



Meet new council leader
Come and hear Cllrs Barry Rawlings and Paul Edwards talk about the Labour Council's plans for the future
 Pennefather Hall, St Albans Road, Barnet
 Thursday June 23. Doors open at 7.00pm for a drink and nibbles, followed by the start at 7.30
 Barnet Council is now controlled by Labour for the first time since the 1960s and the new Leader Barry Rawlings and Cllr Paul Edwards will give a talk outlining their proposals. It will include matters regarding conservation, building and the environment, and you will have an opportunity to raise questions. This will be followed by the AGM at 8.30pm. **Notice and details on Page 11**

Barnet goes from Blue to Red

Labour took control of Barnet Council in the May elections for the first time since the London boroughs were created in 1965 – and High Barnet is one of several former Conservative strongholds that now has two Labour councillors, writes Nick Jones.

Paul Edwards and Emma Whysall both had comfortable victories in the redrawn High Barnet ward.

They join other successful Labour candidates who won seats in two newly created wards for Barnet Vale and Whetstone.

There was almost a clean sweep for Labour in the six wards closest to High Barnet, which helped the party take a commanding outright majority on the borough council, winning 41 of the 63 seats on a 37.9 per cent voter turnout.

One of the few Conservative councillors to survive was David Longstaff, formerly ward councillor for High Barnet, who was elected in Barnet Vale.

The Conservatives held their three seats in Totteridge Woodside, but otherwise the

local ward map turned from blue to red.

Labour took two seats in Underhill (electing Zahra Parveen Beg and Tim Roberts); two seats in Barnet Vale (electing Richard Barnes and Marianne Haylett); three seats in East Barnet (electing Philip Cohen, Edith Ngozi David, and Simon Radford); and two seats in Whetstone (electing Ella Rachel Rose and Liron Mark Velleman).

Ahead of the elections there was considerable uncertainty about the

Continued, Page 2 ➡



Councillor Barry Rawlings, centre, leader of the new Council, with some of his fellow Labour victors

Continued from Page 1

outcome in and around High Barnet and across the borough because of significant changes to council ward boundaries.

High Barnet was redrawn to include part of Labour-held Underhill but lost an area south of Meadway to the new Barnet Vale ward. Similarly, there was a split in Totteridge and Whetstone to create two new wards.

Councillor Barry Rawlings, leader of the Labour group, hailed their victory as a boost for party leader, Keir Starmer,

In recognition of the borough's importance as a top target, Starmer launched Labour's overall campaign in Barnet. and his first stop the morning after polling day was back in the borough to congratulate Councillor Rawlings on an historic outright victory.

Barnet was in Labour hands for six years with the support of the Liberal Democrats – from 1994 to 2000 – until the Conservatives regained control.

For the last 20 years the council was one of the Conservatives' flagship authorities in London, along with Wandsworth and Westminster, also lost to Labour in May.

During the campaign, Councillor Rawlings, who was re-elected in Friern Barnet, promised to work more closely with residents and to return 1 per cent of this year's council tax while ensuring that any future increases were kept below the maximum amount allowed by the government.

In his first post-election statement, the pledge to refund the 1 per cent increase in the adult social care precept – worth £2m – headed Labour's top five commitments for the new administration.

The four other priorities are:

- Protect and enhance green spaces and establish a citizen's assembly on the climate change emergency.
- Invest in more CCTV, better lighting, and community safety hubs.
- Protect weekly bin collections and bring back the community skips service.
- Stand up to developers for more affordable homes and against tower blocks.

Labour's undertaking to continue its opposition to tower blocks – especially on

car parks at nearby London Underground stations – does not amount to a total ban, as Councillor Rawlings acknowledged during the campaign that there was a case for some housing development on land around High Barnet tube station.

Barnet's defeated Conservative leader, Councillor Daniel Thomas – who was re-elected for Finchley Church End – blamed the perfect storm of a cost-of-living crisis, 12 years of a Conservative government, redrawn boundaries, and public anger over the Prime Minister's role in "Partygate".

Amid the euphoria of their success, Councillor Rawlings reflected on Labour's failure against expectations to take control of Barnet in the 2018 council elections.

He believed a turnaround in the party's fortunes locally had been due in large part to the strength of Keir Starmer's leadership following the difficulties they had faced under Jeremy Corbyn.

To Councillor Rawlings' great relief, the "stain" of anti-Semitism had finally been removed. For the full list of the election results see: www.barnet.gov.uk/elections



Paddy O'Connell, presenter of Radio 4's Sunday morning programme *Broadcasting House* got more than he bargained for when he visited High Barnet

Paddy goes to market

High Barnet became a political hot spot for the first time in living memory once the news media realised that the town might deliver an historic upset for the Conservatives, *writes Nick Jones.*

Over the years, stallholders and customers at Barnet Market have rarely been disturbed by media frenzies and the razzmatazz of electioneering, but they rose to the challenge and were ready with some feisty responses about the performance of Boris Johnson and his troubles over

"Partygate". Fruit and vegetable stall-holder Tyler Bone did seem somewhat nonplussed when he was asked for his views by Paddy O'Connell, presenter of Radio 4's Sunday morning programme *Broadcasting House.*

"I'm just bagging up oranges. I'm just here for the entertainment," was Tyler's diplomatic reply.

In the run-up to local elections day, national newspaper coverage and broadcast commentaries singled out Barnet as one of the boroughs where Boris Johnson could face a setback.

A steady increase in the Labour vote in recent general and council elections has threatened both the MP Theresa Villiers and High Barnet's Conservative councillors and all the indications were that upsurge would continue.

The prospect that this Tory citadel might be under threat attracted television, radio, and newspaper correspondents anxious to sound out local opinion.

In hotly contested elections, market squares up and down the land are an ideal location for securing *vox pops* – the soundbites and quotes from local people that the reporters desperately need.

After the broadcast, Tyler explained that he had been anxious not to upset his regular customers by sounding off about politics.

"I wasn't going to fall for that," he said. "I'm here to sell oranges and tomatoes; that's my fare, not offering my views on Boris Johnson."



Chipping away at the old order

With Labour councillors now outnumbering Conservatives in wards in and around High Barnet, the Chipping Barnet MP Theresa Villiers recognises that she will have another fight on her hands at the next general election, writes Nick Jones.

What was once considered a safe Conservative seat has become one of the most marginal in the country.

At the 2017 general election, Ms Villiers hung on by a mere 353 votes – a majority she did manage to increase to 1,212 in the 2019 general election – but her constituency is now one of Labour’s top London targets, along with the constituencies of Finchley and Golders Green, and Hendon.

“Don’t worry, I’m up for the fight,” said Ms Villiers who will contest the seat for the sixth time if she is re-elected as the Conservatives’

▲ Theresa Villiers MP (left) with Emma Whysall, her possible challenger for the Chipping Barnet Westminster seat at the next general election

“This was a very poor result. I thought it would be much closer - Theresa Villiers

Chipping Barnet candidate. “My seat has been a marginal for the last two general elections, and I’m more than ready to defend the Conservatives’ record on economic growth and raising living standards.”

Voters in Chipping Barnet will have to be prepared for what could one of the most closely fought seats in London as Ms Villiers is likely to face a re-match with Emma Whysall, her challenger in 2019.

If re-elected as Labour’s parliamentary candidate, Ms Whysall – one of High Barnet’s two newly elected Labour councillors – said she would relish the chance to take on Ms Villiers for a third time.

Ms Whysall believes that Labour’s success in taking control of Barnet Borough Council – and the swing locally to Labour at recent general elections – strengthens her chances of being elected MP for Chipping

Barnet. Another factor that is sure to be highlighted as a result of the Conservatives losing control locally is the irony that Ms Villiers, who lives in Arkley – which is within the High Barnet ward – is now represented by Labour councillors in a Labour-controlled local authority.

Ms Villiers told the Barnet Society that she believed the council elections were a judgment on the national party, the Prime Minister and a sense that the government was “lurching from crisis to crisis”.

“This was a very poor result. I thought it would be much closer because I think there is a recognition locally that Barnet Council has done a good job and there is considerable anxiety about what Labour will do.

“Clearly the government needs a stronger plan for growing the economy and getting taxes down. We must also rebuild locally.”

Mahender's push for a safer community

A recently retired forensic accountant is determined to cast a fresh eye over the effectiveness of the police response in and around High Barnet in his drive for a safer community, writes Nick Jones.

Mahender Khari is about to be installed as the new chair of the group of residents and representatives that monitors the work of the High Barnet Safer Neighbourhoods Team.

A shopping list of issues up for discussion at their next meeting in June includes shop lifting and purse thefts in Barnet High Street, rowdy behaviour by teenagers in the Old Court House Recreation Ground, and catalytic converter thefts. These volunteer groups work through the Community Action Panel, established by the Metropolitan Police.

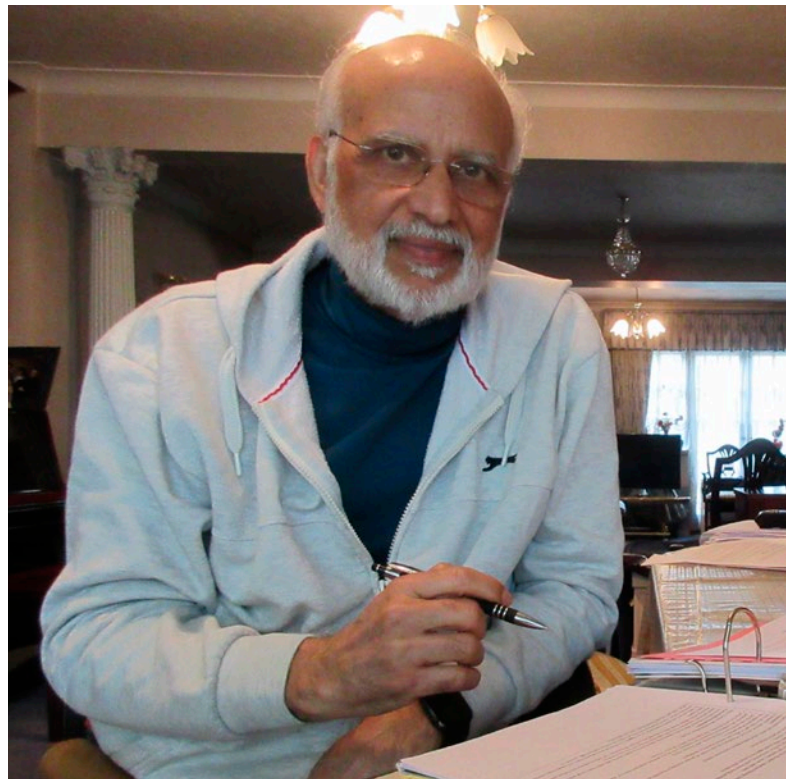
There are four police officers in the High Barnet Safer Neighbourhood Team – a sergeant, two police constables and a community support officer – and in the wake of the easing of lockdown restrictions, Mr Khari is anxious to look at ways to rebuild face-to-face contact with residents and improve community support.

Regular contact points when the officers meet residents have already been reinstated and dates arranged for the next two – between 12 noon and 1pm at Waitrose entrance, The Spires shopping centre on Wednesday 15 June, and between 12 noon and 1pm at Theo's Cafe, Plantagenet Road, New Barnet, on Wednesday 13 July.

Another initiative is the possibility of arranging contact points at banks and building societies along the High Street to raise awareness about purse snatching and distraction thefts at cash machines.

“What we would like to encourage is a citizen-led approach to assist the response rate of the Safer Neighbourhoods Team and to work through some of the criticism of

► Mahender Khari at his home in Wood Street. He sees the Community Action Panel as playing a key role in holding local policing to account



“We have a civic duty to co-operate with the police and we hope residents will support our work

local policing and see how it can be improved,” said Mr Khari.

He has been a member of the High Barnet CAP for the last five years and has been acting as its chair for some months.

Mr Khari has already adopted a hands-on-approach and has been paying random visits to the Old Court House Recreation Ground to check out regular complaints that youngsters have been congregating in the gardens, drinking, smoking weed, and intimidating passers-by and families using the children's playground.

Tucked away, just off Wood Street, and a stone's throw from the parish church, the gardens and playground are locked at night but during the day they have, over the years, been plagued by bouts of street drinking, disorderly behaviour and vandalism.

“We do want local people to feel comfortable walking through the Old Court House recreation ground and I am hoping that at our June meeting we can see if the Safer Neighbourhood Team can come up with some solutions.” Mr Khari welcomed an initiative by the leader

Come and meet the team...

Sgt Kevin Rudge heads up the local Safer Neighbourhoods Team of PCSO Richard Celeste, PC Umar Fida and PC Benjamin Knight. They can also draw on the support of additional officers if needed. The team works closely with the council, community and resident groups to decide policing priorities for the area. Regular contact points have already been reinstated and dates arranged for the next two – between 12 noon and 1pm at Waitrose entrance, The Spires shopping centre on Wednesday 15 June, and between 12 noon and 1pm at Theo's Cafe, Plantagenet Road, New Barnet, on Wednesday 13 July.

Not to everyone's taste

of the Barnet SNT, Sergeant Kevin Rudd, to help motorists who fear their cars are at risk of catalytic converter thefts.

His team were planning to distribute 150 marker kits to owners of hybrid cars likely to be targeted, such as Toyota Prius, Honda Jazz, and Lexus.

Roads where vehicles have been vulnerable in recent months include Puller Road, Carnarvon Road, The Drive, Wentworth Road, and Leicester Road, Station Road and Artesian Grove, New Barnet.

With only four officers in the team – and with one police car to share between them – Mr Khari acknowledged that with such limited resources it was difficult for them to cover an area that was two miles wide, especially when they were mostly patrolling on foot.

Another factor that had increased dissatisfaction with the police response was the loss of a front desk open to the public at High Barnet Police Station.

This had weakened the link between the police and the community. While there was a 24-hour desk for the whole of the Borough of Barnet at Colindale Police Station, this was no substitute for the police presence there had been in previous years.

“The priority of representatives attending our CAP meetings is to continue testing the police response and to see how it can be improved.

“There is undoubtedly a time lag between the reporting of a crime and action being taken, so again we will see if we can improve the manner in which crime is being reported.

“We have a civic duty to co-operate with the police and we hope local residents will support our work and come up with ideas to help ease the difficulties under which our neighbourhood team has to work in the hope of improving their response rate.”



For some they're a godsend, an easy and quick way to get food, while to others they are a nuisance.

These are, of course, the fast-food scooter couriers who popped up with lockdown but seem here to stay. They are lined up all day outside the likes of McDonald's and KFC waiting to collect snacks and meals that have been ordered on-line for home delivery.

The fact that there are so many means quite a bit of boisterous behaviour, to say the least. This can some times boil over. After an argument between several of them over a disputed delivery, one courier was recently issued with an anti-social behaviour order.

Lunchtimes are especially busy as are early evenings, but there is often a steady demand throughout the day, indicating that many more people are ordering food and drink to consume at home.

Since the easing of lockdown – when demand for deliveries really took off – there has been no sign of this trade tailing off and the boost to daytime turnover is being experienced by other cafés and food outlets along the High Street.

Daytime demand for coffee, teas, and sandwiches in outer London suburbs such as Barnet increased significantly during lockdown, with many more residents forced to work from home and the WFH phenomenon has had a significant impact, lasting far longer than many experts predicted.

High Barnet branches of McDonald's and KFC say they each regularly receive anything from 20 to 40 or more orders a day for home delivery that have been booked via meal delivery apps.

These are then collected by riders working for Deliveroo, Just Eat, Uber Eats or other couriers; often there are a dozen or more riders waiting in the High Street.

Leonardo, who was just setting off on a delivery with a couple of McDonald's bags in his panier, said he worked a 12-hour day.

“It can be boring just waiting for an order, and you have to keep your eye on your mobile phone all the time just in case you get an alert, but we are a great crowd and get on well together.”

While they wait the riders, wearing helmets, visors and sometimes face masks, sit on their scooters, or stand around on the pavement, keeping an ever-watchful eye on their mobile phones in the hope of picking up a delivery.

They prefer to keep themselves to themselves; some speak little or no English. They tend to brush away prying questions and do not like being photographed.

Certainly, there are a lot of shoppers and pedestrians who find the presence of so many couriers, hanging around in groups, rather disconcerting, even somewhat intimidating. Most of the scooters carry L plates – indicating that the riders have a two-year provisional licence.

Musical tribute, a 100 years on

Organ and piano pieces by the celebrated Barnet organist and composer William Ralph Driffill (inset) were played for the first time in probably 100 years at a recital commemorating the centenary of his death in 1922, writes Nick Jones.

Hearing her grandfather's music was a poignant moment for William's granddaughter Janet Culley, now 68, who lives in Carlisle, and who was the guest of honour at the recital at St Mark's Church, Barnet Vale.

His unexpected death from pneumonia at 51 had a devastating impact on his family.

His widow Kate was so distraught that she packed away her husband's compositions and manuscripts in a cupboard. His music was never celebrated again by Kate, and it became a lifetime ambition of Janet's late mother Rosemary – who was born six months after her father's death – and of Janet herself, to hear his compositions played in church.

"This recital has been a strange yet overwhelming occasion, hearing for the very first time some of my grandfather's most important organ and piano pieces, music that my mother would love to have heard and which I have waited so long to hear."

His most famous composition – *Toccata in F Minor* – is played regularly by Dutch organists, and is available on You Tube, but much of his work, some of it unpublished, has rarely if ever been played in recent years.

John Hay, churchwarden at St Mark's, organised the recital after researching William's life, his training at the Royal Academy of Music, his work as a composer, and his many musical contributions in Barnet, including becoming organist at both St Mark's and Monken Hadley parish church.

"Sunday 24 April 2022 was the 100th anniversary of Driffill's death and we all agreed at St Mark's that this had to be commemorated.

"We were really fortunate in being able to track down his granddaughter Janet and with her help and other research we have managed to assemble scores for 58 pieces of his music, when originally we only knew of 32."

Organist Ruth Lewis opened the recital with *Cantiline in A Minor* (published 1909), which she described as a "charming piece of music."

Jonathan Gregory played the other piece which again had probably not been performed since his death, *Nocturne Op.3*



▲ Organiser John Hay, pictured with Craig and Janet Culley and Father Tristan Chapman



(published 1893), and Jonathan rounded off the recital with the most well-known work, *Suite in F minor. Op.14. Allegro Maestoso, Romance, Toccata* (published 1905).

Another highlight of the recital was the playing of a selection of William's piano pieces by Terence Atkins, organist and choirmaster at Barnet parish church, including two songs for which William wrote the music.

Longing for You (words by Aubrey Jacques) was sung by Zehra Horkuc, and *Here's to Jack* (words by L. Melville) was sung by Luxnavi Suthaharan, year eight and year 10 pupils at Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School.

After his training at the Royal Academy, where William was awarded three gold medals and a certificate for harmony, its highest award, he became organist at Barnet Wesleyan Church in 1894, and later at Holy Trinity, Lyonsdown, before becoming organist at St Mark's and Monken Hadley parish church where he married Kate Prior in 1908. After his death in 1922, he was buried at Bells Hill cemetery.

He gave numerous concerts locally, including one at Barnet Town Hall in 1895 that was said to have been "enthusiastically received."

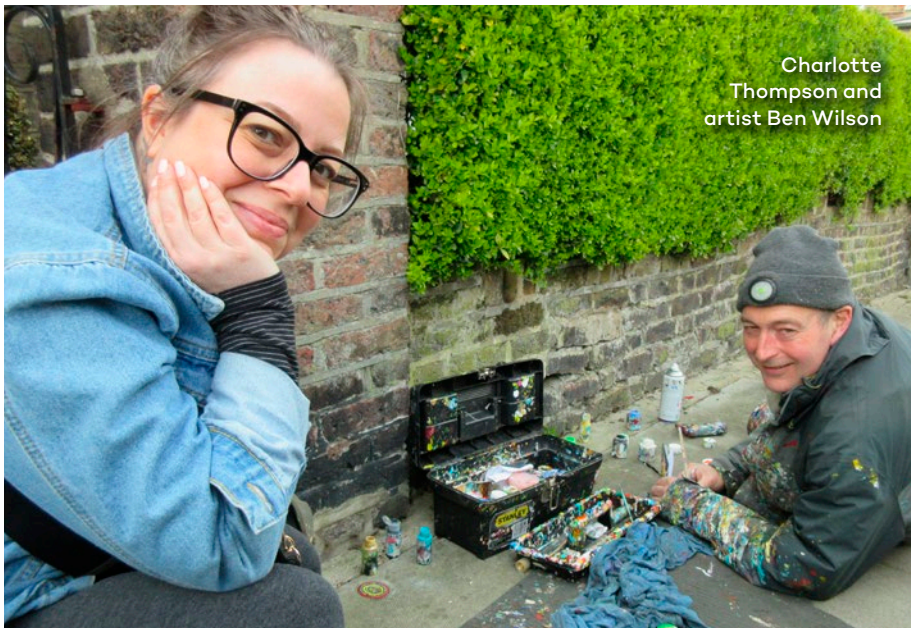
By the early 1900s he was performing regularly at concerts organised by both the Barnet United Choral Society and the Barnet Philharmonic Society.

Pianoforte recitals of his work included some performed by the pupils he taught from Queen Elizabeth's Boys School and other schools.

Before playing *School Day Miniatures* for the pianoforte (published 1916) Terence Atkins said it was obvious from his compositions that William must have been great fun as a teacher and had a great relationship with his pupils, judging from the whimsical nature of some of the titles.

▼ Below, performers, Zehra Horkuc and Luxnavi Suthaharan with Janet Culley. Bottom, organists, Ruth Lewis, and Jonathan Gregory with Janet





Charlotte Thompson and artist Ben Wilson



Par for the course

Golfers with disabilities assembled at The Shire golf course in St Albans Road, for the launch of the Cairns Cup, a new international disability golf competition between teams from Europe and the USA.

One of the England players in the 16-strong European team was paraplegic Kris Aves, a former Metropolitan Police Officer, who lives at Hadley Highstone.

He invited the Chipping Barnet MP Theresa Villiers to open the tournament. Mr Aves was left paralysed because of a spinal cord injury he received when hit by the van used in the March 2017 terror attack on Westminster bridge.

Despite being confined to a wheelchair, he was re-introduced to golf by the charity, Golf Trust.

He competes with the help of an all-terrain golfcart wheelchair, which raises disabled golfers to a standing position and allows them to stand securely while playing.

"It was an amazing experience to play with Team Europe and welcome American golfers with disabilities here at The Shire for this tournament.

"Sadly, the USA took the trophy, but the event did so much to raise awareness about the opportunities for people with disabilities to take up golf."

Among those at the opening was Lindsay Bowman, cultural affairs officer at the US Embassy in London, who said she hoped that the event would strengthen sporting links.

Art that doesn't cost a packet

School days in Barnet inspired artist Ben Wilson and his unique chewing gum paintings

Residents were delighted to welcome back to High Barnet the celebrated chewing gum artist Ben Wilson who spent a day refreshing a trail of tiny pavement illustrations that starts outside his parent's former home in Carnarvon Road and continues round the corner into Alston Road.

Each little painting on a flattened lump of discarded chewing gum depicts an image chosen by one of the householders – a miniature blackbird, the favourite of his late mother; Batman, for the children of her carer; a phoenix statuette for one neighbour; and even a wily fox (inset) for another.

Ben started painting his series of images in Carnarvon Road and Alston Road in 2004 and it is one of the many trails of his chewing gum paintings that can now be seen across London and around the world.

Educated at the former East Barnet Comprehensive School and what was then Middlesex Polytechnic, Ben's flourishing artistic influence has had an impact over the years in and around Barnet in different and unexpected ways.

His iron man sitting in the front garden of his Carnarvon Road family home – a sculpture which he created in 1984 out of surplus zinc roofing sheets – often brings a smile to passers-by.

One of Ben's most celebrated local exploits was the construction of the mysterious sleeping giant sculpture hidden in Hadley Wood, and which caused quite a sensation at the time.

The giant figure was constructed by Ben in April 1986 and assembled out of a fallen beech tree. "I didn't realise it would be as big as it ended up. I wanted walkers in the woods to be caught by surprise and wonder how it got there. After about three years I secretly dismantled it, just to add to the mystery."

Once he unpacked his paintbox and began restoring the miniature gum painting of a blackbird outside what is now his sister's home in Carnarvon Road, neighbours and nearby residents were soon stopping for a chat.

Charlotte Thompson, herself an artist living in Barnet, told Ben that as a child she loved seeing his sleeping giant in Hadley Wood. "I remember it so well. It was such a mystery. After so many years it's great to meet Ben at last. I love his work."





Going, going, gone

Barnet High Street is to lose one of its convenience stores with the closure of Sainsbury's Local later this year, writes Nick Jones.

Sainsbury's said the closure had been a "difficult decision" and recognised that this would be an unsettling time for the staff.

All possible support would be offered to those affected and every effort would be made to explore alternative roles for them within Sainsbury's.

News of Sainsbury's departure follows the loss earlier this year of Harry's traditional butcher's shop and the imminent closure of the zero-waste shop Kronos & Rhea, suppliers of specialist foods.

Sainsbury's said it hoped customers would continue to shop at its superstores at New Barnet and Potters Bar and other nearby grocery stores.

Closure of the convenience store will result in the loss of another High Street cash machine – on top of the recent loss of ATMs outside the former branches of banks HSBC

▲ Clockwise, Kronos & Rhea, Sainsbury's and Harry's, all victims of the difficult trading climate along the High Street

“ Sainsbury's hopes that customers will continue to shop at its nearby superstores

(now earmarked as a branch of Gail's Bakery) and TSB.

No indication was given by Sainsbury's as to the precise reason for the closure but the owners of neighbouring shops in the High Street say there had been a recent rent review.

The long opening hours of Sainsbury's Locals – from 7am to 11pm, seven days a week – were extremely costly and there was said to be insufficient demand in Barnet High Street, especially during evenings, to justify retaining the store.

No date was given by Sainsbury's for the closure, but nearby retailers thought it would probably cease trading in July.

When ownership of the premises changed hands in 2017 the sale document for the store and flats above indicated that Sainsbury's had a five-year lease expiring in September 2022 and would pay an annual rent of £92,000.

Sainsbury's withdrawal from High Barnet will be seen as a setback in

view of efforts to boost the town centre following loss of trade during the Covid.19 pandemic and social distancing regulations.

High Barnet retains a Tesco Express at 64 High Street and the Waitrose supermarket in The Spires shopping centre.

Shoppers were reassured earlier this month with the news that Waitrose had extended its lease in The Spires for another 20 years.

Sainsbury's departure from the High Street will bring back memories of earlier Sainsbury's stores in Barnet.

The premises to be vacated were for a time a M&S food store but it too failed to pay its way and was closed.

In recent years there have been some pretty dramatic changes in the nature of the High Street's retail units – the latest example is that from June the former Bentley car showroom will become an outlet for London Essex Outdoor Living selling among other items, hydro pool spas, hot tubs, and outdoor kitchens.

Den for Barnet dragons

With so few opportunities available for small shopkeepers and so little space for new businesses and shared working, Chipping Barnet Town Team has decided to take the initiative and open temporary accommodation for budding entrepreneurs in a prime location, writes Nick Jones.

By the end of June, the former showroom of estate agents Foxtons – at the corner of the High Street and Moxon Street – should have been re-opened and transformed into a community hub for pop-up enterprises.

The new venture – The Chipping Work Shop – is backed with finance from the Greater London Authority and Barnet Council.

Gail Laser, founder of the Love Barnet website and a High Street champion on the Town Team, said their initiative was all about driving and supporting the local economy.

“Finding suitable accommodation is so hard, and with so many local residents having been forced to work from home because of the pandemic, we know there is lots of pent-up demand from people who would like to set up businesses locally.”

The Town Team’s aim over the

next six to nine months is to try to meet the shortage of affordable work and retail space and encourage new start-up businesses.

During the day the front of the showroom will offer retail space on movable shelving with shared working spaces and a meeting room at the rear.

In the evening, the front will be turned into a bar, operated four nights a week by Urban Alchemy, the independent New Barnet brewery.

There would be food stalls available in the yard at the rear of the building – and stallholders offering West Indian food and crepes have already expressed an interest.

After taking possession of the showroom, the Town Team has a tight timetable to complete the alterations and adjustments needed for its re-opening.

By offering temporary work and retail space, they would create opportunities for

new businesses, increase footfall and also help rebuild evening trade.

The challenges facing small enterprises were far greater in outer London suburbs because of exorbitant rents and a dire shortage of low-cost commercial space.

The possibility of creating low-cost accommodation for start-up businesses in and around Barnet has been a priority for the Town Team for some years and the venture became a possibility, with funding from the GLA topped up with a £10,000 grant from Barnet Council.

By chance, suitable premises became available: long-term plans are being drawn up to redevelop the vacant Foxtons showroom to provide new retail space with residential accommodation above, but in the meantime, until the scheme has been finalised and approved, the owner has agreed to allow the Town Team to use the premises rent free.

Operational costs should be reduced still further as the Town Team is in the process of obtaining charitable status, which should cut its business rates by up to 80 per cent.

Any fees charged to start-up enterprises would be kept as low as possible and would simply have to cover the Town Team’s costs for insurance and other necessities.

Advice on the project has been provided by Ashleigh Watkins, Barnet Council’s

town centre representative, and local contractors have stepped in to install services such as air conditioning and an alarm system, either free or at a low cost.

Mrs Laser appealed to the Barnet community to support their initiative and with their backing is confident it should succeed.

In recent years she has been the inspiration behind several pop-up ventures, including shops in the High Street and The Spires and the Tea Station cafe.

Anyone wishing to volunteer or take space in the venture can do so via the contact page on the Chipping Barnet Town Team’s website, www.chippingbarnettownteam.org/contact-us



Gail Laser of the Town Team and Love Barnet inside the ‘pop-up’ office, situated in the old Foxtons estate agents, on the corner of Moxon Street and the High Street

Society's persistence pays off with 1 Sunset View victory

Robin Bishop writes

Eighteen months ago, I wrote that 1 Sunset View was a test of Barnet Council's will to enforce planning decisions. The owner had made multiple small – and cumulatively very harmful – changes to a house on the Local Heritage List in the Monken Hadley Conservation Area. Several Council Enforcement Orders had been ignored. The owner appealed against them, but the appeal was recently dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

The decision is a significant victory for the Council and for the Society, which has campaigned for nearly five years to protect the house. It acts as a reminder to owners and developers that Barnet planners are not a pushover. We hope it will also help save other similar buildings.

No.1 was one of the best and most prominent houses in a road that is a North Barnet classic of garden suburb design, master-planned and largely designed by local architect William Charles Waymouth in the early 20th century. The houses are attractive variations on Arts & Crafts themes, and comprise an unusually complete and high-quality development for its period. It's an important part of the Monken Hadley CA.

The Society first got involved in 2017, when the new owner applied to make drastic alterations and additions to the house.

The Society and local residents strongly opposed it, and the application was withdrawn. We nominated the house for the Local Heritage List, which was confirmed in July 2019.

The Council's citation drew attention to the "considerable variety of well-crafted brickwork, door and window details... unified by consistency of materials" and mentioned its attached garage, something of a novelty in the early days of mass motoring.

Two more applications were made, and the third (less damaging than the previous two) was approved. In spring 2019 work

started on site, but we became concerned when the original brown roof tiles were stripped off, smashed and replaced with red. When unauthorised rooflights appeared, the planners served a Breach of Condition Notice, which went unheeded by the owner.

Over following months, the rear balcony was demolished and chimneys rebuilt, but not exactly as before. Original Crittall windows were replaced with clunky uPVC. New side windows appeared. The traditional front door was replaced with a modern one.

The integral garage was rebuilt – taller than before, and with a new window behind fake doors. The freestanding garage in the same style as the house was demolished and replaced with a wider, more modern one with an up-an-over metal door.

The low brick front garden wall was replaced with high railings. The front garden was paved with blocks. The attractive Arts & Crafts interior was gutted.

None of the changes were in materials or style faithful to the original, and none was made with planning consent – a requirement in Conservation Areas.

In March, after a 15-month wait, a Planning Inspector upheld all but one of the Council's Notices. The bricks used in the extensions can stay, but all other changes must be rectified to match the original.

The owner has six months to do the work. Let's hope that ends the story. If not, be sure that we'll be on the case again.

A far better approach has recently been taken at the other end of Sunset View. Last year the owner of No.13, another of the road's charming houses, wanted to replace its porch and make other modifications, and consulted us on their design. We made some constructive suggestions – and lo and behold – changes in keeping with both house and street, and the Conservation Area enhanced.

1 Sunset View – before



1 Sunset View – after



13 Sunset View – before



13 Sunset View – after



Chairman's Annual Report

Another year has passed and the Barnet Society with your support has gone from strength to strength. With Covid restrictions lifted, we will be holding our AGM in person for the first time in two years and look forward to seeing as many of you as possible.

This year we have experimented with having a rotating chair to share the workload and give committee members the ability to experience something new. It's my honour to be the chair in situ for writing this report.

As highlighted in the sub-committee reports, we have been active on a number of fronts

Our committee members have invested considerable time and effort in trying to improve our High Street, fighting planning applications that would fundamentally change the look and feel of our beloved Borough and organising fundraising activities that bring people together.

In terms of High Street and Common area improvements, we have spearheaded events to clean the area around St John the Baptist's Church including cleaning and re-staining the wooden bench in conjunction with our fellow local organisation The Barnet Residents Association. We worked with the Council to improve refuse collection

On the planning and development front, we have successfully opposed several proposed developments, for example those of High Barnet Station and Whalebones, due to density and environmental impact concerns. We are not anti-development or anti-progress but we have pledged to safeguard the Green Belt and ensure that new developments represent the needs of our community in terms of good quality living accommodation and appropriate support infrastructures.

Our committee member and local historian Dr Susan Skedd has highlighted the important role local women have contributed to society via guided walks in Barnet/Monken Hadley. These events have served to bring people together and also to raise funds for the Society. Uptake of these walks has been popular. We are privileged to live in an area that is steeped in history and variety in terms of flora, fauna and architectural styles and we will endeavour to share the wealth of experiences available to us all locally.

Other work undertaken by us has included campaigning for the re-instatement of cancelled bus routes as well as the identification of buildings of historic interest that should be added to the local conservation register.

As a committee, we are excited about the future and are considering several new initiatives to increase membership including a young person's Barnet Society for which we would like your feedback

I'd like to express our appreciation for the long-standing contributions of Gail Laser and Eamonn Rafferty, who will be retiring from the Committee this summer and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

Andreas Tjirkalli

2022 AGM - NOTICE

Pennefather Hall, St Albans Road, Barnet

23rd June at 8.30pm, preceded by guest speakers, Cllr Barry

Rawlings, Leader of the Council, and Cllr Paul Edwards, 7.30pm

1. Approval of minutes of the 76th AGM 1st July'21 (*Page 15*)
2. Approval of 77th Annual Reports for 2021-22 (*Pages 11-13*)
3. Approval of Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2022 (*Page 14*)
4. Election of Independent Examiner
5. Election of Officers and Committee Members
6. Any other business

Officers and committee 2021-22

President Aubrey Rose, Vice Presidents Judith Clouston, David Lee and Jenny Remfry; Independent Examiner Jim Nelhams

Committee Members 2021-22

We have had a rotating Chair this year with Committee members taking it in turn. Vice Chair Nick Jones, Secretary John Hay, Treasurer Derek Epstein, Membership Secretary Kim Ambridge, Minutes Secretary Frances Wilson, Planning Lead Robin Bishop. Other Committee Members: Simon Cohen, Gail Laser, Eamonn Rafferty (Newsletter Editor) Susan Skedd (Social Media Officer), Andreas Tjirkalli, Simon Watson (Website Officer) Simon Kaufman, Simon Radford & Holly Kal-Weiss both co-opted. Andrew Hutchings & Hayley Lehmann both stepped down for personal reasons during the course of the year.

If you wish to stand for election to the Committee or need further information, contact: info@barnetsociety.org.uk

Doors open 7pm, drinks and nibbles available

Membership Report

At 31st March 2022 there were **482** household memberships comprising **704** members.

55 new households joined **but** 23 households did not renew - a net increase of **32** households. (2021: 21)

Reasons for not renewing again included moving away and financial difficulties.

For the year 2022-23 I hope to increase net membership by 50 households. Just over 10% of membership households live outside Barnet.

Membership Subscriptions

Reminder letters are sent to members who pay by cheque - currently 52 households. We do encourage annual membership payments by standing order or PayPal.

The Year Ahead

The Committee will continue to work to encourage membership through local events, spreading the word where we can. Hopefully, I shall get to meet some of you at the AGM and other events where we can exhibit examples of the local projects the Society has been involved with.

Meanwhile, keep your eyes on the website for updates between newsletters.

Kim Ambridge, Membership Secretary



Robin Bishop

It's been a great year for us, but we'll still keep battling on

This year the Society has seen a spectacular series of wins against damaging planning applications and appeals. We can also claim a part in forcing a Government volte-face on planning reform. Several ideas we strenuously objected to in last year's White Paper seem to have been quietly dropped.

We've also influenced Local Plans. We got some modifications to Barnet's draft Plan and – with some 18,000 other objectors – persuaded Hertsmere Council not to build on 10 per cent of its (and our) Green Belt. We hope for similar success with Enfield Council, where we objected to housing on Green Belt land at Hadley Wood, Crews Hill and elsewhere.

The Chipping Barnet Community Plan seems to have sunk almost without trace. However, one element of the plan, the business incubator, looks set to proceed. An application is in to convert the former Foxtons premises in the High Street into pop-up workspace, expected to open later this year (See *Page 9*).

Several major proposals we thought we'd killed off last year have reappeared as developers appealed against planning refusals. But we've won against-the-odds victories protecting the **Whalebones** estate and **33 Lyonsdown Road** from housing development. The saga of the **1 Sunset View**

appeal – and the contrasting case of 13 Sunset View – is covered on Page 10.

We've also helped to see off appeals for **telecoms hubs** in the High Street and, at **70 High Street**, build-out flagrantly exceeding the planning permission. We submitted representations against over-development at **202 High Street** (the former car showroom), **204 High Street** (the former Statons), **33 Park Road**, the **Victoria Quarter** and **Barnet House** in Whetstone.

Two notable decisions didn't go our way. **The Windmill School** in Moxon Street was approved despite our concerns, especially about its extremely limited rooftop playground. So were proposals to convert **Hendon Central Library** and other Council sites to Middlesex University use. We don't oppose the University's expansion, but the library is a listed building, which deserved better treatment, and the new architecture is unworthy of Barnet's civic heart.

We thought we'd lost the battle against TfL's overbearing towers at **Cockfosters Station** – but the





◀ Planning Inspector Jonathan Price and officials visit the Whalebones site last September as part of the appeal

◀ We were neutral about new stables by Chesterfield Farm

We were neutral about a **Gaelic football pavilion** at King George's playing field, and about new stables by **Chesterfield Farm** in Mays Lane. We supported reuse of the former cricket pavilion at **40 Barnet Lane** to rehouse the Rainbow Centre.

We supported horse riding at **Greengate Farm** in Mays Lane. And we supported a city farm classroom and WCs on a former meadow at **The Totteridge Academy**. Strangely, the Council didn't, and the application has been withdrawn.

Over the year we reviewed 88 planning applications, the fewest for years. We commented on 39, supported 8 and objected to 25. The Council agreed with 70% of our verdicts.

I don't do all this myself. Despite the Council withdrawing support from the Conservation Area Advisory Committee, Guy Braithwaite has strongly represented us on CA and heritage cases. I've also had valuable advice from Simon Kaufman, Gail Laser, Nick Saul, Susan Skedd and Simon Watson. Together with Derek Epstein and Andreas Tjirkalli, we've formalised a P&E Committee to discuss contentious cases and (I hope!) to spread the load.

We must also thank Theresa Villiers MP, who's harried the Government over its planning and environmental policies, and with whom we've worked on several of the more egregious developments in and around our area.

Finally, a big thank-you to the 30 or so Society and Sha'arei Tsedek volunteers who planted 200 more hawthorn saplings on the side of Barnet Hill early this year. They're growing well.

Transport Secretary unexpectedly overturned Enfield's decision to approve.

Big dogs that haven't barked yet are **The Spires**, the former **Barnet Market** site and **High Barnet Station**, where at least some building on the car park is likely.

One small project, refurbishment of **Tudor Park** cricket pavilion for community use, is making welcome headway. Committee Member Simon Cohen has won the support of hundreds of residents – and a Council grant of £200,000 – to repair the derelict building. A project committee is being formed.

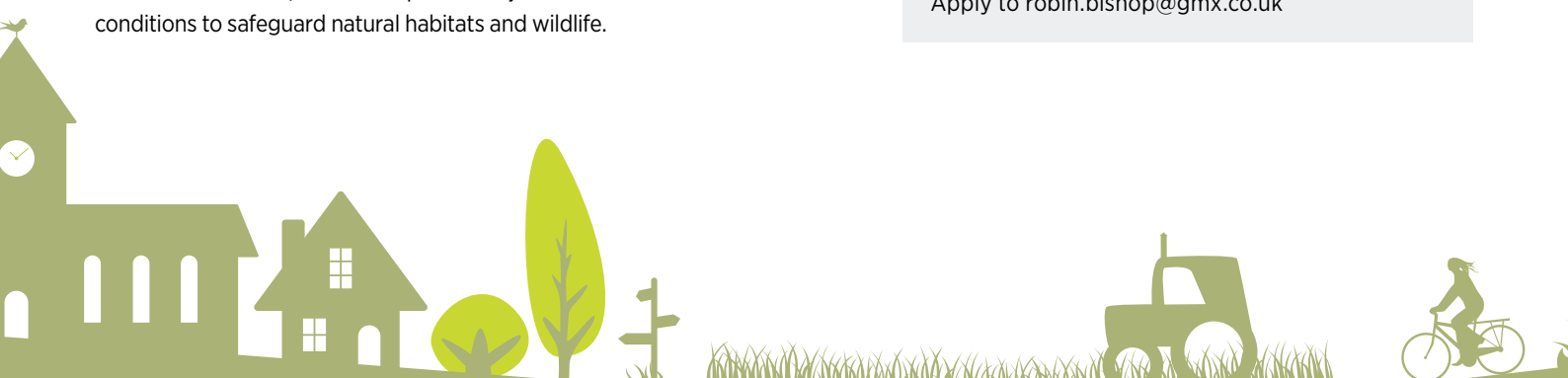
We're constantly vigilant about our Green Belt. Fortunately the Council rejected plans for an electric battery off **Partingdale Lane, Mill Hill** – to which we and 911 others had objected. But Sky has been given permission to build outdoor studios in fields by the A1 (in addition to the sound stages already approved). And fields continue to be disfigured by building materials and structures to the rear of **14 Hadley Highstone** and beside **56 Hendon Wood Lane** in Arkley.

We opposed an application for houses in a field next to **Vale Farm**, Mays Lane, and an appeal for houses at **Arkley Riding School**, Hedgerow Lane. Both were turned down. A second, more modest, application for the Arkley site has been submitted, and is acceptable subject to strict conditions to safeguard natural habitats and wildlife.

“ We are constantly vigilant about our Green Belt

Rambles Round Barnet – in the footsteps of EH Lucas

Volume 1, reprinted last year in a limited edition to commemorate our 75th anniversary, is available. We also have copies of Volume II. Each costs £6 + P&P or £10 + P&P for both. Apply to robin.bishop@gmx.co.uk



Barnet Society Accounts, year ending 31 March 2022

OPERATING STATEMENT TO 31 MARCH 2022

	1 Apr '21 - 31 Mar '22	Apr '20 - Mar '21
INCOME		
Membership Fees: minimum	4,699.35	4,195.00
overpayments	1,235.81	1,133.81
On-line donations	212.00	340.00
Donations for tree planting	300.00	100.00
Gifts & Donations: members	141.00	101.00
Gifts & Donations: non-members	70.00	95.00
Activities	179.32	0.00
Newsletter sales	33.00	5.00
Newsletter advertising	0.00	800.00
Books sales	739.00	90.00
Bank Interest Earned	0.40	2.01
TOTAL INCOME	7,609.88	6,861.82
EXPENSE		
Events		
Christmas Stall	20.00	0.00
Insurance & Other	132.00	87.00
Total Events	152.00	87.00
Newsletters		
Design	1,441.99	1,842.00
Printing	2,007.00	2,071.00
Postage & Stationery	226.88	284.09
Total Newsletter	3,675.87	4,197.09
Donations & Contributions		
Tree Planting	370.80	156.76
Digital High Street	0.00	100.00
Total Donations & Contribs	370.80	256.76
Computers and Internet		
IT support/ software	333.47	361.25
Website admin	120.00	240.00
Total Computers and Internet	453.47	601.25
Other Expenses		
Membership admin	0.00	250.00
Membership Expenses	115.00	182.83
Printing - Rambles booklets	364.00	0.00
Dues & Subscriptions	270.00	180.00
Bank and Paypal Fees	116.13	81.92
Total Other Expenses	865.13	694.75
TOTAL EXPENSE	5,517.27	5,836.85
SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	2,092.61	1,024.97

Overall

The year ended with a surplus of around £2,000, raising the Society's reserves to some £7,300. Although the Society's current financial situation is reasonably healthy, the Committee has decided that, in this inflationary environment, it would be prudent to implement the subscription increase for new members for which authority was given at last year's AGM

Derek Epstein, Hon Treasurer

BALANCE SHEET 31 MARCH 2022

	31 Mar 2022	31 March 2021
CURRENT ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Accounts receivable	0.00	0.00
Pre-paid expenses	0.00	0.00
Cash at bank and in hand		
HSBC - Deposit Account	5,435.32	4,434.92
HSBC - Current Account	804.81	139.90
PayPal	1,113.28	1,130.98
Total Cash at bank and in hand	7,353.41	5,705.80
Total Current Assets	7,353.41	5,705.80
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	(50.00)	(471.00)
Advance subscriptions	0.00	(24.00)
Total Current Liabilities	-50.00	(495.00)
NET ASSETS	7,303.41	5,210.80
CAPITAL AND RESERVES		
Movement		
Opening balance	5,210.80	4,185.83
Surplus / (Shortfall) for the period	2,092.61	1,024.97
Closing balance	7,303.41	5,210.80
Comprising		
May Finnerty Memoriam Reserve	1,000.00	1,000.00
General Reserves	6,303.41	4,210.80
TOTAL Capital and Reserves	7,303.41	5,210.80

COMMENTARY

Income

Recruitment at the Zero Waste Market and Medieval Festival has generated an increase in subscription income. 156 members generously pay more than the minimum subscription, boosting our subscription income by more than a quarter. Two generous member donations, one of £100 from Vice-President David Lee, substantially funded the planting of additional hawthorns on Barnet Hill. Member donations includes Membership Secretary Kim Ambridge's donation of all of the year's membership expenses, estimated at £115. Close to £180 was raised by Susan Skedd's walks while sales of Rambles booklets, including a reprint of Rambles 1, raised no less than £739

Expenditure

Leaving aside the reprint of the Rambles 1 booklets, total expenses were down from around £5,800 to around £5,100, both years benefiting from the virtual absence of spending on events that averaged around £500 in pre-pandemic years.

Minutes of the 76th Annual General Meeting, 1st July 2021

1. Welcome and Introduction

Robin Bishop (Chair) welcomed everyone to the AGM, which was held on Zoom due to the pandemic. There were 40 participants.

2. Apologies were received from the President, Aubrey Rose, Vice President David Lee and 19 other members.

3. Minutes of 74th AGM, 13th June 2019, were approved.

4. Approval of the 76th Annual Report

The Chair's, Planning and Environment, and Membership reports, and Annual Accounts were published in Summer 2021 Newsletter.

4.1 Chairman's Report 2020-21

RB said the Society gained members and reached a wider audience via social media and achieved some notable planning successes. We published 75th Anniversary Newsletter.

The purpose of the AGM was to seek approval for the Annual Report and approve changes to the way we run the Society in line with our Constitution. The first 5 votes were standard AGM items and the first three related to published reports.

4.2 Planning & Environment Report

RB said the report published in the Newsletter provided details of the issues facing Barnet and he would highlight the major challenges towards the end of the meeting. Both the Chair's Report and Planning & Environment were approved with no objections.

4.3 Membership Report

Kim Ambridge, Membership Secretary, said household members had increased to 465 from 450 following a promotion at a Fair in Leicester Road, where we had a stall. The report was agreed with no objections.

5. Treasurer's Report & Accounts for the year ended March '21

Derek Epstein, Treasurer, said accounts showed surplus of £1,025. The membership fees raised £5,329, including donations by 149 members. The 75th Anniversary Newsletter cost £900 thanks to a donation from Eamonn Rafferty and sponsorship organised by Simon Cohen. DE explained that the change in the Constitution 4.2 would enable us to raise the subscription when necessary. This has not been raised for 10 years and a third of members pay £20- £25. The accounts have been independently examined by Jim Nelhams and were approved with no objections.

6. Election of Independent Examiner 2021-22

Jim Nelhams was nominated as Independent Examiner by the Committee and was approved with no objections.

7. Role of Chair

RB was stepping down from the role after 4 years. It was proposed to rotate the post between Committee Members at each meeting subject to the Approval of Resolution to 6.2 of the Constitution.

8. Election of Vice Chair

Nick Jones was willing to continue for a 4th year and was proposed by the Committee and approved with no objections.

9. Election of Secretary

Andrew Hutchings was standing down. John Hay was proposed by the Committee and was approved with no objections.

10. Election of Members on the Committee

RB thanked John Gardiner, who was retiring from the Committee after 17 years including many years as Membership Secretary.

Members standing down but willing to be re-elected:

Robin Bishop, Simon Cohen, Andrew Hutchings, Nick Jones, Gail Laser, Eamonn Rafferty, Susan Skedd (Social Media Officer) Frances Wilson (Minutes Secretary)

Co-opted and willing to be elected: Kim Ambridge (Membership), Simon Watson (Website Officer) - proposed by the Committee Willing to stand for election; Simon Kaufman and Hayley Lehmann Both Simon and Hayley introduced themselves to the members.

All were elected with no objections.

11. Resolutions to amend the rules of the Constitution

The changes proposed had been published before the meeting and members were asked to indicate if they objected.

a. This AGM approves the deletion of rule 4.1 This states that the Annual subscription shall be due in May when a Notice shall be sent to all ordinary Members with the Annual Report. Since we have moved to a digital membership database with many members paying by PayPal, it is more efficient to have a rolling renewal and send out reminders of subscriptions due on the anniversary of members joining or renewing. **Agreed with no objections.**

b. In accordance with Rule 4.2, this AGM approves the Committee's proposal to raise the Society's annual subscription for new members to £10 (individual) and £15 (family) if it becomes necessary. This is to enable the Committee to raise subscriptions during the course of this or future years, if deemed necessary for the health of the Society's finances without requiring an Extraordinary General Meeting to be called. **Agreed with no objections.**

c. This AGM approves the amendment of Rule 4.4 as follows: Members are sent a series of reminders leading to termination of membership in the absence of any response within approximately three months of the renewal date. This is to bring the rule into line with the rolling renewal proposal in Resolution (a) above. **Agreed with no objections.**

d. This AGM approves the addition of the following sentence to rule 6.2: "in the event of an Officer retiring or stepping down, and no nominee or replacement being found to fill the position, the Committee may appoint any other Committee Member on a rotational basis until the post of that Officer can be filled". The purpose of this is to enable the role of Chair to be temporarily filled, and also to give flexibility to fill other posts should they fall vacant between elections. **Agreed with no objections.**

12. Any Other Business - None

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.



Send us your party pics!

We're planning to publish pictures of your Platinum Jubilee street parties, so please send them along with the details to: reporter@barnetsociety.org.uk

Local churches and voluntary groups arranged a wide programme of events for throughout the four-day Bank holiday weekend.

Lighting the beacon on top of Monken Hadley Church tower was due to be a highlight on Thursday evening and all were welcome at a Big Picnic on the green at Barnet Parish Church on Saturday lunchtime.

Residents had spent weeks planning their own neighbourhood Sunday lunchtime and afternoon get-togethers.

Volunteers were lined up to prepare food and drink and to decorate their areas with bunting. Long-planned gatherings included Sunday lunchtime and afternoon street parties in Rockways and Wylo Drive, Arkley; Granville Road, High Barnet; and Leicester Road, New Barnet.

Barnet Council received a last-minute rush of applications for temporary road closures across the borough for street parties.

Knights on horseback are to feature for the first time in military re-enactments at the fourth annual Barnet Medieval Festival at the Byng Road playing fields on Saturday and Sunday, June 11-12.

Staging mounted combat will be a spectacular addition to what is becoming the leading medieval festival in London and south-east England, attracting military re-enactors from across the country.

Re-enactments of the 1461 Battle of St Albans and the 1471 Battle of Barnet will be the highlight on both days.

Dr Susan Skedd, festival director, says the re-enactors, who are co-ordinated by the House of Bayard and the Wars of the Roses Federation, are hoping to bring four of perhaps five knights on horseback.

"Mounted combat will be a first for the Barnet festival and is another vote of confidence in our appeal and popularity."



The Friends of Tudor Park Pavilion will be holding a small "Bring your own Picnic" event in Tudor Park on Sunday 17th of July between 11am and 2pm.

We aim to:

- Let local residents know about the FoTPP (Friends of Tudor Park Pavilion) group.
- Learn a little about Tudor Park and its history.
- Find out what has happened at the pavilion so far and what we are trying to make happen in the future.
- Have your say and join the FoTPP
- Make a donation.
- Get to know some more of your neighbours.

Simon Cohen, FoTPP

Help the Barnet Society carry on its work by joining.

Annual subscriptions for new joiners are £10 for an individual or £15 for a family. Additional donations are greatly appreciated.

Website - www.barnetsociety.org.uk

Rotating Chair - Andreas Tjirkalli

Membership Secretary - Kim Ambridge, kimbarnet6@gmail.com, 07974 225950

Correspondence - The Secretary, 4 Hillary Rise, Barnet EN5 5AZ

Editor - Eamonn Rafferty

Designer - Richard Cooke

