

# The Barnet Society

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## Buzz about Bees' return

**A**n audacious attempt by Barnet Football Club to return to the town after a ten-year exile in Harrow has prompted an enthusiastic response from past and present fans, writes Nick Jones.

**Club chairman Tony Kleanthous is to make a fresh application to Barnet Council for planning permission to build a new stadium on playing fields at Underhill next to the club's former ground.**

However, nearby residents have condemned as "diabolical" a proposal that they say would only add to extra traffic generated by the Ark Pioneer Academy, the new school which was built on the previous pitch.

But within days of the announcement of a possible return, comments posted online on the Barnet Society's website and its Facebook page were running three-to-one in favour of welcoming home Barnet FC.

Supporters are adamant that Barnet has paid a heavy price in the last decade. Without its football club, the town has lost part of its identity and much-needed trade from fans and visiting spectators.

Barnet FC moved to The Hive Football Centre - midway between Edgware and Stanmore - in 2013 after a protracted disagreement between Mr Kleanthous and the council over his failure to get planning permission for a new stadium at Underhill.

There seems little chance so far of a change of mind: the



council says it is "highly unlikely" approval would be given to an application to re-establish the club on playing fields immediately to the south of Ark Pioneer Academy because the site is in the Green Belt.

However, the council insists it would like to welcome the club back to Barnet and has indicated the position could change if it could prove there was an overwhelming case in favour of a new stadium.

Mr Kleanthous recognises the challenge: he needs to rally sufficient support among fans and residents to put pressure on the council to "bring our incredible club back to where it belongs".

Barnet is currently well placed in the National League - the fifth tier of the English football league - and is making a bid for promotion to League Two.

In perhaps his most telling admission, Mr Kleanthous acknowledges that some Barnet fans "haven't ever embraced" the move to The Hive.

Attendances at 18 matches this season have averaged around 1,700, exceeding 4,000 for a home fixture with Southend

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Club chairman Tony Kleanthous and an artist's illustration of the new stadium plans, with a capacity of 8,000



## *Continued from Page 1*

United but falling as low as 671 for one game in October.

Despite the sale in 2014 of the Underhill stadium – home of Barnet FC since 1907 – some dedicated supporters worked tirelessly for several years to persuade the club to return. “The Bees belong in Barnet!” was the slogan of the Back2Barnet campaign.

No doubt deterred by the prospect of a

five-mile drive or lengthy bus journey to The Hive, some former fans have switched to support Hadley Football Club which has a ground at Brickfield Lane, Arkley, and which has been going from strength to strength in recent seasons.

Nonetheless, the online comments on the Society’s website welcoming

the possibility of Barnet FC returning to Underhill indicate the continuing sense of loss over the ending of the town’s long association with professional football.

[www.barnetfc.com](http://www.barnetfc.com)

## Plan for new stadium

**A planning consultancy has been hired by Barnet Football Club to prepare an application for a new stadium for up to 8,000 spectators on playing fields next to its former ground at Underhill, writes Nick Jones.**

Since the move to the Hive at Harrow a decade ago, the club chairman Tony Kleanthous has always said he hoped it might be possible one day to return to Barnet.

He is ready to meet the full cost of constructing a new stadium – estimated at up to £14 million – and if approved, he would aim to have it ready for the start of the 2026-27 season.

Mr Kleanthous and his architect have revisited the club’s previous plans for a new stadium at Underhill – an application that failed to get approval and which precipitated the move to The Hive.

They believe the best location is still the one they first suggested, on the playing fields immediately to the south of Ark Pioneer Academy, the new school that was subsequently built on the site of the original stadium.

The new stadium would be a “slimmed down version” of the club’s original scheme. There would be stands for 6,000 to 8,000 spectators and a new club building, including a car park, which would front on to Barnet Lane.

A fresh planning application would take account of the new school, and its needs were “at the forefront of the project”.

Included in the plan were two multi-use games areas, a circulation and recreational zone for pupils, a formal pitch for training and playing purposes on Barnet playing fields, and a school drop-off zone for pupils which would help alleviate the morning rush hour traffic problems in the area.

While Barnet Council says it would like to welcome the club back to Barnet, a new stadium at Underhill would be “highly unlikely” to be approved as the site is in the Green Belt.

Planning permission would only be granted if the club could prove there was an overwhelming case in its favour.

The benefits would have to outweigh the detriment and that was hard to see “as a new stadium would cause additional pressure on local roads and highways”.



The Underhill playing field shows where the stadium would be...south of the Ark Academy school

Undeterred by the council’s initial rebuff, Mr Kleanthous is appealing directly to Barnet FC fans and local residents to give their full support.

“Ultimately it will be down to our supporters to convince the council that the club should be back in its spiritual home.”

News of a possible return of Barnet FC – and the ambition to site a new stadium close to its previous ground – has surprised the local community after a long history of disagreements between Mr Kleanthous and the council.

A great deal has happened since the club abandoned Underhill because of its limited capacity of 4,000 spectators and the failure to get approval for a new stadium.

Robin Bishop, who is the Barnet Society’s lead on planning and the environment, said a lot more information would be needed about siting a new football stadium in an area where there was already considerable concern about the loss of Green Belt land.

A new stadium in that location would have an impact on the Ark Pioneer Academy and raise questions about the proposed move of the Rainbow Community Centre to The Pavilion, which adjoins the school.

Other developments were also planned in the area – a children’s playground, and community leisure and cafe hub.

He said: “Many of our members would like to see the return of the Bees to their home turf, but there is local concern about more development in the area and the loss of biodiversity.

“We would welcome early engagement with the local community, and some joined up thinking by Barnet Council about the Barnet FC proposals and other local issues.”

Mr Kleanthous has instructed the WSP Planning Consultancy to begin the pre-application process and prepare a planning application.

Sean McGrath from WSP will head the project and engage directly with Barnet Council and the council’s planning officers.



Mike Noronha, curator of Barnet Museum



## Community use hope for Tudor Hall

**When High Barnet's much-loved Tudor Hall was put up for sale at the end of last year moves were immediately made to see if it could be purchased for community use, writes Nick Jones.**

An application to register the former schoolhouse as an asset of community value is being made by Barnet Museum, together with national and local history groups.

They hope the building could become a visitor centre for the Wars of the Roses and the part played by the Battle of Barnet.

Originally, the schoolhouse of the free grammar school granted a charter by Queen Elizabeth I in 1573, the Tudor Hall is no longer required by Barnet and Southgate College.

Property agents Colliers are advertising the property, which is in a prominent position just across Wood Street from the parish church of St John the Baptist, as an "exceptional investment opportunity" – and the asking price is thought to be in the region of £1 million.

Apparently, there is already a preferred bidder, "a private education provider", which is thought to have made an offer close to the full price.

Mike Noronha, curator of Barnet Museum, said the chance to try to acquire the Tudor Hall was an opportunity that could not be missed.

"We are at a very early stage in considering this, just looking at possibilities for seeing how we might be able to put together a bid to acquire the building.

"By registering it as an asset of community value, we would have six months to try to pull together the necessary finance to purchase the hall and then fit it out as a visitor centre."

The museum is working with organisations like the Battlefields Trust, local history groups and Queen Elizabeth's School to assess the various options to ensure the building is retained for public use.

Unlike the battles of the 1640s between the Royalists and

Parliamentarians – commemorated at a national Civil War centre at Newark – there is no national focal point to celebrate the Wars of the Roses between the armies of the Lancastrians and Yorkists.

This was an era of British history when the country was at war with itself over who should be King and when a decisive battle was fought just north of Barnet town centre in 1471, and which is commemorated by Hadley Highstone.

Numerous local organisations were surprised and somewhat disappointed to find that the former schoolhouse, which fills one side of the courtyard in front of Barnet and Southgate College campus, had been put up for sale, raising doubts about its future use for community events.

In recent years the hall has been part of what the college calls its "learning environment" and was occasionally hired out for conferences, exhibitions, and other local events staged by groups such as the Barnet Guild of Artists.

Colliers say the hall, which is a Grade II listed building with Historic England, is now surplus to college's requirements and is to be sold on a leasehold basis with vacant possession.

Its sale will offer an opportunity for an investor to undertake structural repairs to refurbish and upgrade the interior areas which include a first-floor balcony and second-floor offices. The property has potential as "a banqueting hall and conference centre".

The sale is via informal tender with a bid date to be announced in due course if not already sold.



## The Barnet Society

### FUNDRAISING DINNER

Wednesday 22 May at 7pm | Le Rose Restaurant  
47 High St, Barnet EN5 5UW

£39.50 for a 3 course meal,  
donation to the Barnet Society included

Last year's inaugural dinner was a huge success and we hope to replicate that with this year's event. The money raised will go towards funding the Society's work in making Barnet a better place to live and work

To reserve your place, please email Holly at [kaw@eiss@yahoo.com](mailto:kaw@eiss@yahoo.com) and pay by bank transfer to: Barnet Society. Sort code: 40-09-10. Account: 50132381. Ref: dinner

Or by cheque made out to The Barnet Society and posted to:  
16 Sunset View, Barnet EN5 4LB

Questions? Please call Holly on 0794 635 5245

# New vicar swaps stage for pulpit



Cindy with her two deputy church wardens at St Peters, Iris Auburn and Maureen Stevens (far right) and below St Peter's Church in Arkley

**St Peter's Church, Arkley, has a new vicar, the Reverend Cindy Kent – and few women priests have a back catalogue of experience that stretches to the 1960s and fame as lead singer in the pop-folk group The Settlers, writes Nick Jones.**

Cindy, who left behind concert and cabaret appearances, to develop a lifetime's career as a broadcaster – and get ordained as a priest – was installed as the new team vicar for Arkley parish in January.

She is no stranger to Anglican congregations in North London having spent nine years as curate and then priest-in-charge at St John the Apostle Church in Whetstone and more recently having taken services at churches in both the Edmonton and St Albans Dioceses.

Cindy says the challenge in Arkley as in other churches will be to build up the congregation.

“St Peter's has a popular church magazine so perhaps I can start by posing half a dozen questions and ask readers what social events local people would like to see being held at the church.

“Once I know what kind of activities might appeal, I can get organising and hopefully generate a strong community response and increase attendances at our services.

“When I was priest in charge at St John the Apostle in Whetstone, we doubled the congregation, so it is all about finding ways to encourage people to get involved.”

After eleven years as lead singer for The

**“Once I know what kind of activities might appeal, I can get organising and hopefully generate a strong community response and increase attendances at our services.”** Reverend Cindy Kent, St Peter's Arkley

Settlers, often appearing with Cliff Richard, she started to build her career as a broadcaster, first with the BBC in the mid-1970s, selecting and reviewing albums for Sunday on BBC Radio 4, and presenting Gospel Road on BBC Radio 2.

Cindy has rarely been off air in the last four decades and has worked on stations around the country, presenting and producing programmes for BBC Radio Medway, LBC, and Radio Hallam.

She became religious affairs producer for Capital Radio in 1978 and widened her experience presenting a series about St Francis of Assisi for HTV Wales, another 13-week series of Lent, combined with appearances on BBC TV and ITV.

In 1995 she became a presenter on Premier, the UK's first Christian Radio Station, where she held a range of posts over the following 15 years.

Her expertise and dedication were recognised in 2016 when she was awarded an MBE for services to religious

broadcasting. While continuing to broadcast – and she currently has a two-hour show on Serenade Radio (Saturday 3 to 5pm, repeated on Sunday) – Cindy was ordained as a priest in 2007, becoming curate at St John the Apostle, Whetstone, and then priest-in-charge in 2010.

Semi-retirement beckoned in 2016 when she moved to the Isle of Sheppey, where she continued to conduct occasional services at the five Anglican churches in the West Sheppey Benefice and presented a weekly religious spot on the community radio station, Sheppey FM.

Two years ago, she moved back to Barnet to be nearer her son James – who has been choirmaster at All Saints, Friern Barnet – when he and his wife had a daughter.

Rev Cindy's appointment as priest in charge with house for duty at St Peter's follows the retirement in March of the previous team vicar, the Reverend Nick Wheeler.





**First, I'd like to honour a great predecessor in my role, David Lee, who sadly died in January** (see box below and Page 11).

### GOVERNMENT

Michael Gove has shelved his most radical planning reforms, but revised the National Planning Policy Framework and is consulting on promotion of development on brownfield sites and further expansion of Permitted Development Rights.

### BARNET COUNCIL

The Council is consulting on a new Parks & Open Spaces Strategy. The Society has submitted comments, but you can add your own via the Council website until 18 March. The Council has set up voluntary action groups to advise on its next steps to Net Zero. I've agreed to Co-Chair the group on Homes & Energy.

### ANTICIPATED

**The Spires** – We were assured before Christmas that the bankruptcy of BYM will not affect plans to redevelop the site for commercial and residential use, but have heard nothing since.  
**Barnet FC** – The Bees could return to Underhill. Many of our members would welcome them back but we need a lot more information about the project, which is in the Green Belt (GB).

### APPROVED

**Moxon Mews** – We supported this proposal for 21 new homes and commercial premises.  
**Elm Farm, 2 Galley Lane (GB)** – Conversion of four barns to residences.  
**Greengate Stables, Mays Lane (GB)** – We supported plans for an equine yard.  
**Whitings Road** – We supported this cluster of 35 houses around a communal green.

### REFUSED

**Mays Lane between Chesterfield Farm and Brethren Meeting Hall (GB)** – We were among 1,304 objectors to an application for two travellers' pitches.  
**Abbey Arts Centre, East Barnet** – We objected to replacement and new buildings on this site with an extraordinary history.

### WITHDRAWN

**Everyman Cinema** – We objected to a Jolt EV charger in front of this listed building.

### DECISIONS AWAITED

**Victoria Quarter** – We objected particularly to the housing mix and poor environmental performance of many of the flats. The Planning Committee has postponed its decision until another meeting (date TBA).

**Whalebones** – We consulted all 508 of our membership addresses, by email and post, on the latest planning application. We received 89 responses (17.5%). 78 (87.6%) supported our proposed objection and only 6 (6.7%) opposed it – a majority of 13 to 1: a clear mandate, so we objected.

**98-100 High Street (fka Foxtons)** – Workspace plus 12 flats above.

**118 High Street (the Grade II-listed former Barnet Press)** – Conversion of flats above Costas.

**2 Clyde Villas, Hadley Green Road** – Application for 12 adults recovering from mental illness in a Locally-Listed house. We were neutral but submitted comments.

**Off Langley Row, Hadley Highstone (GB)** – Rebuilding of former stables.

**Brookfields Garage, Victoria Lane** – Three modern but inconspicuous houses and workspace on backland.

**Intec House, 49 Moxon Street** – The developer claims that the scheme approved last year with 35% affordable housing is no longer viable. He's made a new application for 96 flats and more workspace. The 7-storey exterior remains almost the same as previously. We objected again.

**Fortune House, Moxon Street** – The Intec House developers propose a similar, but only 6-storey, building for 41 flats and 2 workspace units. It's not as bad as its neighbour and won't harm the GB, so we were neutral.

**Arkley Manor Farm, Rowley Lane (GB)** – Two large scaffolding storage racks have been built in a scruffy yard. Retrospective application for permission; we've objected.

**Wetland scheme, Hadley Wood (GB)** – While we support the principle of nature-based drainage, Enfield Council's application was light on key environmental and organisational information. They invited us to a video meeting and promised to supply more information.

### APPEAL DISMISSED

**111 Hadley Road** – Appeal against Council requirement to provide disabled access.

### FARTHER AFIELD

**Former Homebase site, North Finchley** – 149 homes approved. A triumph for the Finchley Society, which had fought off two bigger and uglier schemes.

**Former B&Q site, Cricklewood** – Locals haven't been so lucky; 1,049 homes approved in blocks up to 18 storeys high. It continues recent Manhattanising of the west of the borough

**Hendon Central Library** – Refurbishment of the existing Library and addition of a rear extension for Middlesex University approved.

**Lower Kitts End Farm (GB)** – Conversion of most of the agricultural buildings to industrial and warehouse use. We had no comments; it's been approved.

**Land north of Barnet Lane, Borehamwood** – More ructions in the GB. Locals raised £23,000 to challenge the deregistration of Woodcock Hill Village Green; a High Court decision is imminent. Taylor Wimpey want to build 220 houses on the Green and adjacent Horses Field. Another 79 houses are proposed nearby at Hartfield Avenue.



**David Lee**

**David died in January at the age of 93.**

**As well as chairing the Society's Planning & Environment Committee from 1996 to 2008, he was a tireless campaigner for a greener Barnet, and persuaded the Society and Council to plant hundreds of trees over the last three decades.**

We're delighted that not only has the Council undertaken to complete his planting masterplan for Barnet Hill, it has also offered to pay for a tree commemorating him. We hope to have a ceremonial planting this autumn, and will announce details in due course. *See also Page 11*

# How best to green Barnet's existing homes

Our Winter Newsletter highlighted the crucial importance of minimising carbon emissions from Barnet's existing housing stock, and looked at the challenge of upgrading the environmental performance of two houses on the Council's Local Heritage List. This article shows what can be done to a more typical home in our borough. **Robin Bishop writes**



**No.1 Halliwick Road is an Edwardian semi-detached house typical of many in Barnet. Its owner, architect Ben Ridley, has radically upgraded it with the aim of making it an exemplar of sustainable retrofit on a constrained budget. When it was opened to the public as part of London's Open House Festival last September, The house attracted scores of visitors.**

Ben is the founding Director of Architecture for London <https://architectureforlondon.com/>, a practice with a track record of domestic and larger

projects completed since 2009. Several have been published and won awards. He has expertise in Passivhaus design, an approach originating in Germany that through excellent thermal insulation, scrupulous airtightness and mechanical ventilation and heat recovery (MVHR) enables houses to provide comfortable living conditions with minimal use of energy.

Ben refurbished the façades of the existing house and its neighbour so that, seen from the street, they retain their traditional character.



This was achieved by insulating the front brick wall internally with 65mm of wood fibre finished with 10mm of lime plaster. The flank wall and the upper floor to the rear were insulated with 170mm phenolic insulation and coated with a grey render.

Internally, the ground floor has been almost completely opened up. This was not necessary environmentally, but provides a great sense of spaciousness and light, with daylight flooding in on three sides.

A back extension was added to the ground floor with walls of prefabricated 172mm structural insulated panels (SIPs).

Triple glazing was installed throughout the house. New double-glazed vertical sliding sash windows were fitted, and behind them demountable secondary glazing panels are fixed and removed in summer. Continuous curtains provide additional thermal and acoustic insulation as well as privacy.

New windows are simply framed in wood and offer dramatic uninterrupted views of the greenery outside. A low-energy MVHR system ensures a supply of fresh, filtered and pre-warmed air when the windows are closed. Hidden ducts distribute fresh air and extract vitiated air via the roof.

The original suspended timber ground floor was overlaid with large Italian marble slabs for their visual quality and thermal mass. The void below was packed with insulation with sub-floor air vents to



Ben refurbished the façades of his house and neighbour's, so that they retained their original character. A back extension was added to the ground floor (top left) with insulated panels. Elsewhere, throughout the house, triple glazing was installed and additional natural light created during the refurbishment

avoid condensation and decay. First floor timber joists and boards were exposed and cleaned up, and sound transmission between floors deadened by acoustic quilt. A wet underfloor heating system supplies the little space heating that such a well-insulated house needs.

The staircase has been replaced by a more compact one of plywood. A ground-floor toilet is tucked underneath it. On the first floor is a new toilet and bathroom lined with limestone and wood. The existing loft has been converted into a bedroom and TV room.

The use of steel and concrete, which require large quantities of carbon to make, has been significantly reduced, with no steels used in the loft conversion.

The end result is a striking combination



## The end result is a striking combination of traditional and contemporary craftsmanship, with the overall cost of £250k + VAT good value

of traditional and contemporary craftsmanship that achieves a Passivhaus standard U-value of 0.15 or better (with the exception of the internally insulated front façade). The overall cost was around £250k + VAT – good value considering the extensive floor area (190sq.m.), especially at a time of high inflation and construction costs.

Ben has shown one way of upgrading an old house environmentally: there are others. But whatever you chose to do, it's vital to (1) **get appropriately qualified advice**; (2) **assess the whole building, its site and surroundings** (even if your project has to be carried out in stages); (3) **evaluate the likely costs of different options and possible sources of funds**; and (4) **use experienced contractors**.

That's easily said but in practice very challenging to achieve.

The carbon reduction targets set by the Government are commendably ambitious, but to help meet them, the only funding currently on offer to home-owners is grants of £7,500 for the installation of heat pumps. Although the need for better

training of designers, engineers and builders has long been recognised, we also have a national skills shortage.

Both Council and Government must do much more. As Marianne Nix, a Barnet Society member and house-owner keen to follow best practice says,

'I can't see how ordinary families will be able to manage. I can see the consequence – a lot of old buildings will be insulated incorrectly with all the wrong materials being used, and causing more issues and damage to properties in the long run.'

Barnet Council has launched some worthwhile initiatives following its declaration of climate emergency in May 2022, and the Barnet Sustainability Strategy Framework focuses, understandably, on improving the energy efficiency of Council-owned property to help achieve net-zero council operations by 2030. But as part of Building a sustainable future for Barnet, it also wants to ensure residents have access to the information they need to make sustainable choices.

Following its Citizens Assembly it has set up action groups to advise on the next steps for its BarNET ZERO policy. I'm representing the Society on the Homes and Energy Action Group, and hope to be able to report progress towards achieving that aim over the next few months.

### In the meantime, if you're wondering what to do about your own home, the following sources of information may be helpful:

- The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB): [www.spab.org.uk/advice](http://www.spab.org.uk/advice)
- Green register: [www.greenregister.org.uk/the-register](http://www.greenregister.org.uk/the-register)
- Historic England: [www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/climate-change](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/advice/climate-change)
- Low Energy Transformation Initiative (LETI): [www.leti.uk/retrofit](http://www.leti.uk/retrofit)
- Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA): [www.find-an-architect.architecture.com/](http://www.find-an-architect.architecture.com/)
- Trustmark (Government-endorsed quality scheme): [www.trustmark.org.uk/homeowner](http://www.trustmark.org.uk/homeowner)

*I'm most grateful to Ben Ridley for technical information and Dave McCormick for environmental advice on this article.*

**THE GENERAL ELECTION  
– WHAT MATTERS  
MOST TO THE BARNET  
SOCIETY?**

Robin Bishop writes

**Not since the 1950s have planning, architecture and the environment been such salient issues as they will be in the general election to be called this year.**

**This year's Barnet Society newsletters will each focus on one of four key themes of our work: housing, Green Belt and other open spaces, town centres and transport. Underpinning them all is our concern for the environment.**

We will not be taking sides in the election. The Society is non-political and you, our members, are well able to form your own conclusions about which party to vote for. But by spelling out our hopes and concerns in relation to each theme, we hope both electoral candidates and voters will understand clearly what matters most to us, and why. With their and your help – and, let's pray, a favourable turn in world affairs – we can make our corner of the planet a better place.

# Housing kicks off countdown to the election

**The first of our four themes is housing. It's likely to be the most urgent of our issues for residents in Chipping Barnet constituency. There's not enough of it for those wanting live here – especially at 'affordable' prices, whether to buy or rent. And what we do have often copes poorly with climate change and soaring energy costs.**

I won't go into the reasons; they're explained brilliantly in the BBC2 documentary Britain's Housing Crisis: *What Went Wrong?* (by Martin Lewis and others, available on iPlayer).

Let's start with existing homes. They emit around 50% of the carbon released in Barnet. Radically reducing that by upgrading the environmental performance of our homes is the most useful thing many of us can do to save the planet – and our fuel bills.

In our last issue I wrote about the challenges of upgrading buildings of historic value. In this one, we look at a more typical Barnet house, an Edwardian semi-detached in Halliwick Road (see pages 6&7).

I won't say more about existing homes, except to note that rising property prices and relaxing Permitted Development Rights have caused a rash of extensions to their front, back, sides and roofs. We rarely object unless they're quite out of character with the original house or detrimental to neighbours. But they rarely add to Barnet's overall stock of homes.

Contrary to our critics' claims, the Society doesn't normally object to new homes! Of the planning applications we review (a fraction of those submitted) we object to less than a quarter, and in the majority of cases the planners agree with us.

When we look at planning applications, our main concern is usually design. Below are 10 principles that we follow, with examples of successful – or sometimes unsuccessful – solutions.

**1 Historic buildings (nationally or locally listed).** When one of these becomes financially nonviable, we don't automatically oppose its repurposing, provided that historic fabric is restored where possible, alteration or extension minimised, and work carried out to Historic England and best conservation guidelines. The Old Courthouse in High Street has been successfully converted into flats. And we advocated something similar for 33 Lyonsdown Road, though the owner seems set on demolition.

**2 Conservation Areas (CAs).** The Wood Street & Monken Hadley CAs contain a wealth of historical and architectural



Old Courthouse



quality, and we resist attempts to alter their character, particularly via roof extensions. Uniquely, the Wood Street CA also encapsulates Barnet's marketing and livestock droving origins: a major reason why we oppose loss of the Whalebones fields.

**3 Neighbourhood character.** We scrutinise changes to neighbourhoods that are not CAs but possess architectural unity and quality, for example the SPACES streets west of Stapylton Road. We also do so for places relating closely to attractive open space or countryside. This is the case at Moxon Street, which overlooks the Green Belt, and why we objected to the proposed 7 storeys of No.49.

**4 Brownfield.** We strongly favour building on previously developed land wherever technically and financially feasible. Examples we've supported include Moxon Mews and the 2017 scheme for Victoria Quarter. But brownfield status alone doesn't guarantee our support: TfL's 2020 proposal for High Barnet Station was fraught with design flaws and would dominate Barnet Hill to an unacceptable degree.

**5 Recycling buildings.** We welcome reuse of buildings that have lost their original purpose, especially for housing, subject to compliance with the Mayor of London's housing standards. Our objection to conversion of Kingmaker House in Station Road from commercial to residential use was driven mainly by its impact on the historic centre of New Barnet. But we regard the conversion of redundant barns at Brent Lodge Farm in Mays Lane as a success.

**6 High density-low/medium rise.** We generally oppose high-rise buildings in Chipping Barnet, but we don't necessarily oppose high densities. At Brook Valley Gardens off Mays Lane some flats rise to four floors and effectively punctuate street junctions. Edgewood Mews in Finchley rises to five storeys, but retains human scale and adds picturesque variety. But we have grave reservations

**We generally oppose high-rise buildings in Chipping Barnet, but we don't necessarily oppose high densities**

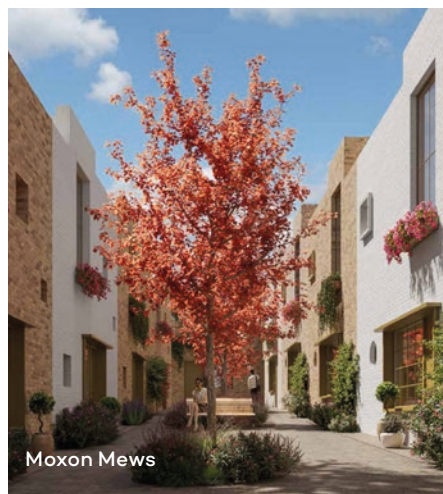


Edgewood Mews

about anything higher, as recently proposed for The Spires and Barnet Hill.

**7 Housing mix.** Chipping Barnet was traditionally a suburb of low-rise family houses and gardens, but we accept that demographics and economics today demand a much higher proportion of 1, 2 & 3-person flats. Diversity of unit size is usually welcome.

**8 Tenure mix.** We also like diversity of tenure types. We deplore the shortfall of affordable and social housing in most new developments, almost always well below the Council's minimum requirements. We therefore supported Barnet Homes' mix of size and tenure across its Moxon Mews & Whittings Road sites.



Moxon Mews

We'd also welcome more diversity of housing provider. High Barnet's New Ground co-housing for older women is not simply outstanding architectural and landscape design. Its self-managed combination of private flats with shared social spaces and gardens is an inspiring exemplar all too rare in the UK (though not in Northern Europe).

**9 Environmental performance.** This increasingly informs our scrutiny of building plans and details. Although the latest scheme for Victoria Quarter is an improvement on the two previous ones, it includes almost 20% of single-aspect flats dependent on mechanical heating and ventilation, with the risk of poor air quality and adverse impacts on health. In the rush for new homes, we mustn't build future slums.



Camlet Way

**10 Green Belt.** The Society began nearly 80 years ago by defending green spaces. Tomorrow the Green Belt will be even more important for the health of individuals, communities and biodiversity. We oppose all but the most exceptional developments in Barnet's Green Belt. The only new dwellings we have supported in the GB in the last 10 years have been one built sustainably and almost invisibly off Camlet Way and four replacing sheds in Hendon Wood Lane.

**A final word: style.** I haven't mentioned it until now because we appreciate design in any style, as long as it's good of its kind. Stylistic variety is part of Chipping Barnet's ID.

# New Islamic centre's welcome



(Left) the new Darul Noor Islamic Centre. (Above) members cooked a range of dishes for the open day and (Below) some of the many children who took part in activities such as colouring in and face painting

## Family day with tasty food and fun for children as new Islamic centre offers a welcome to High Barnet residents, writes Nick Jones.

A fun day out with activities for children and a vast choice of refreshments welcomed families, friends, and supporters to the newly established High Barnet Islamic centre.

Face painting and a bouncy castle were just two of the attractions, together with stalls offering a great variety of treats, including an array of sweets made by an enterprising group of youngsters.

Darul Noor Islamic Centre hopes to take full possession of its new home in Bath Place, just off the High Street, later this year and plans to host a wide range of community events such as coffee mornings, youth activities and a food bank.

Helpers at the one of the many stalls offering a variety of dishes included charity trustees Mohammad Sabet (third from left) and Zainul Katib (second from right).

For the last four years the Darul Noor charity has held Friday prayers and Sunday activities for children at the Rainbow Centre on the Dollis Valley estate.

When the chance occurred to purchase their own property, the charity's trustees seized the opportunity to secure a building that was about to become vacant in Bath Place.

## 'Our new premises will be a centre and meeting place, which we hope will also be used by the wider community' Fahed Bhatti, committee

Owned by the Template Foundation, the property is known as The Centre and comprises a large meeting hall, seminar rooms and other facilities and was on the market for £2 million.

An offer of £1.8 million was accepted and Darul Noor immediately launched a fund-raising appeal.

A deposit of £550,000 has already been paid and the charity has set itself a deadline of May 31 to raise the remaining £1.25 million.

Leading members of the charity welcomed visitors at the family day, including Hassan Ali, Fahed Bhatti, Zainil Katib, and Shujaulhaq Siddiqui

The trustees say the building is ideal for their use because it is a multi-function space for activities for all ages and backgrounds offering the chance to promote community engagement.

"We are Muslims, but Darul Noor is very open, we are not at all secularised,"



said Mr Fahed Bhatti, one of the charity's committee members.

"Our new premises will be a centre and meeting place which we hope will also be used by the wider community.

"We are multi-cultural in our approach and once we have taken full possession of the building, we hope to open our doors to the community and especially to young people with a range of events, possibly a chess club, and other initiatives."

Mr Bhatti, who was born in Finchley, lives in Arkley.

"We are a very friendly, diverse community, and we are open to ideas.

"Similarly, if there any complaints or suggestions please let us know at [info@darulnoor.org.uk](mailto:info@darulnoor.org.uk) "

To ensure that visitors found their way to the new centre, young stewards were placed at the entrance to Bath Place and the charity says it will make sure that if events are held people disperse quietly.

## OBITUARIES

### Tributes to visionary campaigner for the Open Door Centre – High Barnet’s ‘amazing’ community hub and drop-in cafe

**David Parry, founder of the highly successful Open Door Centre and drop-in cafe at Christ Church, St Albans Road, has died at the age of 77.**

Church leaders paid tribute to his achievement in establishing a meeting point for all ages and groups in High Barnet for which the local community would “be forever in his debt”.

He led the campaign to transform the former Christ Church schoolhouse into a hub for the elderly.

His fund raising and determination to see the project through to completion was recognised in 2021 with a London Borough of Barnet civic award for outstanding service to the community.

*(Pictured above with Mayor of Barnet, Cllr Caroline Stock)*

Mr Parry, a long-time resident of Byng Road, moved to Newbury 18 months ago with his wife Jill to be nearer other family members.

His funeral service at St Nicholas Church, Newbury, was relayed by a live stream to the Open Door Centre for the benefit of church members, former colleagues, and friends in Barnet.

Tributes to their father were led by his two daughters and son. Rachel said her father placed service to the community at the heart of his life. He had a deep calling and was always active in lay ministry.

His leadership of the John Trotter Trust that had initiated the “amazing” Open Door Centre reflected his determination to ensure that his voluntary work had an impact in his local community, nationally and internationally. Its success had brought him great joy.

Voluntary service was a thread throughout the family’s time in High Barnet. He had been a school governor and contributed to the work of Barnet Health Authority, Barnet Probus, and the Alzheimer’s Society.

After a decade planning, campaigning, and fund-raising, the Bishop of Stepney, the Right Reverend Adrian Newman, led the celebrations in July 2017 to celebrate the completion of the centre at a cost of £1.3 million - £800,000 of which was raised in individual donations, £230,000 in grants and the remainder through a bank loan.

A variety of organisations make use of the centre – including Chipping Barnet Seniors Day Centre which holds activities there on Monday and Friday.

**Nick Jones**



### Death of landscape architect and Society stalwart who inspired planting of trees that bear his name on Barnet Hill



**Barnet Society stalwart David Lee, who was renowned for his dogged determination to do all he could to enhance and preserve the character of Chipping Barnet, has died at the age of 93, leaving a unique and enduring legacy.**

He was the inspiration behind the greening of Barnet Hill with the planting in 1999 of nearly 50 trees, mainly London planes and Norway

maples, which in the last quarter century have preserved and enhanced the appearance of the main approach to the town.

David, who enjoyed his status as the celebrated tree planter of High Barnet, conceived the idea of “a green chain” of trees all way the from railway bridge at Underhill, up the High Street and then on to Hadley Green.

Now known as “Lee’s Trees” the line of maples and planes that march up Barnet Hill spring into life each spring above a carpet of daffodils and crocuses and provide autumn colour.

It is a sight of which David never tired, a constant reminder he said of his musings as an architectural student in the 1950s.

His lasting achievement is that the local community now enjoys perhaps the greenest surroundings of any comparable North London neighbourhood.

David, who was a qualified architect and landscape architect, joined the society in 1995 and was soon elected to the committee, later becoming a vice president.

He was a young architectural student in 1956 when for the first time he proceeded down Barnet Hill from the tube station and was so disappointed to see such unwelcoming surroundings.

As he walked along the pavement beside this “long, sloping busy main road” all he could see was the tube line and an old railway goods yard on the left and to the right “a bleak, windswept bank that went on for ever without a tree in sight”.

Such was the impact of that first visit it was still fresh in his mind when he eventually settled in High Barnet in 1982. Barnet Hill seemed just as exposed as he remembered it in the 1950s.

Forty years on from his initial thought that tree planting on Barnet Hill would improve the vista, the first saplings went in.

His first task on joining the Barnet Society was to advise on the location of two plantations of trees on the south-west side of Whittings Hill, tucked away between Quinta Drive and Mays Lane.

Barnet Council had created a new open space in what was formerly scruffy pasture land. Local groups were invited in 1995 to plant trees as part of the Watling Chase Community Forest Project.

**Nick Jones**

# ‘Eco school’ sees the success of its tree planting

On a beautiful day in Barnet back in 1988, a group of Christ Church C of E school children and their teachers began a planting project that would span the next 35 years, writes *Holly Kal-Weiss*. On that auspicious day, the children planted the first trees of what would become a copse in the corner of the open land attached to the school.

The project was part of a plan to adopt the land and create a woodland for the school and visitors alike. It also began the school’s commitment to improving the natural environment for the benefit of everyone.

Fast forward to today and what they have accomplished is extraordinary. The school has earned the official title of an ‘Eco school’, and their ‘green flag’ acknowledging this accolade is proudly displayed at the entrance of the school. The site manager, Lee Crocker, warmly welcomed Barnet Society members Jenny Remfry and Holly Kal-Weiss onto the grounds (along with Penny Baxter from U3A), accompanied by an enthusiastic team of children each representing their class as eco-ambassadors.

One of the children, Hazel Y5, said: “We went around the enormous green field looking at the beautiful, stunning trees and



(Left) the children at the tree planting in 1988 and (above) the woodland as it is now, 35 years later

**“We are extremely lucky to have a School community that value our environment and anything we can do to take it forward for future generations is done with love and pride.”**  
– Lee Crocker

talked about the lifespan of a tree and the types of trees there are. I enjoyed the walk and talking to the ladies from the Barnet Society.”

Lee’s commitment to the school and its environmental policy is part of the reason for the school’s success.

He has encouraged the children to take their natural environment seriously. Together they have created a copse of trees on the far end of the school, a memorial garden for student who sadly passed way as well as an elaborate chicken coop to complement the environmental project. The children are encouraged to tend the garden and take part in the upkeep of the copse and chickens; during the visit it was obvious that the children take pride in their garden and their school.

The Barnet Society’s school visit was linked to our involvement in the CPRE ‘Ring of Trees Project’ which hopes to see an ‘M25 of Trees’ encircle the Greater London Area,

We look forward to hearing more from them for the next 35 years!

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

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

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