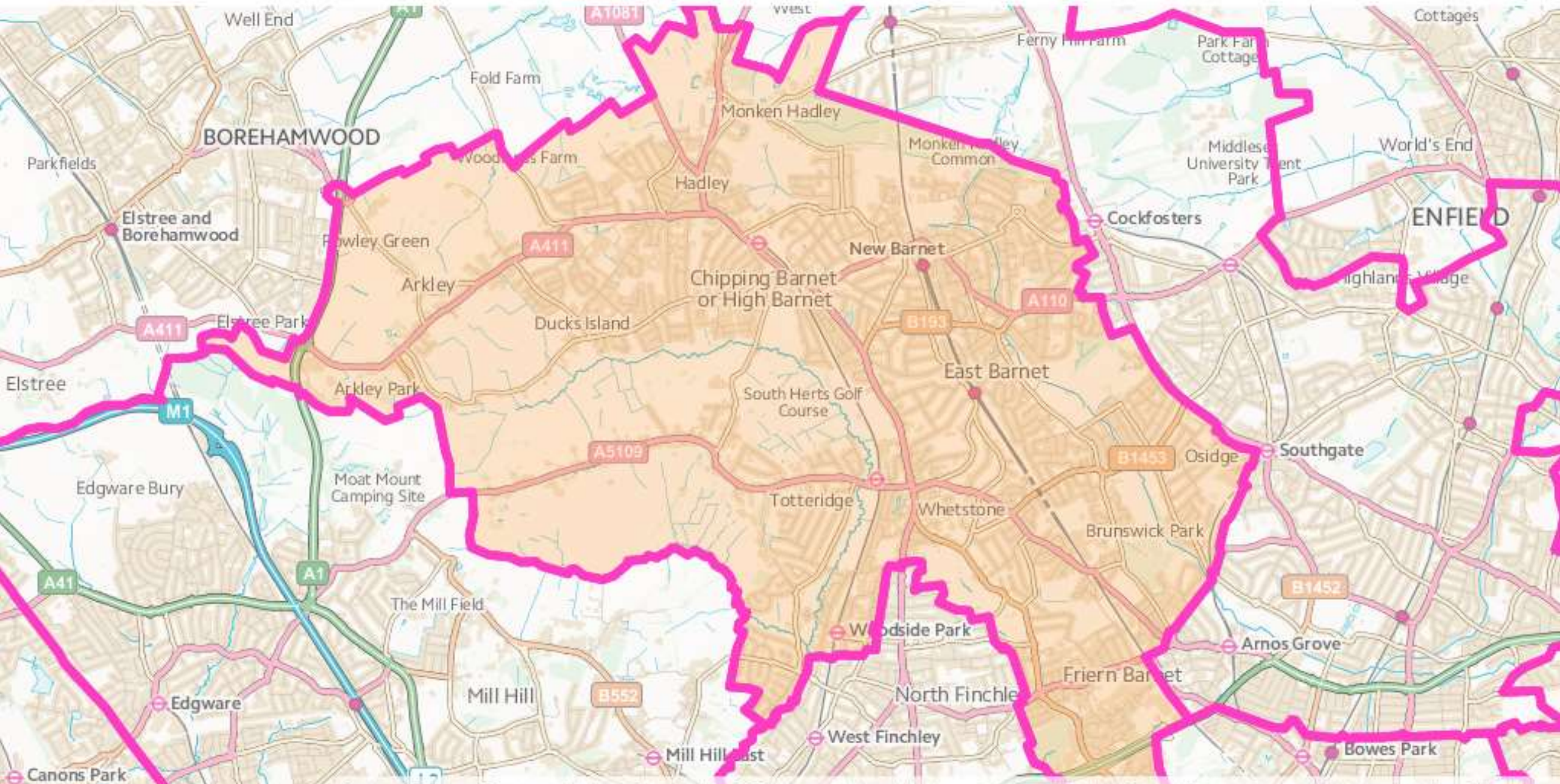
Chair of The Barnet Society

Where we are...

CHIPPING BARNET BOROUGH CONSTITUENCY

Westminster Constituencies

...and who we are



What we aim to do

1. Observe and monitor...the **London Metropolitan Green Belt** and other designated open lands....and to take those actions which it feels necessary to protect and strengthen them

Views from Whittings Hill



Look S-E:
Only a few roofs and tall buildings break up the greenery



Look S-W:
Enjoy miles of uninterrupted trees and meadows

What we aim to do

2. Encourage and stimulate in citizens of Chipping Barnet and Environs a **lively interest in their town and neighbourhood**
3. Call attention...to **activities or proposals** of Public Authorities, Utilities and Transport, or other Bodies **affecting the interests of citizens**
4. Initiate proposals for the **preservation and improvement...of the district...**



What we aim to do

5. Encourage local cultural interest and **collaborate with other organisations...**



Federation of Residents Associations in Barnet



What we do

- Website

www.barnetsociety.org.uk



- Protect Conservation Areas
- Sit on Conservation Area Advisory Committee

The Barnet Society

Campaigning for a better Barnet



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Wednesday, 22 July 2020 12:43

Are these developers having a laugh?

Featured

Written by Robin Bishop

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What we do

- Newsletter
- Publicise local initiatives

BARNET SOCIETY

CAMPAIGNING FOR A BETTER BARNET SINCE 1945 SUMMER 2020 £1

Life goes on, but not as we know it



An eerily quiet High Street at the height of the lockdown, where most of the shops were shut

Who could have imagined only a few months ago what was heading our way. The sheer scale of this pandemic and the utter devastation it has wrought across the world beggars belief, and all this stemming from one animal market in a city most of had never heard of.

It is difficult to exaggerate the cost of this virus on our lives, from health to economic, mental and physical wellbeing to environment. The effects will be felt for years, long after this emergency passes.

One thing seems certain - the world will never be the same again. The shadow of this pandemic will hang over billions of people like never before. In this, perversely, we have become a united world, brought together through a shared danger that recognises no borders, creeds or races.

For the time being, wars, famines, droughts, the environment and all the other usual crises that preoccupy us until March this year have been put on the back burner.

New words have entered the national lexicon - Coronavirus, PPE, lockdown, furloughed, the 'R-rate', social distancing.

Even fiction has been helping out. The

cently president film *Contagion* forecasted with almost unerring accuracy what happens when a viral pandemic spreads across the world. Though it was largely ignored on its release in 2011, it has enjoyed a renaissance, with millions of people streaming it since March.

Here in Barnet, we are barely a dot in the ocean but we too have been joined with the billions of other people across the world in a weirdly surreal fellowship.

We have been brought together through a shared danger that recognises no borders, creeds or races.

For once, we are all united against the common enemy, even if the virus is not the great leveller some commentators would wish us to believe. Try telling that to the bus drivers and security guards and other frontline workers who have been disproportionately affected in the number of dead from coronavirus.

Yet, for all the misery, some good has been coming out of this pandemic. As Nick Jones reports, the people of

Barnet have responded admirably to the situation, helping out where possible. Also, that sense of British reserve seems to have melted a bit, not least from the regular Thursday night clapping for the NHS and essential workers.

In Barnet, some people have seen neighbours for the first time as they stand outside clapping. One wonders if all this new found togetherness will survive the current crisis. We'll see.

Even when the immediate crisis passes, there are a lot of things that will need to be re-calibrated. Social distancing, for example, might well become the norm, with all the implications that entails for leisure, education, transport and spectator sports. The economy, the environment - all will need serious attention. Will even the almost-universal greying of shaking hands stop?

What a difference a few months has made. From utter complacency about the threats posed by pandemics to panic. Maybe the old aphorism that something good always comes out of a crisis will hold true.

Estimote Rafferty, Newsletter Editor

More Covid-19 reports by Nick Jones, Pages 2&3

Swift action pays off for bird-lovers



Nesting box. L-R David Martens, Robin Sidrop, Alex Colman and Tim Friend

No wonder Tim Friend of Fitzjohn Avenue was smiling: a pair of swifts that spent the summer in High Barnet raised two chicks in the nest box fitted under the roof of his house, just above the window of his front bedroom, writes Nick Jones.

Swifts swooping and squeaking high overhead have always been a regular sight in some parts of the town, but local ornithologists fear these summer visitors are diminishing in numbers because of a lack of suitable nesting places.

During June and July leaflets were distributed in streets where swifts are known to nest - including Fitzjohn Avenue, Normandy

in past years High Barnet residents were encouraged to take note of sightings.

Ornithologist David Martens, who has been monitoring High Barnet's swifts for some years, led the leafleting drive and hopes to arrange a High Barnet swift awareness week in June next year to encourage residents to monitor the number of birds arriving and nesting.

"These iconic birds are barely clinging on in High Barnet and sadly, with only a few houses left where they can nest, numbers are dwindling rapidly from a once healthy population."

Despite fears for the future of

Avenue and Cedar Lawn Avenue - encouraging householders to install nest boxes. Swifts usually arrive in the first week of May and depart for Africa around the final week of July and as

these "amazing aerial athletes", the efforts of Fitzjohn Avenue resident Tim Friend finally paid off and he had the pleasure of seeing a pair of swifts raise two chicks in a nest box fitted under the eaves of his semi-detached house.

In May, once the swifts were due to arrive, he put a speaker on the upstairs window ledge and played recordings of the swifts' call - the squealing sound that gives them their nickname "squealers" - which can be downloaded from YouTube.

To Mr Friend's delight he saw swifts flying into the box and then the chicks emerged.

"I kept checking the box and then one day a small face appeared. After I saw that head peeping out, another fledgling flew out. It was an amazing sight and worth all the effort."

"I love to see the swifts swooping overhead in Fitzjohn Avenue. One year a swift flew into the house. I captured it in a towel and then released it outside, and it was fine."

Four houses in Fitzjohn Avenue had swifts nesting this year.

Boosting High Barnet's bat population

Barnet Environment Centre is planning to install three bat boxes to help increase the biodiversity of the Byng Road nature reserve. Common pipistrelle bats have been seen flying in and around the 7.5-acre reserve, but activists at the centre are keen to learn more about the local bat population and have been waiting to get advice from experts on where best to site bat boxes.

The centre was due to hold a bat event in mid-September when experts planned to use frequency detectors to determine the types of bats visiting the nature reserve.

When the centre held a 24-hour "bioblitz" of the reserve in 2012, common pipistrelles were identified as well as the rarer soprano pipistrelles.

"We do know that bats are regularly seen along the boundary between the nature reserve and Byng Road allotments," said Dick Elms, vice chair of Friends of Barnet Environment Centre.

"Hopefully we will get much

more information in September as to where the bats are flying and whether they are roosting or perhaps breeding within the nature reserve.

"We know that bats like to fly alongside rows of trees and hedges, and we think they might roost in the boundary oak trees, between the reserve and the allotments.

"We have three bat boxes which we are eager to install, where bats might be encouraged to breed in future."

"But the placing of the bat box is all important, as they have to face in an east to south direction, so that they warm up in the sunshine."

"These eco-friendly bat boxes are made out of light concrete, and are extremely durable, so once installed would be long lasting and give protection against the weather."

Mr Elms said the centre was always looking for ways to increase the biodiversity of the nature reserve.

In mid-summer two beehives were installed on the site by the Barnet Beekeepers Association.

"We are delighted to welcome



Dick Elms with one of the bat boxes

back the beekeepers and they are promising to install another three or four hives in the autumn, so that should be a real boost."

Yet again the centre was fully booked last term for school visits. Over 1,800 children have visited the reserve in the last 12 months.

Other recent events have included a dawn chorus walk in May when 27 bird species were identified. Two of the six bird boxes installed on the reserve were found to be used by pairs of great tits.

For more information about open days and for opportunities to volunteer see the Barnet Environment Centre website, www.fbnc.org.uk

For advice on bat boxes www.bats.org.uk

What we do

- Publicise our work



What we do

- Hold annual public meetings



What we've achieved



Planted a 50th anniversary copse on Whittings Hill

What we've achieved



Planted Lee's trees and proposed a Green Chain from Barnet Hill to Hadley Green

What we've achieved



Helped to save Barnet Market and Barnet Museum

What we've achieved



Improved the design of Barnet & Southgate College and Ark Pioneer Academy

What we've achieved

Encouraged good housing design at Marie Foster Home



Brook Valley Gardens (L) and

Common Ground co-housing (R)



What we've achieved

Helped save natural environments



Old Fold Manor Golf Club

SOS - GREEN PUBLIC LAND UNDER THREAT- SOS
BROOKDENE NATURE RESERVE
Land to the rear of 71 Holden Road, adjoining Dollis Brook. 26th July 2015

The situation is as follows – there is an area of unspoilt green land to the rear of 71 Holden Rd that backs onto Dollis Brook. It is 0.7 of an acre and is situated on the east bank of Dollis Brook opposite the Old Finchleas Sports Ground near the confluence with Folly Brook. It is publicly owned and part of the site is designated Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC). Council officers are now proposing to grant a 150 year lease on the land to a developer.



The Dollis Valley



Barnet Environment Centre

What we've achieved

Barnet Hill tree planting – 2 March 2020



The Barnet Society with Kisharon

suppo
Barnet

English (United Kingdom)
United Kingdom keyboard

What we've achieved

Urban realm improvements in the High Street



Putting the Community First

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

Chipping Barnet Town Centre Strategy



What we've achieved

Submissions on draft policy documents:

- Barnet Council's Local Plan, Growth Plan & Heritage Advisory Panel
- Sadiq Khan's London Plan
- Enfield & Hertsmere Councils Local Plans

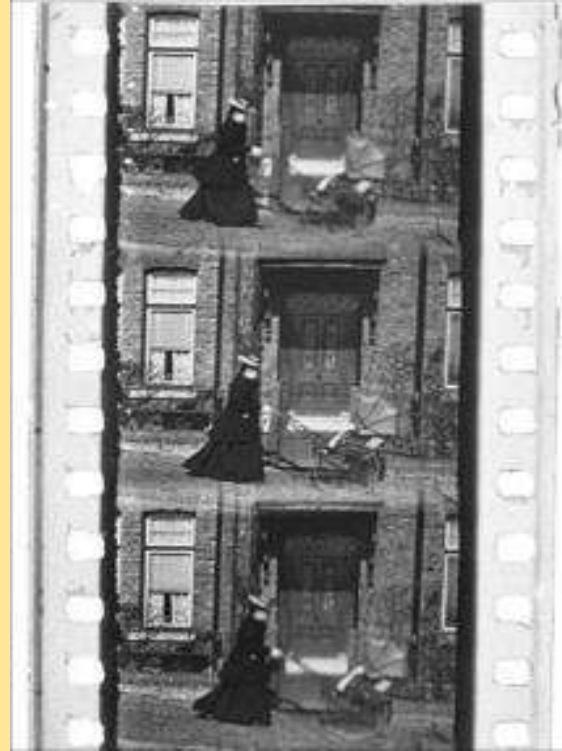


What we've achieved

Approximately 50 additions to Barnet's Local List of buildings of architectural & historic interest



Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School



Clovelly Cottage



30 Granville Road

What we're working on

Pedestrian improvements to the High Street



Collaborating on
Chipping Barnet Community Plan

What we're working on

Opposing
housing over-
development
– 295 flats at
High Barnet
Station



What we're working on

Favouring the approved housing development for the Victoria Quarter in New Barnet

Scheme approved in 2017:
371 units including 113 houses
mainly 2-6 storeys + 1 8-storey block



New scheme
submitted
In 2020:
652 flats
no houses
blocks up to
10 storeys



What we're working on



Saving Whalebones estate from over-development by 152 houses



What we're working on

Supporting conservation
of one of the oldest
buildings in Barnet



What we have to do next

- Continue protecting **open spaces & the environment**
- Demand **fewer flats, more homes with gardens**
- Support **town centre regeneration**
- Fight **government reforms of planning law**

