



East Barnet Residents Association

Incorporating Friends of Oak Hill Park

Remembrance Sunday

We shall be laying a wreath at the war memorial in East Barnet Village on Sunday 8th November (from 10:45 am) on behalf of the East Barnet Residents' Association.

Everyone is of course most welcome to come along to show their support.

Daniel Hope



Photo: Jamie Topham

Osidge and East Barnet Libraries

The results of the initial consultation on the future of the library service were discussed by the "Children Education Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on 12th October and passed on to the full Council who decided on further consultation (see below).

The proposals for our two libraries are that Osidge would be 'core' run by library staff, with technology to extend opening hours when unstaffed. East Barnet library would be a 'partnership' run by volunteers. Unaccompanied children under 16 would only be allowed to use libraries when they are staffed.

To generate income for the Council, libraries could be reduced in size with parts of the buildings being used for commercial purposes, and increased fines for late returns of books including children's books.

On pages 6 and 7 of this newsletter we have included a couple of articles by people who have strong opinions about the libraries in our area.

The second, more detailed consultation is running until the end of the year. You can give your views online at https://engage.barnet.gov.uk/childrens-service/library-service-consultation/consult_view or printed questionnaires are available at libraries or by calling 020 8359 7100. Please also let us at the EBRA know your views - we have had very little feedback from our members and would like to know if you do value them or not. Thank you.

Gillian Gear

It was with great sadness that we learned of Gillian's untimely death following a short illness.

Gillian was a founder member and driving force behind this residents' association, and was the first Chairman when it was set up back in 1982.

She lived in Avondale Avenue at that time and was aghast at plans to build houses on the 'Saxon Field' –open space between the corner of Avondale and Church Hill Road, sloping up to St Mary's church.

The Residents' Association gained massive support from people all over the parish of St Mary's (which defined the boundary of the Association) and successfully prevented the house building, with the Church Field being granted 'Metropolitan Open Land' status as part of Oak Hill Park.

Here are some comments and stories we have received from EBRA members:

"Gillian was a champion for the area, a true expert in all things local."

"When it was thought that they were going to build on Church Farm Field, being a historian and knowing the history behind that field, she quickly got onto it and sent round fliers and formed the Residents Association. She persuaded my husband to go on the Committee with many others, some of who were connected with St. Mary's Church. It is from that 'little acorn' that the Residents' Association has grown and during the years has dealt with many other issues of importance to local residents."

"We were members of the Sunday Swimming Club at Church Farm which she ran, so our paths crossed over the years. We were thinking of moving and our house was on the market and one Sunday at the pool Gill said 'your house is on the market, why aren't you buying my house?' I replied 'I would love your house I but can't afford it', and I thought that was that. When I got home Mike Gear had been round to see my husband, and to cut a long story short we bought their lovely house in Rosslyn Avenue where we still live. Gill and Mike built a house next door which they lived in for a short while before moving to Redbourn."



Gillian received the BEM in 2014

"The Sunday morning swimming club up on the hill was all due to her efforts, and many a child has grown into a competent swimmer due to that facility."

"Gill had lived in Germany with her then soldier husband Mike, and I also spoke some German through family connections, so in 1996 we arranged to attend a German weekend course (described as 'for those with a fair knowledge of German') at Madingley College, Cambridge. We thought that, if it was too difficult, we could always sit at the back out of harm's way. When we arrived, we were told that we had to read and analyse a well-known German classic, which would be difficult with a good knowledge of the language! On top of this, there were only eight people in the group so hiding away was out of the question. We made the best of a bad job and ended the weekend with five credits towards a degree!"

"As recently as January this year I met up with her at Barnet Museum to seek her knowledge and advice on a matter that concerned local residents. She was, as always, willing to assist and expressed her fond memories of East Barnet."

"Gillian provided information and history about Russell Lane and attended the unveiling of the Information Board on 28th February 2015"

EBRA Officers

Chairman	Daniel Hope	Vice-Chairman	George Irons
Hon. Secretary	Rob White	Hon. Treasurer	Wendy Alcock
Newsletter Distribution	Christine Shields		

Committee Members

Alan Kelley, James Bradshaw, Pauline Coakley Webb, Peter Robinson,
Rosina Down, Sue Scott, Sussanne Hassel, Yvonne Ward

President Rev. James Mustard **Vice-President** Pat Gladwin

Rob White is our point of contact via the website <http://eastbar.net>

Osidge Library Evening Talks

Talks start at 6:30 pm

17th November - Colin Barratt - A Brief History of New Southgate

15th December - Female Authors' Panel - Talk and Question & Answer session

For more details contact Osidge Library 0208 359 3920

Some talks will take place on the 1st Floor which is only accessible by stairs

Governor for Monkfrith School

Monkfrith School's governors are looking to co-opt someone who can commit to three full governors' meetings a year (in the evening, one per school term). During these meetings governors discuss the strategic direction of the school, review performance and discuss the implementation of new initiatives. There are also five committees that meet termly to discuss specific issues that fall under the following categories; finance, curriculum, pupil welfare, staffing and premises. Governors may wish to join these committees although there is no obligation. Subcommittee meetings are once a term too. Finally, the governor would also be expected to visit the school at least once a year to see how it is running. The position of governor lasts 4 years.

The governor need not be in education themselves. It's good to have someone who brings something else to the board. They just need someone who cares about what is going on.

The next full governing body meeting is scheduled for the 3rd December and this is when nomination forms will be considered and governors will vote on new members. The website www.monkfrith-school.co.uk gives a clearer picture of the type of school and aims and philosophy. You may also wish to visit in which case they'd be delighted to arrange a tour and answer any other questions you may have.

If you are interested in applying, please contact the head teacher head@monkfrith.barnetmail.net or vice chair Simone Roberts simone@sroberts.net on 020 8368 7272 well before the end of November.

Thank you.

West Road Housing Plans

The plans were passed at the planning committee meeting in September, despite all of the neighbouring residents opposing the scheme. The Council planning officers seem to think that building on allotments is not destroying a greenfield site.

The residents are now preparing for a legal fight because they are confident that the developers do not have rights of access over the alleys leading to the allotments; they are owned by the householders in Woodfield Drive and West Walk. Their solicitor has sent the developers a warning not to trespass, and will obtain a court injunction if the developers do try to go ahead.

Rob White

A Piece of History "Barnet Tramworks"



Laurie Williams asks if anyone remembers the Lancaster Electrical Company's premises in Lancaster Road and Brookhill Road in New Barnet in the late 1940's? The Barnet Tram Works built electric vehicles and delivered accumulators to the surrounding areas. They also built a miniature tramcar based on those in use in Blackpool and this was popular with children at local garden fetes.

There are many more photos on the website tram23.co.uk/Barnetworks.htm

"T. Bailey Provision Merchant"

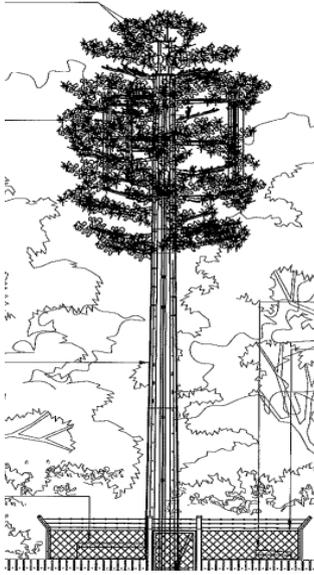
In our previous newsletter we asked if anyone had any information about the T Bailey shop, the signage of which was revealed during works to convert the old Post Office into Costa Coffee.



Well, Mrs Kettle who has lived in East Barnet all her life and still lives in Jackson Road phoned to say that as a girl she used to go into T Baileys shop which "sold everything" and was run by a very nice couple. Their daughter Linda ran the Post Office section of the shop.

Mrs Kettle said there was always a chemists next door to Baileys, and upstairs there was a dentist. Behind the chemists, where Brand Russell have now extended, there used to be a dairy and they kept the horse and cart round the back.

Oakleigh Park Phone Mast



In May, the Council planners rejected the application for a mobile phone tower on the footpath from Alverstone Avenue to Oakleigh Park Station. The site is already the summit of a hill, and a 16 metre (53 foot) tower on top would be "visually intrusive".

So now the phone company has submitted a revised plan, with the aerials partially hidden in what they describe as "a pine tree structure" 15 metre (49 foot) high.

We're wondering if a deciduous tree would be more suitable, but perhaps arranging for leaves to appear during the summer and fall in the autumn would be a bit of a technical challenge...

You can see the plans reference 15/05920/PNT, and if you wish make comments, on the council's website: publicaccess.barnet.gov.uk

Water Water Everywhere...



This lake appeared in Oak Hill Park when a water main burst in July. It burst again after the repair...

Photo courtesy of John W on Streetlife

Why Barnet is such a great place to live

A personal view on the library changes, by local blogger John Dix

Last night (12 October) was the Barnet Council meeting to discuss the future of libraries - the destruction of a brilliant service which is well used by the community. As is the case with so many council meetings, they determine the outcome and then arrange the debate around that conclusion.

Barnet Council use a well worn technique of putting up absolutely dire proposals which they then pull back from slightly to say they have listened. In the case of the libraries the original proposal was to reduce some libraries to just 540 sq ft, an entirely ludicrous proposal, which was never the real plan. Now they have said they can be around 2,000 sq ft and we are all supposed to jump for joy and thank our lucky stars. However, for my local library, East Barnet, that means reducing the space by two thirds. East Barnet library was also listed as closing in one of the previous options. The new proposal is that it will be saved - woohoo! Except that it is now going to be a 'Partnership Library' which means it will be run entirely by volunteers - if they can be recruited and sustained and open just 15 hours a week. No paid librarians, in fact no paid staff at all, just volunteers.

Last night Cllr Reuben Thompstone kept asking speakers "will you volunteer to work in a library?", the classic 'when did you stop beating your wife' question. Whatever way you answer that question you are screwed. If you say yes, then that justifies the council's proposal to make the service entirely dependent on volunteers. If you say no, then the response is that you don't care enough to save your own library. The reality is that many people have to work two or more jobs just to survive. They don't have the luxury of receiving almost £26,000 in allowances as a Councillor chairing a committee. One questioner asked Cllr Thompstone if he would volunteer - no reply, no surprise.

134 questions had been submitted to the meeting demonstrating the depth of feeling. They also illustrated the numerous holes in the proposals; the unsupported assumptions, the lack of evidence, the wildly optimistic belief that they can deliver over £1/2 million pounds of rental income from space freed up in libraries. In East Barnet's case they reckon they can generate £54,000 a year in the space they will free up by cutting the library down to just 1,991 sq ft. Yet in New Barnet redundant office blocks which simply can't find tenants are being converted to flats.

Under 16's will not be allowed into unstaffed libraries unless accompanied by an adult. The rather patronising officer who wrote the report and answered many of the questions last night said at one point "parents wouldn't want their children to use unstaffed libraries unaccompanied". Yes that is correct but parents do want their unaccompanied children to use STAFFED libraries and that is what we are fighting for. In East Barnet's case many local school children go there after school to do their homework - not everyone has the luxury of a quiet room at home where they can do their homework in peace. We are not just talking about secondary school children here. I recall when my children attended Danegrove Primary School, just across the road from East Barnet Library, some parents couldn't afford after school club so their children walked across the road to the library where they were told to wait until their parents could come and pick them up; somewhere warm, safe and with opportunities to learn and have fun. That cannot happen when it is a volunteer only library open just 15 hours a week.

Toilets will be closed when libraries are unstaffed which will affect parents with young children and possibly some older users. Yet Cllr Helena Hart moaned that at Edgware library the toilet was sometimes out of use because people had done 'unpleasant things' in there. Well Helena, have you thought what they might do in the unstaffed library? Will they trash the place, will they defecate on the floor. On no they won't because they will be CCTV - unmonitored so that several days later someone can go through the tapes and try and see which person committed this act. Not very comforting and one reason why so many people in the consultation exercise expressed their concern at using an unstaffed library.

Cllr Dan Thomas kept asking what other suggestions questioners had to maintain the libraries at lower cost. Well actually Cllr Thomas there were many ideas put forward in the consultation process, all of which were ignored. Barnet are spending £6.5 million on new technology to diminish our service so I am sure with a bit of thought we could come up with alternative ways of making that investment to deliver a much better service. The council are going to spend £34 million to build a new office building at Colindale, highly inaccessible to those who live in the east of the borough. Perhaps libraries could have been developed into community hubs with council services co-located there, right in the middle of our communities saving a large chunk of the £34 million they intend to spend.

So why the title to this blog? Well one thing that can be said about Barnet is that people care. 134 questions, a large meeting room full to overflowing with people forced to wait outside as there was no room for them. So many people who care about the libraries. Barnet is a great place to live because of the people who live here, the people who care, the people who are passionate about their community.

John Dix

Osidge Library

A personal view by committee member Sue Scott

I began going to the library when I was a very small girl. Books have always fascinated me and they are a huge part of my life. I began using the adult library when I was 8 years old and have continued to join libraries wherever I have lived.

Our local library, Osidge, was started in 1965, having moved from Hampden Square and I joined in 1984 when we moved to this area. My whole family belongs and I have encouraged new friends moving here to join. But it is not the place it used to be back in '84. Now it has many different facilities which serve the whole community. It is the centre of a dense, residential area, is a small building. Our nearest alternatives would be North Finchley and East Barnet, both smaller and not as easy to access. It is next to Brunswick Park Primary School, the medical centre and an elderly residential home. This makes it a convenient place to call into when doing other things. There is also a small car park which means those who have difficulty with mobility can bring their cars and there is a bus stop right outside.

The facilities are many and varied:- 1) the lending of books, cds and dvds 2) a reference section where students come to study in peace 3) access to newspapers, magazines and coffee where the elderly can come and meet and pass the time in warmth and comfort 4) access to computers, free for the first hour with free tuition in the basic use 5) toddler story groups 6) visits by the local school to encourage reading and book borrowing 7) speakers on local and general subject 8) evening and daytime book clubs 9) local councillors surgeries 10) police access sessions 11) community meeting room. The whole community visits and uses the library.

Libraries are the lifeblood of the community and can be used by all. Pubs are few and far between and expensive, youth clubs don't exist – there is very little where all can go. Our library staff are vital to meet and greet, to give advice and information, to order books and to generally organise and run the place efficiently and well, which they do. They become familiar, friendly faces, reassuring and approachable. Without them, the library would quickly become unusable, unsafe and probably damaged. They must remain.

It is of major importance that local residents use this valuable asset and make their views known. It is up to us to support and save our library. If it closes, our community will lose its last genuine meeting place and valuable resource. It can never be replaced.

Sue Scott

North London U3A

A Super Celebration

Many East Barnet members of the successful North London U3A (University of the Third Age) joined their friends and colleagues early in September to celebrate their 21st birthday.

This took place at St. Paul's Church in Finchley Central where many of the classes had tables demonstrating what they did, ranging from Art to Yoga with Bridge, Croquet, Cryptic Crosswords, Drama, Film, French,



German, Spanish, Writing, Scrabble, Knitting, Table Tennis, Singing and many others in between.

Enquiries for membership, an astonishingly low £35 per year, to:

Helene Davidian: helenedavidian@googlemail.com

or Sandra Nistri: ssandra_nistri@hotmail.com

or contact EBRA and they will put you in touch.

*Larry Ross
Press Officer, NLU3A*

Barnet Furniture Centre

We mentioned this a few years ago and they were very grateful for the interest our members showed. So we thought a reminder might be useful:

The Barnet Furniture Centre is a furniture reuse charity which brings multiple benefits for the community and the environment. Visit the warehouse store at Queens Parade Close, Friern Barnet, London, N11 3FY or telephone 020 8361 6802 to buy or donate.

Website: <http://barnetfurniturecentre.org>

They will collect (at their driver's discretion) donations of large and small pieces of furniture, paint, rugs, small homeware items, crockery, electrical goods including PCs, lamps, stereos, kettles, toasters and fridges to be refurbished and prepared for sale by a team of staff and volunteers.

For the latest news from the Centre, visit their Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/barnetfurniturecentre>



Road Surfacing

We were inundated with complaints about the "surface dressing" carried out on many of our roads by contractors working for the council. This involved spraying tar over the existing tarmac, and spreading small sharp stones over the tar. The general feeling was that the work was of very poor quality and seemed unlikely to extend the life of the road surface, so questions were asked about the value for money.

Some residents complained that the tar and loose chippings worked their way into houses, causing problems on carpets and wooden floors. And the puddles and cracks in the road were worse because the tar caused water to drain away more slowly.

We asked the Brunswick Park Ward councillors to investigate, and although they succeeded in getting some remedial work carried out, this was mostly just sweeping up some of the loose chippings.

Please continue to contact us and your councillors if you have concerns about your road surface.

Argos in New Southgate Homebase

Argos have opened a new shop inside the Homebase store in Station Road, New Southgate. This may be of interest to members who shop online and wish to collect in person, and those who find it difficult to get to and park near the existing North Finchley shop.

Membership Subscriptions

Our membership year started again in July, so if you haven't already paid, or are unsure, please contact your road stewards or phone me on 020 8144 8469. I will have informed those members on email about their subscription status when sending this newsletter.

Membership is still only a nominal £2 per household per year to help cover some of our costs, and we welcome payments for up to five years at a time. Cash or cheques can be brought or posted to me at the address in the renewal slip below, although 2nd class stamps are now 53p...

The cheapest other way to pay is to make a free direct bank transfer or mobile payment (contact me for details), or for a small fee you can pay online by credit or debit card at eastbar.net/subscribe (you don't need a PayPal account for this)

We now also have a chip-and-PIN reader, so you can use a credit or debit card at meetings, or call in person at my address with your card if you like.

Thank you for your support!

Rob White

I enclose £_____ for _____ years' subscription to the East Barnet Residents' Association (£2 per year per household)

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Please send cash / cheques (payable to "EBRA") to Rob White, 16 Woodfield Drive, East Barnet, EN4 8PA

October 2015

Our Local Ward Councillors

Brunswick Park Ward – Surgeries at Osidge Library, Brunswick Park Road, N11 1EU (see times below)			
	Andreas Ioannidis (Labour) cldr.a.ioannidis@barnet.gov.uk		Kathy Levine (Labour) cldr.k.levine@barnet.gov.uk
1st Saturday every month, 2.30pm - 3:30pm: (NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY) 2nd, 4th & 5th Saturday every month 10:30am - 12 noon: (NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY) 3rd Tuesday every month 5-30pm - 6:30pm: (BY APPOINTMENT)			
	Lisa Rutter (Conservative) cldr.l.rutter@barnet.gov.uk	Every Saturday between 3pm - 4pm (NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY)	

East Barnet Ward		
		
Rebecca Challice (Labour) cldr.r.challice@barnet.gov.uk	Philip Cohen (Labour) cldr.p.cohen@barnet.gov.uk	Laurie Williams (Labour) cldr.l.williams@barnet.gov.uk
Surgeries: Every first and third Saturday of the month from 10.30 - 12 noon at New Barnet Community Centre , 48/50 Victoria Road, EN4 9PF Every second and fourth Saturday of the month from 10.30 - 12 noon at East Barnet Library , 85 Brookhill Road, East Barnet, EN4 8SG		

Can You Help EBRA ?

Our Honorary **Treasurer** Wendy is standing down. If you could spare some time to help us keep track of the EBRA's funds and attend our occasional committee and open meetings, please get in touch.

You can of course come along to some committee meetings to discuss the position and what being a member of the committee entails, before making a decision. Thank you.



Chas R LOWE Estates

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Chas R Lowe Estates are proud to sponsor the East Barnet Residents' Association newsletters.