

# THE BARNET SOCIETY

## QE Boys - what price excellence?

Is the school now an academic hothouse at the expense of local boys, asks **Nick Jones**

Around 2,000 boys from across London and the Home Counties are again expected to apply to study at Barnet's award winning Queen Elizabeth's Boys' School, which has just begun the selection process for the 180 places that will be available in September 2015.

Neil Enright, headmaster at QE Boys for the last three years, has spoken out in support of an admissions system that reverted 20 years ago to a grammar school entrance test at 11 plus.

In an interview in The Independent newspaper, he justified continuing to attract boys from across London and the surrounding counties and defended an admissions policy that no longer drew pupils solely from what he described as the "immediate, affluent area" of the school's original catchment area around High Barnet.

But among many local parents there is a sense of resentment and even of anger at the rejection of boys who do meet the school's criteria and who cannot gain high enough marks on the entry test for so few places in such a large field. These parents ask, what price excellence: has High Barnet gained an academic hothouse, but lost a local school?

For his part, Mr Enright insisted that QE Boys was still pursuing the aims of the 1573 charter from Queen Elizabeth 1 that established a free school for boys from all walks of life.



### Could the school do more to celebrate its local connections?

He said 90 per cent of its 1,200 pupils were from ethnic minority groups, including many from Asian, Chinese or Afro Caribbean origins, and he considered this was "a reflection of the make-up of the north-west London community". In terms of the national deprivation index, the intake reflected broadly the average for the country.

After its outstanding academic

### 'Among many local parents there is a sense of resentment'

success last year, when it topped the list for A level results of the 100 most successful state secondary schools and became one of only two schools in the country to get a 100 per cent pass rate in the new English Baccalaureate, Queen Elizabeth's achieved Gold Club status in the awards scheme of the

Mayor of London, Boris Johnson.

One of the Mayor's objectives is to ensure London's that exceptional schools share their experience with other schools, which prompted the Barnet Society to ask if QE Boys was planning any fresh initiatives to share its educational prowess, or perhaps do more to celebrate its local connections and historic heritage.

Unlike Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School, which is a comprehensive serving the High Barnet area under an admissions process co-ordinated by Barnet Council, Queen Elizabeth's Boys' School no longer has a designated catchment area having become a selective grammar school.

Boys who wish to study at the school sit an 11 plus entrance test which is held each September

for the 2015 intake, entrance test request forms must be received by the school by 23 July 2014.

In his interview for The Independent 10.4.2014, Mr Enright

**Turn to page 2**

# QE Boys - what price excellence?

acknowledged the newspaper's description of the school as being situated in the heart of what would, by any standards, be described as "a very leafy, suburban, white, British-dominated territory", but the school's intake reflected the "whole economic spectrum".

"We take boys from all over London Greenford, Ealing, Hayes and towards Heathrow. Some travel the length of the Northern line or come from Essex or Hertfordshire.

QE Boys' website [www.qebarnet.co.uk](http://www.qebarnet.co.uk) describes the school's progress from its foundation in 1573 and the changes in status that followed the decision in 1970 to convert the original grammar school into a comprehensive. From an establishment of 300 pupils, the school grew year by year to become a 1,200 strong comprehensive by 1976.

In 1989 QE Boys' became one of the first schools to secure grant maintained status; it reverted to a selective intake in 1994; and then achieved academy status under the framework of the current coalition government.

## School response

In a follow up to Mr Enright's interview, the Barnet Society asked for the school's response to a number of questions which are often posed by local parents:

● What happened? Why does Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School draw its pupils from the local catchment area whereas Queen

Elizabeth's Boys' School does not?

● As QE Boys is just commencing the selection process for its September 2015 intake, has any thought been given to an allocation of places for local children?

● Has High Barnet gained a centre of excellence but lost a neighbourhood school for local boys?

● Is the answer to the final question simply that QE Boys' academic success is a reflection of the greater freedom for schools that successive governments have encouraged?

These questions were left unanswered, but the school gave a lengthy explanation of the actions it was taking in line with its Gold Club status and the hope of the Mayor of London that exceptional schools share their practice and experience with other London schools.

Mr Enright told the Barnet Society that the school is playing its part in enriching the local community while remaining "a centre of academic excellence from where boys of any background, however humble, can succeed".

School facilities such as halls and swimming pool are regularly hired out to local groups, including swimming clubs, Barnet Choral Society and the Barracudas children's club.

As part of its outreach programme children from local primaries use QE Boys' music technology facilities, and every year 300 children from its five partner primary schools Foulds, Christ Church,

Frith Manor, Moss Hall and Bushey Heath are invited to a concert by the full symphony orchestra and to learn about musical instruments.

Discussions, debates and engineering competitions are held jointly with other local secondary schools. There has been collaboration in music and dance with Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School.

Sixth formers at QE Boys are required to do voluntary work that benefits the local community. The school's musical ensembles such as the chamber choir and saxophone quintet have performed regularly in homes for the elderly.

## Royal charter

A translation of the charter establishing the "Free Grammar school of Queen Elizabeth" for the "inhabitants of our town of Barnet" is available at Barnet Museum. It opens with the words:

"Elizabeth by the grace of God of England France and Ireland Queen Defender of the Faith:

"To all whom this present writing shall come greeting know ye that we at the humble request of our well beloved cousin and counsellor Robert Earl of Leicester, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, Master of our Horse in behalf of our faithful and liege subjects the inhabitants of our town of Barnet in the counties of Hertford and Middlesex there to erect and forever to establish a grammar school for the education and instruction of boys and youth there to be instructed brought up and taught of our Special Grace certain knowledge and good pleasure for ourselves our heirs and successors to will grant and order that for the future there be and there shall be one common grammar school in the said town of Barnet or near the same which shall be called the Free Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth for the education bringing up and instruction of boys and youth.



Facilities such as the swimming pool are hired out to local groups



# Family-run Barnet cafe has stood the test of time



Tony and Dorina with their son and daughter, Giuliano and Angela, continuing a family tradition at Dory's cafe, St Albans Road, Barnet

When customer satisfaction is the only protection against the tsunami of change that is sweeping so many of Britain's high streets, few Barnet traders can match the long standing loyalty of local residents for the refreshments served at Dory's cafe, still going strong and now in the hands of the third generation of an Italian family, **writes Nick Jones.**

It was in 1956 that Ottorino Pellicci whose name had been shortened to Dory left his father's cafe E Pellicci in Bethnal Green Road, and started running his own cafe next to Barnet Market at 3 St Albans Road.

Ottorini's daughter and husband, Dorina and Tony, now help their son and daughter, Giuliano and Angela, serve up an endless supply of full English breakfasts, teas, coffees and sandwiches as well home made

dishes such as shepherd's pie, steak pie and chicken escalope for lunch.

Angela says they find it so rewarding when customers tell them they are the third and sometimes even the fourth generation of local families who have enjoyed a meal or a quick snack in a cafe that they remember from their childhood.

"One couple here at lunchtime have been coming all the way from Hatfield for the last 47 years; my granddad would be so pleased to think we are maintaining a quality of food and service that can win such satisfaction and loyalty."

Ottorino, whose father and mother opened their cafe in Bethnal Green Road in 1900, was one of a family of eight. In 1956, when he set up in business on his own, the Barnet cafe was being run by the Mancini family.

The week after Ottorino and his wife Crimene opened for business Barnet's cattle market closed, but the success of the stalls market ensured a regular clientele.

Angela has fond memories of helping her mother and father, Dorina and Tony: "Back in those days there was a queue to get stalls at the market and trade was so good we used to get queues outside our door. Over the last 58 years we have become something of an institution.

"Sometimes you find yourself serving a television star or celebrity, or it might be someone popping in who can remember my grandfather. Dad still does most of the cooking

that is what makes a cafe like this so special, we prepare all our own food and that is what the customers appreciate."

## Pop-up shop hopes to revive high street

One of the many vacant frontages along Barnet High Street is about to get a new lease of life as a pop up shop where independent traders, artists and voluntary groups can display samples of their work, goods and crafts, **writes Nick Jones.**

A former outlet of the bakery chain Greggs that closed last year is being made available for the use of the Chipping Barnet Town Team and the Love Barnet campaign.

It is to be fitted out by a team of volunteers led by Gail Laser, vice chair of the Town Team, and a local television producer Samantha Wrightson, who has already drawn up plans for interior decoration which she hopes might be sponsored by the paint and wallpaper specialists Farrow and Ball.

Mrs Laser said: "We are open to ideas. We can provide an outlet for recycled furniture; we may be able to assist local artists who cannot find a gallery; perhaps cookery or sewing groups might like an outlet for their wares; and we can also use the pop up boutique to promote the work of Town Team."

Mrs Wrightson said she had volunteered to assist the Town Team because she believed that the High Barnet could do so much more to become an appealing shopping centre once again.

"There is no reason why High Barnet could not become a one stop destination once again and offer the same range of independent shops that flourish in Muswell Hill or St Albans."

Her husband Daniel Wrightson intends to enlist other members of the North London Artists' Network to support the pop up shop.

"We hope it can become a show case for our work. Local artists could stage exhibitions here. Perhaps we can encourage students at Barnet College to use the pop up shop to display their work. If this initiative succeeds it might help us secure a more permanent local art gallery in one of the town's empty shops or offices."



## Whalebones: 75 years and still in good shape

Seventy-five years ago workmen from a local building contractor, W. Foster & Sons, were asked to complete a highly unusual task: they had to restore the unique appearance of one of Chipping Barnet's oldest residences.

Two massive jaw bones from a 90ft blue whale captured in the South Seas had been shipped from Norway to Hull and then delivered to Wood Street by lorry.

The two jaw bones, 24ft long and each weighing three quarters of a ton, had to be erected to form an archway at the top of the drive leading to Whalebones, a 200 year old house hidden in woods between Wood Street and Barnet Hospital.

They were a replacement for a set of jaw bones which had previously formed a gateway to the house since the 1860s; the name Whale bones had first appeared on a map in the 1872.

In May 1939 it took half a dozen workmen, under the direction of the builder, Mr Foster, all day to manoeuvre the jaw bones into place.

The first task was to extract the nerves from each bone. By sus

tained effort, using the contractors' lorry and wire ropes, they managed to pull out sinews of several feet in length.

Such was the stench of rotting flesh that the many spectators who had gathered in Wood Street kept their distance. Each jaw bone had to be set in six feet of concrete and then the workmen used ladders, ropes, chains and pulleys to cajole them to form a perfectly symmetrical arch.

Although today the weather beaten jaw bones are showing a few cracks and are covered in places with moss, they appear sturdy and remain firmly in place; they give every indication they could last as long as, or even longer than their predecessors.

Motorists travelling along Wood Street often miss the jawbones, especially now that the trees are in leaf and much of that side of the road is filled with parked cars.

Pedestrians get a far better view, and might like to renew an old Chipping Barnet custom: according to local legend it was good luck to walk under the archway and make a wish.



## Keeping a close eye on conservation - at the ripe old age of 82

High Barnet's two conservation areas stretching along Wood Street towards Arkley and from the High Street to include Hadley Green and Monken Hadley, are under the watchful eye of a committee of representatives of local societies, writes **Nick Jones**.

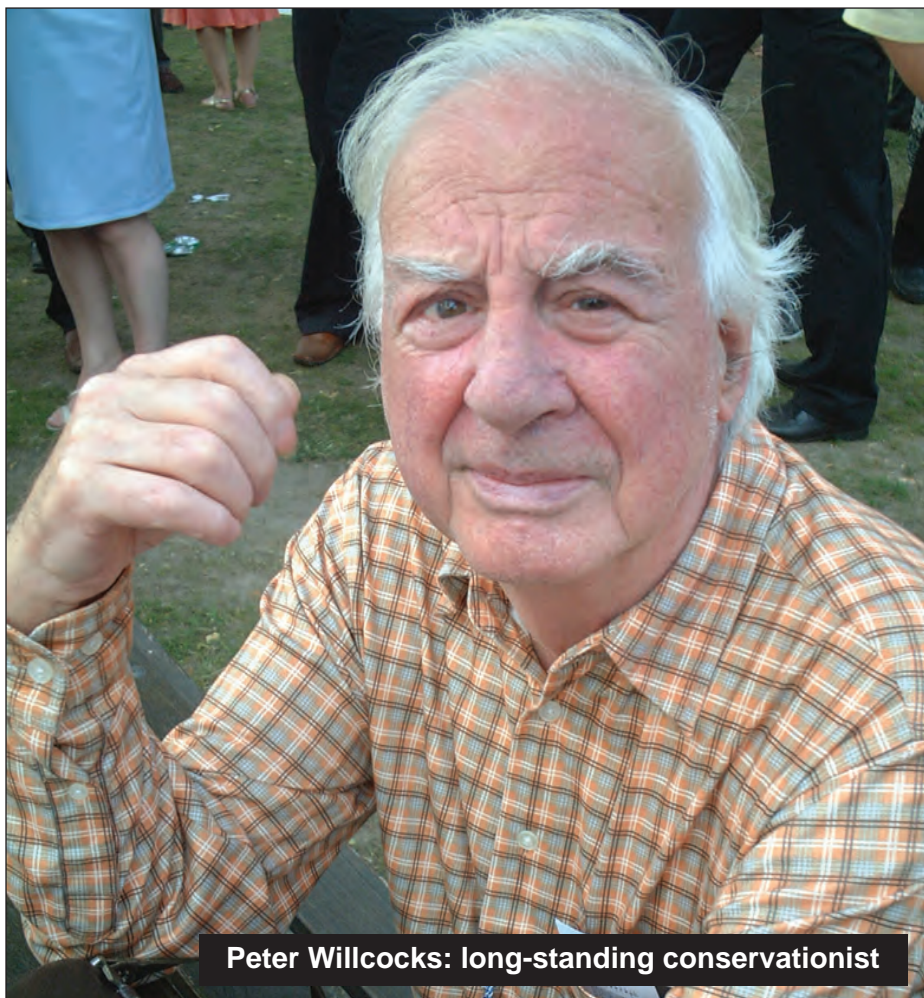
Every month or so they meet under the chairmanship of Peter Willcocks, the long serving Barnet Museum member of the Wood Street and Monken Hadley Conservation Area Advisory Committee, and their role is to give Barnet Council advice on planning applications. At the age of 82 Peter is undoubtedly a father figure among those who have campaigned for so long to protect the local townscape and to safeguard the Green Belt land that borders the built up areas.

Peter is determined to continue doing all he can to help preserve the rich heritage of High Barnet but he is relinquishing one of his many local roles, the editorship of the Barnet Society's newsletter, which has been his responsibility since 2001.

He became a member of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee in the mid 1980s and then joined the committee of the Barnet Society in 1993 following his retirement after many years as a civil service building surveyor.

After a 30 year stint considering local planning applications, he believes the conservation area committee has been broadly successful in its work. "We have managed to protect the townscape of High Barnet and the Green Belt, especially where it overlaps with the built up areas of Monken Hadley.

"As a committee we do look very carefully at each planning appli-



**Peter Willcocks: long-standing conservationist**

cation within the two conservation areas and Barnet Council do respect our opinions."

However, Peter hopes that one day local authority planners will accept the committee's view that it was a mistake to have two separate conservation areas because a section of the High Street, including

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**'We have managed to protect the townscape of High Barnet'**

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the Spires Shopping Centre, and the twin spires of the former Methodist church, is not included.

At present the Wood Street conservation area takes in the High Street only as far north as Moxon Street and Salisbury Road; the Monken Hadley conservation area extends south on the High Street as far as the junction with St Albans Road and Barnet Market.

"We think that the chunk of the

High Street in the middle, including the Spires, should have the added protection of being within a conservation area. For the committee it is unfinished business but we know there would probably be resistance from commercial property owners along that section of the High Street."

Peter hopes to remain a member of the Barnet Society's committee, of which he was the vice chairman and later chairman. He welcomes the steps the Society has taken to improve the presentation of both its newsletter and website. "It is so important for an organisation like the Barnet Society to connect with its membership, and a newsletter and website do help encourage support for the work we are doing."

Peter has lived in High Barnet for 51 years and has taken an interest in family history. He is a long standing member of the Westminster and Middlesex Family History Society which takes in the London Borough of Barnet.

# Minutes of the 68th Annual General Meeting of The Barnet Society

**Held at Christ Church,  
St Alban's Road,  
on Thursday 20th June 2013**

## Present

**Some 35 members of the Barnet Society including:**

Mr Aubrey Rose President ,  
Dr Jenny Remfry Vice President ,  
Mr Robin Marson Vice President ,  
Mr David Lee Vice President ,  
Mrs Maura Howells Life member ,  
Mrs Judith Clouston Chairman ,  
Mr Nick Jones incoming Chairman ,  
Mrs Gail Laser Vice Chairman ,  
Mrs Penny Dye Hon. Treasurer ,  
Mr Jonathan Supran incoming Hon. Secretary  
Mr Derek Epstein Planning & Environment ,  
Mr Robin Bishop incoming Planning & Environment  
Mr John Gardiner Membership Secretary ,  
Mr Peter Willcocks Newsletter ,  
Dr Mary Rossiter (Minutes Secretary),  
Mr Eamonn Rafferty (incoming Committee ,  
Cllr David Long staff (London Borough of Barnet).

## Apologies for Absence

Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP, Mr Alan Howells, Mr Andrew Hutchings, Mr and Mrs D Tyler, Dr and Mrs B Blain, Mrs G M Mulloy.

## Part 1: Talk

**Barnet and Southgate College by David Byrne, Principal and Chief Executive.**

Judith Clouston welcomed the speaker in the context of the history of Barnet College, the recent reconstruction and the involvement of the Barnet Society.

Mr Byrne showed a clip of a film made about Barnet College in 1967 as an introduction to the many changes since then. The college is now on four sites and the numbers of students have grown from 500 to 16,000 a year, from 14 to 87 years of age and with a wide range of abilities and aspirations. It offers vocational and technical training, not just to get qualifications but to teach skills leading to employ

ment, higher education or independent enterprise. He outlined the college's success due to wonderful facilities and links with various outside bodies and industry. They value the local community with whom they are keen to share space and facilities. The structure and function of the college continues to evolve.

There followed a lively discussion. Barnet Society members are keen to be kept informed and involved.

Mr Byrne was thanked by Gail Laser.

## Part 2: Business Meeting Chair Judith Clouston

### 1. Minutes of the 67th AGM held on 21st June 2012

#### Corrections:

Bottom of p14 in the Annual report should say "...David Lee replied that most new street trees were in good shape..... He will prepare a record of the species"

Top of p 17: the word 'Draft' should be omitted as the amendments were agreed at the last AGM

The minutes of the 67th AGM were now confirmed. There were no matters arising.

*Proposed Jenny Remfry,  
Seconded Patrick Gaskell Taylor*

### 2. 68th Annual Report

#### Correction:

Vice Presidents should include Sir Sidney Chapman. Sincere apologies.

*The 68th Annual Report was now adopted by all present. There were no comments*

*Proposed Robin Marson,  
Seconded David Lee*

### 3. Chairman's Report

Judith Clouston referred to her entry in the Annual Report detailing the activities of the Society in the previous busy year. She provided a brief update including information regarding the recent planning permissions for Barnet Market and



The Spires: a master plan for the whole site

withdrawal of the two planning applications for The Spires made by UBS, which The Barnet Society had objected to.

The new owners, the William Pears Group, have given a good impression so far but we are pressing them to provide a masterplan for the whole site and not to make piecemeal applications as their predecessors did.

The Town Centre Strategy Board has been reconvened and the involvement of David Longstaff is much appreciated. However, the Strategy document which is to be adopted next week is a disappointment.

It is still frustratingly difficult to make headway with many issues e.g. outstanding work on Churchyard Gardens, enforcement action regarding the inappropriate facade to 1 Church Passage, etc.

In standing down as Chairman, Judith thanked everyone for their help during her term of office and welcomed the excellent new people applying for election to the committee today. She will continue on the committee, particularly involved in the Planning and Environment Sub Committee.

*The report was adopted by all present  
Proposed Jenny Remfry,  
Seconded Françoise Lewis*

Gail's thank you to Judith for her hard work and achievements was followed by loud applause.





epstein is being sought by the Society

**4. Hon. Treasurer’s Report and accounts for the year; Independent Examiner**

Penny Dye referred to her entry in the Annual Report and informed the members that copies of the accounts are on the website. Healthy finances in much part due to the sales of “Rambles Round Barnet.”

The accounts had been approved by the Independent Examiner, Peter Mellows. Penny again thanked him and commended his re election.

There were no questions.

*The report plus the re election of Peter Mellows as Independent Examiner was adopted by all present*

*Proposed Derek Epstein, Seconded Neil Kobish*

**5. Report from Planning & Environment Subcommittee**

Derek Epstein referred to his entry in the Annual Report. He pointed out how easy it is for people to flout the rules about the Conservation Area, Green Belt etc.

The Borough’s finance and politics are difficult to understand

it feels as though control is being stripped away from us.

In standing down Derek is delighted to hand over to

**Theresa Villiers MP: thanked for her help**



Robin Bishop.

*The report was adopted by all present Proposed David Lee, Seconded John Gardiner*

Judith’s thank you to Derek for his hard work and achievements was followed by loud applause.

**6. Revised constitution approved at the 67th AGM**

This was duly noted on page 17. There have been no applications for Corporate Membership

**7. Election of President and Vice-Presidents for the coming year**

Judith Clouston explained that Mr Aubrey Rose has been proposed by the Committee as President for a further year with Dr Jenny Remfry, Mr David Lee and Mr Robin Marson as Vice Presidents.

*Seconded by Jo Vargas and approved by all*

**8. Election of Officers to serve on the Committee**

Judith Clouston handed the chair to Aubrey Rose who confirmed that the following have been proposed by the Committee:

Chairman: Mr Nick Jones  
Vice Chairman: Mrs Gail Laser  
Hon Treasurer: Mrs Penny Dye  
Hon Secretary: Mr Jonathan Supran  
*Seconded by Neil Kobish and approved by all*

**9. Election of members of the Committee**

Completed three years but co opted for a further year:

Mrs Judith Clouston, Mr John Gardiner Membership, Mr Peter Willcocks Newsletter.

New committee members proposed by the committee:

Mr Robin Bishop Planning and Environment  
*seconded by David Lee*  
Mrs Frances Wilson Minutes Secretary

*Seconded by Jasmine Marson*

Mr Eamonn Rafferty

*Seconded by Peter Willcocks*

Mr Andrew Hutchings

*Seconded by Peter Willcocks*

*Approved by all and duly elected*

**10. President’s address**

Mr Aubrey Rose thanked Mrs Theresa Villiers MP for her help in the last year and congratulated her for becoming a Cabinet Minister. He sends best wishes and good health to Sir Sidney Chapman.

He thanked everyone for their work in the previous year, especially Judith Clouston and wished the new officers and committee good luck for the future of the Barnet Society.

Jenny Remfry now presented Judith with flowers as a token of the committee’s gratitude.

Nick Jones took the Chair

**11. New Chairman’s address**

Nick paid tribute to Judith Clouston and her fellow officers and committee during a difficult time for the society. In “Campaigning for a Better Barnet” he plans to use his skills as a journalist, especially via the new Website, re launched today.

The printed Newsletter will of course continue but there is also a need to engage with an online and younger audience. Members will be encouraged to interact with the Society on various issues e.g. parking.

Nick hopes that with the new team and so many experienced other hands, we can really make a difference.

**11. Any other business**

**11.1** Gail Laser needs continued support in her battles for the town centre, especially with regard to inappropriate applications e.g. a gaming centre.

This would be a good use of the website.

**11.2** Aubrey Rose commended Chris Smith for his work with FOBM

**11.3** Penny Dye thanked the Church for the excellent facilities provided in spite of a burglary last night.

**11.4** Derek Sagar enquired about the theft of a public bench in the High Street. Judith Clouston to pass on relevant information. The meeting closed at 9.35pm

# Chair's report



**Nick Jones** reflects on the Society's recent activities

Across the country civic groups such as the Barnet Society are doing all they can to try to widen their appeal and recruit a younger membership.

Like so many local organisations, we have been finding it difficult to attract volunteers. We realise we have to find new ways to reach out to the community if we are remain effective in fulfilling our role of campaigning for a better Barnet.

In my year as chair of the Society, we have made every effort to refresh and improve the ways we communicate with members and supporters. Our website [www.barnetsociety.org.uk](http://www.barnetsociety.org.uk) has been transformed in both content and appearance; our annual report is being published for the first time in our new look newsletter.

My first task is to thank the dedicated team who have done so much to deliver a vibrant, newsy website that offers an engaging online platform for the town and also a full colour newsletter that builds on the sense of community that High Barnet residents are so keen to retain and encourage.

My other big "thank you" is to members, supporters and the thousands of unknowns out there on the internet who regularly visit our website and take an interest in the Society's work and our selection of news stories.

We are both surprised and gratified by the number of online hits for reports about the issues that have occupied so much of the Society's time: the revival of Barnet Market, revitalising the Spires shopping centre, monitoring planning applications and unexpected opportunities such as the bid to



There were nearly 20,000 hits for our stories on Barnet Market

get funding for an archaeological excavation to determine the precise location of the Battle of Barnet.

The on-off saga over the proposal by the William Pears property group to demolish the twin spires of the former Methodist Church topped the list for online activity in terms of personal involvement.

Our news reports on the Spires' redevelopment attracted well over

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## 'We have to find new ways to reach out to the community'

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12,000 hits, but of even greater encouragement was the fact that 58 people posted comments and gave their opinions for or against keeping the two spires in a new High Street entrance to the centre.

All told there were not far short of 20,000 hits for our news stories about the campaign to preserve and redevelop Barnet Market.

Each report remains available in the website's news archive and among the stories that continue to attract interest are our investigation into Barnet's derelict NHS buildings 12,200 hits ; a look back at the famous people born at the former Royal Victoria maternity

hospital 11,400 and our series of reports about the possible Battle of Barnet dig and the potential threat posed by a proposal to re landscape part of the Old Fold Manor Golf Club 12,600 .

We have to thank our inspirational webmaster Martin Standley for having devised such an engaging design and layout and especially for ensuring the website is so easy to navigate. Martin's innovations include an increasingly popular listings column for local events, a news feed giving the headlines on local newspapers and most recently, a Barnet Forum available for posting notices, comments and online discussion.

Vicki Harris, who edits the news copy that appears on the website, has extended our influence by exploiting social media via Facebook and Twitter. We have 127 "page likes" on Facebook (and a total reach of 428 and 450 followers on Twitter.

My final thank you is to Eamonn Rafferty (aided by Julian Vickers), the new editor of the newsletter, who is using the latest computer design to provide the residents of Barnet with a publication which celebrates our sense of community while strengthening our work campaigning for a better Barnet.





# Treasurer's report

## Penny Dye

**BARNET SOCIETY  
TREASURER'S REPORT  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
For the Year ended 31st March 2014**

The income from subscriptions has increased by 10 per cent this year reflecting increased membership. 'Rambles 2' book was published this year and although sales started slightly slowly, both books 1 and 2 continue to sell at a steady rate and are available at Waterstones, The Paper Shop and Barnet Museum.

Expenditure includes the full cost of printing the 'Rambles 2' book, which is included in the accounts therefore the stock of books 1 and 2 held at 31st March 2014 is not shown as a value in the accounts. There has been considerable expenditure this year on the website, software for producing the newsletter and training for both, to enable us to bring our communication with the members up to date. Affiliations include £100 for Friends of Barnet Market, and it is great to see the market now flourishing.

With all the changes and updates this year the net result this year is still a surplus of £480.75, making the total funds at 31st March 2014 £8,930.40. The accounts will be examined by Mr Peter Mellows in due course, and will then be available to view on the website.

Year to 31st March 2013		Year to 31st March 2014
	<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	
3,345.31	Subscriptions	3,642.81
1,917.00	Sales of postcards & Books	836.00
4.53	Bank Interest	4.61
<u><b>5,266.84</b></u>	<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<u><b>4,483.42</b></u>
	<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>	
1,127.46	News letter printing & expenses	1,295.46
0.00	Leaflets	175.00
70.78	Website, Software & Training	644.22
<u>1,775.00</u>	Cost of printing 'Rambles' books	<u>1,125.00</u>
2,973.24	Lectures & Activities	<u>3,239.68</u>
<u>260.01</u>		0.00
3,233.25		3,239.68
120.00	Affiliations to Other Associations & Societies	280.00
68.00	Stationery, Postage, Phone & Other Administration	73.00
43.00	Other Activities including AGM costs	
102.87	AGM costs	185.37
<u>0.00</u>	Xmas Stall	141.15
145.87	Miscellaneous	<u>83.47</u>
<u><b>3,567.12</b></u>		409.99
<u><b>1,699.72</b></u>	<b>Total Resources expended</b>	<u><b>4,002.67</b></u>
	<b>SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) for the year/period</b>	<u><b>480.75</b></u>
	<b>BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st March 2014</b>	
At 31.3.13	<b>ASSETS</b>	At 31.3.14
6,493.26	HSBC Deposit Account	6,497.87
1,773.39	HSBC Current Account	2,372.53
428.00	Debtors & Prepayments	60.00
(245.00)	Less Creditors	0.00
<u><b>8,449.65</b></u>		<u><b>8,930.40</b></u>
	<b>FUNDS</b>	
6,749.93	Opening Balance at 1st April 2010	8,449.65
1,699.72	Current Surplus/(Deficit) for the year to date	480.75
<u><b>8,449.65</b></u>		<u><b>8,930.40</b></u>

Note to the accounts

- 1 The Society also holds a stock of both 'Rambles Round Barnet' Books 1 & 2
- 2 These accounts have not yet been examined by the Independent Examiner

# Planning report: More than meets the eye when you take a stroll about

**Robin Bishop** explains why it is vital to be vigilant about what we might take so easily for granted

The last year has been a busy one for the Society though that might not be obvious from a stroll around Chipping Barnet! The only major visible change has been the restoration of Barnet Market to its St Alban's Road site, with many more stalls now in a newly paved and planted setting. May it prosper after all its tribulations.

That will depend partly on what happens next within and around The Spires precinct. At the High Street end, proposals at last have been published, with a new façade retaining the original spires and a new restaurant, Carluccio's. These have received considerable coverage in previous Newsletters and on our website, so I won't add to it, and by the time you read this we will have submitted our comments on the planning application. By and large we welcome the design, though some details could still be improved.

Behind the scenes, the Society and Judith Clouston in particular have been actively engaged in both this and future improvements to The Spires. To support a retail revival there and in the rest of the town centre, we believe that production of a master plan for the strategic development of the whole area with more direct links to the Market will be key. Together with enhancements to High Street shops, environmental improvements to the public realm and better bus connections, we believe that

Chipping Barnet could once again become a 'destination' shopping and town centre.

Judith, Gail Laser, Jonathan Suran and I have also been involved in the new Chipping Barnet Town Team, which has met several times this year. On the whole the mood has been positive, and the Council's new planning partner, Re Regional Enterprise has said the right things about pursuing the agreed Town Centre Strategy objectives, but so far virtually nothing has changed on the ground.

The most conspicuous example of that is No.1 Church Passage where, despite our vigorous protests and the Planning Inspectorate's ruling that the previous façade should be reinstated by mid April, work is far from complete. We have submitted a list of details that still need addressing, especially at the junction with the Hyde Institute. The present treatment is hideous and an insult to the Hyde one of the best facades in Chipping Barnet as well as to the otherwise greatly improved Churchyard garden. We see it as a test case for the Council's enforcement procedures, which have been sadly ineffective in other parts of the Wood Street and Monken Hadley Conservation Areas. As members of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee, Markus Geiger and I continue to press for more robust protection.

We have also acted on several other planning issues affecting the



**Society chair Nick Jones casts a glance over**

quality of life and work in our area. We have put in detailed submissions to Transport for London on bus services, and to the London Assembly and All Party Parliamentary Group on protection of the Green Belt. Our thanks to Peter Bradburn and David Lee respectively for their expert contributions. Extracts from our Green Belt submission can be found elsewhere in this Annual Report.

The Society is also concerned by the loss of, and poor management of, trees in Barnet. A particularly upsetting recent example has been the felling by the Council of four mature Ashes on Tapster Street. They were just outside the Conservation Area, and therefore unprotected, but made a big contribution to the environment, visually and ecologically.

Judith's proposals for pavement widening along the main stretch of High Street, to give more space for pedestrians, tree planting and pavement cafés without loss of parking spaces, is an example of a





er the Church Passage

creative solution to compensate for tree loss elsewhere. The principle is contained within the Town Centre Strategy, and is being vigorously pursued by the Town Team as the Council appear to be doing very little to make it happen.

Finally, we continue to be vigilant about developments on our patch, large and small. With the recession showing signs of ending, Chipping Barnet is already a target for densification. Over two hundred planning applications or prior notifications for home extensions have been made – an increase of some 50 per cent over last year – and nearly 60 for conversions of commercial property to residential use, and we comment whenever seems appropriate. Our active membership of the London Forum, the Federation of Residents Associations in Barnet and the London Green Belt Committee keeps us aware of the bigger picture, and we hope helps us to influence change. With a more proactive Council and planners, a lot more could be achieved.

## Green Belt report

The Barnet Society was founded to defend the Green Belt, and in view of growing housing and other pressures on local land, we thought it important to contribute to recent public consultations by the London Assembly and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on its protection. Here are our (slightly shortened) replies to some questions they posed:

● **What is the value for London boroughs of having an open space strategy?**

The Barnet Society believes the value of open space in cities is very high – provision of places to play, exercise and relax are a vital ingredient for physical and mental health.

Chipping Barnet has been shaped by drovers' roads and greenways with their grazing strips, which for centuries brought livestock destined for London, and by its extensive fields, which fattened the herds and was the site of Barnet Market – the main marshalling point before their final journey to Smithfield.

Much of this green space survives, and together with ancient woodland such as Hadley Wood surrounds three sides of the town, to the health and enjoyment of its residents, visitors and all who pass through.

Without the formation of the Metropolitan Green Belt around London in the 1930s, rigorously policed, we are certain that these open spaces would have been filled in years ago and would be under continuing threat of development, given the economic buoyancy of London and the relentless demand for new housing.

● **Has London seen particular pressures on retaining its green and open spaces? If so, where do these pressures come from and how successful have the boroughs been in resisting development of them?**

Chipping Barnet and its environs have experienced constant pressure over the years, particularly for new houses or housing schemes, but also for commercial re-use of former farms and stables.

A less obvious but growing pressure has been to intensify existing uses such as playing field and recreation facilities in ways that diminish natural – and sometimes ancient – greenery.

● **Could you provide figures that identify the net change in the amount of the London's green and open space over the last five years? Alternatively could you point to specific cases where open space has been lost or is under threat?**

We are not in a position to provide figures, but the last few years have seen planning permission granted for a range of developments, such as conversion of historic meadow to school all-weather pitches, and of a stables to a horseball centre. Although these spaces have remained open, their natural green character has been eroded or lost altogether.

A specific local case that offers both a threat and an opportunity is the potential redevelopment of Barnet Football Club, which has left its former stadium (bordering Metropolitan Open Land and Green Belt). The redundant buildings have no architectural merit and their replacement by, for example, well designed housing (including a proportion of affordable and/or social housing) would be welcome – but not to the detriment of the adjoining green spaces.

● **Should brownfield land in Green Belt areas have the same protection as greenfield land in Green Belt areas?**

Our view is that brownfield land should continue to have the same protection. Having said that, we know numerous local examples of buildings or land use on brownfield land that impair their adjoining green spaces.

If we could be convinced that national and local government were genuinely committed to enforcing the highest standards of design and sustainability and not allowing any significant new encroachment onto Green Belt, we might be willing to reconsider this stance.

# Membership Secretary's report

We are pleased to welcome Mr R Fell, Mr and Mrs P Stern, Mr A Clark, Mrs D Killip, Mr and Mrs D Wrightson, and Mrs J Macqueen as members of the Society.

With this copy of the Annual Report you should have received a membership renewal letter specially tailored to your own situation. Please read it carefully.

If you have joined in recent months it will request no further payment this year.

If you have an existing standing order it will simply remind you of the fact and thank you for paying in this way.

Those, the majority, who pay their subscription by cash, cheque, electronic transfer or PayPal are urged to set up a standing order (the necessary form is provided) or to send payment to the Membership Secretary in the usual manner.

Even if you have no payment to make, please do check the accuracy of the letter, correct as necessary and return it. At time of writing we have 410 fully paid-up members.

**John Gardiner**

## New member profiles



**Samantha Wrightson (pictured left with Gail Laser and Daniel Wrightson) says: "I'm a TV producer and we moved to the area last September. I'm keen to encourage more family friendly shops and spaces in Barnet but I also joined the society to support and promote Barnet's heritage, the development of the High Street and to celebrate the incredible arts and literary talents we have in Barnet."**

**Sandra and Peter Stern have lived in Barnet since 1976. They both worked at Barnet Hospital, where they met. Sandra was an Operating Theatre Sister and Peter was in Pathology.**

**Being Trustees at the Countryside Centre, in Byng Road, they heard about the Society. "We felt we should join to support all its good works and keep up to date with what is happening in Barnet."**

## Annual General Meeting agenda

Notice is hereby given that the 69th Annual General Meeting of the Barnet Society will be held at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 26th June 2014 at Pennefather Hall, Christ Church, St Albans Road, Barnet, EN5 4LA for the transaction of the following business:

1. To confirm the minutes of the 68th AGM held on 20th June 2013
2. To receive and adopt if approved the 69th annual report
3. To receive and adopt if approved the Chairman's report.
4. To receive and adopt if approved the Hon Treasurer's report and accounts for the year ended 31st March 2014
5. To receive a report from the

Planning and Environment sub committee

6. To elect officers for the ensuing year
7. To elect members to serve on the committee
8. Any other business. Members are very welcome to raise points from the floor but are asked to write to/speak to the Chairman beforehand

Immediately prior to the formal business of the Annual General Meeting there will be a talk on the plans for the first phase of the redevelopment of the Spires shopping centre.

Guest speaker at the start of the Barnet Society's annual general

meeting will be Charlotte Dunlop, asset manager for the Pears Property Group, who will give the latest details of the plans to modernise the Spires shopping centre.

She will be happy to answer any questions about the first phase of the redevelopment. This includes the construction of a new-look entrance retaining the twin spires of the former Methodist Church and converting the former premises of WH Smith into a new branch of the Italian delicatessen and restaurant chain Carluccio's.

If you are happy to have electronic delivery of future newsletters please email [membership@barnetsociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@barnetsociety.org.uk)