

# The Barnet Society

SUMMER 2023 | £2

## Growing hopes for 84's return



Sherry Billings (below, right) organised a protest demonstration in support of the Save the 84 campaign, outside Potters Bar Community Hospital. (Left) a library picture of the 84 when it was still running



**Within weeks of the Conservatives losing control in local elections in May, the new Hertsmere Borough Council is taking steps to honour a Labour Party pledge to restore the bus service between Potters Bar and High Barnet, writes Nick Jones.**

If an operator can be found and Transport for London approves the request, an hourly service might be up and running by September.

Without a direct route, bus passengers are being forced to make roundabout journeys to reach either Barnet Hospital or the Potters Bar Community Hospital.

Hertsmere, now under the control of Labour and the Liberal Democrats, has

agreed to fund a replacement service.

A proposed route and timetable have already been prepared by Hertfordshire County Council's integrated transport unit which has also agreed to seek tenders from potential operators.

Following the withdrawal early last year of the Transport for London 84 bus service from New Barnet to St Albans via Potters Bar, there has been mounting anger and desperation among elderly residents, especially those with hospital appointments.

Instead of spending ten minutes or so on a direct route, passengers are having to go via Cockfosters and change buses, a journey

that can take up to an hour and a half.

If agreement is reached on a circular route for the hourly replacement service, it would start at Potters Bar rail station with stops at Potters Bar Community Hospital, Hadley Highstone, High Barnet High Street, High Barnet tube station and terminate at Barnet Hospital.

Hertfordshire stepped in last year to fund a replacement service for the section of the 84 route between Potters Bar and St Albans.

Continued failure to restore a link between High Barnet and Potters Bar has led to mounting anger among the abandoned passengers and the launch of a vociferous Save the 84 campaign.

Sherry Billings, a leading member of the campaign, said the breakthrough was due to the perseverance of Hertsmere councillor Nik Oakley, who is the council's executive member for transport and who had marshalled their case from the start.

*Continued on Page 2* ➔

AGM, Thursday July 13, 7.30pm, Pennefather Hall, St Albans Road, Barnet EN5 4LA

## *Continued from Page 1*

“This is fantastic news and all credit to Councillor Oakley. Hopefully, come the autumn, a bus will now leave Potters Bar station every hour.

“This will be a lifeline both for Potters Bar residents trying to get to Barnet Hospital and High Barnet residents visiting Potters Bar Community Hospital and its Moorfields eye unit.

“We have been assured that pensioners’ bus passes will be accepted on the replacement service.”

Councillor Oakley told the Barnet Society that she hoped the route of the bus from High Barnet tube station and on to Barnet Hospital would be via Underhill, Mays Lane, Manor Road, and Wood Street.

But Councillor Barry Rawlings, Barnet’s Labour leader, said there was no possibility of the council agreeing to remove the width restriction in Mays Lane. This would prevent a replacement bus turning right into Manor Road.

“Perhaps one solution might be for the bus to use the turning circle at the Dollis Valley estate so that buses could return up Barnet Hill and then proceed directly along Wood Street to Barnet Hospital.”

When Metroline ceased running the 84 service from New Barnet to St Albans, Hertfordshire stepped in with funding of £60,000 a year to finance the northerly section of the route from Potters Bar to St Albans, which is now being operated by Sullivan Buses.

**“This will be a lifeline both for Potters Bar residents trying to get to Barnet Hospital and High Barnet residents visiting Potters Bar Community Hospital”**

Theresa Villiers, MP for Chipping Barnet, added her welcome to Hertsmere’s decision to provide funding for a restored Potters Bar to High Barnet service.

“This is great news for my constituents but there may well be some further hurdles to overcome before we can be confident the lost service is definitely on the way back and I will continue to do all I can to make sure that happens.”

She understood from TfL that the annual cost of restoring the High Barnet to Potters Bar section could be as high as £175,000 a year but she had been encouraged by the assurance from the Transport Minister Richard Holden that there was flexibility in government funding to help finance the replacement of vital bus services.

TfL says that it understands the pressure to start a replacement service and it was prepared to waive the three-month application period for a London service permit for a bus route that would operate within the Greater London boundary.

## The Spires – High Barnet’s character and commercial success at stake

### **Robin Bishop writes:**

**The last 12 years have seen attempts to revive the precinct by a series of new owners. The latest is BYM Capital Ltd, which has been consulting on redevelopment. This is a once-in-a-generation chance to revitalise our town centre, but it risks being wasted.**

BYM’s key planning idea is to replace all the buildings between the existing High Street galleria and Waitrose on Stapylton Road with three to five storeys of flats above shops and bars, etc. The present partially covered courtyards would be replaced by Spires Walk [see visualisation]. Homes would also be built on the existing multi-storey car park and the former Barnet Market site.

The Society could accept about 250 flats if the result would be a real improvement on the present Spires. That would include a wider range of retail and other uses, a more attractive place to shop and hang out, and better bus/car drop-off and pick-up arrangements.

Apart from 24-hour access through the site and space for the market to expand, however, so far we can see no real community benefit in BYM’s proposals to date.

We are particularly concerned about the visual impact of the 4, 5 & 6-storey slabs proposed at the

heart of the site – not only their complete overshadowing of Spires Walk but their effect on neighbours and distant views.

A further concern is the major disruption that construction would cause to existing traders in what is already a precarious commercial situation.

We said all this to BYM’s team six months ago, after they showed us their first ideas. The scheme they exhibited in April had hardly changed, which was not encouraging. But apparently 650 members of the public commented on the exhibition, and BYM now tell us “We are keen to deliver a proposal which goes some way to meet the community’s aspirations and so intend to spend the summer improving on our scheme in the light of the feedback we have received.” We must hope they mean what they say.





# Medieval catwalk



**A medieval fashion show with displays of 15th century attire was another first at the annual Barnet Medieval Festival at Byng Road playing fields, writes Nick Jones.**

Re-enactors paraded in clothes worn by peasants, middling sorts such as farmers and merchants, as well as the nobility.

Modelling the fashions of the day was a new departure for the re-enactors who were led by the House of Bayard and who recreated scenes from the 1461 Battle of St Albans and the 1471 Battle of Barnet.

Spectators for the fashion show were captivated by a fascinating commentary by Kathleen Davies, who was dressed as a 15th century noblewoman and who explained how wealth had so much influence on medieval clothing.

“The most significant difference between people today and in medieval times was their clothes.

“We don’t think of our everyday clothes as being valuable, but in medieval times cloth represented hours of labour to which had to be added the expense of using brightly coloured dyes.

“So, clothes, even for peasants, were precious, and passed down as heirlooms.”

(Clockwise, from top left) the type of axe used at the time; Medieval re-enactors remember the dead of the battle; participants in the ‘Medieval Fashion Show’ dressed in clothes from the period and riders from the Freelance group demonstrate battlefield skills

Kathleen opened the show with a display of clothes worn by peasant women which were made from woollen hose. The women’s hair was covered as they “didn’t tend to show their hair except on their wedding day”.

For the session on clothes of the nobility, Lord and Lady De Mowbray were dressed ready for an audience with the King. Both their gowns were made from cloth of gold and his lordship’s gown was trimmed with white fox fur.

Now in its fifth year, Barnet has become well established in the annual calendar of medieval festivals and events commemorating the Wars of the Roses.

Barnet Councillor Emma Whysall, ward member for High Barnet, fired a cannon to open the festival with the help of gunner Ben Godden.

In her welcome, Dr Susan Skedd, festival director, said history and culture were entwined in the event and Barnet had played an important role in the history of war with the first use of handguns following the introduction of cannon.

“Barnet Council is currently asking for residents’ views on what culture means to them.

“We hope you agree that re-

enactments of 15th century battles and the great range of medieval life that is here on display should help influence the council’s future strategy on culture in the borough.”

Another popular display in the medieval campsite was a demonstration by Chris Carr who in her role as Dowager Countess of Wiltshire explained the role and purpose of some of the beauty products of the 15th century.

“Personal hygiene and beauty were just as important in medieval times – and it proves that not everyone could be accused of being smelly.”

Before the start of the re-enactment of the Battle of Barnet, the combatants knelt for a minute’s silence in memory of those who died that day.

There were over 350 re-enactors taking part in events from 30 different households. Their organiser Linda Godden of the House of Bayard congratulated the festival committee of their efforts to build up the event.

“Barnet is a fantastic weekend for us. The crowds are brilliant in their response, the campsite is so inviting, and we love coming to such a safe, friendly festival.”

**“Personal hygiene and beauty were just as important in medieval times”**



## LESSER-SPOTTED ARKLEY CAR MAKES APPEARANCE

### Barnet Classic Car Show saw a much-awaited appearance by a locally made sports car

Pride of place among a record turnout of over 100 classic and vintage cars that filled the upper deck of The Spires' car park was a 1980s version of the Arkley sports car.

It is the first time one of these elusive Barnet-made cars has been on display at the annual show since the Barnet Classic Car Club was established ten years ago.

Ted O'Day (right with his son Chris Fisher) of Epping answered the club's long-standing appeal to find an owner prepared to exhibit an Arkley car.

Around 1,000 were produced in the 1970s and 1980s at John Britten Garages in Barnet Road, Arkley.

Mr O'Day bought the car eight years ago for his son Chris Fisher to compete in events for historic sports cars. Originally it was a MG Midget but was converted and rebodied with Arkley fibreglass panels.

Club chairman Derrick Haggerty, who welcomed them to Barnet, expressed his delight at the appearance at long last of a locally made car which has pride of place in the club's logo.

"Seeing an Arkley here at the Barnet show has made our day.

"We have well over 100 classic and vintage cars on show, a record turn-out. There has been a great atmosphere with crowds of people on the top of the Spires' car park and for the parade through the High Street."

Club committee member Chris Martin was responsible for communicating with entrants to the show.

"We had 109 acceptances, and all but a couple managed to get here. This is easily our best-ever show. For the first time we have filled the two bays of the car park."

One of the oldest cars was Paul Griffin's 1923 3 litre tourist trophy Bentley. "She was first registered in July 1923 so will be 100 years old this summer – and to celebrate she will be racing in July in Le Mans in an event for vintage 1920s Bentleys."

Among the entries were seven vintage motorcycles.

## POSSIBLE REPRIEVE FOR BARNET POLICE STATION

### Still not open to the public...but High Barnet station might continue as a base for neighbourhood ward police officers.

A review to be conducted by the Metropolitan Police might lead to a reprieve for High Barnet police station, which was closed to the public some years ago and which is among several police stations said to be surplus to requirements.

Sir Mark Rowley, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, has told the Chipping Barnet MP Theresa Villiers (pictured below) that the force intends to "carefully consider" the future of buildings previously earmarked for sale.

Since 2017 the station has remained the base for local neighbourhood police teams and provided office space for other police personnel.

A strategy for policing the capital, which was announced in 2013 when Boris Johnson was Mayor of London, listed High Barnet as one of the stations that might be sold off to developers.

After Colindale became the police headquarters for the Borough of Barnet, High Barnet became one of 37 London police stations which lost its front counter service open to the public.

It is a substantial four-storey building, with extensive office space at the rear and parking for vehicles. It was constructed after the previous police station was demolished in the 1970s.

Over recent years, Ms Villiers and community groups in High Barnet have campaigned consistently for the retention of a police station in the High Street.

They believe that it is vital to maintain a town centre base for ward police officers and hope that it might re-open to the public one day.

If the station was sold off for redevelopment, a new base would have to be found for the safer neighbourhood teams which serve High Barnet, Barnet Vale, Underhill, and Totteridge.

Sir Mark gave the assurance the future of High Barnet police station was being looked at again when he met Ms Villiers and other Conservative MPs. The review will report back to him at the end of the summer.

Ms Villiers said that the Commissioner acknowledged the importance of police officers being based near the communities they serve. "I feel this latest development means that further progress is being made in the campaign to change minds and keep the station as a place to locate officers serving in and around High Barnet," said Ms Villiers.





## PETER'S FOUNTAIN THIRST QUENCHED

**Once again walkers on Hadley Green can quench their thirst at one of London's finest drinking fountains**

High Barnet's magnificent pink marble drinking fountain, now in full working order, is once again the centre of attraction at the top end of the High Street, welcoming walkers, and visitors to the delights of Hadley Green.

At an official opening ceremony in April, organised by the Heritage of London Trust, there were tributes and rounds of applause for Peter Wanders, (left) the High Street shoe shop proprietor, who was the inspiration behind the five-year campaign to get it restored and reconnected to the water supply.

Councillor Alison Moore, Mayor of Barnet, who cut the ribbon to declare the fountain ready for use, congratulated the foresight of the celebrated Barnet benefactor, Miss Ann Paget, who paid for its installation in 1885.

Miss Paget, together with her younger sister, Lucy, were renowned in the town for their support for philanthropic causes and Councillor Moore said the restoration of the fountain – abandoned for the last 50 years – was a fitting memorial to all they contributed to the community.

"The Paget sisters were philanthropists in an era when the Temperance Movement was not so popular.

"With the erection of the fountain, they ensured there was an alternative to beer in the town and that there was clean water available for everyone."

Once the ribbon had been cut,

Peter Wanders was the first to fill his re-usable water bottle and partake of the water – an event that he said he had dreamed about for so long but had never thought would arrive.

After five years campaigning to get the fountain back into use, he finally achieved a breakthrough and secured sufficient funds to dismantle and restore the fountain and return it to working order.

A grant of £15,000 from the Heritage of London Trust was backed up by over £5,000 raised through a crowd-funded appeal with donations from local residents, community groups, and residents' associations; £2,700 from Barnet Council; and a free reconnection to the mains from Affinity Water.

Dr Nicola Stacey, (centre) director of the trust, told the assembled crowd of well-wishers, that it had been an amazing experience working with Peter.

His dedication was an inspiration to all those campaigning for the restoration of Victorian drinking fountains and in promoting their environmental importance, not least in reducing the waste and pollution from throw-away plastic water bottles.

Hadley Green's water fountain is now the third re-opened for use this year and the trust has another nine that are under repair, but this is still only a fraction of the 100 or so fountains in and around London that could be brought back into use.

Restoring Hadley Green's fountain had been especially exciting for the trust because it was in an amazing location, a landmark site on the boundary of Greater London.



## COMING UP ROSES

**High Barnet publican Veronica McGowan has played a leading role in the selection of the London finalist for the Rose of Tralee International Festival which is to be held in County Kerry in August.**

She escorted this year's contestants to a reception at the Irish Embassy (above) in London and then chaired the judging panel which chose the London entrant for what has become an annual global celebration of Irish culture bringing together women of Irish descent from around the world.

Ms McGowan – who was herself chosen as London's Rose in 1981 – held a reception for this year's London contestants at Ye Olden Monken Holt where she has been publican for the last six years.

It is now an annual celebration and has become a popular community event in High Barnet.

"As a former London Rose myself, it is important to grow the Rose of Tralee festival for young women from around the world.

"It is an expression of the Irish culture of the modern woman. It is definitely not a beauty pageant, but a chance for the contestants to display their passion for music, arts and literature and share that with the community.

"So, when we hold the reception at The Monk it is a real feel-good evening, and it is so encouraging that so many locals want to join us for such a happy Irish celebration."

A vintage car display in the High Street was part of this year's reception in High Barnet for this year's London contestants who included Niamh Reilly of Wagon Road.

Amy Gillen, a freelance musician, was chosen as the London entrant for the County Kerry festival.



# Celebrations

## fit for a king

**Bell ringers at the Parish Churches of High Barnet and Monken Hadley rang peals of bells over the holiday weekend as part of celebrations throughout High Barnet to mark the Coronation of King Charles III, writes Nick Jones.**

The Barnet Parish Church Guild of Bellringers were on duty again on Bank Holiday Monday renewing their proclamation for the Coronation and welcoming guests to the Big Picnic organised by the Church of St John the Baptist.

Churches throughout the country participated in Ring for the King, a recruitment campaign to attract new volunteers keen to be taught the intricacies of bell ringing in time for the Coronation.

There were two new recruits at High Barnet and four at Monken Hadley, which the Barnet tower captain Nancy Surman said was highly encouraging.

“Ring for the King helped to raise the profile for bell ringing, as did the celebrations for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, so now we can get busy with training some new volunteers.”

Eight bell ringers are needed each Sunday morning at both High Barnet and Monken Hadley and the two teams help each other out.

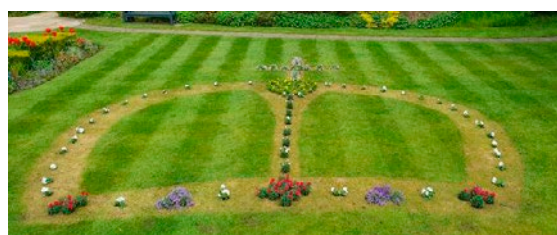
On the morning of the Coronation, there was a peal of bells at Monken Hadley and then at the Parish Church and this was followed on Sunday morning by a quarter peal from a new piece, King Charles III Delight Major, which was written for the Coronation celebrations.

A regular visitor to the Barnet bell ringing team is Hilary Walls who lives in Enfield and who attends practice at Waltham Abbey every Wednesday.

“There are 12 bells at the Abbey, and I do enjoy it there, and I come to Barnet for a practice session on Mondays.

“I started to train as a bell ringer six years ago and it is quite a challenge, so getting it right is part of the joy.

“The Barnet Parish bells do sound lovely when they are rung and the Barnet guild of bell ringers are of a very high standard, so it is a great privilege to ring in Barnet as well.”



(Pictures, from clockwise) Bellringers at St John The Baptist

At the street party for residents of Wentworth Road and Byng Road, (top) pride of place on the cake stall went to an eye-catching sponge cake made by Natasha Coates, seen above with her six-year-old son Daniel.

A Coronation Tea Party in Rockways and Wylo Drive, at Arkley, entertained well over 100 residents, relatives, and friends. There was a big thank you to the organisers, from left to right, Judith Heineman, Mel Garfield, Anji Iqbal, and Raj Iqbal...and their dogs Butler, Arney and Azlam.

Laid out on the lawns of the historic Wood Street almshouses of Jesus Hospital charity were King Charles’ royal cypher and his crown, made by gardener Robert Fenton.

Shoppers at The Spires were entertained with a Coronation concert given by the Barnet Big Choir under their choir director Sofia Hutchinson. The event raised money for Cancer Research.

## Chair's Annual Report

This year has passed so quickly because the Committee members have been really busy trying to retain the character of Barnet and the surrounding Green Belt, which seems to be under constant threat.

The Planning & Environment Report (**Pages 8&9**) highlights the many proposals we have objected to and some which we supported; I would like to mention two in particular.

One of the major threats we tried to prevent was the demolition of 33 Lyonsdown Road, a Victorian villa on Barnet's Local Heritage List. Simon Kaufman an architect and Committee member provided a plan to refurbish it rather than demolish it; we demonstrated outside to draw attention to the situation, and held many meetings, but despite our best efforts demolition was approved. Because it seemed quite wrong that demolition of a Locally-Listed building should be allowed as 'permitted development', the Committee agreed that £3,800 of our reserves should be used to engage a solicitor and Queen's Counsel for their opinion on whether we should ask for a Judicial Review. Unfortunately they advised that our chance of success was low, so we decided not to pursue the case.

The other major threat is redevelopment of The Spires shopping centre. We agree the site needs refurbishing and rejuvenating but we are unhappy with the proposed scheme, which we feel is very unimaginative and disappointing: too high with blocks of flats five and six storeys high, and the loss of parking spaces, which will not encourage local shoppers.

We have organised some social events this year as they seemed welcome following the pandemic. In November, we invited 'Living Streets' to give a talk; January we held a quiz and the following month a Housing Forum all held in The Bull Theatre and were well attended. In March we held a dinner at Menage organised by Holly Kal-Weiss which was very successful and we have been asked to repeat; it raised £550. Susan Skedd organised three very interesting walks stretching from Barnet Church to Hadley Church identifying 'Incredible Women' who lived in Barnet raising £730, including a donation of £200.

This year Barnet is participating in the London Festival of Architecture, whose theme is 'in common' and we are leading four circular walks through the town centre and adjoining countryside, particularly to introduce people not living in the Borough to our common spaces, allotments and almshouses. Both start from the Station and visit Barnet Church, then one goes along Wood Street via Thomas Watson Almshouses to Whittings Hill then along the Dollis Valley Greenwalk, while the others go along the High Street visiting New Ground Cohousing in Union Street then up to Hadley Green and Common then down King George's Fields to Meadway. All have proved popular.

This year we have also held meetings with the Enfield Society and Elstree & Borehamwood Green Belt Society - both valuable allies given their upcoming Local Plans and a general election, which are likely to create fresh threats to the Green Belt.

I'd like to express our appreciation for the long-standing hard work and commitment of Derek Epstein our Treasurer who did far more than just keeping the accounts, and also thank Holly Kal-Weiss who has been with us a year and helped organise the events which took place this year. They are both resigning and we wish them all the best. Simon Kaufman is stepping down from the Committee, though we are pleased he will continue giving advice on planning.

Finally, I would like to invite members to stand for the Committee - especially if they can spare a bit of time to become a Treasurer, take minutes or organise events.

**Frances Wilson**

## 2023 AGM - NOTICE

**Pennefather Hall, St Albans Road, Barnet**  
**13th July at 7.30pm. Preceded by guest speaker**  
**Gordon Massey from Barnet Residents Association,**  
**who will present their views about the Spires**  
**redevelopment.**

1. Approval of Minutes of the 77th AGM 23rd June'22 (**Page 11**)
2. Approval of 78th Annual Reports for 2022-23 (**Pages 7-10**)
3. Approval of Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2023 (**Page 10**)
4. Election of Independent Examiner
5. Election of Officers and Committee Members
6. Any other business

### **Officers and committee 2022-3**

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

### **Committee Members 2022-3**

Chair Frances Wilson; Vice Chair and Newsletter Editor Eamonn Rafferty; Secretary John Hay;

Treasurer Derek Epstein; Membership Secretary Kim Ambridge; Minutes Secretary Holly Kal-Weiss; Planning Lead Robin Bishop.

Other Committee Members: Matt Bannon, Nick Jones (Reporter), Susan Skedd (Social Media Officer), Andreas Tjirkalli, Simon Watson (Website Officer), Simon Kaufman, Simon Radford, Mahender Khari, Christine Klein.

Simon Cohen stepped down during the year and Derek Epstein, Holly Kal-Weiss, Matt Bannon and Simon Kaufman are resigning from the Committee.

**If you wish to stand for election to the Committee or need further information, contact: [info@barnetsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@barnetsociety.org.uk)**

**Also, we need a Treasurer and Minute Taker, so if you can assist we would love to hear from you.**

*Doors open 7pm, drinks and nibbles available*

## Membership Report

As at 31st March 2023, there were 506 (2022: 482) household memberships comprising 735 (2022: 704) members, representing an almost 5% increase in households and members.

The membership grew by 50 (55) new households but sadly 26 (23) households did not renew - a net increase of 24 (32) households. Reasons for not renewing included moving away and financial difficulties.

### **Membership Subscriptions**

Annual fees remain unchanged for 2023-24 at £10/individual and £15/household. Payment by annual standing order is preferred.

**Kim Ambridge - Membership Secretary**



## JUST WHEN WE THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO RELAX...

### Robin Bishop writes:

Although the number of planning applications has been down compared with the last five years, big beasts we thought we'd slain have revived. And a new, even bigger one has appeared: redevelopment of **The Spires** and the former St Albans Road market site – see my separate article on **Page 2**.

Another big and long-running case is **Whalebones**, where we hoped the Planning Inspector's dismissal of an application for 152 homes in the **Wood Street Conservation Area** would prompt a rethink. No such luck: another application is expected soon. The number of homes has been reduced to about 120, but other changes are minimal.

We're still braced for homes on High Barnet station car park, though Transport for London may focus on less complicated and costly sites such as **Cockfosters Station**, where Michael Gove has decided not to call in four towers on the edge of the Green Belt.

We've had some successes. At **118 High Street** (the Grade II-listed former TSB & Barnet Press) we helped see off an application for 'bingo'. A historically uninformed makeover of **The Mitre**

(Above) an artist's impression of how the Spires would look under the controversial plans to redevelop the shopping centre

has been refused. Funding for a new community hub in the dilapidated **Tudor Park pavilion** is growing. The sale of **Hendon Central Library** has been averted. Enforcement action has had some success in **Sunset View**.

Appeals have gone our way at **47 High Street** (the Crown & Anchor), **159 High Street**, **1-15 Richard Court** in Alston Road (where roof extensions have been prevented) – and most notably at **Victoria Quarter**, where the developer's appeal to the High Court to overturn the Planning Inspectorate's dismissal of their scheme for 539 flats failed. Instead, the 2017 scheme for 371 homes is now being built.

Unfortunately we also lost some arguments. At **164 High Street** (Lightfield, fka Brake Shear House) the development will now be gated, contrary to Shanly Homes' original promise. They are also applying to drop the workspace originally promised and build more flats instead. At **202 High Street**, the former car showroom will be demolished in favour of a 3-storey terrace that will push up the roofline of the Monken Hadley Conservation Area. And at **49 Moxon Street** a 7-storey block of flats on the edge



of the Green Belt has been approved. The Inspectorate has also upheld appeals against the Council's refusal of the **Barnet House** redevelopment site in Whetstone, and of an **electric battery array** in the Mill Hill Green Belt.

A more mixed outcome is **70 High Street**. The developer has been given permission to retain part of his new building, but a drastic reduction of its overall height is required.

One important case, **33 Lyonsdown Road**, may yet have a happy ending of sorts. Frances Wilson writes in her Chair's report on Page 7 about the sad saga. Inconsistencies in planning law meant that the Council has been powerless to prevent its demolition. The Victorian Society is so concerned about this and similar cases across the country, however, that it has had the matter raised in the House of Lords. There's a long way to go – and too late for No.33 – but





(Above) Robin Bishop and Barnet Society chair, Frances Wilson at the Society's stall at the Medieval Festival.  
 (Right) 33 Lyonsdown Road, where we fought to stop its being demolished. (Below) Mixed success at 70 High Street.  
 (Bottom) Original plan for Brake Shear House development, which showed no gate, whereas the developer has now included one



a new Government may rectify these inconsistencies.

On the wider planning and environmental front, we've been neutral about the Mayor of London's expansion of the ULEZ. We want clean air for Barnet and need better data about indoor and outdoor air quality to inform and shape decisions, and said so in our submission on the Council's draft Air Quality Plan. ULEZ expansion may not be perfect and does not address all air quality issues. Radical improvements in public transport – not just reinstatement of the 84 bus link to Potters Bar! – are also badly needed.

This is especially true in the Green Belt. Local councils in London and the Home Counties are currently planning to allow



building on more than 48,000 acres of GB, according to a recent report by the London Green Belt Council, of which we're a member. That's the combined area of the London Boroughs of Barnet, Camden and Enfield – or of 60 Hampstead Heaths.

In neighbouring Hertsmere, anger about that scale of building on its (and our) Green Belt was a factor in its Conservative Council losing control to a Labour/Liberal Democrat coalition in May.

Most of the new homes we need could be built on brownfield land. Only genuinely sustainable communities – including adequate infrastructure, public transport and affordable housing – should ever be considered in the Green Belt.

Finally, a few facts. Over the year we reviewed 99 planning applications, commenting on 29. We supported 4 and objected to 18 – less than a fifth. The idea that we're Nimby is wide of the mark. In the majority of cases, the planners agreed with us.



*Many thanks to my colleagues on our Planning & Environment Committee. Guy Braithwaite, Simon Kaufman, Dave McCormick, Nick Saul, Susan Skedd, Katy Staton & Simon Watson have given invaluable advice on these and other matters.*

# Barnet Society Accounts to 31 Mar 2023

## OPERATING STATEMENT TO 31 MARCH 2023

	1 Apr '22- 31 Mar '23	Apr '21 - Mar '22
<b>INCOME</b>		
Membership Fees: minimum	5,009.00	4,699.35
overpayments	1,307.81	1,235.81
On-line donations	34.50	212.00
Donations for tree planting	0.00	300.00
Gifts & Donations: members	200.00	141.00
Gifts & Donations: non-members	496.00	70.00
Activities	529.83	179.32
Talks & fund-raising events	1,542.89	0.00
Newsletter sales	5.00	33.00
Books sales	105.00	739.00
Bank Interest Earned	13.81	0.40
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>9,243.84</b>	<b>7,609.88</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>		
<b>Events</b>		
AGM	200.00	0.00
Christmas Stall	45.00	20.00
Other Events	1,033.83	45.00
Insurance	87.00	87.00
<b>Total Events</b>	<b>1,365.83</b>	<b>152.00</b>
<b>Newsletters</b>		
Design	1,430.00	1,441.99
Printing	1,969.00	2,007.00
Postage & Stationery	199.84	226.88
<b>Total Newsletter</b>	<b>3,598.84</b>	<b>3,675.87</b>
<b>Donations &amp; Contributions</b>		
Tree Planting	0.00	370.80
<b>Total Donations &amp; Contribs</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>370.80</b>
<b>Computers and Internet</b>		
IT support/ software	347.49	333.47
Website admin	0.00	120.00
<b>Total Computers and Internet</b>	<b>347.49</b>	<b>453.47</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>		
Membership Expenses	0.00	115.00
Other printing	118.09	364.00
Dues & Subscriptions	175.00	270.00
Bank and Paypal Fees	211.70	116.13
Legal fees	3,792.00	0.00
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>4,296.79</b>	<b>865.13</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>9,608.95</b>	<b>5,517.27</b>
<b>SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)</b>	<b>-365.11</b>	<b>2,092.61</b>

## BALANCE SHEET 31 MARCH 2023

	31 Mar 2023	31 March 2022
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
<b>Cash at bank and in hand</b>		
HSBC - Deposit Account	3,449.13	5,435.32
HSBC - Current Account	1,906.53	804.81
PayPal	1,582.64	1,113.28
<b>Total Cash at bank and in hand</b>	<b>6,938.30</b>	<b>7,353.41</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>6,938.30</b>	<b>7,353.41</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable	0.00	(50.00)
Advance subscriptions	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>(50.00)</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>6,938.30</b>	<b>7,303.41</b>
<b>CAPITAL AND RESERVES</b>		
<b>Movement</b>		
Opening balance	7,303.41	5,210.80
Surplus / (Shortfall) for the period	(365.11)	2,092.61
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>6,938.30</b>	<b>7,303.41</b>
<b>Comprising</b>		
May Finnerty Memoriam Reserve	1,000.00	1,000.00
General Reserves	5,938.30	6,303.41
<b>TOTAL Capital and Reserves</b>	<b>6,938.30</b>	<b>7,303.41</b>

## COMMENTARY

This year had been an exceptional one for the Society. Some £3,300 (c.£3,800 less c.£500 contributions from others) was spent on legal fees in an attempt to save the Victorian villa at 33 Lyonsdown Road from demolition. However a major operating loss for the year has been mitigated by some excellent fund-raising.

£530 was raised by three walks led by Susan Skedd, one in April last year and two in March 2023, supplemented by one member's generous £200 match-funding donation for one of the walks

A fund-raising dinner and raffle at Melange organised by Holly Kal-Weiss raised some £550.

Three other events - Living Streets, a Quiz night and Better Housing - roughly broke even, helped by The Bull very generously hosting the events at well below its commercial rate.

Membership secretary Kim Ambridge continues to generously carry the membership administration (stationery and postage) costs.

The bottom line is that, despite the substantial outlay on legal fees, the operating deficit has, through these efforts, been limited to just £365.

**Derek Epstein, Hon Treasurer**

# Minutes of the 77th Annual General Meeting

Pennefather Hall, St Albans Road, Barnet, 23rd June 2022

## 1. Welcome and Introduction

Nick Jones the Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting saying it was especially good to meet in person after the restrictions of the pandemic. He explained this year we had experimented with having a rotating chair to share the workload and to give committee members the opportunity to experience something new. He drew attention to the current Chair's report in the Newsletter written by Andreas Tjirkalli.

## 2. Apologies

Aubrey Rose (President), David Lee (Vice President) Simon Radford, Simon Watson, Andreas Tjirkalli, Jim and Jo Nelhams, Bill and Sherrie Foster. Present- There were approx. 57 members present.

## 3. Approval of the Minutes of 76th AGM 1st July'21

Nick Jones said the Minutes had been published in the Summer'22 Newsletter – Approved unanimously

## 4. Approval of the 77th Annual Report

Nick Jones said the Chair's, Planning and Environment Report Membership Report and Annual Accounts are all published in the Summer '22 Newsletter.

The purpose of the AGM is to ask members to approve the actions we have taken over the past year. Everyone has been given the opportunity to raise questions before the meeting.

### 4.1. Chair's Report 2021-22

Andreas Tjirkalli wrote we have had a very successful year opposing several proposed developments such as High Barnet Station and Whalebones. Susan Skedd, a committee member and local historian organised guided walks highlighting the important role local women have contributed to society providing an opportunity to bring people together when they could not meet indoors and raised funds for the Society. He explained that the Committee are considering several new initiatives to increase membership including a Young Barnet Society.

The Chairman's Report was agreed with no objections

### 4.2. Planning & Environment Report

Robin Bishop, the Society's Planning and Environment Lead, said, we had had a good year but he wanted Members to note developments since he had written his report:

- 33 Park Road - for 6 years the owner has been trying to build on the roof of this block of flats. Last year he tried again under the government's relaxed Permitted Development Rights, but was refused again. He appealed, we opposed the appeal and the Planning Inspector has just dismissed the appeal.
- 1 Church Passage L'Antica Pizzeria – proposed a roof extension which looked bizarre so we objected and it has been refused.
- 98-100 High Street (was Foxtons) – Proposal is for 12 flats above and a mixed use project. Simon Kaufmann has produced the proposal and as he is a committee member we will discuss it at the next meeting without his being present. Members have also been asked to give their views.
- 33 Lyonsdown Road – The owner applied to demolish under Permitted Development Rights despite its being locally listed and the redevelopment had been refused by the Council and Planning Inspectorate. We objected unsuccessfully, engaging a Solicitor to write on our behalf suggesting there were legal grounds to refuse it. We were pleased local residents contributed £450 but we have just learnt the Planners have approved the applications to demolish. The Committee will discuss this at the next meeting to see if we can take any further action.

The Planning & Environment Report was approved with no objections.

### 4.3. Membership Report

Kim Ambridge, Membership Secretary said at 31st March'22 there were 482 household memberships comprising 704 members. 55 new households joined but 23 did not renew making a net increase of 32 households. Just over 10% of membership households live outside Barnet.

The Membership Report was approved with no objections.

## 5.0. Treasurer's Report & Accounts for the year ended Mar'22

Derek Epstein, Treasurer produced the report published in the Newsletter. He said it was his third year as Treasurer but the first opportunity to address the members in person. The accounts show a surplus of around £2,000, raising the reserves to some £7,300. We have grown our subscription

income over the 3 years from £4,700 to £5,900. 156 members paid more than the minimum subscription -See overpayments £1,235 boosting the subscription income by more than a quarter. The income was also boosted by two generous members contributing to the planting of additional hawthorns on Barnet Hill. Kim Ambridge donating £115 towards membership expenses and Susan Skedd's walks raised £180, the sale of the Rambles Books raised £739. Total expenses were down because there have been very few events due to the pandemic

Although the Society's current financial situation is reasonably healthy, the Committee has decided that, in this inflationary environment it would be prudent to increase the subscription rate for new members from £8 to £10 (Single) and £12 to £15 (Family) for which authority was given at last year's AGM.

Question- A member queried the overpayments of £1,235 which was explained in the Commentary that it was members who overpaid the minimum subscription.

The accounts have been independently examined and passed by Jim Nelhams and were approved with no objections.

## 6.0. Election of Independent Examiner 2022-23

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

## 7.0. Officers and Committee members

Our President is Aubrey Rose and Vice Presidents David Lee and Jenny Remfry.

### 7.1. Election of Officers on the Committee

*Chair:* Nick Jones said there had been a rotating Chair for a year which had been interesting but he was pleased to say Frances Wilson had been nominated for Chair by Robin Bishop and seconded by Andrew Hutchings and has agreed to stand. This was approved unanimously.

Frances thanked everyone for their support and promised to do her best following in the footsteps of Robin and Nick.

*Vice Chair:* Nick Jones has decided to step down after 3 years as Chair and 4 years as Vice Chair. Frances said he had been excellent in both roles and combined them with writing most of the articles in the Newsletter and website. showing his skills as a professional journalist. There were 2 applicants for vice chair: Eamonn Rafferty our Editor of the Newsletter and Andreas Tjirkalli our representative on the Town Team. The election took place with a show of hands and Eamonn was elected Vice Chair.

### 7.2. Election of Members on the Committee

Before this took place Frances thanked Gail Laser and Andrew Hutchings for all their hard work as committee members over the years and said they have both decided to retire. Gail has been Vice Chair for many years and been a very active campaigning member especially regarding the High Street and is a leading member of the Town Team and founder of Love Barnet. She is always full of enthusiasm and we hope to continue to benefit from her experience. Both Gail and Andrew joined the Committee in 2004 so between them have clocked up 36 years or a third of a century. Andrew was Hon Secretary until this year and has provided excellent advice on transport and highways which are both areas of his expertise and he will continue to advise on these matters. Hayley Lehmann unfortunately has retired due to ill health.

Members standing down but willing to be re-elected

Nick Jones, Derek Epstein and Andreas Tjirkalli

Co-opted and willing to be elected

Holly Kal-Weiss and Simon Radford. Holly has agreed to become Minute Secretary-- proposed by the Committee.

Willing to stand for Election

Christine Klein, Matt Bannon and Mohender Khari who all introduced themselves.

The election of Committee Members on the Committee was approved with no objections.

## 8.0. Any Other Business

There was none

# Death of celebrated drama critic who was the first to spot Harold Pinter's talent

**Irving Wardle, one of the most distinguished theatre critics of his generation, has died at the age of 93.**

He was a leading drama critic for newspapers such as *The Observer* and *The Times* during the post war revival of British theatre and he was the first to identify the significance of the playwright Harold Pinter, with whom he became a close friend.

The two met after Wardle reviewed Pinter's *The Birthday Party* in 1958, and the playwright complimented him on his critical sensibility. Wardle coined the phrase "comedies of menace" for Pinter's work.

Latterly, he also acted at the Bull Theatre. in Barnet.

His penultimate appearance there was in February 2022 was in the Blue Door's production of two short Pinter plays in which he played the role of the colonel in *Mountain Language*.

There have been tributes galore to his support and encouragement for local amateur dramatics, coupled with a profound admiration for a determination -- that continued into his late eighties and nineties -- to share a lifetime's experience in theatrical life.

"Irving was so inspirational for the younger generation," said Susi Earnshaw, founder of the drama school at the Bull Theatre.

"He was a regular visitor to our shows and was always so keen to talk to the pupils. What was so wonderful was the way he could talk to them so easily and demonstrate the art of improvisation."

In 2018, Wardle, who lived in New Barnet, joined the newly formed drama group The Bull Players .

Their first production, staged at The Bull Theatre in 2019, was *Love and War* – billed as an evening of "passion and laughter" – which proved to be a sell-out.

One sequence included Irving and cast member Pina Griffin in *The Seagull* by Anton Chekhov.

They both appeared in the group's next production in September 2021, in the garden of the garden of Monken Hadley Church, which was the première of *Fog of War*.



Irving Wardle

Written by budding Barnet playwright James Godwin, it told the story of a local beguine, a semi-monastic community of women, through the sound and fury of the 1471 Battle of Barnet, and was produced by his mother Siobhan Dunne, the Bull Players director and producer.

Ms Dunne said that when she first saw Wardle perform at The Bull in 2018, she was amazed at how later life he was still brilliant at improvisation.

"Irving knew just how to respond, whether it was looking at dead bodies or filling a vital moment in a production."

After her success with the Bull Players, Ms Dunne became artistic director of Bull's Blue Door Theatre Company, in which Wardle became an active cast member.

He had a central role in Blue Door's Pinter Project in February 2022 when after playing the colonel in *Mountain Language*, he led a live discussion on Pinter's work, his friendship with the playwright and his 26 years as drama critic for *The Times*.

"Irving told us he always hankered after finding a role on stage rather than just critic, so in his later years he really was a game keeper turned poacher," said Ms Dunne.

"He trained as a classical musician, wrote his own play and then became an outstanding theatre critic, but I think inside he was always a performer, and we were so lucky to share his lifetime's experience."

Wardle took part in an anarchic cabaret staged by the Blue Players in July 2022 with ten extracts from plays, including a Chekhov monologue which Wardle adapted to suit the production.

"Irving had been rehearsing with us for his role as Gonzalo in *The Tempest* – which was performed by Blue Door at The Bull in February – and despite failing health had been hoping to appear, but unfortunately, he was taken ill over Christmas and later suffered a fall.

"We feel so privileged that we were able to share and take advantage of Irving's vast experience," said Ms Dunne.

## Join the Barnet Society and help carry on its work

Annual subscriptions for new joiners are £10 for an individual or £15 for a family.

Additional donations are greatly appreciated

**Chair** Frances Wilson, [chair@barnetsociety.org.uk](mailto:chair@barnetsociety.org.uk)

**Membership Secretary** Kim Ambridge, [kimbarnet6@gmail.com](mailto:kimbarnet6@gmail.com), 07974 225 950, [membership@barnetsociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@barnetsociety.org.uk)

**Website** [barnetsociety.org.uk](http://barnetsociety.org.uk)

**Correspondence**, The Secretary, 4 Hillary Rise, Barnet EN5 5AZ  
[info@barnetsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@barnetsociety.org.uk)

**Editor** Eamonn Rafferty, [raffertye@gmail.com](mailto:raffertye@gmail.com)

**Designer** Richard Cooke, [rtcooke74@gmail.com](mailto:rtcooke74@gmail.com)



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