

THE BARNET SOCIETY

2,500 back parking petition

Society's campaign to urge the council to allow an hour's free parking in High Barnet has met with a great response, writes **Nick Jones**

Almost 2,000 people visiting shops and other premises in the High Street have signed the Barnet Society's petition calling on Barnet Council to consider offering an hour's free parking to help the town's retailers.

Support for the campaign far exceeded expectations: over a five-week period 1,908 signatures were collected from the 45 shops and outlets that agreed to take the petition forms.

Together with the 130 people who signed up at the Barnet Christmas Fair in December, and the 361 who have backed the petition on-line, there have now been nearly 2,500 expressions of support – and we are still counting.

The Society says the response to the petition represents an urgent plea from traders and their customers that the council should think again about its outright refusal to extend the extremely limited parking concessions that are currently available.

In reply to our survey, retailers indicated that if the council agreed to an hour's free parking along the entire length of the High Street, and in all three of the council-owned car parks, it could increase trade by an average of 25 per cent.

When asked about footfall, retailers estimated that their businesses could attract an average of eight extra customers each day.

Several shops have each collected well over 100 signatures and the



Roger Aitken signs the parking petition as Society members look on

Society believes the strength of local anger is the clearest possible rebuttal of Councillor Dean Cohen for refusing to accept that the council's expensive and inordinately complicated parking charges have been partly responsible for driving customers away from High Barnet's shopping centre.

Councillor Cohen, the cabinet member responsible for car parking, told the Barnet Times (15.1.2015) that charges had not caused the decline of high street shopping.

He said: "We need to bust the myth that the health of the high street is all about parking. What we all really need to focus on is how we can help the high street adjust and innovate to meet the demands of the 21st-century consumer."

The Society's next move is to seek a meeting with High Barnet's three councillors, David Longstaff, Wendy Prentice and Bridget Perry, and the Chipping Barnet MP Theresa Villiers.

Councillor Longstaff has already promised to put forward to the council the Society's demand for

an hour's free parking if a detailed case can be prepared.

Our aim would be to seek Councillor Longstaff's support in asking for a meeting with Councillor Cohen and other members of the council's environment committee.

At the start of the new year, the Barnet Times followed the Society's lead and joined the campaign to persuade the council to rethink its approach.

The newspaper has launched its own online petition in support of 30 minutes of free parking in high streets throughout the London Borough of Barnet.

Since the launch of the Society's petition last November, and the distribution of forms for signatures, there has been a groundswell of support from shops and other traders who believe that High Barnet is being penalised because it cannot offer the free parking available in other nearby shopping centres.

Age UK is one of the organisations criticising local authorities such as Barnet Council that have imposed cashless parking charges. It says pay-by-phone and credit
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Parking petition

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card charging systems present huge difficulties for elderly and disabled people, who are being excluded from their own town centres if they have to use a car.

In a statement thanking retailers for their assistance with the petition, the Society said it had been impressed by the determination of High Street traders to try to succeed, despite the hit their businesses took when the council removed cash meters and introduced phone and credit card charging.

“Some shops estimate that they lost 20 to 25 per cent of their trade once parking by phone was imposed and it has been heartening to see how they have been encouraged by the petition. They hope that the support shown by their customers will have an impact on Barnet Council and MP Theresa Villiers.

“Almost every trader has a horror story about losing trade from customers who cannot master parking by phone or who are not prepared to put their credit card into a parking meter in the High Street.

“Others say the main drawback of the complicated charging system is that it deters shoppers who want to pop in to pick up an item or make a simple purchase. They are not prepared to go through the rigmarole of paying by phone and are frightened they will get a parking ticket if they stop for a few minutes.

“The Society accepts that innovative solutions are needed to assist town centres but it hopes that the widespread support for the petition, and our analysis of shopkeepers’ estimates for the impact on trade, will bust Councillor Cohen’s myth that parking charges are not having an impact on our High Street.”



Sophie Theophanous, staff, Sara Conway, catering and hospitality student, and Annie Hussain, cookery and pastry student

Time for a cuppa at the Tea Station

Catering and tourism students from Barnet and Southgate College are gaining work experience at High Barnet’s newest pop-up shop, a family-friendly tea shop that has opened in the Spires shopping centre.

The Tea Station is the latest venture to be started by Love Barnet in conjunction with local residents, and the aim is to create a retro inspired tea shop that includes a soft play area for children.

Play time: The Tea Station, which also incorporates Kids Shop, selling wooden toys, games alphabet art and books, is the third pop-up venture to be opened by Love Barnet and local residents.



Students are helping to prepare food, bake bread and serve customers in order to gain work experience.

David Byrne, the college principal, says the Tea Station is an exciting community venture and will provide a great opportunity for students to find their feet in a work environment and learn more about the catering and retail trade.

“The college is extremely proud and thankful that local residents

Dismore enters broadband battle

Andrew Dismore, London Assembly member for Barnet and Camden, has stepped in to try to badger British Telecom to complete the High Barnet roll-out of high-speed broadband.

Mr Dismore’s intervention follows scores of complaints from residents who are angered by BT’s failure to install the nine additional fibre-enabled cabinets that are needed to provide an improved service.

So far pressure from Barnet Council and the Chipping Barnet MP Mrs Theresa Villiers has made virtually no impression on BT except for a repeated assurance that it expects eventually to provide 90 per cent of Greater London with access to super-fast broadband.

Mrs Villiers says she has been told that the new finish date for the Greater London roll-out is “spring 2015”; but she has also warned that many High Barnet householders might fail to get an improved service because some local cabinets are “not considered commercially viable for an upgrade”.

Mr Dismore says he is as frustrated as High Barnet residents with BT’s unwillingness to engage with the local community and especially with members of the GLA. He had

raised the issue repeatedly with the Mayor of London and the economy committee at City Hall and has submitted further questions.

“I was hopeful of getting some progress last year but BT have clammed up again. The only course of action is to keep battering away at them ... I have not forgotten about you, or BT’s failure to respond.”

Only one extra cabinet has been installed so far as part of the High Barnet roll-out, at Hadley Highstone, and BT customers in streets in and around roads such as the High Street, Wood Street, Stapylton Road, Queen’s Road and Bell’s Hill have become increasingly alarmed at evasive answers issued in response to complaints.

BT says Greater London will not benefit from the funds set aside for improving rural broadband, and the installation of fibre-enabled cabinets for the 10 per cent of London homes not covered by the planned roll-out will depend on commercial considerations.

The factors to be taken into account are the level of customer demand, the cost of extending the super-fast network and whether additional installations are technically viable.

and the key businesses in Love Barnet have come together in this way and are prepared to give college students a fantastic chance to experience business and enterprise.”

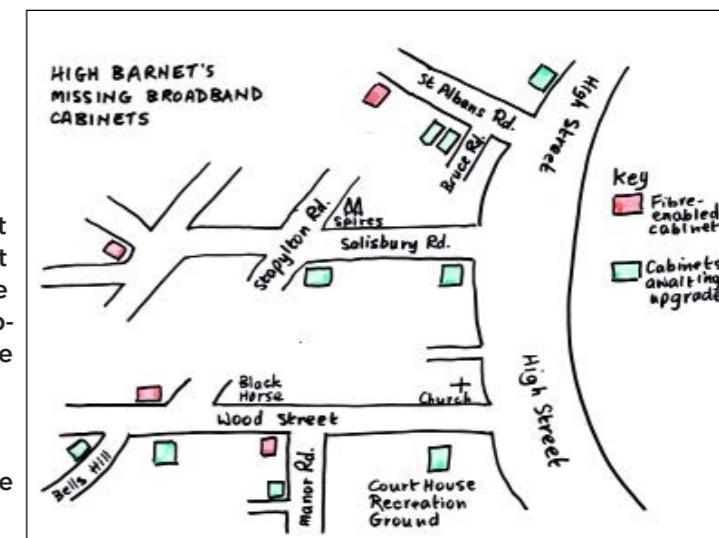
Construction students from the college helped to fit out the shop and the students assigned to the tea shop will be supervised by experienced retail staff. Food preparation will be a key part of their work.

“For the young students at Hospitality House, the college’s catering department at East Finchley, this will their first experience of the work place,” said Lucy Bridgers, one of the Love Barnet volunteers.

The Tea Station’s menu is still evolving after it opened in mid-January and it will offer a range of prepared salads, scones, pastries, tea cakes and a range of junior food as well.

“More children’s facilities are planned including a baby-changing area and children’s toilet. Story times are also in the pipeline and we hope to make the Tea Station available on Sunday afternoons for party bookings,” added Ms Bridgers.

This excellent diagram by Pat Jones shows at a glance where the missing cabinets are: Those in red have been enabled for fibre broadband and those in green have not





Ask not for whom the bells toll...

...they toll for High Barnet, as **Nick Jones** found out when he paid a visit to the bellringers at the parish church of St John the Baptist

Sunday mornings are quite a rush for the bell ringers of High Barnet. At 9 a.m. they meet up at the Parish Church of St John the Baptist and the bells ring out for half an hour before the start of the main morning service at 9.30.

Then, with just enough time to catch their breath, several set off for Monken Hadley to help ring the bells and call worshippers to

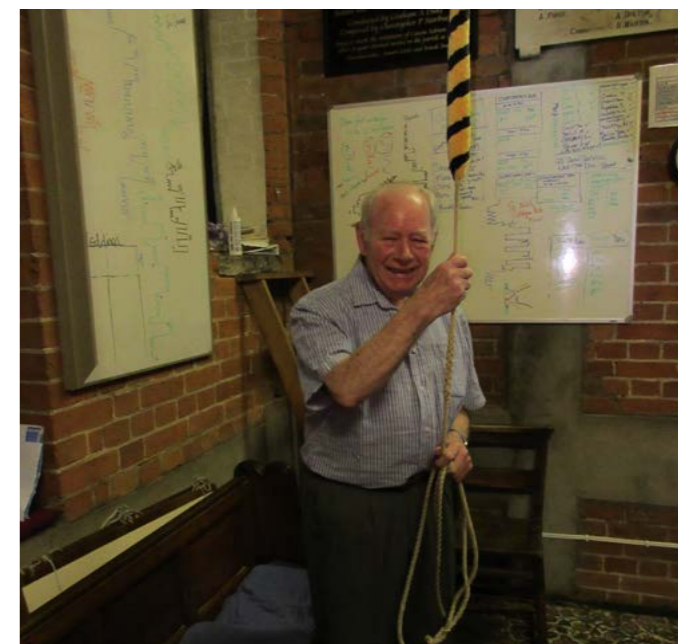
the 10.30 service at the church of St Mary the Virgin.

Hearing the bells, perhaps while walking along the High Street or Wood Street, is one of the delights of living in High Barnet, whether early on Sunday morning or perhaps on practice night on Monday evening.

The bells are rung from a platform half-way up the tower of St



Ringing endorsement:
David Ely,
Adrian Sweeting,
Niamh Hickey
(obscured)
Richard Lewis and
Nancy Surman
(Right) Derek Yates, at 83, is the oldest bell ringer at St John the Baptist



High Barnet's team, under its ringing master Nancy Surman, share duties, and especially bell practice, with half a dozen local churches.

Derek Yates, at 83, is the oldest of the pool of a dozen bell ringers at St John the Baptist. He has been ringing the bells there for 25 years.

"It was my daughter who got me into bell ringing, and it has turned out to be a great hobby. It is challenging, but good exercise and a very sociable pastime."

David Ely (70) is High Barnet's longest-serving bell ringer. He started at the parish church 44 years ago. "I'm a mathematician and worked in the computer industry so I enjoy a mathematical challenge;

bell-ringing can be all about mathematical permutations rather than just melody."

Nancy Surman was elected the High Barnet tower captain four years ago and she has been bell-ringing since the age of 14. She liaises with Tricia Narracott-Wales, captain at Monken Hadley, to make sure they have a full team each Sunday.

"Both our teams are ringing for the main Sunday service. That's what we are there for so we never want to let our churches down," said Ms Surman.

By local tradition, Monken Hadley rings in the New Year. "It is one of the highlights, ringing out the old year and ringing in the new, and we end up having quite a party," said Ms Narracott-Wales.

Perhaps the final word should go to Ann Pegum, another regular ringer at High Barnet. "I always wanted to be a bell ringer and it is great when we go on tour visiting other churches.

"I know how important the bells are to the residents of High Barnet. When local people hear them ringing out on our Monday evening practice night they say they sound so wonderful floating over High Barnet and that makes it all so worthwhile."

The eight bells of St John the Baptist were first dedicated on Christmas Eve 1892. They were rehung with metal headstocks and rededicated on Christmas Eve 1992.

Da Capo keeps the world of amateur music alive

It's not just the bellringers who are kept busy at St John the Baptist, as rehearsals for the first of this year's concerts at the church by the Da Capo Concert Band gather pace. The band was established in 1997 for amateur adult musicians in north London and Hertfordshire.

Wind and brass players are needed to supplement the band, and newcomers will be welcome at rehearsals starting at 8pm each Wednesday evening.

The first concert of 2015 will be at St John the Baptist at 7.30pm on Saturday 28 March.

The programme promises a range of well-known and symphonic wind band music, including selections from Mary Poppins, the 'Robin

Hood Suite' by Frederic Curzon, Phillip Sparke's 'Albion Heritage' and 'The Hounds of Spring' by Alfred Reed.

The band takes its name from the musical term da capo, 'from the beginning', and is still going strong after 17 years.

Martin Short, a member of the band committee, said their objective was to provide amateur adult woodwind, brass and percussion players with a friendly, dynamic and challenging environment in which to play.

The band performs three major concerts a year. Tickets on the door: adults £8, concessions £5, children under 12 free.

Contact: enquiries@dacapoconcertband.co.uk

John the Baptist; access is by a steep spiral staircase.

The parish church has eight bells, two more than Monken Hadley, so needs a full complement to complete a Grandsire Triples, which can take up to three minutes to perform.

Bell ringers enjoy each other's company and a dash from one church to the next adds to the fun.



Baton charge: bandmaster Jonathan Milne with the Da Capo Concert Band

Bring the Bees 'Back2Barnet' campaign is a hive of activity

Wolves supporter **Nick Jones** leaves aside football rivalries to report on Barnet supporters' fight to return 'home'

Sign up to get the "Bees" playing football in Barnet once again

A campaign to get Barnet Football Club to return to the town in a new purpose-built stadium is to be stepped up, after what local supporters believe could be some promising signs.

Underhill stadium, the former home ground of Barnet FC, is about to be sold and one of the proposals being sounded out with the planners is that it could become the site of a new free school.

Back2Barnet campaigners hope that some of the money freed up by sale of the site might be allocated by the club's chairman Tony Kleanthous towards the cost of building a new local stadium.

Barnet FC played its last game at Underhill in April 2013 and has moved to the Hive Football Centre in Camrose Avenue, Edgware, because Barnet Council made no move towards resolving a disagreement over a possible lease for the additional land required for expansion.

But in recent weeks, in another hopeful sign, the council has given permission for a nearby Green Belt open space, bordering Dollis Brook, to be fenced off for use as a football ground by the Hadley

Wood Sports Trust. Back2Barnet's campaign director Gerry Bates says these two developments have spurred on their efforts to get the "Bees back to Barnet, where they belong".

Fund-raising is being stepped up in the hope of securing sufficient money for an application to be made for planning permission for a new football ground on the former playing field of Barnet Cricket Club, which is next door to the Underhill car park – the land that was previously at the centre of the long-running dispute between Barnet Council and Mr Kleanthous.

"If Barnet Council can now give Hadley Wood Sports Trust permission to fence off what was once the Old Stationers Football Ground and what has been an open space for the last seven years, then perhaps the planners will now look



Hopeful sign? Gary Cooper (left) and Gerry Bates at the old Barnet ground



Turfed out: Barnet's final match at the Underhill ground in April 2013, which they won

Chequered career

Barnet was founded in 1888, having been previously known as New Barnet FC and Woodville FC. They played in various leagues, with the usual smattering of Barnet results. Even in the early days, they never did anything the easy way. The modern life of Barnet began when they moved to Underhill in 1907 until 2013, more than a hundred years of tears, cheers and the occasional jeers.

more kindly on our application," said Mr Bates.

"Hadley Wood FC is now planning three new pitches within a few hundred yards of Underhill but in 2006 Barnet FC failed to get permission for a replacement stadium at Underhill and that dispute culminated in the move to the Hive.

"We always knew that the chairman Tony Kleanthous intended to sell the site of the Underhill stadium and we now understand it could become the site of a new free school.

"The chairman made it clear at the time that any funds from the sale of Underhill would be used to pay off the club's overheads but that any remaining funds would be put aside for a new stadium back in Barnet.

"So our aim is to raise awareness to the possibilities that are opening up and do all we can to build on the fund of good will that local supporters still have for the possibility of getting the Bees back to Barnet."

Back2Barnet (www.bfctrust.co.uk) has launched two online petitions to raise the campaign's profile:

www.change.org/p/barnet-council-and-barnet-fc-bring-barnet-fc-back-to-barnet and www.petitions.barnet.gov.uk

Gary Cooper, a leading member

of Back2Barnet, has personally raised £4,600 for the fighting fund by completing a sponsored walk from Underhill to the Hive ahead of each home game.

"It is 5.8 miles, although it is slightly shorter across the fields, and I am looking for sponsors for every home game." His email is: walkunderhilltothehive@outlook.com

Mr Cooper has been a committed supporter since his schooldays. "My first home game at Underhill was in 1965. I walked along Mays Lane with my father and I have only missed six or seven home games since 1968.

"But that's the problem with the move to the Hive. Local dads aren't

prepared to take their kids all the way to Edgware. It's very sad but I would estimate that we have easily lost 400 to 500 local supporters who no longer turn up for home games.

"We know how strongly local football enthusiasts feel about the loss of their professional team after over a century playing at Underhill.

"It is such a shame. Barnet are now top of the Vanarama Conference League, eight points clear, and we could win promotion to Divi-



sion Three of the Football League, so we are not going to give up now."

Mr Bates hopes the prospect of promotion might help their campaign.

"Barnet have only a ten-year lease at the Hive from Harrow Council and there is no provision at the Hive for the club to play at the higher ground standards required by the Football Association, which makes it all the more important that the chairman plans for a return to Barnet.

"Even if Barnet did have to be saved by Harrow Council several years ago because of the row with Barnet Council, we will go on supporting the club, and we realise that if the opportunity arises to get the Bees back they will need to be in a good financial position."

The Hive in Edgware, where Barnet FC moved to at the start of the 2013-14 season



Students focus on the Green Belt

Trainee TV journalists make a documentary in Barnet on pressures on the Green Belt, writes Nick Jones

High Barnet's much-coveted Green Belt is to be featured in a seven-minute television documentary being filmed by students from City University's department of journalism.

Their assignment is to explore the pressure to develop Green Belt land around London, given the growing demand for new housing.

Alex Marshall and Terri-Ann Williams, who are both students on an MA course in TV journalism, travelled out on the Northern Line from Angel; they were amazed to see so much countryside once the tube train left West Finchley.

"We have to admit that we had never been all the way to High Barnet before, and we found the views from the Tube, especially after Totteridge, really stunning. No wonder local people make such a fuss about preserving the Green Belt," said Alex.

The two students had asked the Barnet Society to give them a tour and explain why protecting the Green Belt was such a priority.

Their first stop was Cavendish Road looking across the Green Belt countryside to the north of the town. Cavendish is one of several roads, along with Byng Road and Grimsdyke Crescent, that end abruptly and were originally planned to extend farther north until housebuilding was halted by the Second World War and the land was then designated Green Belt.

Robin Bishop, who leads on planning and environmental issues, for the Barnet Society, explained why the Society considered it so important to preserve a green lung of countryside between the M25 and the northern boundary of High Barnet, Arkley and Cockfosters.

Next stop was in Barnet Gate



Robin Bishop, with Alex Marshall (centre) and Terri-Ann Williams

Lane, looking across at a site in Hendon Wood Lane where there is unauthorised storage of building materials and vehicles on what was once ancient meadowland and is part of the Green Belt beside Dollis Brook.

Barnet Council is being encour-

Tight rein needed

The modern concept of the Green Belt dates from the 1950s though legislation was in force from 1947, when councils were given powers to make such designations on open land. Groups such as the Campaign to Protect Rural England were in the vanguard on the issue, helping to ensure that more than 1.6m hectares are Green Belt in England alone. However, no one has become complacent and the threat to encroachment from developers is always on campaigners' minds. Vigilance is required as plans for encroachments on Green Belt land are common. The Barnet Society is constantly monitoring sites and reporting breaches.

aged to enforce planning regulations and get the site cleared, but it has been an uphill task, and Robin described why attempts at gradual infilling of protected land posed a constant challenge

He insisted that the Society was prepared to support building projects that were in keeping with the Green Belt and that respected and preserved the countryside, but he and his team had to be constantly on their guard when developers tried to eat away at protected land.

The final filmed sequence was in Mays Lane, where the two students were shown new houses being built on the Dollis Valley estate; they were able to see for themselves how the density of homes was being increased to cope with the pressure for new housing.

"We wanted to come to High Barnet to see what is at stake. We knew from the Barnet Society's website how important the Green Belt is to local residents but we also want to consider whether it would be right to extend into the Green Belt given there is such a shortage of new houses around London," said Alex.

Bada Byng! - at long last, projects get off to a start

Work has finally begun to build new facilities and a children's hospice at the Barnet Countryside Centre in Byng Rd



Philip and Janet Hulme, Mike MacInerry and Mayor Hugh Rayner at the site

After years of campaigning and fund-raising, work has finally started on building new headquarters and facilities for the Barnet Countryside Centre in Byng Road.

Councillor Hugh Rayner, the Mayor of Barnet, wearing a hard hat and his chain of office, was armed with a new spade as he set to work breaking ground at a ceremony that also marks another milestone in the development of the Noah's Ark Children Hospice.

The construction work is the first phase in redeveloping a group of former school buildings, just off Byng Road. The new environment centre is to be built on an empty plot, and after the dis-used school buildings have been demolished the cleared land will be the site of a new children's hospice.

Once completed, the environment centre and hospice will both share access to the nature reserve that is managed jointly by the Barnet Countryside Centre and the London Wildlife Trust.

A £750,000 donation by the Hadley Trust to Noah's Ark (www.noahsark-hospice.org.uk) helped launch the three-way partnership, and Councillor Rayner acknowledged the importance of the ceremony (24.1.2015) to Noah's Ark and the Friends of Barnet Countryside Centre (www.fobcc.org.uk).

"Noah's Ark is such an inspirational charity, as I was only saying to Mrs Cameron at 10 Downing

Street the other day," said the Mayor, amid laughter from the assembled guests. "I am delighted to attend and to take this chance to congratulate the environment centre on their work and thank the Hadley Trust."

Ru Watkins, chief executive of Noah's Ark, added his thanks to the Hadley Trust for its generosity in helping to achieve a "great step forward" in the joint future of the hospice and countryside centre. "Today's ceremony shows that at last we are digging out to support the community, the families and their children and to show why both organisations are an integral part of the community."

Dick Elms, chair of the countryside centre trustees, welcomed the Mayor, and expressed his delight at the rapid progress that was being made. Construction work was two

weeks ahead of schedule and should be finished by July, ready for the official opening of the new centre in September.

Now that construction is underway, the centre is advertising for an environmental education manager who would help prepare and deliver education sessions for school children visiting the nature reserve.

Planning permission was granted by Barnet Council in 2012 for an eco-friendly environment centre and a £4.8 million children's hospice, and the first stage of the work includes the demolition of the dis-used school buildings.

Mr Watkins said Noah's Ark hoped to start work on the construction of the hospice in 2016 but the timing depended on the success of future fund-raising.

"We need £6.7 million in the bank before we can begin the new building and we are still £4 million away from our target. We also need assured operating income for Noah's Ark as we are continually expanding our work in the community and costs keep increasing."

He said that at present Noah's Ark was caring for 185 children but research has shown that there are probably 350 children in the charity's catchment area that need palliative care and assistance.

Local residents in the vicinity of the Byng Road centre were given a briefing on the building work and plans for the hospice.

Noah's Ark

Noah's Ark hopes to provide a complete hospice service to help care for children with life-limiting illnesses. The new hospice in Byng Road would include six fully equipped specialist children's bedrooms and four family rooms to accommodate relatives. There would also be extensive nursing and treatment facilities and a day centre with play areas for children.

Guns & Smoke application is shot down by the council

The Society's Planning & Environment officer **Robin Bishop** reports on the latest round of the Church Passage saga

Guns & Smoke has been refused planning permission for its shop-front in Church Passage.

In January, Barnet Council's Planning Committee voted to reject its application seeking retrospective approval for the ground floor alterations. The restaurant's illuminated fascia sign had been rejected the previous month.

The committee's decision is an important victory for the Society and 15 other local objectors.

It was a test case for the Chipping Barnet Town Strategy, adopted 18 months ago to "encourage high-quality buildings and public spaces... to help foster local distinctiveness".

In my address, I pointed out that the alterations to the restaurant and the "Swiss chalet" re-cladding above and beside it were the most conspicuous of a number of in-fringements in our Conservation Areas in recent years, and that Chipping Barnet's most prominent civic and religious space deserved a design of restraint and dignity.

The decision leaves open the question of the final appearance. We believe the facade should be treated as a whole, and have written to Barnet's Planning Enforcement Manager specifying details (such as windows, paving and colours) with which we are not happy, and suggesting acceptable solutions.

Barnet Museum

We welcome a planning application by the Barnet Museum to extend their premises to house relics from the Battle of Barnet, which may be subject of an archaeological excavation before long. The extension goes to considerable lengths to be in keeping with the existing building and its neighbours.



Guns & Smoke stands in marked contrast to the Hyde Institute a few doors down. With its latest application turned down, the question of the final appearance of 1 Church Passage has still to be resolved but the Society will be keeping a close eye on matters

Pictures:
Siofra Rafferty/
Robin Bishop



What a beautiful contrast

A delightful contrast to Guns & Smoke is its dignified neighbour, the Hyde Institute, writes Robin Bishop.

The Hyde is one of the best facades in Barnet and, along with Butterfield's St. John the Baptist's church, and its parish hall further along Church Passage, nicely frames the churchyard and its war memorial – which in effect form Chipping Barnet's principal civic space.

In 1888 Julia Hyde left £10,000 to establish a free "Literary Institute and Reading Rooms" for parishioners of Chipping Barnet and Monken Hadley in memory of her late husband, Henry. The Misses Paget commissioned Thomas Graham Jackson (1835-1924) in 1903, and it was completed the following year. It became Barnet public library, and is now part of Barnet & Southgate College.

Jackson had been a pupil of George Gilbert Scott, one of the greatest Victorian architects. In 1862 he started his own practice and designed many buildings in Oxford, notably Hertford College's Bridge of Sighs (1899), and later in Cambridge.

The Hyde is a distillation of his style. It has a Free Classical façade, with a pitched roof behind its parapet balustrade and traces of a former lantern or ventilator.

The entrance passage on the left originally gave access to a double-height reading room with an open timber roof and galleries; a first floor has since been inserted with offices, etc. At the back is a generous top-lit extension for meetings, lectures and/or practical classes.

The façade is unified by a subtle grid. It is dominated by two pairs of six-light windows of stone, derived from Hardwick and other grand Elizabethan halls.

Through them can be seen the original gallery balustrade. They are framed by Ionic pilasters, their lower third solid and upper two-thirds fluted in Mannerist style, which stand on a plinth and support a dentil course.

All these are in red brick, expertly carved. Across them, continuing the transom lines, run two stone courses, tying in the central commemorative plaque and the oval window above the entrance arch.

Mystery absences

The character of Chipping Barnet derives from its distinctive mix of ordinary and special buildings and greenery. An excellent example is when you enter or leave on the St. Alban's Road.

The combination of Christ Church, its ancillary buildings and Burial Ground, the White Lion pub and the backdrop of mature trees signal the transition between town and country. It is a mystery, therefore, that – although these landmarks adjoin the Monken Hadley Conservation Area – none is actually included, even though Christ Church is nationally listed Grade II, its Vicarage and the White Lion are locally listed, and the former school, parish hall, and its Burial Ground lych-gate are fine examples of Arts & Crafts architecture.

Two things about this concern us now. Firstly, The White Lion is threatened with closure and possible sale for housing. The pub was probably built soon after the

construction of the new St. Alban's Road (by-passing Potters Bar) by Thomas Telford in 1826, in the expectation of profits from the (then major) coaching trade. Its present owners, Fullers, have advertised for a new landlord on a higher rent – unlikely to improve the viability of the pub. If it has to close, Fullers will be able to claim that redevelop-

The decision is a victory for the Barnet Society and 15 other local objectors

ment is the only alternative. If you care about its future, please let the Society know. Secondly, the trees of the Burial Ground form a fine boundary with the Green Belt and, together with those on the other side of the road, form a green gateway to Chipping Barnet. However, many are not in good condi-

tion. The Council's agents, Capita, propose tree surgery, but seem to have no overall strategy for care of existing or planting of new trees. In its absence, we objected to their planning application. Although it was approved, we do not intend to let the matter rest.

We wish to see a properly planned programme of tree protection, care and replacement. The cutting down of several Ashes in Tapster Street last year, the neglect of a Ginkgo and other recently planted trees by Queen Elizabeth's Girls School, and the failure to plant any new ones, suggest that this is badly lacking, and we intend to pursue the matter with the Council.

If you know of any particular trees in danger, or places to plant new ones, please contact me (robinbishop@gmx.co.uk) or David Lee, the Society's Vice President and tree expert, on 020 8364 9161.

Sir Sydney Chapman, assiduous MP with nice line in humour

Jenny Remfry writes:

Sydney Chapman was elected President of the Barnet Society in 1990. He had good credentials - an interest in Barnet as an architect and town planner, and a passion for the green belt and initiator of 'Plant a Tree in '73'. He was also assiduous in replying to letters, with the co-operation of his wife Clare, and he soon became greatly appreciated.

I was elected Chairman at the same time, and grew to greatly value Sydney's support. Sydney became well known for his self-deprecating wit. When Sydney Chapman Way was named in his honour, his



Sir Sydney Chapman:
1935-2014.
President of the Barnet Society,
1990-2005

response was to note that nobody actually lived in that road, so nobody was likely to object!

In the 1990s, Derrick Bridges was Honorary Secretary of the Society. He was in the habit of lacing his secretary's report at the AGM with items from the joke book he had inherited from his father.

On one occasion, he retold the story of the brain surgeon who offered replacement brains to his patients, the most expensive being brains from politicians - because they had never been used..

Sydney was sitting next to me and went rather white, but he recovered, and said that these days he regarded himself as a states-



Gillian honoured for museum work

Dr Gillian Gear, Barnet Museum's archivist, was invested with the Order of the British Empire at a ceremony at the Tower of London last November. She was awarded the British Empire medal in the Queen's 2014 Birthday Honours in recognition of her work safe-

guarding the museum and her support for local history projects. Gillian is pictured (L-R) with Sir David Brewer, Lord Lieutenant of Greater London, husband Michael, sons Tim and Chris and General Lord Dannatt, Constable of the Tower.

Membership report

membership@barnetsociety.org.uk

Welcome to the following new members: Ms Armitage, Mr Waller, Ms Gyseman, Mr and Mrs Steel, Mr and Mrs Graham-Taylor, Mr Stevens, Mrs Duffin and Mrs Lindsay.

On behalf of the Barnet Society, I would like to thank one of our longest subscribing members, Gill Mulloy, for a very generous donation to the Society.

Gill no longer lives in Barnet but she shared with us her recollections of life in Barnet. As a child she enjoyed walking along Mays Lane past the 'Fever Hospital', and also going to the Stable Room at Whalebones, initially as a Girl Guide, and later to the 18-30 Club.

She used to walk every week to QE Boys' School for lessons in their outdoor, unheated swimming pool and was later involved with the fundraising efforts for a pool to be built in QE Girls' School. Gill's father was a founding member of the Society and I'm sure he would be so pleased to know that we are continuing that work decades later. Teresa Kelly, Membership Secretary

man rather than a politician! Animal welfare was among his many interests. He was an honorary associate of the British Veterinary Association and chaired the parliamentary all-party Animal Welfare Committee. Sydney resigned as president after leaving parliament in 2005, sold his house in The Drive, re-married and moved to central London. They later moved to Oxfordshire, where he died.

He will be long remembered.

Jenny Remfry is a past chair of the Barnet Society

