

# The Barnet Society

*Campaigning for a better Barnet*

## NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2010



**The former Magistrates' Court – see page 11**

## CHAIR'S LETTER

I began my last letter with news of change. This continues, as you can see, with The Barnet Society's new look. This goes hand-in-hand with the new website, which we hope will be operational in the next few weeks. You will see, later in the Newsletter, that we're asking for confirmation of e-mail addresses and starting a new on-line discussion group to help improve communications and to encourage exchange of information between Members. We realise that not all our Members have e-mail, or wish to use the internet, and we will continue to communicate with them in the usual ways. However, for those that do, we are keen to enhance the ways we can 'talk' to each other. Let us know what you think.

Our new 'strapline', *Campaigning for a better Barnet* proclaims our renewed efforts to gain improvements for our town and its surroundings. Much work has been going on behind the scenes, particularly with Barnet Market, the High Street and the Town Centre Strategy Board (see articles below). We have been researching, examining and lobbying to gain the best outcome for the Market - it is such an integral and significant part of the character and history of Chipping Barnet and, working closely with Friends of Barnet Market, we are doing all we can to keep it going and to help it to grow. We will continue to agitate (and aggravate!) to ensure we make our town a better place.

By the time you read this we will have held a retail 'forum' with local shops and businesses in an attempt to get more of them involved in the debate regarding future plans for the High Street. We had been surprised to find that many of our local businesses knew little about the work that has been going on with the Strategy Board. We are trying to get more of the key players, chain stores and our independent shops to talk to each other and to act together, where possible, to get the best outcome for the High Street. Campaigning on behalf of our town centre is becoming a full-time job! We will report back with further news in our next Newsletter.

You will probably have heard by now that the Council finally approved the Section 106 Agreement to give the go-ahead for the £4.5 billion redevelopment of Brent Cross at the end of October. The scheme could take approximately 20 years to build. The controversial application, which was submitted in March 2008, comprised the building of 7,500 new homes,

111,000 sqm of retail, over 450,000 sqm of commercial/business space, hotel, leisure and community uses, a private hospital, new rail and bus stations and a new 'waste handling facility' The cash-and-carry store, Bestway, may still pursue a Judicial Review over the compulsory purchase of its land to build the waste handling and gasification plant. The developers say '*The overall aim is to create a new town centre, uniting the areas north and south of the A406 and to stitch together the damaged fabric of this extensive urban area.*' This new town centre will be at the opposite end of the borough and will, we hope, have minimal impact on the health of our own town centre; we are not convinced the same can be said, however, for the waste handling facility.

On the subject of waste, the Mayor of London has just published his draft Municipal Waste Management Strategy for consultation (which can be viewed on the GLA website). We will be studying it and sending our comments shortly. If you have any views, please let us know.

And last but not least, welcome to the new intake of students at the new Barnet College in Wood Street. The buildings look very good and provide the historic Tudor Hall with a much-improved setting, particularly since the tree planting at half-term. All we need to do now is to persuade the owners of the private car park in front of the listed building to convert it into an Elizabethan knot garden! Having seen the building's interiors and facilities several times (thanks to David Lee's visits), it is clear that the students have a first class college, but it will be a long time before this level of public expenditure is available for further education again.

**JUDITH CLOUSTON**

## **MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT**

We are pleased to welcome Mr. and Mrs. D. Paul to the Society and would urge all our members to invite friends and neighbours to join The Barnet Society and so strengthen our voice as we argue the case for the town in increasingly difficult times.

Subscriptions for the current year, 2010-2011, have continued to trickle in over the summer, but we have still to hear from members who, we hope, have simply forgotten to pay up. If you receive a personal reminder with this newsletter, please respond promptly. We need all the members and all the subscriptions we can get if we are to exert an effective influence.

I would commend to you the report from Derek Epstein outlining our plans to improve electronic communication with members. We are keen that you keep us up to date with any changes in your email address and would ask you to consider joining the new online information exchange network for the exclusive use of Barnet Society members. For more details read what Derek has to say.

**JOHN GARDINER**

### **AN ORDINARY HOUSE IN BARNET: Little thoughts on our 1930s semi**

#### **Part One**

Our dear old house in Grasvenor Avenue; a three-bed semi built between the wars, is nothing special architecturally and many would sneer at its ordinariness. But to us it is wonderful and, in places, does just the right thing. On a good day, with the sun in the right place, I think its funny ill-conceived 'rustic bricks' look just perfect. And I love the architrave around each internal door frame. A simple moulding with a plonked-in square at the two top corners. Perhaps it saved a crummy carpenter from crafting a mitred corner? I don't know. But it just about manages a faint and hesitant nod at art deco.

Most readers will be able to imagine our house in its original state. A standard design with a little hallway leading to a small living room at the front, a dining room at the back and a tiny galley kitchen tucked behind the stairway and hall. Then up the stairs to two modest bedrooms over the living room and dining room and a box room at the front over the hallway. And to the left of the stairs as you arrive at the top a separate toilet and small bathroom.

Its original layout clearly didn't suit its previous occupants who bashed it about to within an inch of its life. Bathroom and toilet were knocked together (although this was a good decision I think) and the lounge and dining room were combined to make one 'through' reception.

A foot or two of the old dining room was claimed to make the kitchen wider and a wall was moved. We later found out that a load-bearing wall had been sacrificed and upstairs was balanced precariously on a slim beam doing its determined best to prevent a catastrophe. Poor old number 52.

But we arrived full of excitement and hope in 1994 (me with a belly full of our first daughter who was born in March the following year) to find precious original doors in situ along with things like picture rails and the original front windows in the bay at the front. And when we moved in we loathed and laughed at things like the brick built fireplace in the front room, the garish chandelier light fittings, the bath set on a wobbly platform and the fully tiled kitchen in putrid brown.

But we loved a lot more about our house. We loved the views over the playing fields, the funny overgrown back garden, the unpretentious but careful design and the peace of its Barnet location on the very edge of the Green Belt.

But most of all we loved the sweet nature of our house – its gentle welcome and its quiet embrace. There's no less sentimental way to describe the house that became, and remains, our home.

Of course, in November 1994 when we moved in, we had our hands full getting ready for our new arrival. Scrubbing brushes, paint brushes, sugar soap and a nursery-themed wallpaper border. Our little house seemed to hum with excitement...or maybe it was groaning in dread of what was to come....

**BECKY GLENISTER**

**BETTER TRANSPORT IN BARNET: A summary of the talk by John Cox at the AGM.**

Barnet is a low-density borough, where the private car will continue to provide much of people's transport. However, congestion increases every year, only held back by the current recession. The council's efforts to turn the borough into a high-density suburb, at Brent Cross, Colindale, Mill Hill East, and so on, will greatly increase road congestion across the whole borough.

Barnet has some of the best roads in the country after a century of improvements, but those cannot continue. There are still a few junctions

that may be rebuilt, but there is no possibility of major new roads. The main thoroughfares have been widened to their limit, three lanes each way. This allows high capacity for through traffic, although lousy living conditions for those people alongside them

So what assets has Barnet got, to improve public transport? In three words, good radial railways. The planned Northern Line improvements will improve capacity on the two branches -- if and when they happen. The Great Northern Railway line would be improved by more frequent trains, and perhaps closer stations, but neither seems possible. However, the north-south radial railways in Barnet are a way to avoid car-driving, if north or south travel is all one happens to want!

The big problem in Barnet – and the other north London boroughs – is poor east-west public transport. All the boroughs mention this in their strategic planning.

The recent improvement to the North London Overground line, nearer central London, is worth praising. However, this is of little benefit to Barnet, because there is no interchange with the Northern Line branches, or properly with the Kings Cross line.

Finally, there is one extra interchange, often neglected, between the Northern Line and Thameslink trains, at Kentish Town station (at least for now).

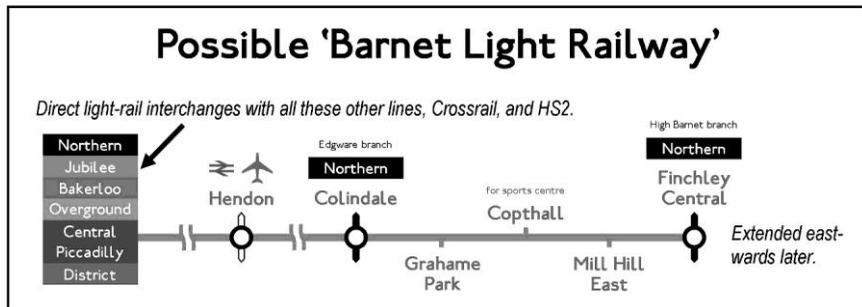
Until 1939, passenger services ran from Finchley Central via Mill Hill East to Edgware. The railway was dismantled in the 1960s, and the M1 motorway was built on part of the track bed. With the right political will, we could make use of Barnet's large development sites, even if they are scaled back, to partly finance a light-rail line to replace the missing line.

The track bed west of Mill Hill East still exists, and a new line could be built from Copthall to Colindale station instead of Edgware, then south to Hendon and Brent Cross. From there it could join another old railway, to continue west to the Jubilee, Bakerloo and Central Lines, and maybe a new 'High Speed Two' station at Old Oak Common. (Theresa Villiers calls this “Wormwood Scrubs International”!)

Future rail links east from Finchley Central could follow, either along the North Circular Road, or via Alexandra Palace.

Adding an east-west line to the existing north-south ones would allow much easier public transport journeys. It would cut road congestion for those people who needed, or chose, to drive their cars. We need an all-party and no-party

consensus of people in Barnet to support such plans, and break the current fossilised thinking on transport, still unfortunately stalking the corridors (on foot!) of Barnet Council.



## BARNET COLLEGE “UP AND RUNNING”

It seems appropriate that for our latest visit, on Wednesday 20th October, our entry should be not through the building contractors’ back door but the High Street front entrance, as the College is now “up and running”. Indeed, one feels the veritable buzz of a university campus as one crosses the large square separating the main building from the street and enters the Reception Block at the side of the square.

Here we were welcomed, and subsequently hosted, not by the Architect as originally billed but, in his non-availability, by the College Principal herself, Marilyn Hawkins, surely the ultimate representative of the users of the new building. During her introductory talk Marilyn spoke of the general success of the building so far, but changes are already on the way, some of which will soon be perceived by the public.

The Reception Block itself, the result of a planning requirement that there should be a part of the College that forms a street frontage, is perhaps not best used as a Reception as this function is partially duplicated inside the main building. So look out for an art gallery or a hair salon, all student-connected of course.

The large square incorporates plots for mature trees with interleaved seating, and can be expected to have been completed by the time this Newsletter appears. (Indeed, the trees, twelve *Malus baccata*, have since arrived.) Smoking is now permitted in the square, the original idea that the whole campus should be non-smoking having led to overcrowding on the pavement.

Barnet must be the only College in the land with a tunnel through it accommodating a public footpath, and application for the path to be closed may be made sometime in the future. Health and safety hazards have become apparent, although there has to be “an incident” before application on such grounds can be made. We were later to experience for ourselves the disruption to the flow of people around the building caused by the “up and over” necessary to move between inter-related rooms which are actually all at ground level.

Off on an escorted tour, first to Tudor Hall, whose interior is now clean, light and airy now that the contractors and their equipment have retreated. Then to the Main Building and through the barriers that electronically count personnel in and out and register them, these barriers being a single point of entry or exit for the whole building. We, without electronic ID badges, had to be counted in and out by more traditional methods.

We were shown a variety of classrooms, laboratories, workshops, etc, some with teaching sessions in progress. Overall one could feel a sense of wonderment that less than two years ago we were squelching through mud in the drizzling rain on this site, have seen the building grow through its skeletal stages, and now here it is, fully fitted, brightly illuminated, colourfully decorated, and alive with students and staff.



The new college and refurbished Tudor Hall (*thanks Judith for photo*)



The Society Members outside Tudor Hall; the photograph, framed, was presented to Mr Keith McGinnis.

Our time with Marilyn finished with questions and answers over tea and biscuits. One issue raised was the use by students of the car park in the Old Court House Park, displacing genuine park users and Bowls Club members. She had not been made aware of this and thanked us for the feedback.

Barnet College is, like the world at large, facing financial challenges, and is thus reviewing the use made of its various sites. The Wood Street campus will be the centre for the consolidation of the teaching functions; it is better served by public transport than Grahame Park, and the new building with its open frontage connects better with the town around it. There are those who question whether we want this daily influx of hundreds of students, but feedback from local retailers leaves no doubt on the economic benefit.

The Society thanks Marilyn and her helping staff for the afternoon; our thanks and apologies too to the staff and students whose sessions we interrupted – we hope it was found to be brief!

I have since been informed by David Lee that the Society can look forward to a further meeting with Marilyn with the emphasis not on the new building but on the mutual opportunities and benefits afforded by the relationship between

College and town. This meeting is to be in March or April next year; whether at one of our venues or on the campus again is not yet decided.

A final postscript: the ancient mulberry tree that grew near the entrance to Tudor Hall had to go, and this was much regretted by most. However, four seedlings from it are growing in the grounds at the rear of the College, and if any achieves the magnificence of its parent, it is to future generations that we have to entrust its preservation.

## **DAVID ELY**

### **ON BEING A GRANDMA**

Gosh I don't know where to begin. I have lived up here on Hadley Green for the past eleven years and since living here my father and father-in-law both died, my daughter married and four weeks ago my first grandchild was born. In between all that my life is always hectic which I suppose is how I like it. That is until now because I want some time to spend with my delicious new grandson Raphy. I suppose I am being rather boastful in taking up space in this issue to advertise the delights of my life at this time. But I wanted to tell you how lovely it is to be a grandma and to live in an area that remains forever a little piece of old England, where the local folk are friendly and know all about you and their occasional nosiness is well meaning and appreciated. For without this who else would stop me in the street to take a peek inside the pram other than my nearest and dearest. Who else would enquire as to how my daughter is managing, and yes thank you she is coping brilliantly as I knew she would. I could go on but I just wanted to point out a true positive of living in a community that cares. We may have issues about the state of our High Street, or the lack of choice on offer or the abundance of hideous street furniture, but at the end of the day these can all be remedied. Caring and kindness from people that live in a community is not a given it is special and I for one think I am very lucky to live here within walking distance of this historical place I like to call Chipping Barnet.

## **GAIL LASER**

**Vice Chairman, Barnet Society**

### **HIGH STREET WATCH**

We are pleased to note that the long-abandoned restaurant on the corner of the High Street and Moxon Street has had its hoardings removed and is

undergoing shop-fitting. We understand it will be a new fish and chip shop and look forward to trying it out!

We see that another restaurant at the northern end of the High Street has also undergone a change of look and cuisine with ‘Pan-Asian’ food on offer. Unfortunately, although the owners have refurbished the premises to a high standard, they have done so without seeking Conservation Area Consent. The new shopfront and illuminated signage have been installed without the correct approvals and will now be the subject of enforcement action. We trust that the fish and chip shop owners will not make the same mistake (although so far no application has been received for illuminated signage).

In 1996 the Council produced Design Guidance Note 10: Shopfronts which gives guidance on suitable design and appearance of shopfronts, fascias and signs. Although this was published some years ago, the principles remain the same. The Council has recently produced a draft leaflet to reinforce these principles and we have commented on it. It is hoped that, following approval, this will be delivered to all shops and businesses in the borough’s High Streets with special reference to the section on the need for Conservation Area Consent in the relevant parts of our own High Street.

We have written to English Heritage in support of BRA’s request to list the former Court House building on the corner of the High Street and Normandy Avenue. The building was sold a few months back and, as it falls outside the boundary of the Wood Street Conservation Area, has no statutory or local protection should the new owners choose to demolish. We consider it to be a good example of civic architecture of its time and a ‘sister’ to the old Register Office in Wood Street which was successfully listed a few years ago.

## **QUINTA PUBLIC OPEN SPACE BECOMES A ‘VILLAGE GREEN’**

We note with interest the recently successful application to designate an area of open space in Mays Lane as a ‘Village Green’. There has been a number of such applications in and around London in the last few years, as a result of new legislation that was brought in under the Commons Registration Act 2006. Information on how to go about registering land for such a purpose is readily available on the web, e.g. The Open Spaces Society.

A Town or Village Green can be any land on which a ‘significant number of the inhabitants of any locality, or of any neighbourhood within a locality, have indulged as of right in lawful sports and pastimes on the land for a period of at least 20 years’.

The application appears to have come about as a result of the Council wishing to grant a new lease to a football club from Finchley (it had previously been leased to Lyonsdown FC). This was resisted by local residents who made an application to designate and the Council objected. The matter was referred to an independent public inquiry which was held in 2009 into the relevant facts and legal issues and the Inspector found no reason not to grant the application. The latest stage came when the application went before the Council's Planning & Environment Committee on 20 October and was approved.



*Quinta Open Space is the area blacked in. (c/o LB Barnet Committee Report)*

## **THE HIGH BARNET PROJECT**

In spite of the recent appointment of a Co-ordinator for the Project, progress on setting up a dedicated website to promote our town centre has been slow and we understand that the Co-ordinator has now left the post. This is disappointing for all. However, The Barnet Society is working with Barnet Traders Association (BTA) to keep the project alive and we will be reporting on this in subsequent Newsletters.

**JUDITH CLOUSTON**

## **KEEP IN TOUCH BY EMAIL:**

### **1. NEWS FROM THE SOCIETY**

We have email addresses for many members but have found that some are invalid and we do not have email addresses for more than half of you. Having your email address would enable us to send you email reminders of upcoming events and notify you of events arranged at short notice. If you would like us to keep you informed in this way, please drop an email to [membership@barnetsociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@barnetsociety.org.uk) so as to give us your current email address. Please do so even if you have provided your email address previously.

### **2. BARNET SOCIETY DISCUSSION GROUP**

The Society has established a Google Group enabling members to communicate with each other by email.

The group can be thought of as the Society's 'chatline' where members can exchange news and views on any matter of interest to our local community. Need a recommendation for a plumber? Need a baby-sitter? Got something to give away? A room to let? News about a new shop or a sale at a local shop? A complaint about our streets or environment? Warn others about roadworks or an accident? In short, anything that you might gossip about with your local friends and neighbours.

When you reply to a group email, your reply goes, not only to the sender, but to the whole group. New messages that you send to the group email address are broadcast to all members of the group. All group emails are prefixed [BarnetSociety] in the subject-line to distinguish them from your ordinary emails.

If you would like to join the discussion group, please drop a request to: [listowner@barnetsociety.org.uk](mailto:listowner@barnetsociety.org.uk) and you will receive, shortly thereafter, a welcome message telling you that you have been added to the group and more about how it all works. (Do try it, it's fun; and you can unsubscribe at any time.)

**DEREK EPSTEIN**

## **PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE NOTES**

The Planning & Environment Committee has been very active over recent months. Each of the committee members has had a role: Judith's has been to work tirelessly on the two 'hot topics' - Barnet Market and the Town Centre Strategy whilst mine has been to watch in awe!

In November 2005, the owners of the Barnet Market site obtained planning consent for the redevelopment of the site for a market hall at ground floor with 14 apartments above and a basement car park. The planning consent was due to expire in November and the owners have applied to the Council to have it renewed. The Barnet Society has been working closely with Friends of Barnet Market and a separate article on the Market explains why we felt we should object to the application.

With the Chipping Barnet Town Centre Strategy Board, we are looking at alternative ways to improve the connectivity between the Market site, The Spires and the High Street. Links between shopping areas are recognized as being vital for a successful town shopping centre and the proposed redevelopment would squander the opportunity to provide such links.

The departure of Dorne Kanareck from Barnet Council (where she was Director of Environment & Operations) has deprived the Town Centre Strategy Board of its chairman and driving force within the Council. However Barnet has reaffirmed its commitment to the project with Lucy Shomali moving to take the Chair and additional senior officers, from conservation and from major projects, joining to strengthen the strategy team. In response to the September public consultation, 73% of respondents expressed concern about the future of Barnet Market, 58% about the number of vacant shops in the High Street, 44% about the poor quality of many shop frontages and signs and 38% about traffic congestion in and around the town centre. And there was a clear majority in favour of calling the town Chipping Barnet.

The draft Town Centre Strategy is beginning to emerge but much work remains to be done. The draft contains commitments by Barnet to "secure the future of Barnet Market so it is able to effectively contribute to the town centre economy" and to "develop planning briefs for key development sites which are consistent with the vision and objectives set out in the strategy". It also contains commitments to enforce against unlawful and unsympathetic development in the two Conservation Areas; ensure that buildings and shop-fronts enhance the character and appearance of the area; explore whether joining up the conservation areas could assist in enhancing the character of the

town centre; and provide and promote updated shop-front guidance and advice to traders to help them understand the importance of shop fronts and signage in the town centre and the basic principles that should inform new designs and alterations.

A meeting with Transport for London has taken place to discuss improvements to the access to the tube station, possible provision of a Hopper bus and possible re-routing of the No.34 bus turning point. As expected, the main obstacle to any of this is money. To seek to involve all local retailers and businesses in the development of the Strategy, the Society has invited them to attend a Retail Forum to inform them of the work that is under way and seek their input. A full consultation with residents will take place next year when the final draft strategy has been completed.

Barnet is at last giving serious consideration to the proposal put forward by the Society over a year ago for changes to the Wood Street/High Street junction to improve pedestrian safety and the setting of the St John the Baptist Church. This will be paid for by a Section 106 commitment from the planning consent for Barnet College; however we understand that it won't be implemented for approximately one year, which is disgraceful, given that the College opened in September.

In parallel with this strategic thinking, the minutiae of planning control continues in an attempt to stem further damage. Barnet has refused consent for an unsightly new fascia sign for Boots Opticians at the corner with Union Street. Meantime the sign had been installed, so now bears a little "Temporary sign" sticker in the corner! Boots will presumably respect planning controls and, before long, replace the sign with something more appropriate to the conservation area. But such respect is not universally shared. In June, the "Less Tax to Pay" shop at 47 High Street applied retrospectively for the retention of the signs that it had installed without planning permission. Consent was refused. In July they applied for retrospective consent for the removal of the leaded-light windows and replacement with plate glass, again done without consent. Permission was again refused. But the signs and windows remain and are likely to do so for some time due to the vastly under-resourced planning enforcement team at Barnet. It is deeply disturbing when local businesses show such cavalier disregard both for the local heritage and for the law.

Barnet College is now complete and operational and twelve saplings have recently been planted in the forecourt. Although the college is still a long way from full strength, the effect on footfall is already apparent and it is hoped that

the students albeit perhaps not Chipping Barnet's 'big-spenders' will help to generate local business.

In the wider context, significant changes to the operation of local government may arise from the Government's proposed Localism Bill, which promises to devolve powers from the GLA to the Boroughs and, in ways not yet clear, from the local Councils to the community. Maybe the Barnet Society will become the local planning authority? Maybe not; don't hold your breath!

## **DEREK EPSTEIN**

### **SHOPPING IN OUR HIGH STREET**

Hello everyone. I thought it would be a nice idea to give some of the local shop owners a bit of space in the Newsletter over the next few issues so that they can tell you a little about working in Chipping Barnet.

#### **HOB Salon Barnet**

As I have my hair styled at HOB and I have been going there since they opened I thought that was a good place to start. Particularly as I know how keen and supportive Eric the owner is about everything local.

I met Eric and his manager Stefano in Café Compiano this morning. Eric Habert, born in France, recently married to Lynn, and stepfather to Kate who works in the salon with him, is the franchisee of HOB Barnet, the stylish hairdressing salon that opened not so long ago almost at the corner where the High Street meets St Albans Road. I asked Eric what it is like to work in Barnet.

It is the community spirit, the great relationship with other traders and the interesting and eclectic clients that frequent my shop that I love about working here in Chipping Barnet.. Sshh don't tell anyone but we have been known to style the hair of the odd celebrity but of course I would never name drop.

I will never forget the warm welcome we were given by other traders. I have the use of a hire van if I need one, a member of my staff was given guitar lessons and Tony & Guy greeted us with flowers which is pretty lovely don't you think as they are competitors of ours? Of course HOB reciprocates whenever we can and all local businesses are given a 15% discount. It's what we all do to help each other.

Business is pretty good but we never sit back on our laurels. I was out at 7am this morning with members of my staff at High Barnet Station. We

were distributing discount leaflets and available to chat as always, about someone's hair or even the weather.

Eric believes that Barnet is a dormitory town. Many of his clients live here in Barnet and travel outside of the area to work, shop and have a separate lifestyle away from home although they do come home to have their hair done.

A keen follower of the developing new Town Centre Strategy programme, Eric is keen to help it grow and is brimming with ideas. As Christmas is approaching Eric is planning more late night opening and he would like The Spires to follow suit on this. He will also be selling gift packs, gift vouchers, hair dressing tools, hair experiences and more.

Eric can also see that many Barnet residents are very open to changing their hairstyles. In fact even the colour market is growing and HOB Barnet now has three colourists as well as nine stylists, six juniors, one nail technician and two receptionists, and boy is it fun working with so many creative people. There are romances and dramas; it sounds as if there is never a dull moment. It sounds like a fun salon to work in and Eric is a great local employer so if any of you know of a great local hairstylist, then he will be happy to employ them too. Eric is always on the lookout for local talent!

HOB Barnet is open until 8pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. He is offering any reader 25% discount on their first visit so just mention this article to claim it. A wash, cut and blow dry starts at £47 so with your discount it will be £35.25 which in this day and age is pretty good don't you think?

I interviewed Eric at Café Compiano so thought it only fair to chat to Raffaele who owns the Café so that he too could tell us about his business - something for another Newsletter.

## **GAIL LASER**

### **BARNET MARKET**

By the time you read this in late November, events may have overtaken us but for now, the situation is as follows.

The Barnet Society, after painstaking analysis of the application, the site's recent planning history and current planning legislation and in consultation with Friends of Barnet Market (FOBM) and other groups has decided to oppose the granting of an extension of planning permission. This has come about principally because we do not believe that renewal of the previous consent (which has now expired) will be in the best interests of the Market. We want to see the Market grow and thrive. For this to happen we believe it

needs to be highly visible and connected to the High Street and the Spires Shopping Centre. The previous consent would not do this.

In both previous planning applications, the owners have made a case for the need for redevelopment on the basis that, without it, the Market will cease to exist. In spite of having gained *two* planning consents to redevelop (one in 2002 and another in 2005), no such development has taken place. Instead, the Market was relocated to Stapylton Road with the loss of approximately half the stalls and the buildings on the old site were demolished. That was nearly three years ago. Last year the remaining stalls were allowed to move back and you are all aware of the shocking state of the site. In spite of these obstacles, the Market still exists and customers still buy from it twice a week, although the numbers have decreased. It appears therefore that the argument for redevelopment has been overturned. However, we do not think the status quo can continue indefinitely and there are real concerns that the Market will fail as a result of granting the previous planning consent.

The legislation that was brought in to assist developers unable to implement their planning consents due to the economic downturn generally assumes that applications for extension will be granted. However it does say that if there have been significant changes to planning policy in the meantime, then the application can be reconsidered. There have been changes at all levels of planning policy and the site now falls within a Conservation Area.

To summarise, we are objecting to the application in three ways:

1 There have been significant changes in planning policy since the last application was approved and it does not comply with several of these, particularly in the provision of affordable housing and sustainable design and in relation to the Monken Hadley Conservation Area.

2 The design is not suited to the needs of the Market in a number of ways and does not fit the latest strategic thinking, such as connecting it to rest of the town centre

3 The previous justification for redevelopment no longer appears to hold true.

If the application for extension is turned down, the Market will continue on its present site for the time being. The site cannot be used for any other purpose without further planning consent.

There has been a large number of objections to the application and it is likely to go to Committee in December. We will report what happens in the next Newsletter.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2010 – 2011**

**WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2010 – 2.30 p.m.**  
**Church House, Wood Street.**

**NICK JONES – “Is Coalition Government the End of Spin?”**

Nick Jones, retired BBC Political Correspondent, is one of Westminster’s seasoned observers. He covered many general elections and we are guaranteed an illuminating and entertaining talk.

**MONDAY 6<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2010 – 2.30 p.m.**  
**Church House, Wood Street.**

**TERENCE ATKINS presents CALENDAR 2011**

Terence has produced calendars from old Barnet photos for many years now, raising funds for local charities. He will talk about his 2011 calendar and feature some of the evocative photos therein. Copies will be available.

**TUESDAY 14th DECEMBER 2010 - 10.00a.m**  
**Pre-Christmas walk led by Diane Nightingale**

A breath of fresh air before all the festivities get fully under way. From the Old Red Lion along the Dollis Valley (some mud), then up to Totteridge Lane, descend to the Dollis Brook again and return to Old Red Lion for lunch.  
**Meet in the pub Car Park at 10.00 a.m. If you need or can offer a lift, ring Diane on 8440 0203.**

**SUNDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> JANUARY 2011**

**The Phoenix Trip - A chance to see the newly restored Phoenix Cinema.**

The Phoenix is possibly the oldest cinema in Britain with a continuous history; the first films were shown here in 1910. It has survived several name changes and the threat of demolition in the 1980s. It has been run by a charitable trust since 1985 and aims at playing a wide range of films from UK and the rest of the world (largely avoiding Hollywood blockbusters!).

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## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

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**The trip:** The Phoenix Cinema is approx 100 yards up East Finchley High Road from the underground station and on the other side. **Meet** at the box office (for 12 midday or 12.30 pm) for a “behind the scenes” tour of 30 – 40 minutes. Then time for lunch (there is now a restaurant at the Cinema) and at 2 pm there will be a free film show. (Staying for the film is optional!) Probably old newsreel material of the Far East followed by an old feature film.

**Places for the tour are limited. To book your place on the midday or 12.30 tour, please contact Dennis Bird on 020 8449 0705. If demand exceeds places, we will arrange another visit.**

### **SATURDAY 5<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2011**

**Railway Walk - Alexandra Palace Station to Finsbury Park, morning walk. Optional add-on: Finsbury Park to Olympic Park, afternoon walk.**

**Meet at Alexandra Palace Station at 10 a.m.**

(Train from New Barnet or 184 bus will get you there!)

A walk in two stages: c. 5 miles to Finsbury Park through ancient woods, the old railway track and panoramic views of London. Nearly all off road and very suitable for families (all children accompanied by an adult please). We will finish at the park café by the children’s playground where the food is good! after lunch we will walk a further c. 6 miles or so through Stoke Newington down the River Lee to see the almost finished Olympic Site.

Any queries please ring Dennis Bird on 020 8449 0705.

**Advance notice: WEDNESDAY 6<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2011 - Meeting with Marilyn Hawkins, Principal of Barnet College. Details in our next newsletter.**

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