

# The Barnet Society

SPRING 2025 | £2 (WHEN SOLD)

## New Battle of Barnet



**B**arnet Football Club is about to start discussions with planning officials at Barnet Council over its controversial proposal to construct a new 7,000-seat stadium on an open expanse of playing fields at Underhill.

Confirmation by the club's chairman Anthony Kleanthous that he is going ahead with the application has provoked a war of words between frustrated fans and defenders of the Green Belt.

Bring Barnet Back posters have been placed around the town by campaigners who have spent the last few years urging him to return the club to a site as close as possible to its former home at Underhill.

Over 5,000 supporters have signed up to the campaign, but they are meeting stiff resistance, especially from many nearby residents.

Opponents of the scheme are being urged to sign a petition which has already attracted nearly 18,000 signatures since its launch last November.

It says the local infrastructure at Underhill cannot support such an "oversized project" which would sacrifice "a green space vital to the health and wellbeing of local residents".

After first suggesting the possibility of using the school playing field of the Ark Pioneer Academy – which was built on the site of the original Underhill football ground -- Mr Kleanthous has decided instead to see whether Barnet Council will give permission for a site further south along Barnet Lane.

An outline planning application, submitted at end of December, proposes the construction of a £14 million stadium on playing fields which back on to Grasvenor Avenue and which extend south to the Dollis Valley London Loop footpath.

The site is council-owned land and within the Green Belt, but Mr Kleanthous hopes a way can be found to allow Barnet FC to return to where he says it really belongs.

Barnet moved to The Hive Football Centre – midway between Edgware and Stanmore – in 2013 after a protracted dispute between Mr Kleanthous and the council over the refusal to grant planning permission for a larger stadium.

The Underhill ground was put up for sale in 2014 and was purchased by the Department of Education as a site for a new free school -- Ark Pioneer Academy -- which opened in 2019.

But after well over a decade at The Hive, Mr Kleanthous recognises that the town of Barnet has suffered from the loss of its football club.

"This is an attempt to see if we can return to Barnet. A new stadium at Underhill would benefit the town and help ensure a sustainable future for Barnet FC.

"This would provide new jobs and create enhanced opportunities for local

**"This is an attempt to see if we can return to Barnet. A new stadium at Underhill would benefit the town and help ensure a sustainable future for Barnet FC"**

*– Anthony Kleanthous*

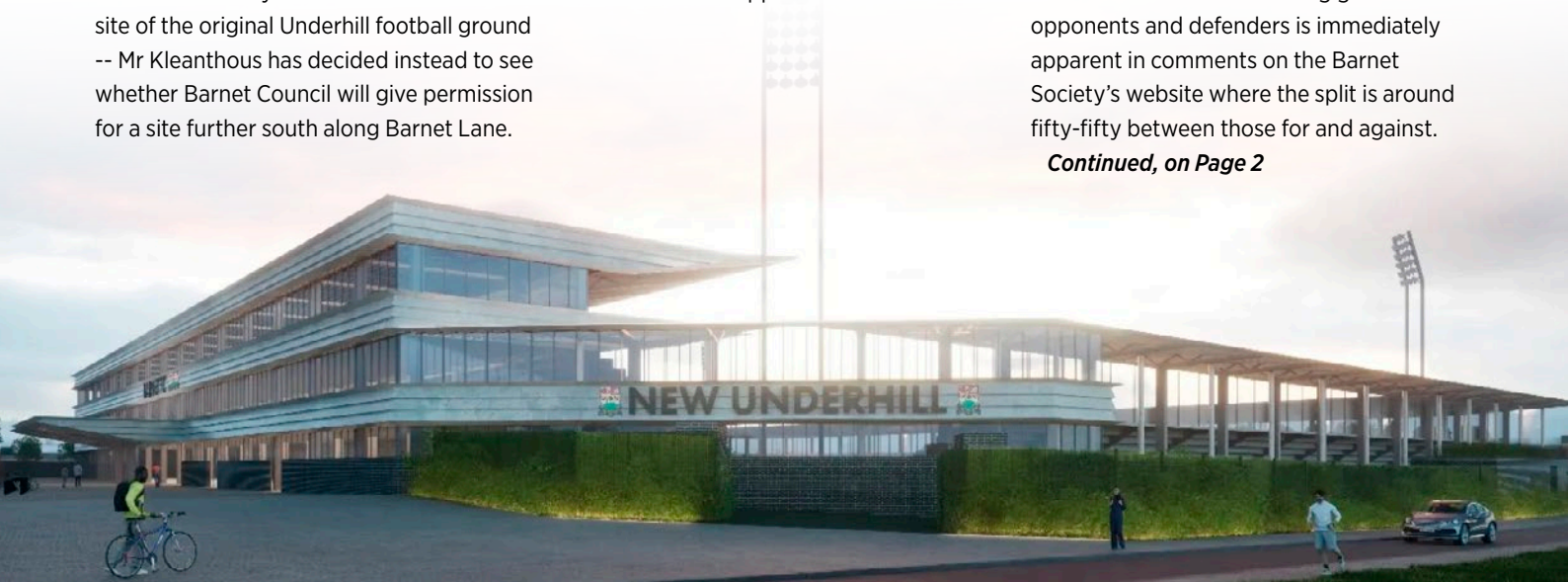
businesses. Long term we think it will help attract new investment to Barnet.

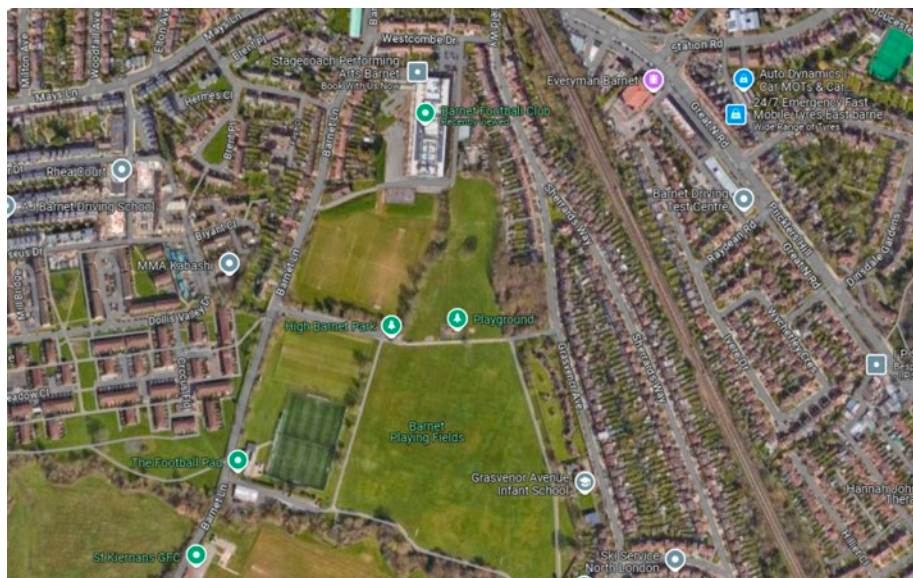
"This new site would be well away from the school and our team of architects and planners think a new stadium would fit in well with the Green Belt countryside of the Dollis Valley."

Despite his optimism, Mr Kleanthous is facing a well-co-ordinated fightback. Several hundred names are being added online every week to the Save Barnet Playing Fields petition which has a target of securing 25,000 signatures.

A reflection of the widening gulf between opponents and defenders is immediately apparent in comments on the Barnet Society's website where the split is around fifty-fifty between those for and against.

***Continued, on Page 2***





Iain Dalziel (right) of the Bring Barnet Back campaign gave his support when Tony Kleanthous unveiled the club's latest proposal.

Above, the new proposed site, bounded by the Ark, almshouses and training pitches

on the surrounding land.

Sean McGrath, planning consultant with WSP, explained why the club had abandoned the idea of seeking to build the stadium on the school playing field of the Ark Pioneer Academy.

"We listened to all the comments made at our public presentation in mid-November.

"Although Barnet FC was keen to work with the Ark Academy, we realised the school had no wish to give up its playing field and that the stadium would be too close to the school. For that reason, the previous site did not really work for us.

"All the advice we have been given is that the best option would be to see if a new stadium would be acceptable further to the south on the much larger green space."

Once the process of validating the application has been completed by the council there will be several weeks of pre-application discussions and the club hopes a formal application might be ready to be considered by the planning committee sometime in the spring.

If planning approval could be obtained by the summer of 2025 work on the stadium could take place over the 2025-26 season and if all went well the club could be playing in Barnet once again for the 2026-27 season.

Mr Kleanthous recalled the troubled ending to Barnet FC's time at Underhill.

He said a previous Labour controlled council had initially approved plans to build a 10,000-seat replacement stadium at Underhill, but that approval was rescinded by the incoming Conservative controlled council on the grounds that it would be a breach of the Green Belt.

"When we left Underhill and the original stadium site was sold, we had no choice. At that time there were no circumstances under which the council would give us the go ahead.

"With the change in control of the council back to Labour and with the realisation that Barnet is not the same vibrant town it was when it had a football club, we know many in the community would like the club to return.

"The people of Barnet realise what they have lost. We have also learned a lot as a club. We have scaled down the stadium. We realise that in a Green Belt site, it can't be too commercial, and we hope this application will be approved."

## Continued from Page 1

Claims that Barnet FC's return would be a huge boost for the town are countered with pleas for the club to find a site away from a congested area like Underhill and closer to the A1 or M25 motorway.

When Mr Kleanthous held a news conference at The Hive last December to announce that he was going ahead with the application, his decision was welcomed by Iain Dalziel of the Bring Barnet Back campaign.

"Fans have been waiting such a long time for this news. Hopefully we can all work together as a community in Barnet and get the club back where it belongs at Underhill."

Mr Kleanthous and his team had been working on the project for the last two years, trying to find an acceptable location, listening to people, before finally settling on the site outlined in the planning application.

The green space where the new stadium would be built is bounded on the northern side by the Ark Academy playing field and a children's playground; on the

eastern side by almshouses and a school in Grasvenor Avenue; on the southern side by the London Loop footpath and Dollis Brook; and on the western side by the training pitches of Wingate and Finchley FC.

The main stadium would be three-storeys high with changing rooms and a medical centre on the ground floor; club offices and a hospitality suite on the second floor; and boxes for spectators on the top floor.

There would be lightweight one-storey stands on the other three sides of the stadium each with 12 rows of seats. Modern floodlights – which be used on only ten to 15 match days a year – would contain the light within the stadium.

The entrance to the stadium would be along the existing approach road to the playing fields off Barnet Lane. Inside the ground there would be parking space for 40 to 50 cars.

Manuel Nogueira of AndArchitects said the new stadium had been designed to blend in with landscape, with tree planting and other measures to improve biodiversity



# Only six local objections to plan for bus lanes in High Street

**A plan to introduce bus lanes along both sides of the busiest section of Barnet High Street – between the Wood Street junction at Barnet parish church to Meadway – has been approved by Barnet Council and Transport for London, writes Nick Jones.**

Only six objections were registered after 456 letters were sent to nearby residents and businesses.

But an earlier council questionnaire and a petition organised by the former Chipping Barnet MP Theresa Villiers indicated there was much wider opposition among local car drivers and other road users.

An official consultation process was launched in July last year after TfL surveys indicated delays to both southbound and northbound bus services using the High Street.

TfL says timings will be improved by the introduction of rush-hour bus lanes – operating Monday to Saturday from 7-10am and 4-7pm.

According to data published by Barnet Council around 6,700 bus passengers either board or alight each weekday at stops in this section of the High Street, which is served by 11 separate bus routes.

The northbound bus lane would be from the junction with Meadway to the junction with Fitzjohn Avenue and the southbound bus lane would from the High Street junction with Wood Street as far as the junction with Normandy Avenue.

No loading will be permitted when the bus lanes are operational (7-10am and 4-7pm) but the inset parking bays on the southbound side between Wood Street and Meadway will not be affected and there will be no parking loss as a result.

To improve access for buses the kerb will be re-aligned outside the Red Lion public house and a bus stop on the other side of the road, near the junction with Park Road, will be relocated by seven metres.

In setting out the case for the introduction of three-metre-wide bus lanes, the council says that passenger numbers on bus routes passing through

**“I am a resident of Arkley and regularly use this route as a tube and bus passenger, car driver, pedestrian and cyclist” – Ex-MP Theresa Villiers**



Travel through Barnet has increased to 208,000 trips daily from 11 bus routes

Barnet have increased to 208,000 trips per day.

However, passengers wait approximately 20 per cent longer than intended on high-frequency routes and travelling within the borough by car is typically two to four times faster than taking the bus.

A public questionnaire was distributed last summer which produced 439 responses – and 52 per cent of those replying thought a northbound bus lane was important and 62 per cent considered a southbound lane was important.

But 54 per cent of those who responded said they feared the introduction of bus lanes would lead to increased congestion.

The questionnaire was followed by a three-week statutory consultation which closed on December 19, and which resulted in only six objections, five of which warned of increased congestion.

While the consultation was taking place Ms Villiers says she received well over 4,000 signatures to a petition against the plans for bus lanes in Barnet High Street, Whetstone High Road and Cat Hill.

Later, when TfL dropped the plan for bus lanes at Whetstone and Cat Hill, she maintained her opposition to bus lanes in High Barnet on the grounds that they offered no significant benefit and would only worsen traffic conditions at the already complicated junction of the High Street with Wood Street.

Although she was no longer the Chipping Barnet MP, she was still strongly opposed to the scheme and was anxious that residents' views should be heard.

“I am a resident of Arkley and regularly use this route as a tube and bus passenger, car driver, pedestrian and cyclist,” said Ms Villiers.

“In my nearly two decades of representing Chipping Barnet no one has ever asked me for a bus lane in Barnet High Street.

“Barring cars and vans from using road space in this location would cause significant and unnecessary congestion.

“This would harm community life in our neighbourhood by leading to more empty shops.”



# Storage capacity

**A small industrial estate behind hoardings and cafes at Pricklers Hill on the Great North Road will be replaced by a new self-storage depot if Barnet Council gives planning approval, writes Nick Jones.**

The Meadow Works complex, midway between High Barnet and Whetstone, has been purchased by Compound, a development company, which is developing self-storage facilities around London and the south-east.

An application to redevelop the site with self-storage for commercial and residential clients, combined with flexible co-working spaces designed for local use, was due to be submitted in mid-February.

Currently the estate is occupied by a range of workshops, small garages, and vehicle repair firms, some of which would be displaced.

One business which has been promised space along the new frontage on to the Great North Road is Hole in the Wall Cafe which trades on being Barnet's oldest cafe, established in 1935.

After consultation with nearby residents and tenants, Compound says feedback was positive and the company is anxious to work with the local community.

One result of the redevelopment is that Dale Close at the rear of Meadow Works would become a cul-de-sac – something residents have been demanding for years to



Aerial view of Meadow Works estate, top, left, artist's impression of the new self-storage depot and Kevin Callaghan, proprietor of the Hole in the Wall Cafe.

stop their road being used as a route for commercial vehicles.

Jacob Sandelson, Compound's chief executive, said the company was anxious to support the local business community. There would be space for small commercial enterprises and co-working offices along the Great North Road frontage.

"We are very conscious of the fact that London has lost 20 per cent of its industrial space since 2000. We are anxious to back commercial enterprises and specialist businesses."

"Around 40 per cent of our new self-storage capacity will be for commercial undertakings. We expect the other 60 per cent will be taken up by local householders and residents."

Compound purchased the Meadow Works complex in May last year from the Morris family which had owned the site since the early 1900s.

James Morris, whose great grandfather developed the land, says there are currently 46 tenants including small garages and vehicle repair firms,

MOT testing, car exhaust and battery suppliers, and specialists in moulding, metalwork and joinery.

"I have worked at Meadow Works all my adult life and I've been running the site since the death of my father Stuart in 2021, so selling the business has been a wrench," said Mr Morris.

"Will I be happy to leave? Well, yes and no. The site needs new investment and money spent on it if the business is to succeed long term.

"We only agreed to sell Meadow Works because the new owners are committed to continuing the site's commercial use. That is important to us as a lot of people have their livelihoods tied up in their workshops."

Kevin Callaghan, proprietor of the Hole in the Wall Cafe, welcomed the prospect of the site being cleared as a new cafe was included in the design of the redevelopment.

"I shall be happy as long as the Hole in the Wall retains our frontage on the main road. Yes, we are a popular cafe, but we do depend on being where we are on Pricklers Hill.



# A clean operation

**Meadow Works industrial estate was once the home of a well-known laundry serving customers in and around North London.**

Sidney Morris established the business in the early 1900s and news of the likely redevelopment of the site has revived memories of the days when laundry was all hand washed

Family members have compiled a history of Meadow Works and how it has passed through four generations of the Morris family.

A sales brochure for the Meadow Hand Laundry shows what it looked soon after the business was opened by Sidney Morris following his purchase of the site in 1901.

Laundry was hung out to dry in the surrounding meadows. Hampers of washed and ironed laundry were delivered by horse-drawn carts to customers in London and nearby towns and villages in Hertfordshire.

An early photograph of the laundry staff indicates the scale of the business.

Much of what has since become the Meadow Works industrial estate is hidden behind large hoardings alongside the Great North Road.

These were erected by the Finchley Bill Posting Company to serve as advertising space, and they had the added advantage of preventing dust blowing from the road onto the laundry drying in the meadows.

Sidney Morris, who was born in Finchley, was one of five brothers and a blacksmith and mechanical engineer by trade.

After first purchasing land for a laundry business at New Southgate, he bought Whelm Villa, the only building on the Great North Road between Barnet and Whetstone.

Traffic along the main road has continued down the years to offer plenty of business opportunities.

In the 1920s there was a coffee stall at the corner with Lyonsdown Road which was owned by a Mr and Mrs Francis.

After criticism from local councillors about the appearance of their stall, which was a caravan on wheels, they rented space from the laundry and opened what became the Hole in the Wall Cafe – named because it was hidden behind the advertising hoardings.

Recollections about the history of Meadow Works, and those who lived and worked there, have been collected from members of the wider Morris family by Jane Polledri, a great granddaughter of Sidney Morris, and her mother Barbara Valle

Jane said the demolition of buildings on the site, including The Whelm, which was the original home of the Morris family, had prompted her to start compiling a record of what they could all remember.

“It is sad to think that a place which holds so many happy family memories is about to be demolished.

“I have learned so much about the history of the place. The original building, Whelm Villa, was thought to have been a coaching inn or hotel on the Great North Road.

“Family legend has it that Dick Turpin or even Charles Dickens stopped off there. We know there was stabling for horses and one of my uncles remembers seeing bricks on the porch floor which outlined the name ‘Whelm Hotel’.

“We are not sure where the name Whelm came from. It could be a corruption of the word elm, after the elm trees alongside the Great North Road, and well – after the well behind the house.”



Sidney Morris – standing far right – was born in Finchley. The photograph, which was taken outside the laundry, shows the rural nature of the land around Meadow Works as it was in 1910.

Early photo of staff at the Meadow Works hand laundry

Jane Polledri (top, left) and Barbara Valle, great granddaughter, and granddaughter of Sidney Morris.



## PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT

### GOVERNMENT

The government's **National Planning Policy Framework** has been amended to allow building on Green and Grey Belt on certain conditions. Environmental constraints on major housing and infrastructure projects are likely to be removed. An announcement on new towns is expected. All these could have major impacts on greenery and wildlife near us.

### MAYOR OF LONDON

Sadiq Khan was previously committed to protecting the Green Belt, but his 2024 election manifesto avoided the subject. He's now announced a **review of London's GB**, and...

### ENFIELD COUNCIL

At the current examination of its **draft Local Plan**, Khan has stated that housebuilding on GB at Chase Park and Crews Hill will be inevitable. He's also considering building on part of Trent Park.

### BARNET COUNCIL

In a September public consultation, we and many others opposed TfL and the Council's proposal for **bus lanes in the lower High Street**. We weren't consulted by letter in December, so were unable to object. The scheme is now proceeding. In December we objected to the Council raising **car parking charges** to £3.50 per hour because of harm to the town centre economy.

### NORTH LONDON WASTE AUTHORITY

We agreed with the aims and objectives of the draft **North London Joint Waste Strategy 2025-40**, but were disappointed at the lack of information or urgency on how to reach targets. Waste disposal technology is controversial, but is hardly mentioned in the Strategy.

### CPRE (THE COUNTRYSIDE CHARITY)

CPRE asked us to comment on 10 **'limbo' sites** in and around Chipping Barnet that they'd identified as potential new woodland. They were grateful for our local knowledge.

### ANTICIPATED

**High Barnet, Barnet FC & The Spires** will headline our **Q&A with Dan Tomlinson MP**, details on Page 8

**Meadow Works site, Pricklers Hill, A1000** – A planning application for self-storage and some other commercial uses will be submitted in February. (See Pages 4&5)

### New housing, New Barnet gasholder site –

Berkeley Homes consulted in December on proposals for up to 200 homes next to the Victoria Quarter. No designs were exhibited, so we didn't comment.

### SELECTED CASES

#### APPROVED

#### Centre for Islamic Enlightening, Mays Lane –

Alterations and additional floor to the former Brethren Meeting Hall, but with conditions to minimise noise and nuisance.

#### DECISIONS AWAITED

**The Mitre, 58 High Street** – Greene King took our criticisms of their previous ambitious application to heart, and we've objected only to a couple of details. Some of the structural timbers could be very old, and a dendrochronological investigation is in hand to verify their age.

**88 High Street** (aka Hopscotch) – We've supported façade improvements and a new flat in a roof extension above the present shop.

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

**118 High Street** (the Grade II-listed former Barnet Press) – Flats over Costas. Neutral.

**Off Langley Row, Hadley Highstone** – Rebuilding of former stables on GB. Neutral.

**Fortune House, 49 Moxon Street** – Six storeys next to Intec House. Neutral.

#### Barn adjoining Windmill Cottage, Brickfield Lane, Arkley –

We supported restoration of a Grade II-listed 18th-century timber barn, but asked for new materials and design details to be as sympathetic as reasonably possible.

#### GONE TO APPEAL

#### Mays Lane between Chesterfield Farm and

**Brethren Meeting Hall** – The appeal against refusal of two travellers' pitches in the GB was heard in January online (to residents' dissatisfaction). We re-submitted our objections, but didn't have resources to take part in the inquiry. Result awaited as I write.

**Abbey Arts Centre, East Barnet** – We objected to replacement and new buildings.

#### SECOND THOUGHTS?

**St Mary's Church House, Camlet Way** – Following planning approval to rebuild the hall, Susan Skedd, Guy Braithwaite and I discussed the project with members of the building committee. To our pleasant surprise, they largely accepted our criticisms of aspects of their brief and design, and seemed willing to reconsider them.

#### GREEN BELT DECISIONS

#### APPROVED ON APPEAL:

• **Horses Field, Barnet Lane** – 220 houses. We objected.

#### AWAITED:

• **Land S of Potters Bar** – About 900 homes on

fields N of the M25. We objected.

• **Land E of South Mimms** – Three huge data centres.

• **Sky Studios North, Rowley Lane** – Sky have appealed against Hertsme's refusal of 10 more sound stages and associated buildings in the GB.

### SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

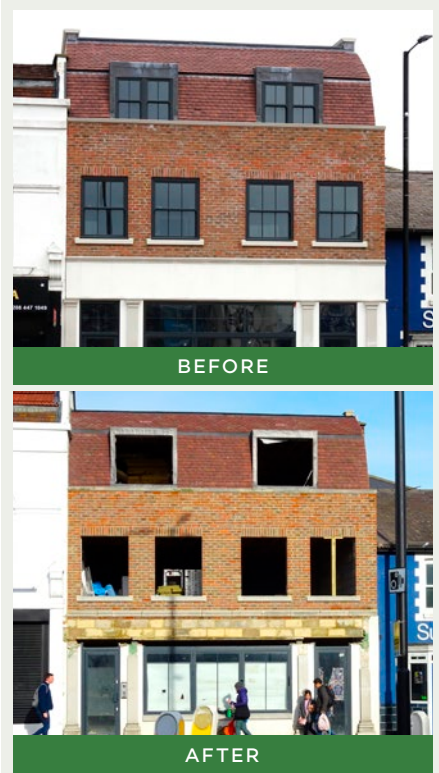
Q – How long does it take to make a developer rectify a building to conform to the approved plans?

A – **At 70 High Street**, four and a half years and counting...

For the benefit of new readers: this new building sits in the Wood Street Conservation Area diagonally opposite St John the Baptist's Church. It replaces a building of similar size.

But when the scaffolding came off it in 2020, it was 1.5m taller than it should have been and dominated The Bull. Several other features also deviated from the designs the planners (and the Society) had approved. We saw it as a test of the Council's will to enforce its planning decisions.

Barnet's Enforcement Team ordered it to be demolished. The owner appealed; a Planning Inspector ordered its demolition; and eventually a compromise design was approved. By the time the building is complete, 10 years will have elapsed since the first planning application. What a waste of time and money for the owner and Barnet planners. But for the locals who made a fuss, it will have been worth it if it deters similar gross breaches of planning law in future.







Sara Gharbifard, (centre), an employment specialist from the Shaw Trust, is among those who offer advice with Victoria Miller, foodbank manager, and Bob Bevil (right), Chipping Barnet's campaign and advocacy lead.

## More than just a foodbank

**Pioneering work by Chipping Barnet Foodbank is highlighting Barnet Council's shortcomings in tackling hardship resulting from food shortages and inadequate advice for needy families, writes Nick Jones.**

Barnet Food Partnership, which represents the borough's 22 foodbanks, is urging the council to match the example of other London boroughs which are developing community hubs to provide a range of services as well as emergency food supplies.

Some councils have helped to establish social supermarkets and food clubs which sell groceries, vegetables and other items at affordable prices.

Chipping Barnet Food Bank, which has led the way in offering a range of support and advice about benefits, jobs and housing, is among those hoping the council will be more progressive in its approach.

At its twice weekly foodbanks - held on Tuesdays and Saturdays at St Peter's Roman Catholic Church, Somerset Road, New Barnet - all those seeking food parcels are offered advice on their financial affairs and employment prospects, a policy which has resulted in a significant increase in those being able to manage without further support.

Sara Gharbifard, an employment specialist from the Shaw Trust, offers advice on job prospects, writing a cv or claiming benefits, assistance which she says can be life changing.

"It is so important, and so rewarding, to be able to give people the confidence

to hone their skills, perhaps begin a new career, retrain or start an apprenticeship."

The Shaw Trust focuses on assisting those who might have a mental health condition or physical disability and who have found their handicap a real barrier to finding work.

Chipping Barnet's pioneering work in developing a wraparound approach by offering advice as well as food, fruit and vegetables was widely praised at an all-day conference held last year by the Barnet Food Partnership.

A report setting out recommendations from the Barnet Food Partnership's summit was prepared by Bob Bevil, Chipping Barnet's campaign and advocacy lead.

In preparing for the conference, they made visits to see a community shop opened in Lambeth and a social supermarket established in Dagenham.

Through council leverage and local support low-income families can purchase food and produce at affordable prices and are also offered a range of other services at established community hubs.

Mr Bevil says the food partnership hopes Barnet Council will recognise that it must get more involved. "Barnet is one of the few London boroughs - if not the only London borough - where the council relies on the tradition of foodbanks being run predominantly by volunteers and maintained by donations.

"Other boroughs are showing a far more progressive approach. They know the need for emergency food supplies is so critical that they can't just rely on the

philanthropic model.

"Councils are establishing community hubs where these services can be co-ordinated at a permanent location.

"In the Borough of Barnet all our foodbanks must survive on their own initiative - holding foodbanks for a few hours every week in a church hall or some other temporary location.

"Since Barnet Council closed the Barnet Food Hub distribution centre at East Barnet Library last year, the council has had no involvement in tackling food insecurity, and we all think there is more the council could do."

## "In the Borough of Barnet all our foodbanks must survive on their own initiative"

Mr Bevil said one local factor that forced people to seek help from foodbanks was that Barnet Council was far more aggressive than other London authorities in using bailiffs to collect debts.

Research in 2023 showed that Barnet had the second highest figure in the UK for the use of bailiffs in debt collection.

To assess whether this practice is continuing to increase pressure on vulnerable households, the food partnership is seeking up to date information from the council.



## Meet Dan Tomlinson MP

**Thursday 27th February 2025**  
**Pennefather Hall,**  
**Christ Church, St Albans Road**

Doors open at 7.00pm  
with a welcome drink and nibbles.

**This is an opportunity to ask our MP what he thinks about the following topics...**

Barnet Society members will be able to raise their concerns about important decisions facing the future of the town at a question-and-answer event with the Chipping Barnet MP Dan Tomlinson on Thursday 27 February.

Three of the main areas of uncertainty are the future of **The Spires** shopping centre; potential housing development on the car park at **High Barnet tube station**; and the debate about whether **Barnet Football Club** should be allowed to open a new stadium at Underhill.

Nick Saul will open the first short debate by outlining the proposal by Transport for London to build four blocks of flats to provide 300 homes on land at High Barnet tube station.

This would result in the loss of all 160 car park spaces at the station.

In his session, Simon Kaufman will explore the options that face the town in view of continuing uncertainty over the future of The Spires shopping centre.

Almost two years have elapsed without any further word on proposals to redevelop the centre by creating a new central walkway with six blocks of flats to provide 250 new homes.

BYM Capital, owners of The Spires, became insolvent in late 2023 and administrators are now in charge of the company.

Mr Kaufman is keen to see whether there is support for fresh initiatives towards tackling the need to regenerate both the shopping centre and surrounding area and to explore the future role of Barnet Council.

Frances Wilson will lead the debate over the controversial proposal by

Barnet Football Club to seek permission to construct a new stadium on playing fields at Underhill.

Pre-application discussions are taking place between the club and planners at Barnet Council.

*Reports by Nick Jones*



## Medieval festival finds new home

**Barnet Medieval Festival is relocating to farmland off Galley Lane with more space for Wars of the Roses re-enactments and camp sites for the opposing Yorkist and Lancastrian armies.**

A 12-acre field off Galley Lane will be the setting next June for what seems likely to be the largest celebration in the town since the start of the recent events to commemorate the 1471 Battle of Barnet.

More military re-enactors than ever before are expected to attend the 2025 festival over the weekend of Saturday and Sunday June 7 and 8.

Barnet's celebration is becoming a highly popular date in the annual calendar of Wars of the Roses commemorations.

Organisers hope this year's enlarged festival at its new location will make up for the disappointment following the forced cancellation of the event last summer.

Re-locating from the previous festival site in Byng Road to the fields around the Lewis of London Ice Cream Farm will provide more space for the campsites and re-enactments as well as easier access, as it can be approached by re-enactors and visitors without having to pay the ULEZ charge.

Festival director Dr Susan Skedd (above, left, with Fiona and Daniel Lewis) said the move had given the organising committee an ideal opportunity to grow the festival and widen its appeal.

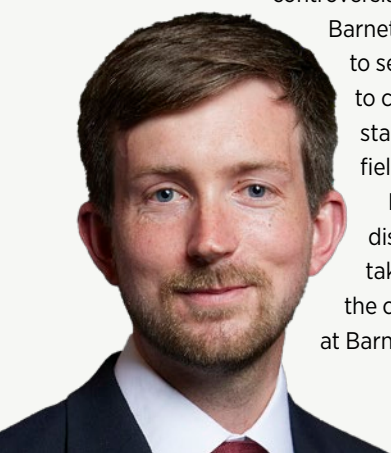
For the first time next summer the festival will be held in partnership with the Wars of the Roses Federation, which organises the annual festival to commemorate the Battle of Bosworth and which is the main umbrella group for 15th century re-enactments.

"Working with the federation has already had a tremendous impact. More re-enactment groups than ever before have expressed interest in taking part," said Dr Skedd.

"We hope to make the Barnet festival one of the most anticipated events of the year offering the chance to engage with a wider audience to showcase the impact of the Wars of the Roses on British history.

"What is so encouraging is that we could be welcoming re-enactors from much further afield, especially from the North of England, who are attracted to taking part in a festival so close to London."

"We now have a fabulous new site with masses of room for living history tents and stalls, space for separate camps for the Yorkist and Lancastrian armies and lots of room as well for re-enactments of the Battle of Barnet and the Battle of St Albans".







## McMullen pub pledge

**Hertford brewers McMullen and Sons says two Barnet pub closures are only a “temporary measure” and that the premises should re-open by the spring**

Regular customers at The Queens Arms, Barnet, have been fearing the worst with the doors remaining locked and no sign of life.

However, they have been assured that the closure – and also the closure of The Kings Head in the High Street – are both temporary.

McMullen say they have recruited a new tenant for the Kings Head but are still in the process of a lining up a new tenant for the Queens Arms.

The Kings Head has been closed since September and the aim is to re-open it by the late spring or early summer.

Several potential tenants have expressed an interest in taking on The Queens Arms and that should re-open by the spring at the latest.

The Queens Arms, with the Everyman cinema on one side and a BP petrol station on the other, is mid-way between the Northern Line and the Great North Road.

There has been speculation on social media that this large site, which includes a car park, might be sold off for redevelopment as flats.

But McMullen stressed to the Barnet Society that the closure was only temporary.

Local concern about the future of The Queens Arms and Kings Head has been heightened by the grim statistics about the difficulties facing the licensed trade with reports from across the country of an average of 34 pubs closing every month.

Another McMullen pub just a few hundred yards away, The Old Red Lion at the bottom of Barnet Hill, was closed in 2015 and replaced with a group of town houses.

East Barnet village has been without a pub for almost a year since the Stonegate group closed the Prince of Wales – but locals have been encouraged to see that work has started on refurbishing the premises.



## Refurbished laptops for schools

**Whitings Hill Primary School is among the recent beneficiaries of a borough-wide Digital Inclusion Project to repurpose surplus computer chrome books and laptops for use in schools across Barnet.**

Such is the shortage of computer hardware that in some schools two or even three pupils have to share a keyboard and computer screen when completing online class work.

CB Plus –formerly Community Barnet – is appealing to employees in businesses and commercial enterprises to alert company managements to opportunities to recycle and reuse laptops and chrome books which might otherwise be scrapped.

Over 200 reconditioned machines were distributed to local schools during the last 12 months. Staff at computer specialists 4WaySolutions of Potters Bar carry out repairs free of charge and clear donated machines of any outstanding data so they are ready for school use.

At schools where there is a shortage of equipment, teachers are overjoyed when at last each pupil can work on their own during lessons on subjects such as maths and English which have online sessions and reading tests.

“What is so empowering about the project is that instead of two or three children having to share a chrome book each child can work at their own speed and they can each be assessed individually by the teacher,” says Helen Harte, director of operations for CB Plus.

School prefects at Whitings Hill welcomed a delegation from CB Plus when 30 chrome books were handed over – a generous donation which headteacher Deepa Samani said was so appreciated by the pupils.

Moss Hall Junior School in Finchley was presented with 30 chrome books by CB Plus in November.

Helen Harte said the pupils gave them a heartwarming welcome.

“They cheered and clapped and told us how much they enjoyed being able to work online on their own during lessons without having to share a keyboard and screen.

“With the help of our donations of chrome books and laptops teachers can allow children from low-income families to take a machine home.

“All the feedback we get from schools we have been helping is that literacy and numeracy skills have improved across the board.

“It is when you hear how some children are forced to try to do their homework on a parent’s mobile phone – because there is no computer or laptop in the house – that you realise the extent of digital poverty.

“Alex and Hector from 4WaySolutions at Potters Bar told us how much it had meant to them to see the delight on the faces of pupils at Moss Hall receiving donated machines which they had been able to recondition and repurpose for school use.”

## Mrs Livingstone, I Presume?

**High Barnet drama group's new play highlights life of Mary, wife of explorer and Hadley Green resident Dr David Livingstone.**

Daily life in High Barnet well over a century ago has been re-imagined for a new play which looks back even further in time to the years when the Victorian explorer Dr David Livingstone and his wife Mary lived on Hadley Green.

A plaque on the front wall of what is now known as Livingstone Cottage records that he lived there in the year 1857.

*Mary Livingstone, I Presume?* has been written by local dramatist Claire Fisher who has lived in the cottage for the last 11 years and who believes Mary Livingstone has not had all the recognition she deserves.

Very little has been published about Mary's life. She was the daughter of missionaries, became a missionary herself and was an accomplished African linguist. Her knowledge of African people and languages was considered crucial to the success of Dr Livingstone's travels.

Rehearsals by members of the High Barnet drama group the Blue Door Theatre Company are well underway for a production which is to be staged at the Bull Theatre with four performances at the end of February. The play recreates events in 1913 when some of High Barnet's well-connected residents decided the town should install a commemorative plaque at Dr Livingstone's home on Hadley Green.

A grieving widow living in the house, Mrs Isabelle Harrington, played by Brigid Hekster, takes an interest in the life of Mary Livingstone, played by Sarah Munford. Isabelle finds herself in conversation with Mary – a storyline which explores the lives of women in different times and places, and which presents a "feminist look at women's hidden voices".

Cast members take on the role of residents of the town including a butcher's daughter, schoolboy and other local characters living on Hadley Green and at Monken Hadley.

A vital prop in the drama is a magnificent Victorian phonograph, a model of which was made by sculptor and artist Cos Gerolemou, who studied illustrations of phonographs of the era. Writer and director Claire Fisher acknowledged the challenge she has in getting *Mary Livingstone, I Presume?* ready for its premiere at the end of February. "This is the first play I have written and directed, and I am so in awe of the cast in giving it their all.

"Many of our drama group have full time jobs and here they are at rehearsals, giving their time to help bring the play to life."

Livingstone Cottage is a regular stopping point for guided walks and people visiting Hadley Green and Monken Hadley.

Since moving in Claire has been busying researching the history of both the house and the Livingstone family.



## Council's new arts role

**Barnet Council is to promote and support arts and cultural events across the borough – a role previously performed by volunteers.**

An online guide is to be published by the council listing a wide range of arts, leisure and sports events.

Council staff will help to co-ordinate attempts to gain sponsorship and advertising.

Details of the new approach were outlined to arts enthusiasts and supporters at The Bull Theatre, High Barnet, during a commemoration of the achievements of the late Pam Edwards who devoted 60 years of her life to encouraging the local arts scene.

Councillor Anne Clarke, Barnet Council's cabinet member for culture, leisure, arts and sports, told the get together that a new strategy on arts and culture in the borough is due to be published in the spring and will set out the new framework.

A new online guide to arts, culture and sports events will be compiled by the council.

It will replace the listings published in Barnet First, the quarterly magazine published since the 1970s by a volunteer team at the Barnet Borough Arts Council.

Ros Staines, who took over from Pam Edwards as the secretary of the arts council, welcomed the decision to take on the task of publicising the listings of local arts events.

Susi Earnshaw said The Bull Theatre would continue to assist in co-ordinating the volunteer committees which organise the annual Barnet Christmas Fayre and Theatre in the Park at Oak Hill.

These two events were previously organised under the auspices of the arts council which is now to be wound up following the announcement of the introduction of a new borough-wide arts and culture strategy.

Councillor Clarke said the borough council's aim was to link up Barnet's cultural and sporting institutions and provide full access to a comprehensive events listing on the council's website.



## Drama sessions at Noah's Ark

**Sarah Parish, well known for her role in TV series such as *Peak Practice* and *Pillars of the Earth*, and her husband, actor James Murray are supporting drama therapy sessions at the Noah's Ark Children's Hospice in Byng Road, Barnet.**

Through the Murray Parish Trust, established after the death of their daughter, they help to fund children's mental health care projects. On a visit to Noah's Ark the couple met Christina and her two sons, Arthur aged one, and nine-year-old Joseph, who both attend drama and music sessions at the hospice.

The trust is to fund a total of 300 drama therapy sessions -- the latest initiative to get their backing since they started raising money in memory of their daughter Ella-Jayne who died in 2019 at the age of eight from a congenital heart defect.

Sarah said their trust -- which has directed over £4 million to healthcare projects since it was established in 2014 -- was there to help families at their darkest hours.

"When our daughter was in intensive care for four months, we witnessed at first hand the unmet need for emotional and psychological support.

"If the mounting trauma of having or being a seriously ill child isn't properly processed with professional help, it can have



devastating consequences." Sarah met Pasha Wild, above, drama and movement therapist at Noah's Ark, who stressed the value of therapy in helping children explore different parts of themselves and untangle and unpick things in a way which is helpful for them.

Christina Lucas-Dodsworth, whose son Arthur was referred to Noah's Ark, was full of praise for Pasha's support.

Arthur, who has severe hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy had to be transferred to a neonatal intensive care unit, and it was thought unlikely that he would survive coming off a ventilator.



The previous dinners have been very successful and enjoyed by all so we hope to replicate that with this year's special event. The money raised will go towards funding the Society's work in making Barnet a better place to live and work.

To reserve your place, please email Holly at [Kalwess@yahoo.com](mailto:Kalwess@yahoo.com) and pay by bank transfer to Barnet Society. Sort Code: 40-09-10 Account 50132381 Ref: Dinner, or by cheque made out to The Barnet Society and posted to 16 Sunset View, Barnet EN5 4LB. Any questions -- Please call Holly on 0794 635 5245

# Dory's 70th birthday party

**Behind an unassuming front door just off Barnet High Street is the hustle and bustle of a cafe which for the last 70 years has been producing a constant supply of full English breakfasts, hot meals, snacks, sandwiches and an endless supply of teas and coffees, writes Nick Jones.**

Dory's – which is now being run by a third generation – is rightly proud of its claim to be probably the oldest family business trading in Barnet town centre.

For the cafe's 70th birthday party, family and friends joined in the celebrations with Guiliano Cardosi and Angela Casali, whose grandfather Ottorino Pellicci opened Dory's in 1954.

Angela said they could not let the anniversary pass without a get together and a chance to look back on the family's long history as cafe proprietors in High Barnet.

"It has been a great 70 years for us as a family.

"Dory's has a wonderful, loyal following and we owe so much to our fabulous customers."

Ottorino – whose name had been shortened to Dory – took over the cafe from the Mancini family in 1954.

He was one of a family of eight and set up in business on his own after leaving his father's cafe E Pellicci in Bethnal Green Road which his parents had opened in 1900.

Dory's was the name he chose for the cafe which is at the corner of Bruce Road and St Albans Road and was originally next door to the former site of Barnet Market.

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

The couple's daughter Dorina

(who died in 2021) and her husband Tony Cardosi took over the business and they have been succeeded by their son and daughter, Guiliano and Angela.

Angela has fond memories of helping her mother and father when stalls filled the former cattle market site (now a car park).

"Back in those days trade was so good we used to get queues outside our door."

Angela and Guiliano are proud of Dory's becoming something of a High Barnet institution and they are constantly surprised by who comes through the door. Sometimes it might be someone who remembers their grandfather or a television star or celebrity.

An original of a painting by regular customer Charley Nash, which was on Dory's Christmas card last year, is now on the cafe's wall alongside other illustrations and memorabilia.



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

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

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