

THE BARNET SOCIETY

Police target Blue Badge abuse

Uniformed patrols are being increased in the area in a bid to deal with abuse of the disabled parking system, writes **Nick Jones**

After increased complaints about blue disabled badges being used unlawfully by motorists, High Barnet Police say they are stepping up uniformed patrols and will take action against drivers breaking the law.

Local residents have raised the problem repeatedly at police community meetings and believe that Barnet Council, the local police and parking enforcement officers are ignoring widespread abuse.

Cars displaying blue badges are frequently found blocking street parking restricted to resident permit holders, but the drivers often appear to be able bodied and are not accompanied by a disabled passenger.

Sergeant Ian Richardson, based at High Barnet Police Station, told the Barnet Society that he and his colleagues understood the anger of local residents and motorists and that uniformed patrols were being increased as a result.

On the day he gave his interview, Sergeant Richardson had just returned from patrolling the High Street, Union Street and Salisbury Road.

“I went out this morning with three pre-prepared enforcement tickets in my pocket just in case but I didn’t find any abuses.

“If we find a blue badge is being abused we do take action. If we issue a fixed penalty notice we take the badge away from the motorist and return it to the local authority.



Streets around the Spires are particularly used by the fraudsters

Call 0208 3592007

This is the number to call if you suspect that someone is abusing a Blue Badge. It’s the council’s anti-fraud hotline. However, they would not tell the Society how many badges they have withdrawn, or how many badges are in circulation.

“Fixed penalty notices are issued for blatant disregard of the rules. If the driver is parking with a blue badge and the badge is for a person who is not in the vehicle, that is an offence. So, for example, I have taken a badge away from a motorist who is the relative of a disabled person and that person is not there when the car is being parked.”

Another High Barnet police officer, Constable Nick Onslow, said it was important to try to educate motorists and remind them of the restrictions on blue badge use.

“We can issue a fixed penalty ticket and impose a fine for misusing the badge. We can take the badge away and report its use to the council and the council will then revoke the badge from whoever is using it.

“If someone is using a badge that doesn’t belong to them, that is potentially fraud and they are

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Blue Badge abuse push

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committing an offence and there could be a prosecution.

“We can also check if a badge is lost or stolen and if that is the case, it can be a criminal offence of theft or handling stolen goods.”

Abuse of blue badges is also being monitored by Barnet Residents Association, which has expressed concern about potential misuse of disabled badges in Moxon Street and other car parks owned by Barnet Council.

In its June newsletter, the Association said that it considered that occasional spot checks by the police were inadequate, not least because they did not include council car parks, which were regarded as private property.

At the heart of the problem was lack of enforcement by Barnet Council’s parking enforcement officers.

“Barnet’s parking enforcement is privatised. The contract does include an optional section for inspection of blue badges, but it would appear that it has not been invoked, presumably because the council would have to pay extra.”

In view of the undertaking by the police to the Barnet Society to increase uniformed patrols, local residents will be able to see whether there is an increased level of enforcement.

Householders and motorists in streets off Stapylton Road but close to the Spires shopping centre and Barnet Library, and in streets around Barnet Hospital, will be watching and waiting with interest to see if there is a reduction in the blatant abuse of recent years.

In one recent incident, a resident of Strafford Road witnessed an abled-bodied person parking and putting a disabled badge in the car dashboard, right under the nose of a parking warden, who showed not the slightest bit of interest in the obvious breach of the rules.



People’s March for NHS stops outside Barnet Hospital

On the march for NHS

Chants of “Our NHS, your NHS” echoed around the Wellhouse Lane entrance to Barnet Hospital as the People’s March for the NHS passed through Barnet on its way to Edmonton.

The marchers were following the route of the Jarrow March of 1936 and heading for their final stop in North London before a rally in Trafalgar Square the following day.

The 207 marchers on the Jarrow Crusade walked the 280 miles to Marble Arch over 22 days, a feat those on the People’s March for the NHS were determined to replicate as part of their campaign to prevent what they fear is becoming the “rapid dismantling, privatisation and destruction” of the health service.

They set off from Jarrow on 16 August and there were around 100 marchers, many wearing “Save the NHS” Tee shirts, and with banners held high, when they reached Wood Street from Galley Lane and headed into Barnet, stopping off for a photo call at the Wellhouse Lane entrance to the hospital.

Their route from St Albans to

Edmonton was 18 miles long, compared with the eleven miles for the Jarrow Marchers who went on more a direct route via Edgware.

A lengthy diversion was required because of the M25 motorway and also due to the fact that in places the main roads between St Albans and Barnet were considered too dangerous, so instead the NHS march went via London Colney, Shenleybury and Borehamwood and then across the A1 footbridge into Galley Lane.

Members of the Barnet Unison branch formed a welcoming committee at Ravenscroft Park and had hoped the marchers would be able to stop for a lunchtime picnic, but time was pressing and together with other local sympathisers they continued on their way along Wood Street towards Edmonton.

The marchers said that they knew all about the changes to Barnet Hospital because of hospital reorganisation in North London and they were concerned at the likely impact of the government’s decision to impose an open market on the NHS.

Pop-up shop does the business

Love Barnet's pop-up shop at 89 High Street, which is promoting locally produced crafts and goods has had what the staff said was a "brisk and very positive" first month's trading.

Eleven stockists are selling a range of products, including hand-made home furnishings, jewellery, cards, soaps and oils and glass and ceramics. They hope that their presence on the High Street will help in the revival of the shopping centre and attract new traders and customers.

The interior of what was once a branch of the bakery chain Greggs has been transformed into a showcase for the output of local entrepreneurs.

Representatives of the Chipping Barnet Town Team joined the staff for tea and cakes to mark the official handover of the premises by the owners, the Eleanor Palmer Trust, which had been keen to assist the Love Barnet team to establish their first pop-up shop.

One of the ten vendors, Jane Northam, who is also a manager of the shop and sells home furnishings and furniture, said that there had been "a fantastic response" from shoppers in the High Street who had been attracted by the range of hand-made crafts and products on display.

The pop-up shop would be trading for a minimum of three months and Love Barnet had every hope that their temporary tenancy might be extended to six months, taking it through the whole of the Christmas



Shoppers peruse the range of high-quality items on offer

period and well into the new year.

Love Barnet received considerable help from the local community in fitting out the shop.

Tutors in building trades from Barnet and Southgate College were among those first on the scene. John Stiles, a master bricklayer, was helped by students to create a brick fireplace and other students and tutors plumbed in an old butler sink. Local painter and decorator Tim Patrick transformed the interior and Laura Felicity hung a design of wallpaper that is on sale in the shop.

Stephen Lane, one of the Eleanor Palmer trustees, described their offer to provide an outlet for the pop-up shop as another example of

the Trust's aims to encourage the endeavours of local people and to support the community.

"We are hoping the shop will be a great success and help local producers and stockists to develop commercially viable enterprises. There had been talk for some time of establishing a hub of some kind for both the community and the charity and we are delighted to assist Love Barnet to create a High Street presence."

Eleanor Palmer was one of Barnet's more philanthropic residents and she made her bequest in 1558, giving "two acres of meadow land and its income for the benefit of the poor of Kentish Town and Chipping Barnet forever".

The original Eleanor Palmer almshouses in Wood Street were rebuilt in 1930 and together with other almshouses and sheltered houses the Trust provides homes for well over 100 local people.

Rent from factories built on Eleanor Palmer's remaining meadow-land provides an income from which the trustees make grants to needy individuals and voluntary organisations within the areas of Chipping Barnet and East Barnet.

Gail Laser of Love Barnet; Julie Eve, stockist of cards and cushions; and Stephen Lane and Tony Alderman, two of the Eleanor Palmer trustees



Barnet People

Come have a gander at Barnet's poultry farm

Peter Mason has no intention of hanging up his wellies yet after 50 years farming, latterly breeding geese, hens and ducks writes **Nick Jones**

For the last 50 years, Barnet children have needed to go no further than Wood Street to catch a glimpse of a scene that brings to life that much-loved nursery rhyme "Old MacDonald Had a Farm".

Tucked away behind the tree-lined conservation area that lies between Barnet Hospital and the main road is the fourteen-acre agricultural holding of farmer Peter Mason, who at 78 says he still has no intention of retiring.

After he took on the farm tenancy in 1962, he reared cattle and horses for many years, but now concentrates on a vast flock of bantams, chicken, ducks and geese.

Children who take a peek through a gate opposite the Arkley public house can see what a farm really looks like: there is a duck pond, muck heap, tractor, chicken sheds and several barns full of equipment.

Strutting around the farm-yard as if they own the place are 200 bantams, 80 hens, 23 geese and 15 ducks that lay the free-range eggs that keep the farm in business.

Peter and his wife Jill live in the small cottage in the wood that borders Wellhouse Lane, just across the road from the entrance to the

'Don't worry, I am not going to give up, I shall be going out of here feet first'



Barnet Hospital car park.

Before being enlarged their home was a pair of two-up and two-down cottages that date back to 1650 and were once the home of two well keepers. They supplied water for the horses of the carters and drovers who stopped off in Barnet when taking hay and forage into London or when leaving with loads of horse manure and ash.

Behind the Masons' cottage is the original well, five-foot wide, brick-lined and very deep, but now safely covered over. "We did open it up once, in the drought of 1972, and the water is very good."

Peter has been farming in and around Barnet all his life. As a boy he helped his father Robert Mason, a farm labourer, at milking time at what was once Homestead Farm in Galley Lane and is now a riding school.

His agricultural holding off Wood Street surrounds Whalebones, one of Barnet's oldest residences, which was the home for many years of the late Miss Gwyn Cowing, whose

Peter Mason is 78 but has no intention of retiring from his farm in Wood Street Feeding time at Old MacDonald's Farm: the geese lay between February and June Peter Mason's house in Wellhouse Lane, opposite Barnet Hospital, was once two cottages for local well keepers



family owned the Barnet Press.

“Miss Cowing was a lovely lady. She was anxious to preserve the park and farmland around Whalebones so that it remained a green space for Barnet. It is now a conservation area and all the trees are listed. When I secured the tenancy in 1962, she was determined to do all she could to help keep the farm going.”

To begin with Peter was into horse breeding, and then expanded into cattle but on reaching his seventies he found the

animals too much trouble and for the last few years has limited himself to poultry.

At one time he had seven pure-bred Arabs (two stallions and five mares), four Shire horses (one stallion and three mares), and a herd of Dexter cattle.

“We kept the Shires until the late 1970s but then the Arabs went the same way when the bottom fell out of the horse trade. People just can’t afford to keep horses but I am still tempted to have a couple on one of the meadows.

“It was the same with the cattle. We were fattening calves at Whalebones until five years

ago but then the last of the cows had to go. I was about to be fined £2,000 if I didn’t get her tested for tuberculosis and that was too much bother.”

Peter’s poultry flock keeps him busy. The geese lay from February through to June and he has customers from all around Barnet lining up for their eggs.

“We have got 15 cockerels and luckily I have had no complaints from local residents about them crowing early in the morning. Poultry breeders up and down the country have lost court cases when people have complained about cockerels, so I’m keeping my fingers crossed.

“I do get a bit of trouble from the local foxes. They had one of the ducks the other day but all the birds seem happy enough and lots of local children like to come and feed them.”

Peter doesn’t sell poultry for the table. “My flock are all egg layers. It’s too much trouble to do poultry for the Christmas trade. People want them oven-ready but I don’t have the time to pluck them and they’ve got to be properly hung.”

In the days when the farm had cattle and horses Peter was regularly seen driving his tractor round Barnet, delivering manure to householders and to the allotments in Byng Road and Bells Hill.

As he walks round his farm yard, feeding the poultry, Peter can’t stop telling stories about the days he had his Arabs, Shires and herd of Dexters. Now he finds looking after the poultry a full-time job.

“I might be 78 but it keeps me going being here at the farm every day. Don’t worry, I am not going to give up, I shall be going out of here feet first.”

Having lived in Barnet for well over forty years I have always wanted to tell the story of Old MacDonald’s farm.

I used to take my two children to peek through the gate and feed the chicken and geese.

Thirty years later my grandchildren enjoyed visits to the farm. So this is my chance to say a big “thank you” to Peter Mason.



Use and abuse of the Green Belt in Barnet

The good and the bad are on show when it comes to developments, writes **Robin Bishop**, our Planning and Environment officer

Green Belt surrounds Chipping Barnet on three sides, and the Barnet Society was founded in 1945 to protect it. As London grows, we believe it – and the natural landscape adjoining it – is likely to be even more appreciated. But while the Society’s default setting is to oppose any development on or next to it, we won’t carry weight if we blindly oppose any change; and if a proposal meets the highest design and sustainability standards, we welcome it.

Two contrasting cases highlight the threats and opportunities that exist, one at each end of town.

The first is in Arkley, where planning permission was granted nine years ago for a two-storey mansion with basement at Parklands, 56 Hendon Wood Lane.

It was to sit on the footprint of a former house, so was not especially controversial. It was vaguely Queen Anne in style, which is par for the course in Barnet. An amended design including an attic floor was approved in 2008, and construction began on the basement shortly afterwards, but soon stopped.

However the main issue concerns the field adjoining it, over a hectare in size, which is owned by

the developer. This lies within the Green Belt beside the Dollis Brook, and is contiguous with the ancient wild-flower meadows that used to fatten the livestock sold at Barnet Market.

Since the original planning application, the field has been used by a builder for what looks like a waste tip. It has been driven over and parked on by heavy vehicles, littered with skips and building materials, and partly dug up. It has been screened off from Hendon Wood Lane by an unsightly hoarding, but is quite visible from Barnet Gate Lane. In short, a piece of the Green Belt has been reduced to an absolute eyesore – in complete contravention of planning law.

Although neighbours have been drawing the attention of Barnet planners to this abuse for years, nothing has been done despite the intervention of our MP. (This, unfortunately, is also par for the course with our Council). If the situation continues, the landowner may acquire the right to keep it as wasteland: if so, another valued bit of Green Belt will have turned brown, become prime building land – and could make a huge profit for its owner.

Meanwhile, in Hadley, planning permission is being sought for a project with a very different approach to the Green Belt.

At 105 Camlet Way, a nondescript two-storey 1980s house is set back out of sight of the road. It is within the Green Belt and Monken Hadley Conservation Area. The intention of the local developers is to demolish and replace it with two new



Society members were impressed by this ne

two-storey houses, but by stepping down the hillside only a single storey would be visible from the drive.

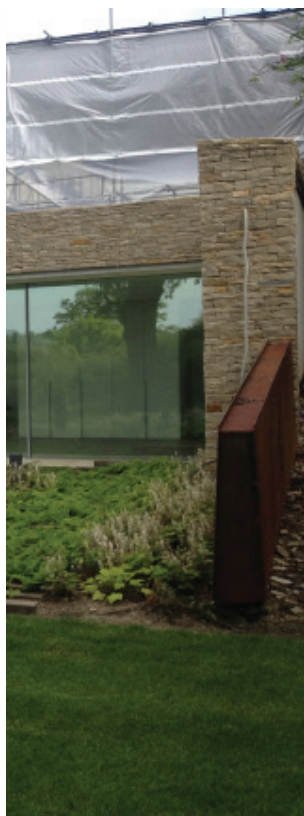
Their combined floor area and footprint would be slightly less than the demolished house, so the

Planning and Enviro

Effort has centred on two key Green Belt cases described above. Since it was written, the Society and our MP, Theresa Villiers, have separately complained to the planners about their inaction over 56 Hendon Wood Lane, and we will follow up if necessary. We have supported the application for 105 Camlet Way.

Another Green Belt proposal we are watching closely is for a solar array in the fields north of Trent Park. Though in Enfield, the decision may set an important precedent.

After much tweeting, Guns & Smoke have submitted a proposal for 1b Church Passage. It would further degrade the already blighted façade, and we oppose it. We are, howev-



New development in Camlet Way. Concern: Site in Hendon Wood Lane is an eyesore

net effect would be to reduce their impact. The setting – currently dominated by high Leylandii hedges – would be enhanced by new indigenous planting.

Some ten hectares of adjacent land is in the same ownership, and

was used as a tip by a previous owner. There are long-term plans to clean it up and restore it to agricultural use.

The design is based closely on another new house, being completed by the same developers for their parents, farther along Camlet Way.

This was recently visited by Society Committee members, who were impressed by its unobtrusive design quality. Cut into the hillside, it is invisible from Camlet Way, and barely visible from Wagon Road in the Green Belt beyond. It has extensive glazing, drystone walls and sensitive landscaping, and also meets high targets for energy saving and carbon reduction. Though clearly not a cheap development, it has been executed with care and discretion.

We have been assured that the design for 105 Camley Way will be to equally high standards. If borne out by the planning application, it will prove that excellent contemporary design can be sympathetic to – even enhance – Chipping Barnet’s green fringe, and the Society would support it.

Government update

er, pleased that the application to rebuild 70 High Street (formerly After Office Hours) has been refused, as has that to add two floors to Hadley Wood Hospital – and the Crown & Anchor has been stripped of its hideous adverts.

The Dollis Valley redevelopment is now visible in Mays Lane in the form of two new ‘gateway’ houses and a community building. They are an abrupt change of scale from the existing little terraces, but we should wait until it is complete before passing judgment.

Further afield, Mill Hill Neighbourhood Forum was launched in October with independent advisory status on planning matters.

Well done Gail - but it's a pity about the market

The Town Team met in September and congratulated Gail Laser and her team at No. 89 (See Page 3) in the High Street for a splendid new shopping experience, writes Judith Clouston.

The pop-up, which has been fitted out by volunteers from our community and Barnet College, only sells goods made or sourced by local people so it's a great showcase for Chipping Barnet's creativity.

Rather less edifying was Charlotte Dunlop's concern over the health of Barnet Market, especially the Wednesday market (Charlotte is the Manager for the Market's owners, Pears Property).

There just aren't enough customers going along and buying goods.

The Chair of the Town Team, Cllr David Longstaff, told us about a new fund of £100,000 per annum which will be available for Chipping Barnet (the Constituency i.e. split between 7 Wards) for the next four years to spend on projects and proposals to be brought forward by local residents, organisation, or community groups. Grants of £200 - £9,999 are available.

We have met council officials to push for progress on pavement build-outs on the High Street that we have been talking about over recent years. This would improve the pedestrian experience and allow room for pavement cafés, more seating and more street trees. They are done without slowing traffic, without reducing car parking/loading spaces or affecting bus stops.

Women break new ground with

Nick Jones has a look at an innovative housing project to build 25 homes on the site of the old St Martha's convent school in Union Street

Work is about to start in Union Street, just off Barnet High Street, on the construction of twenty-five flats for older women. The new complex, on the site of what was previously St Martha's Convent School, will be one of the first purpose-built co-housing projects of its kind in the country.

Seventeen of the flats will be owner-occupied and the remaining eight for social housing. Their completion in early 2016 will mark the realisation of a long-term plan to create a self-supporting community of women home owners and social renters.

The organisation behind the scheme, Older Women's Co-Housing of Barnet – or OWCH for short – was formed sixteen years ago. Their housing development in Union Street will be named New Ground, so as to commemorate the ground-breaking nature of the project.

Membership of OWCH is open to women of fifty-plus, and the

group was established to help women living alone in old age. Most are retired but some are still working, and they come from a variety of backgrounds and cultures.

The site of the former St Martha's Convent School was purchased for the group by the Hanover Housing Association three years ago. Planning permission for twenty-five three-, two- and one-bedroom flats was obtained from Barnet Council in April 2013.

Hanover Housing is developing the site. Builders and quantity surveyors are completing final preparations before the former school buildings are demolished and construction starts.

Only one of the properties remains unsold, a two-bedroom first floor-flat for £303,955. The eight social rent flats – two of which are still available – will be managed by Housing for Women, which has a partnership role in a joint co-operative established to manage the scheme.



In addition to the block of twenty-five flats to be built around a large garden, there will be a common room, laundry and guest quarters.

Angela Ratcliffe, who is a member of OWCH and also the Hadley Residents Association, said they could not wait to see work start in Union Street.

Following in the footsteps of a fine Barnet tradition

Chipping Barnet has a fine tradition of projects initiated by local women for social purposes, writes **Robin Bishop**.

The earliest may have been Eleanor Palmer, who in 1558 bequeathed land 'unto ye use of ye Poore', though the almshouses in Wood Street bearing her name were not built until 1823.

In 1725, Elizabeth Allen provided for a school for poor children of Barnet.

At first the Tudor Hall was used, but in 1824 a school was built in Wood Street. Closed in 1973, the building still survives.

Between 1890 and 1909

Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School grew from 40 to 200 pupils. About a third of the cost of extending it was provided by two governors, Annie and Lucy Paget.

The building is unfortunately now largely hidden from public view, but worth listing for its attractive Arts and Crafts appearance and its significance for the education of girls from the Barnet area.

In 1903, the Misses Paget also commissioned T. G. Jackson to design the Hyde Institute. This became Barnet's first public library, and is now part of Barnet & Southgate College. Sited

opposite St John the Baptist's church, it is a cameo of Neo-Tudor dignity and craft.

And just before the First World War, a delightful 'garden city' estate was commissioned by two more sisters, Annie and Florence Watson.

The Thomas Watson Cottage Homes, at the bottom of Leecroft Road, were built in memory of their father as retirement homes for 'old and loyal employees' of his firm.

They are also a testimonial to the capability and determination of his daughters, who pushed the project through at a time when women still had no vote.

Flats in old school



Members of Older Women's Co-Housing of Barnet, who hope to be residing in their new block of flats in Union Street by early 2016. Top right, the old St Martha's school, and below, how the new development will look



The site in Barnet was the fourth that the group had tried to acquire. They believed their development was breaking new ground in co-housing and an example of direct action to help tackle old age and loneliness among women and achieve social inclusion.

"It is incredible to look back and realise that our efforts to convert the idea of a self-supporting community of women home-owners and social renters was launched by three people sixteen years ago.

"So you can understand the elation of the moment when we are able to tell the world that we have paid the individual deposits on our flats, the builders have been appointed and we anticipate work on the site with bated breath."

Maria Brenton, one of OWCH's founder members, said it had taken three years of persistent work to achieve planning consent for the project. She led visits to their future neighbours in Union Street to ease the concerns of local residents.

Trying to secure approval for the demolition of a disused school in a Victorian conservation area and

replacing it with flats has not been without problems. "Parking was the subject of local objections to the planning application but, anticipating this, OWCH members have undertaken to relinquish or share cars, and to make the best use of a limited number of on-site parking spaces with no on-street parking allowable."

Ms Brenton, who plans to move into another co-housing scheme for men and women in Muswell Hill, said OWCH members had gained much useful experience during the last sixteen years.

"This is a testing length of time for a group whose oldest members are now in their early eighties, but members have learned resilience above all.

"The group has amassed considerable 'social capital' – the key ingredient of co-housing. Although scattered through London and beyond, OWCH members are already a community, participative, hard-working, friendly, helpful to each other and sociable."

More information at www.owch.org.uk or contact owch.org@gmail.com or owch.org@googlemail.com

Clock faces given a new leaf of life

Barnet church has its clock back at last! For almost a month residents looked in vain when needing to check the time, but the tower of the town's famous landmark is resplendent once more.

The three clock faces of the Parish Church of St John the Baptist have been repainted and regilded and were finally reinstalled after a delay caused by the stormy weather of early October.

Gold leaf was used to regild the Roman numerals on the three copper dials once they had been repainted black.

Pedestrians watched in awe as clockmaker Terry Hill, with a rope and a pulley attached to the top of the tower, winched himself up and down and refitted each of the three dials.

His colleague clockmaker Peter Lane was on watch below. He said it had been too windy for some time but finally the weather had calmed down enough.

"The twenty-three-and-a-half carat English gold leaf on each of the numerals and the minute marks is the best you can get for a clock like this. The three dials should now look great for easily the next twenty-five years, and probably much longer."

The removal of the dials for repainting had exposed a small but rarely seen window on the west face of the tower. Its reappearance puzzled passers-by. There are small holes on the north and south faces for the two original clock faces but the west face dial wasn't installed until much later.

Mr Hill said he thought that the last time the dials were removed for regilding was probably up to 40 years ago and they were in quite a state.

The gold leaf that was used in the clock refurbishment cost about £1,000.

Hello, hello, hello

Nick Jones had his collar felt when he popped in to the local police station's open day

Face-painting, games, balloons and cups of tea were among the attractions at Barnet Police Station's open day as a full complement from the uniformed ranks were on hand to welcome local residents, families and children.

The aim was to reassure the community that police officers serving Barnet and Whetstone are very approachable, anxious to be as helpful as possible and always ready to give advice.

Local traders manned some of the stalls and joined the officers in entertaining children; Waitrose and Tesco Express offered refreshments.

PC Ala Yuddin, a dedicated ward officer for High Barnet, organised the open day and he had the full support of his colleagues.

Eight constables, eight public community officers and 15 cadets from the Police Training College at Hendon greeted visitors and



Insp King and PC Ala Yuddin



I predict a riot: PC Nick Onslow ready for action. Meanwhile, fun at hand



answered questions. Available for inspection were two police cars and several specialist officers. PC Nick Onslow was kitted out in full public-order dress, complete with shield and truncheon. Nearby was a dog handler with the station's spaniel Turbo, used for drug sniffing, and known in police jargon as a "passive dog".

PC Yuddin said the open day was an opportunity for some bridge-building with local residents and traders.

"We want the public to feel confident and reassured when approaching us. Opening up the station to the public is an opportunity to build a better relationship with the community."

Among the special guests was a lady in her eighties, who had recently been the victim of bank fraud.

"We now make a point of visiting her home every week to make sure she is all right. We brought her along to the open day so that she could see where we all work and have a cup of tea with us."

PC Yuddin said another successful initiative had been the campaign to reduce shop lifting at the High Street Tesco Express.

A life-size cut-out of a police

officer has been installed next to the tills, and the store manager Asif Altaf said that it had proved to be quite a deterrent.

"We asked the police for help and PC Yuddin suggested installing a life-size cardboard policeman. It really does deter shoplifters because it is right by the front door and is a warning to them that the shop is working closely with the local police."

Detective Inspector Gordon King, who is in charge of policing in Barnet, said the Metropolitan Police knew it had to do more to build up a relationship with local communities.

"We realise that for some members of the public their contact with the police might have been very brief. Sometimes they might have had a negative experience or have formed a negative impression, so an open day like this is our chance to show we are approachable and that we really are part of the local community."

When asked if High Barnet's police station had an assured future, Insp King said that he knew of no threat to it remaining the headquarters for the policing of Barnet and Whetstone. Stations at Whetstone and Golders Green had been closed but High Barnet was the police base for the local area.

Barnet's busy beekeepers

Honey from hives at Friern Barnet allotments scooped the top prize at the 100th annual show of Barnet District Beekeepers Association.

Annette Chmiel, who joined the Association five years ago, won overall best in show for the second year running and thinks her success reflects the wide variety of vegetables, flowers and plants grown by the allotment holders and also the local trees.

After congratulating the Association on reaching its centenary, Councillor Hugh Rayner, the Mayor of Barnet, presented Mrs Chmiel, of Cockfosters, with the Centenary Cup at the annual honey show held at Hadley Memorial Hall (27.9.2014).

In thanking the Mayor, the President, Roger Hedgecoe, said that although it was Barnet's 100th honey show, they believed that the Association had been in existence for far longer.

There was a record of a meeting at the Bow House in Wood Street 103 years ago. By then the Association already had a President and thirteen Vice-Presidents.



Mayor Cllr Hugh Rayner presents Annette Chmiel with the top prize

Its collection of silver cups dated from the 1920s and their records showed that the Association had over 500 members during the Second World War. Beekeeping was popular because of sugar rationing and older members could remember Ewen Hall being filled with exhibits at the annual show.



... And is there honey still for tea?



There's a real buzz in the association

Barnet's bee population - and the borough's beekeepers - are in very good shape thanks to the enthusiasm and good husbandry of the Barnet District Beekeepers Association, **writes Nick Jones.**

Membership has increased threefold over the last five years, and in September the Association celebrated the centenary of its annual honey show.

A dozen potential recruits spent Saturday afternoon inspecting hives at an open day at the Association's apiary in High Barnet and were given a rundown of both the life history

of the bee and the attractions of beekeeping.

Geoff Hood, the chairman, said that the membership had increased from just over 30 in 2009 to well over a 100 today and that most members kept hives, either in their gardens or on other suitable sites in an area running from north of the North Circular to as far as South Mimms.

New members were signing up for beekeeping courses not just for the benefit of collecting honey and beeswax but also because they wanted to help the environment and encourage pollination.

“But sadly by the end of the last century the Association nearly packed up. In 2002 the annual meeting did consider whether to fold the Association but we turned ourselves around, became an organisation teaching beekeeping, we attract about twenty newcomers every year and currently we have over 100 active beekeepers in membership.

“Our annual show is the peak of our year when everyone brings along their honey so that our judge Martin Buckle can give his comments and select the best in show.”

The two other leading prize winners were Geoff Hood, the Association's chairman, who took the Ellis Cup for the best liquid honey, and Wilf Wood, the winner of the Davies Cup for the best set honey.

Most members keep their hives either in gardens or other suitable sites in an area running north from the North Circular as far as the M25 and South Mimms.

Much of Barnet's honey is derived from oil-seed rape in the spring, brambles, lime trees and garden flowers. However, increasingly honey from exotic plants and trees is adding to the mix.

Museum's Battle of Barnet plans

Barnet Museum is drawing up plans for an extension to its Wood Street premises and a programme of community activities if the go-ahead is given for an archaeological excavation on the site of the 1471 Battle of Barnet, **writes Nick Jones.**

A renewed bid for financial support for a dig on the battlefield site is being prepared for presentation to the Heritage Lottery Fund, and the museum is hoping to become one of the partners in the project.

Dr Glenn Foard, a celebrated military archaeologist at Huddersfield University, would lead the excavation together with the Battlefields Trust; it is hoped a final decision might be made early next year.

If the go-ahead is given, for the dig, Barnet Museum's role would be to co-ordinate the response of the local community and develop a programme for the widest possible participation.

Dr Gillian Gear, the museum's archivist, said the growing likelihood of there at last being a proper excavation of the battlefield site could be the ideal opportunity to ensure the museum's long-term future.

An outline has already been prepared for a possible three-storey extension to be built at the rear of the



The museum was set up in 1938

museum and architectural drawings are now being prepared.

An education centre could be created on the top floor; on the ground floor there would be disabled access, a new kitchen and other facilities; and a new basement could provide extra space for secure storage. Detailed plans are now being drawn up in the hope of gaining planning permission.

"We are very hopeful the Heritage Lottery Fund will approve funding for the excavation. We see it as a chance to build on the great local support there has been for

the museum in recent years.

"We have already set aside a room which could be used to clean and examine any finds from an excavation of the battlefield site. Our job will be to encourage and co-ordinate a community response. We would hope to involve local schools, arrange lectures and events. Who knows, we might even get support for a re-enactment of the Battle of Barnet."

Barnet Museum is one of the few remaining community museums in Greater London, manned entirely by volunteers. It was established on the Wood Street site in 1938 and almost all of its exhibits and artefacts were donated by local people and other well wishers. The collection is held in trust by the museum.

Dr Gear said the enthusiasm among the volunteers had never been greater and the prospect of there being an excavation and greater recognition of the Battle of Barnet site could not have come at a more opportune moment.

"We have been so relieved that Barnet Council has finally changed its attitude and stepped back from its previous talk of possibly evicting us from our Wood Street premises."

Membership News:

membership@barnetsociety.org.uk

It's not always easy to decide what to choose as a Christmas present for family and friends. Well, here is a solution for you – the gift of a Barnet Society membership, which is perfectly suited to keep your friends and neighbours in touch with local issues.

The best part about this gift idea is that it is unique enough to be memorable, and there is very little chance that someone else will get them the same thing.

If your friends and neighbours are concerned about their surroundings and want to know what is happening in the area, then you can help them to join The Barnet Society

and make it even more effective.

You can print off a membership form from the website at: <http://www.barnetsociety.org.uk/membership> and provide us with their name and address details. Contact details such as email addresses can then be requested directly from the gift recipient.

Membership report

Since the last report we welcome to the Barnet Society the following members: **Mrs Cleare, Ms Bird, Mr Brooks, Mr Katalan, Mr Ramsay, Mr Jenkins, Mr Gold and Mr McElhatton.**

Thank you to those who have already paid your subscription for 2014. For those of you who

are still to pay for 2014, you will have received a reminder with this newsletter. Renewal payments can be made by standing order, cheque, cash, Paypal, or electronic transfer. **Teresa Kelly, Membership Secretary**

