

The latest Ark Academy design. Visualisation by architects, Pick Everard

# Barnet Society

70 YEARS OF CAMPAIGNING FOR A BETTER BARNET

WINTER  
2017

## Tories change their mind and vote for school no-one seems to want

**The six Tory councillors on Barnet's planning committee have voted in favour of building a secondary school at the old Barnet Football Club ground, writes Nick Jones.**

This comes nine months after plans for a 1,700-pupil school were unanimously thrown out by both Tory and Labour councillors.

But now the Conservatives have backed a watered down version, in which pupil numbers would be cut to 1,200-place. However, Labour opposed this, saying there was no demonstrable need for a new school on the site, and also raised concerns about traffic congestion and building on green belt land. But they were outvoted by the Conservative majority on the committee, 6-5.

Labour councillor Paul Edwards claims that hundreds of Underhill and High Barnet residents have grave concerns about the environmental impact of a super-sized school, and apparent breach of the green belt.

He said: "Incredibly, all six Conservative councillors on the committee voted in favour. This decision sets an extremely worrying precedent for the rest of Barnet's green belt under the Tory administration."

However, one of the Conservatives who voted for the plan, High Barnet councillor Wendy Prentice defended her decision.

She said: "I voted for the school because it was a legitimate replacement for a derelict football ground, the application was much



Tory Councillor Wendy Prentice and her Labour counterpart for Underhill, Paul Edwards

smaller than the original plan and represents a good result for the area."

The first application was submitted last September after the site was purchased for £14.5 million by the government's Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Ark Academy chain was chosen to run the new school, and originally the agency proposed a 1,690 place all-age school, but after that was rejected in January, a fresh proposal was submitted for a slightly slimmed-down super school with 1,200 places, including 300 at sixth form.

Councillor Edwards said the new academy failed the test for justifying a development in the green belt because the projections of the Greater London Authority suggested there would be only a temporary increase in the number of new entrants requiring schooling – this would peak in around 2020 and then decline to 2017 levels. Labour councillors had complained that they were *(continued, Page 2)*

**'(The school) is a legitimate replacement for a derelict football ground... and represents a good result for the area'**

**- CLLR WENDY PRENTICE, CONSERVATIVE**

**'This sets an extremely worrying precedent for the rest of Barnet's green belt land under the Tory administration'** - CLLR PAUL EDWARDS, LABOUR

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## QE Girls heading back to its glory days

**Record GCSE and A-level results for the second consecutive year have now been topped by the news that Queen Elizabeth Girls' School, Barnet, has been ranked in the top 2 per cent of all secondary schools by the Department of Education, reports Nick Jones**

given only eight days' notice of the meeting but were unable to get the application deferred. Their protests have been supported by Andrew Dismore, London Assembly member for Barnet and Camden, who attended the planning committee meeting and who has written to Barnet Council challenging the legality of the decision.

He believes that the Council's advice was unlawful because the committee was told that if the application for a government-funded new school was rejected then the cost of a future school elsewhere in the borough would fall on the council.

"The funding of a new school is not a planning consideration in law, but clearly was a factor in the mind of the chair, and also by extension those the chair sought to influence, namely the Conservative councillors on the committee.

"Moreover, no officer stepped in to correct the chair and to make the point that this was an irrelevant factor.

"In approving the application, the committee took into account irrelevant matters, which I argue makes the decision unlawful, and would make this application susceptible for judicial review."

Mr Dismore has asked the council's chief executive to refer the decision back to another "differently constituted committee" for a lawful decision to be taken.

Based on the latest performance tables, QE Girls is now placed 47th among all secondary schools, and is the top performing non-selective all-girls comprehensive.

Head teacher, Mrs Violet Walker – herself a former QE Girls pupil and teacher – is confident that the school is heading back to its former glory days.

In March 2014, its teaching standards were questioned by Ofsted and the staff were told that their performance required improvement. Since Mrs Walker took over as head teacher at the start of the 2015-16 academic year, there has been a dramatic turnaround.

On the back of its latest results, QE Girls is in the top 1.3 per cent of schools where pupils are performing better than expected at primary level, and in the top ten per cent of sixth forms.

Mrs Walker hopes that GCSE and A-level results in this academic year will set another record and she is confident the school is taking the steps to maintain its turnaround.

"I really believe QE Girls' is now in a position where it can return to its glory days when it was the local go-to-school for girls.

"My parents moved to Barnet in the 1960s so that we would be in QE Girls' catchment area, and in the hope that I could go there if I passed the 11-plus exam.

"Demand for places shows we are on the right track, and I am so pleased that the girls are now enormously proud of wearing the QE Girls' uniform."

Over 1,000 prospective parents attended the open day in September and there is now a waiting list for all ages. The distance for the catchment area had to be reduced and is currently homes within three miles of the school. Each year 180 girls are admitted at age 11, and the school is oversubscribed by three to one.

Mrs Walker believes that the school's success in GCSE and A-level is in large part due to the attention paid to tracking pupil performance and then using that information to have a timely impact on a student's work and choices.

"Our declining A-level results prior to 2014 were probably influenced by putting pupils on the wrong courses and not following through with their work. Now we match the information with the teaching and encourage a strong morale purpose."

At the end of the 2016-17 academic year, 79 girls secured qualification suitable for university entry; 65 received a university offer; and 26 per cent of the students went to Russell group universities.

Mrs Walker's return to QE Girls, where she was a pupil in the 1970s and then returned in the early 2000s as part of her training as a maths teacher, has won praise from the 2017 Good Schools Guide, which says the school is a relaxed, safe and friendly place, with "a firm hand on the tiller and rocketing results".

On the day the Department of Education announced QE Girls' new place in the schools' rankings, she was joined for a photograph by three well-placed students.

Nanaekua Minta (12) said her first year at the school had been an amazing experience and she had made a lot of progress.

Next year's GCSE exams are the focus for Afsham Farred-Birtill (15), who is studying triple science and is one of QE Girls' team for the Young Scientist of the Year contest.

Anna Taylor is in her first year of the sixth form studying English Literature, Geography and History at A-level. At GCSE she secured ten passes a A\* and one at A.

She was full of praise for the school's English department and its out-reach. Pupils had been reading their own stories to pupils at St Catherine's primary school.

Anna was looking forward to the next highlight: a trip to Stonehenge.



Violet Walker, head teacher of QE Girls, with students and teachers on the day it was ranked in the top 2 per cent of all secondary schools. From left to right, Nanaekua Minta, Afsham Fareed-Birtill, Mrs Walker, Anna Taylor, Lindsey Southwell and Deepika Makkar



## Barnet Police Station

POLICE

POLICE

## POLICE: DO NOT ENTER



## It's an open and shut case

London mayor Sadiq Khan has confirmed that High Barnet's police station will close to the public by the end of the year along with 36 other stations as the Metropolitan Police withdraws a front counter service, writes Nick Jones

Only one police station will remain open to the public in each London Borough, and in Barnet's case a 24-hour, seven-day a week counter service will continue to be available at Colindale police station in Graham Park Way.

But because the Colindale station is over an hour away from High Barnet by public transport, the Metropolitan Police say provision will be made for a "well-advertised community session" twice a week where High Barnet residents will be able to meet face-to-face with a dedicated ward police officer or a police community support officer.

In announcing the withdrawal of the counter service at High Barnet – which currently is only available from 12pm to 8pm Monday to Friday – the Metropolitan Police say the number of crimes being reported in person at police stations has fallen dramatically in recent years.

High Barnet had one of the lowest rates across London – in May 2017 less than one crime (0.8) was reported each day compared with rates of six or seven crimes a day being reported at Enfield Edmonton, Redbridge and Lambeth.

Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, confirmed that the 37 front desk closures would go ahead following a consultation period in which over 4,000 Londoners submitted their views.

He blamed the withdrawal of half of London's front counters on government cuts to police funding and said the £8 million a year saving would help meet the cost of 140 police constables whose continued employment might otherwise have been at risk.

The cuts meant that police numbers are falling across London and "drastic measures" had to be taken to prioritise public safety and keep as many police officers on the beat as possible.

By the end of the year, when the new arrangements should be in place, there will be two dedicated ward police officers and one police community support officer for High Barnet.

"By next summer these officers will have access to the most up-to-date mobile technology, allowing them to access and input information while on the beat that previously they could only do at a desk or in a police station," the mayor said

Because Colindale is over an hour away by public transport, there will be two – instead of one – community sessions every week where High Barnet residents can meet officers face to face more often.

Although no precise details have been given, the Metropolitan Police say these sessions will be "well-advertised"

and in "well-used, high footfall locations, such as leisure centres and local authority buildings".

"The combination of one 24/7 front counter in every borough, more dedicated ward officers in every neighbourhood, located closer to communities, new community sessions in every ward, every week – and two sessions each week for communities an hour away from their nearest police station – and a significantly improved online service will mean that Londoners will be able to contact the police in the way that suits them."

A further £165 million might be raised by selling redundant and underused police buildings and the money would be reinvested to ensure frontline police were properly equipped.

High Barnet police station itself - in the High Street - is one of the buildings earmarked for closure, but no decision has been made until the Metropolitan Police have decided where to house the police team of safer neighbourhood officers for the eastern half of the borough.

A new base must be within the High Barnet ward or no more than a 15-minute walk from its boundary.



## PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Robin Bishop writes

### House prices may be stagnating in Barnet, but that's not yet holding back house-builders.

Shanly Homes are redesigning the Brake Shear House (186 High Street) redevelopment and will apply for planning permission before Christmas. They have reassured the Barnet Society that they will stick to the mix of affordable workspace and residential use that we supported before, and preserve views across the site. For more detail, see Nick Jones's separate article. In Salisbury Road, SAS Investments are proposing 16 new flats above community facilities to replace the Fern Room. And for the Marie Foster Home site, Wood Street, a proposal for 81 homes plus 105 parking spaces has leaked out.

If designed well, none of these would cause us concern. But two others have: one for 78 flats in an overbearing block replacing Meadow Works, Great North Road; the other major extensions to 1 Sunset View, a fine Arts & Crafts house in the Monken Hadley Conservation Area. We

strongly objected to both, and I'm glad to report that both have been withdrawn.

Given the relentless pressure to build everywhere in Chipping Barnet – including on the Green Belt – strong local and London plans are our main defence against bad buildings in the wrong places. The Society is determined to have its say on these plans. So we've commented on the Mayor of London's draft Environment Strategy, and will do so on his Housing Plan. We've also commented on the London Assembly's investigation into Regeneration of London's Town Centres. And we are involved in Barnet's current review of its Local Plan.

Safeguarding our buildings of architectural and historic interest is also crucial. The Council has a list, but it's out of date and misses many important buildings. Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School, for example, was a local pioneer of education for girls and its Edwardian buildings are of high architectural quality

– but it isn't currently listed. Frances Wilson, John Gardiner, other members and I have participated in the Council's review of the Local List, and made several suggestions for additions.

Safeguarding and planting trees is another key aspect of our work. Nick writes elsewhere of the battle to protect the great Oak by St Mark's, Barnet Vale, from Virgin broadband. We also hope there will be space for trees in the Council's TfL-funded High Street pedestrian improvement scheme. This has been redesigned since objections last spring, but we have yet to see it. We've been working with Barnet Residents Association to promote the case for improvements more effectively, and our ideas will be displayed on the Town Team stall at Barnet Fayre on Sunday 3 December. Come and talk to us about them!



#### APPROVED

**Ark Pioneer Academy, former Barnet FC ground** – Unnecessary new competition for The Totteridge Academy. An appeal against it has been made to the Mayor of London. **Moxon & Tapster Street** – Plans have been approved for the carwash and Royal British Legion sites – but oddly, a fourth application has been submitted for more flats on the latter.

**Ravenscroft Cottages, Potters Lane** – We supported some modifications to the designs approved last year.

#### REFUSED

**64-66 High Street** – Four flats above Tesco. **189-91 High Street** – Unauthorised plastic windows in the Conservation Area. **33 Lyonsdown Road** – 22 flats replacing an attractive Victorian villa.

#### AWAITING A DECISION

**Old Fold Manor Golf Club** – We have been consulted on the landscape details, which are much improved following David Lee's input. The developer has adopted David's recommendation to phase the felling of Poplars along St Albans Road, and to plant more trees – in fact, some 75% more!

#### ENFORCEMENT ONGOING

**85 High Street (former Lloyds Bank)** – The alterations to this attractive façade have been marred by shoddy craftsmanship.

#### AN APPLICATION WE OPPOSED

**Chipping Barnet Library** – This has reopened. The former community room is being reconfigured as entrepreneurial workspace, with desks to rent at low cost

#### CASES ELSEWHERE

**Barnet House** – We objected to a new application for 229 buy-to-rent units in an enlarged and taller slab, and on the car park behind, on grounds of overdevelopment and visual pollution. **North London Business Park** – The planning application for five 8-storey residential towers has been refused by the Council. **National Institute of Medical Research, Mill Hill** – The Mayor of London has insisted on double the quantity of affordable housing. **Hasmonean School, Copthall** – Another school in the Green Belt, rejected by the Mayor of London but maybe yet approved by the Secretary of State.

**Darlands Nature Reserve, Whetstone** – A trust is being formed to manage this attractive lake and woodland. Contact [info@totteridgeresidents.org](mailto:info@totteridgeresidents.org) to support it. **Pinkham Way (by the North Circular)** – In May an Inspector reported that this much-loved nature conservation site on former waste land should not be developed as an employment site. Sadly, Haringey has ignored that ruling in its new Local Plan.

#### STOPPING THE USE OF GLYPHOSATE IN THE BATTLE AGAINST WEEDS

We are concerned by council use of Glyphosate, a herbicide, to control weeds on roads, pavements and around trees despite fears from the World Health Organisation that it might be carcinogenic.

Our concerns about this to the Council's draft Tree Policy and Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document were acknowledged and the SPD has since been amended, but not the Tree Policy.

It is important to continue applying pressure, so please sign a petition against the use of Glyphosate on the Council website by Phil Fletcher of Friends of the Earth, and Green Party candidate for Chipping Barnet in the last election.

**Phil writes:** *WHO considers it highly probable that Glyphosate is carcinogenic. An endocrinal disruptor affecting hormones, it also kills microbes, thus being detrimental to intestinal flora. As it is chemically stable, Glyphosate accumulates the higher up the food chain it goes. Soluble in water, it damages all forms of aquatic life and soil organisms, including earthworms.*

To sign Phil's petition, go to: <http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/mgEPetitionDisplay.aspx?id=50000033>





# Make sure the way ahead is permanent

Make sure that your favourite historic path in Barnet is on the definitive map by 2026 – or else you might lose it, warns *Frances Wilson*

1 January 2026 is the cut-off date for adding historic paths to what is known as the definitive map: the official record of the public's rights of way in an area. When a path is on this map, it not only means we have a right to walk on it, but it is much easier to protect and maintain. However, any path which came into existence before 1949 and that has not been requested to be on the map by 2026 will be lost - forever!

The London Borough of Barnet has a Definitive Map of Rights of Way. It is available to view at their offices. However, it does not include all the urban footpaths in Barnet. Right of Way status gives paths greater protection so that they cannot lightly be "stopped up", or blocked, for developments or security reasons.

Many historic urban routes such as Lovers Walk in Finchley or the Walks in East Finchley are not recorded as Rights of Way. The presence of "Footpath" signposts on the ground does not necessarily mean the route is recorded by Barnet as a Right of Way.

Those routes that are recorded on the Definitive Map are shown on the OS 1:25,000 map marked with green dashes, so this is an easy way to see which ones are - and not - recorded. Don't be deceived by some of the main recreational footpaths that exist locally. A large part of the Dollis Valley Green Walk is not a public right of way; nor is the path from Hadley Green to Cockfosters.

Routes can be added to the Definitive Map either using historical evidence or by providing witnesses who have used the route for 20 years. There is now a deadline of 31st December 2025 for claims using historical evidence, so it makes sense to get going on this while it can still be easily done.

The Barnet Society published 'Rambles Round Barnet 1 & 2 in the footsteps of EH Lucas' and many of these footpaths will not be protected.

The Barnet Society, working with the local Ramblers Association group, is looking to identify footpaths that may need to be recorded to protect their status.

This is where we need your help. If you use a footpath locally and are not sure if it's protected as a public right of way, drop an email to [roger.chapman99@btinternet.com](mailto:roger.chapman99@btinternet.com) telling us where it starts and where it finishes, so that we can check it out. Act now or we could lose these footpaths forever.

*The way ahead: keen walker Roger Chapman wants you to email him at [roger.chapman99@btinternet.com](mailto:roger.chapman99@btinternet.com) if you use a footpath locally and are not sure if it's protected as a public right of way*



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*Tree campaigner Simon Cohen (left) and fellow activists raise a glass in celebration of the 250-year-old oak tree at the junction of The Meadway and Potters Road*

## Support for oak tree grows

Local residents raised a glass to celebrate – and wish good health – to the 250-year-old oak tree at the junction of The Meadway and Potters Road in support of the Woodland Trust's "We Love Street Trees" campaign.

They were determined to highlight the importance of what they believe is one of the many heritage trees in and around High Barnet that need protection.

The celebration was organised by Simon Cohen, who led the protest over the damage done to the tree's root structure during the installation of junction boxes connected with the expansion of Virgin Media's broadband network.

In a statement issued by Barnet Council's highways department, the highways permit manager, Alexander Ryan, says that the disturbance to the roots during the excavation and installation did not cause "significant damage" to the tree and the council rejected the residents' demand that the junction boxes should be moved.

Mr Cohen told the Barnet Society that the council's response was disappointing. "The fact that the roots were not significantly damaged was down to luck and not judgment on the part of Barnet Council, which owns the tree and the land on which it stands.

"The highways department's response confirms our view that there was – and is – no procedure when permits are issued for checking potential damage on environmental grounds and this was a heritage oak that clearly needed protection.

"What this incident has revealed is that Barnet Council is leaving it entirely to contractors to police themselves and abide by the rules designed to prevent excavation under a tree's canopy so as not to disturb the root structure.

"The lack of procedures and controls underlines the need for our campaign to save and protect street trees of which Barnet has so many fine examples," said Mr Cohen.

In his statement explaining why the council has turned down the residents' request for the junction boxes to be moved to a less prominent position, Mr Ryan said they do not affect visibility for road users or access for pedestrians.

All contractors had a responsibility to follow the guidelines and reminders were issued when work was to be carried out in the vicinity of trees.

But Mr Ryan acknowledges that although the council issued reminders, it was "not feasible to consult and monitor every excavation considering that there are thousands of works undertaken each year and thousands of trees within the borough.

Mr Cohen says the row over the mighty oak is proof if proof were needed that residents should support the Woodland Trust in its "We Love Street Trees" campaign.





An earlier plan for the site. Shanly Homes will now look to put its stamp on the redevelopment of the workshops, right

## Brake Shear House back on the block

**Shanly Homes, which purchased the semi-derelict workshops off the High Street earlier this year, has appointed new architects to review the plans for a redevelopment of the site, writes Nick Jones**

Planning permission was granted to the previous owners, Wrenbridge, to build 32 flats, eight semi-detached houses and workspace for 40 or more employees.

At a meeting with Robin Bishop, chair of the Barnet Society, the head of planning for Shanly Homes, Steve Mellor, said they were looking at a number of options for revising the planning permission granted last year.

“We are residential and commercial developers and after reviewing the plans that were approved, we can give an assurance that we intend to maintain a mix of new homes and commercial use offering employment opportunities.

“We also aim to keep to other objectives of the original

plan. We intend to maintain the concept of views through the redevelopment and the need for any new development to respect views of Barnet, its church and historic buildings from King George’s Field and Hadley Green,” said Mr Mellor.

Shanly Homes hope to be in a position to start work at some point from the latter half of 2018 and in the meantime short term contracts would continue to be available to temporary occupants of some of the existing workshops.

Mr Bishop told Mr Mellor that the Society hoped any revised plans keeps to the original proposal for a mixed development.

The Society had worked closely with Wrenbridge in preparing its plan to redevelop the site and hoped to be equally supportive of Shanly Homes if the company continued to demonstrate a commitment to design quality in terms of materials and impact on the townscape.

“Wrenbridge accepted our argument for some flexible and affordable workspace to be included in any Brake Shear House redevelopment. We need to do more to encourage small businesses in Barnet and we consider this a priority for any future scheme.”

Mr Bishop also urged the company to take on board the impact of the plans by Barnet Town Team to encourage Barnet Council to improve Barnet High Street with pavement build-outs and tree planting.

“We do hope Shanly Homes will add impetus to the efforts to extend tree planting from Barnet Hill through to Hadley Green.”

*Steve Mellor (left), head of planning for Shanly Homes, briefs Robin Bishop, chair of the Barnet Society, on the company’s plans for the Brake Shear House site off Barnet High Street after purchasing it*





## At long last, eyesore site is for sale

**A derelict former nurses' home that has been an eyesore for years will finally be demolished under plans to build flats and townhouses on the Marie Foster Care Home site in Wood Street, Barnet, writes Nick Jones**

NHS Property Services has put the two-and-a-half-acre site up for sale. Potential purchasers are being supplied with a design for redeveloping the area to provide a total of 81 new homes.

The site is in the middle of the Wood Street conservation area with historic almshouses opposite and other nearby listed buildings, which together form a highly desirable location for new housing.

While there is likely to be universal acclaim that a decision has finally been made to demolish what was once the nurses' home for the former Barnet Maternity Hospital, there might well be some opposition to the scale of the housing development proposed for the site.

A pre-planning application report being made available by the agents, Montagu Evans, proposes the construction of three blocks of flats together with seven townhouses around a central public

amenity space. There would be access from Wood Street, as at present, and from off Cattley Close, leading to the new buildings at the rear of the site.

Fronting Wood Street would be a four-storey block comprising 18 flats, a second four-storey block would have 32 flats, and the third three-storey block, at the rear of the site, 24 flats.

The seven townhouses would each have four bedrooms. There would be 105 car parking spaces, ten of which would be for disabled drivers.

NHS Property Services has been criticised by the Barnet Society among others for what has been years of indecision over the future of the boarded-up nurses' home and the Marie Foster Care home buildings.

A decision on the future of the site has been "imminent" for the last five years, but the first local organisations knew that its fate

had been agreed was when a "For Sale" sign was put up outside.

Although it seemed likely at the end of last year that the site was to be sold off by the NHS, the Chipping Barnet MP, Theresa Villiers, was then informed that its possible use for the health service was being reconsidered.

She told the Barnet Society in February that the continuing dereliction and indecision was an outrage.

"It is just criminal that it has been left as it is for so long. I have raised this at the Cabinet table, I have raised this in debate at Westminster, and I raise it every three months with the NHS."

The very last she heard at the start of the year was that the NHS had almost made a decision that it was not needed for health purposes – and that that "decision" had now been put into effect with the sale of the site.



## FEARS FOR FUTURE OF OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE



Christine Pugh (left) and Jean Broadhurst get their first chance to see the block of flats that is planned to take the place of the Fern Room in Salisbury Road



Barnet Old People's Welfare committee fears that the demolition of the Fern Room, its day centre in Salisbury Road, to make way for ten flats might force the closure of a group that has been providing activities for elderly residents for the last 75 years.

SAS Investments, which purchased the Fern Room in May this year, is promising that its new development will include new community space, but the welfare committee doubts whether it will be able to afford the rent of the new and enlarged facilities.

Plans for a three-storey block of flats were unveiled for local residents. "We are anxious to work with local groups, and especially the Old People's Welfare Committee, to provide a new and much larger community space," said Tim Jackson, director of SAS Investments.

An application for planning permission is likely to be made before the end of the year. The ground floor would include 1,600 square feet of community space (up from 1,200 square feet at present); an underfloor car park with spaces for ten cars; and above the ground floor would be two storeys of flats.

Christine Pugh, chair of the welfare committee, fears that the much larger-community space would command rents far higher than their existing much smaller one-storey building.

Her concern was shared by Jean Broadhurst, the committee secretary, who feared the demolition might force the closure of their day centre. "I am heartbroken to think the Fern Room is going to be demolished. We have had great difficulty in recent years getting volunteers and it has not been helped because the ownership of the Fern Room has changed so frequently.

As present the committee pays a rent of £875 a quarter.

## It's standing room only as Cardinal reopens St Greg's

*Nick Jones writes:* Cardinal Vincent Nichols, the Archbishop of Westminster, has re-opened High Barnet's Roman Catholic church after the completion of a 100-seat extension and extensive refurbishment.

Union Street was packed with worshippers and well-wishers as the Cardinal's procession left the garden at the rear of the United Reform Church and crossed the road to new steps to the enlarged building.

Above a new front door is a new window designed and engraved by Sally Scott depicting the Risen Christ, with the church's patrons Mary Immaculate and Pope St Gregory the Great.

On his arrival Cardinal Nichols began the proceedings by telling the congregation of his joy at being present for a special moment for the Barnet parish.

After crossing Union Street, he stood at the steps and was welcomed by John Ainslie, who led the rebuilding team, and who described their 11-year journey to enlarge the church and make it "more expressive of the sacred histories celebrated in it".

The re-opening was a proud moment for those who had worked on the project, the priests, parishioners, architects and contractors, and together they had created "something beautiful" that included not only the new engraved window, but also a new altar and sanctuary.

The Cardinal then invited parish priest, Father John McKenna, to open the door so that they could all begin the service to mark the re-opening of the church and the consecration of the altar.

The new church was packed for the service, with many parishioners standing in the aisles and the congregation spilling out onto the steps.

Known to its parishioners as St Greg's, the church was rebuilt in the mid-1970s after being almost destroyed in a fire in 1973, and higher attendance at mass and other services necessitated the need for enlargement.

Seating capacity has been increased from 240 to 340 and some of the extra space has been achieved by the construction of a two-storey extension at the front.



*(Top) Cardinal Vincent Nichols celebrates Mass at the reopening of St Greg's in Union Street (Above) Reverend Andy Rimmer (far left) being congratulated on his institution (from left to right), the Bishop of Edmonton, the Reverend Bob Wickham, the Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Brian Sallinger, and Martin Russell, Deputy Lieutenant for Greater London.*

## New Vicar for Christ Church

A service to institute and induct its new vicar, the Reverend Andy Rimmer, was described as a moment to celebrate the commitment shown by Christ Church, in St Albans Road, to reach out to the High Barnet community.

The Bishop of Edmonton, the Reverend Bob Wickham, told a packed congregation that the appointment of a new vicar indicated that Christ Church was going from strength to strength.

"Christ Church has been a real beacon of hope for High Barnet in the work it does assisting the community, and the growing number of elderly residents."

He praised members of the church for their effort and dedication in opening its Open Door community centre in what was formerly Christ Church School.

Other similarly praiseworthy initiatives were the Holidays at Home week held at the church each August for 40 or more elderly and housebound residents, and Christ Church's role in sustaining the Hope Corner community centre as part of Barnet's Churches Together initiative.

The Bishop said the beginning of a new ministry was also a moment of hope for any church and he was sure that under the Reverend Rimmer's leadership Christ Church would go from strength to strength.

As he shook hands with the congregations after his institution and induction, the Reverend Rimmer said that his first priority was to listen to the community.



# Barnet Market trading places

Barnet market stall holders are delighted by the news that the managing agents for the Spires shopping centre are planning to move the twice-weekly stalls market to the paved area between Waitrose and the bandstand.

Traders believe that switching the market from its current site at the car park in St Albans Road to the Spires' Stapylton Road entrance will lead to increased visibility and footfall from shoppers.

Friends of Barnet Market support the move so long as certain conditions are met, and hope greater prominence for the market will help reverse the decline of recent years.

Bob Burstow, secretary of the Barnet Town Team, expects the transfer from the car park to be have been completed in time for the start of the Barnet teenage market on Easter Saturday next year.

"If the bandstand area becomes the designated area for the stalls market, and it gets well established, it will be a big boost for the teenage market, which will take over on Saturday afternoons once a month from next Easter."

Discussions have been taking place between Hunter Asset Management and Barnet Council, and two conditions have been suggested by Friends of Barnet Market

- The new site should have the same planning protection as the original St Albans Road site and the new market area should be restricted to market and entertainment use.
- There should be a reasonable level of rents for the existing market traders, plus provision of electric power and other facilities.

"This is wonderful news," said Tyler Bone, who runs the family's fruit and vegetable stall. "We have been asking for months for the market to be moved to the bandstand. A permanent site like that, in a high visibility position right outside the Spires, could really extend the life of the market."

Equally supportive is Lenny's meat stall which wished the move had taken place a couple of years ago. The meat stall opened when the market was temporarily beside the bandstand while the original market site was being converted into a car park.

Adrian Wright, a Lowestoft fishmonger, who drives his van to Barnet every Saturday, thought the switch in sites could not come soon enough.

"Business has gone quiet in recent months, and it started going down after one of the three fruit and vegetable stalls closed down. Let's hope the Spires and the Council get a move on and get us by the bandstand as quickly as possible."

Preparations for the teenage market are proceeding apace and Mr Burstow has been astonished by the interest shown by Barnet and Southgate College and the Universities of Middlesex and Hertfordshire.

"They are all really keen for their students to get involved and are promising to take stalls. Barnet College hopes its students will help with the management of the market.

"We have also had a promise by Alex Pascal and his rock school and recording studio to assist with running the sound stage with local groups and performers."



(Top left) Fishmonger Adrian Wright drives his van from Lowestoft to Barnet every Saturday.  
(Centre) Tyler Bone is a regular fixture at the market with his fruit and veg stall.  
(Above) Giovanni and his pizza van are already at the bandstand site  
(Left) The bandstand site, outside Waitrose



## Work starts on Noah's Ark hospice



(Left) Samantha Cameron is a strong supporter of the Noah's Ark project and attended the ground-breaking at the Ark's Barnet site. (Below) An artist's impression of how the Noah's Ark site will look when finished



To coincide with the start of building work on its site at the environment centre off Byng Road, Barnet, an appeal has been launched for the final £2 million needed to complete construction and fit out the new Noah's Ark Children's Hospice.

When a redesign of the £6.2 million project was approved last year, Noah's Ark said the aim was to have north London's first purpose-built children's hospice ready for opening by March 2019.

At any one time, within Noah's Ark's catchment area of central and north London and Hertsmere, there are around 1,200 babies, children and young people with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions.

Among those attending the ground-breaking ceremony to mark the start of construction work was Samantha Cameron, wife of the former Prime Minister David Cameron.

She described how she and her husband were devastated when they lost their son Ivan and she hoped that many children and their families would benefit from the care that would be available once Noah's Ark opens its doors.

There will be four wings to the new hospice, forming an X-shaped building.

Leading off from the main reception area will be a wing with six children's bedrooms; a wing with three family rooms for visitors, and nursery facilities; a wing with therapy play areas with soft and wet games, and a children's den; and a wing providing offices for the charity.

The central space will be the reporting point for key workers who help children out

in the community, and the architects said the aim of the redesign was to take as much benefit as possible from the outlook provided by the seven-acre nature reserve maintained by the Barnet Environment Centre.

Noah's Ark and the environment centre share the use of the nature reserve and the two organisations hope there will be plenty of crossover in the work they do, with children from the hospice enjoying the nature reserve as much as the many parties of school children from across the Borough of Barnet.

In a statement on its website, Noah's Ark says that the new hospice will complement the charity's existing hospice-at-home services, which currently supports 200

children, by providing "a 24-hour end-of-life, post-death and bereavement care".

To help raise the final £2 million, the charity has launched a Build The Ark campaign asking members of the public to give an hour's salary to build the hospice.

Ru Watkins, Noah's Ark chief executive, said that the opening of the hospice would enable the charity to offer more care for the children and families who most need it.

"It will be a state-of-the-art hospice, serving our families first, but also the wider community. It will be a unique community hub open to other groups to enjoy the facilities and support the development of the hospice."

Palliative care facilities that will be available locally for the first time will include sensory, music and wet play rooms; sensory gardens; a drop-in facility for families; 24-hour end-of-life care, including specialised care for new born babies; and post-death care.

Among the recent donations highlighted by Noah's Ark in recent months is a £95,000 donation raised by staff through collection boxes and percentages on special meal deals at 144 Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets across London.

**'It will be a unique community hub open to other groups to enjoy the facilities and support the development of the hospice'**

Ru Watkins,  
Noah's Ark Chief Executive

**For details of the appeal see:  
[www.BuildingTheArk.org.uk](http://www.BuildingTheArk.org.uk)**



(Right) Michael Portillo with Francesca Caine, chair of the Hadley Wood Rail User Group

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## Portillo brightens up big day for 'Puff Buffs'

**Michael Portillo, presenter of the TV series *Great Railway Journeys*, unveiled a plaque at Hadley Wood station to commemorate the great steam locomotive engineer Sir Nigel Gresley, who was a local resident**



Resplendent in a scarlet jacket, and appearing as if he had just stepped out of shot from one of his televised railway excursions, Mr Portillo was warmly welcomed to the event by Francesca Caine, the chair of the Hadley Wood Rail User Group.

She said Hadley Wood was privileged to be the destination that Saturday morning for so many steam train enthusiasts -or "puff buffs" as she dubbed them, much to the amusement of residents and visitors crammed into the station yard.

Sir Nigel, the designer of the Pacific class of locomotives, including the Flying Scotsman and the Mallard, lived at Hadley Wood in Cartmel House, from 1923 to 1931, and used to travel to his office at King's Cross from Hadley Wood station.

Whenever a noisy train rushed through the station, Ms Caine called a halt to speeches by waving a Flying Scotsman flag, but that only seemed to add to the fun.

She explained that Hadley Wood was only created when the London and North Eastern Railway opened the station, and the unveiling of the Gresley plaque was another important milestone in the life of the rail users group, which in May celebrated the opening of a new accessible step-free entrance to the platforms.

Philip Benham, chairman of the Gresley Society, owner of two Gresley-designed locomotives, the Union of South Africa and the Great Marquess, was delighted that Mr Portillo, now a most famous "puff buff", had agreed to unveil the plaque.

Mr Benham recalled his time as the local railway manager in the 1980s when he was responsible for Hadley Wood station and was assisted by Mr Portillo, then MP for Enfield Southgate and Minister for Transport.

"Sir Nigel was in the top three of this country's locomotive engineers and this was a very special station for him, as he used to commute from his home in Hadley Wood to King's Cross. This was the very time that his first Pacific class

locomotives came into use.

"We are delighted the Hadley Wood rail users wanted to reflect this historic link with a plaque, and it follows the unveiling of a statue of Sir Nigel at King's Cross and a plaque at the house in Edinburgh where he was born in 1876."

Mr Portillo said he was sure that Hadley Wood's station yard had never been so crowded and he was so pleased to have the chance to join local rail users in celebrating Hadley Wood's link with such a famous locomotive engineer.

"The Flying Scotsman was the first locomotive to achieve 100 miles an hour and Mallard still holds the record for a steam locomotive of 126 miles an hour. Both locomotives represent engineering elegance."

He recalled the day in 2016 when the newly-restored Flying Scotsman left King's Cross bound for York, and passed through a crowded Hadley Wood station.

"I was on the Flying Scotsman that day... there were four helicopters following the train...I was filming for *Great British Railway Journeys*...in a green jacket that time...and

at one point I leant out of the train and a helicopter picked me up... from everyone seeing the Flying Scotsman powering ahead, there was an extraordinary, emotional response."

Pupils from the local Monken Hadley Church of England School opened the proceedings by singing a specially-composed song, "*Flying Scotsman Send-Off*", set to the music of "*She'll Be Coming Round the Mountains*", and with the repeated refrain, "We'll be leaving King's Cross station very soon."

The choir was conducted by the school's headmistress, Caroline Froud, and the words of the ditty were written by her sister, Jeanette.

Guests at the event included Sir Nigel's grandson, Ben Godfrey, the Mayor of Enfield, Councillor Christine Hamilton, and the former Mayor of Barnet, Councillor David Longstaff.

Proceeds from stalls in the station yard and a silent raffle were in aid of Inclusion Barnet, a local deaf and disabled group which works towards providing a more accessible society for all.



## END OF AN ERA

Butcher's Hook, the last remaining butcher's shop in High Street, Barnet, has ceased trading and the premises are for sale or to let. The former proprietor, John Bye, was the trader with the longest family association of shopkeepers in the High Street, being the seventh generation in a long line of North London family butchers dating back to the 1840s. Butcher's Hook opened in 2011 at 119 High Street when Mr Bye took over from W.T. Parish, a butcher's shop originally established by the Williams Brothers in the 1960s. Back in the 1890s, High Barnet shoppers had the choice of eleven butchers and a great variety of other trades and businesses.



Winter 2017

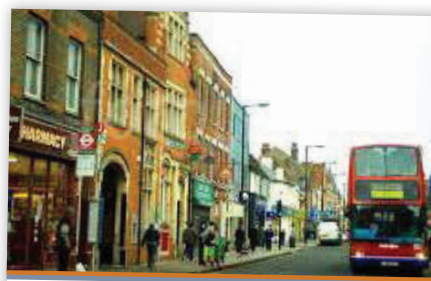
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## Fred's birthday reunion

Neil Kinnock led the tributes at a party to celebrate the 93rd birthday party for Fred Jarvis, Barnet's most celebrated trade unionist – and a New Barnet resident for over 60 years. Mr Jarvis, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers for 14 years, was president of the Trades Union Congress in 1987. His late wife, Anne Jarvis, a teacher in Finchley for 30 years, spent eight years chairing Barnet Council's education committee. Friends from the world of education, the wider trade union movement and the Labour Party, joined the celebrations, and added their congratulations to what Mr Kinnock said was a "lifetime's dedication to improving education standards". Mr Jarvis, and his wife-to-be Anne, a teacher at North Side Primary School, North Finchley, started their married life in High Road, Whetstone, and moved in 1954 to their house in Hadley Road, New Barnet, a much-cherished family home. His career took off in 1952 after being elected president of the National Union of Students, of which Anne Jarvis was vice president. He was appointed general secretary of the NUT in 1975, a post he held until 1989.



Fred Jarvis with former Labour leader Neil Kinnock



### YOUR VISION FOR BARNET

COME TO OUR OPEN FORUM WITH COUNCILLORS !

6:45pm THURSDAY 22 FEBRUARY  
Pennefather Hall, Christ Church,  
St Albans Road

# Barnet Society

CAMPAIGNING FOR A BETTER BARNET

### Major changes are happening across High Barnet and Underhill wards:

- Declining shops and lost businesses in Chipping Barnet and New Barnet
- Big housing developments at Brook Valley Gardens, Elmbank and off the High Street
- More proposed for Whalebones, Marie Foster Home, Oakleigh and New Barnet
- In the Green Belt, a new academy and increasing pressure to build homes.

### What do local politicians have to say about these developments?

Barnet Council is reviewing our Local Plan, and the Mayor of London is consulting on a new London Plan. There are Council elections in May, and the race is close. All these will affect our town and landscape – but we can still influence the results.

This Forum is a timely opportunity for you to meet Councillors and invited representatives of the parties standing for the local elections next May, and to voice your hopes and concerns.

We will focus on three urgent themes:

- Homes – Is the balance between market, affordable and social housing right?
- Transport – How can we travel more easily and sustainably around our borough?
- The town centre – What can be done to revive its economy and conviviality?



Join us for what promises to be an exciting evening!

Car parking & refreshments available.

### To be followed by a short Extraordinary General Meeting (8:45pm for members only) to:

- endorse Jim Nelhams as Independent Examiner for 2016-17 & 2017-18;
- adopt the 2016-17 accounts; and
- elect Judith Clouston as a Vice President of the Society.

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:



Welcome to all our new members listed here who've joined since August. There are still a number of renewals to be updated on the database with quite a few overdue subscriptions and letters have been sent to those members. Please respond if you receive a letter so that your subscription can be renewed. There are some Standing Orders that have not renewed automatically and we are trying to resolve these. If you think you have a problem or a query with your membership, please do get in touch with me by email, post or phone and they can easily be resolved.

**John Hay, Membership Secretary**

## NEW MEMBERS:

Ms H Lifschitz	Mr G Lloyd Evans
Mr T & Mrs P Landridge	Mr P Lemon
Mrs B Fanning	Ms P Kitto
Mr D & Mrs H Grubin	Ms K Bishop-Laggett
Mr M Petch	Ms K Parker
Mr A Wilson	Mr N Allam
Miss P Wishart	

Email: [membership@barnetsociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@barnetsociety.org.uk)  
Phone: 07717 195662

## JOIN US - IT'S ONLY £8 A YEAR, £12 FOR FAMILIES

The Barnet Society has been at the forefront of many campaigns since its inception in 1947. Over the years, we have campaigned on health, environment, transport, education and other issues. Help us keep up that work.

[WWW.BARNETSOCIETY.ORG.UK/MEMBERSHIP](http://WWW.BARNETSOCIETY.ORG.UK/MEMBERSHIP)

