

Nº 26  
Free

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Firefighters from Finchley fire station taking part in a drill last month Credit Leila Davaud

Read more on Page 8 ▶

## Library opening hours slashed and mobile service axed amid council cost-cutting

BY GRACE HOWATH, LOCAL  
DEMOCRACY REPORTER

**B**arnet Council's mobile library service is set to stop in July and the opening hours of four libraries will also be cut in a bid to save money.

The decision was made at a cabinet meeting last month to retire Barnet's mobile library service, reduce the opening hours of four library branches, and to cease the supply of newspapers in libraries.

Around £250,000 will be saved following the implementation of the changes, the council estimates, with a general "service restructure" also taking place.

Self-service opening hours at Chipping Barnet, Colindale, Edgware and Finchley Church End libraries will be reduced from 7am–10pm to 8am–8pm – three fewer hours per day.

Self-service opening allows eligi-

ble library card members to access buildings during unstaffed hours, with the agreed council cuts effectively shutting the libraries to all for longer.

But the council says the change will help "contain increases in building running costs" such as utility costs, as well as "reduce annual security costs by around £15,000".

There will be no changes to the opening hours of the other ten council-run libraries.

Use of libraries was "always lowest in the first hours of opening and the last hours of business" a council report stated.

During a public consultation, increasing "staffed opening hours" was supported by the majority of residents, which the council has agreed to look into.

The council said the move to axe its mobile library service was due to a "gradual decrease" in its use

and estimated the deletion would save the council an estimated £125,000 annually.

The mobile library provides a book-lending service across the borough between Tuesdays and Fridays, currently making a total of 18 stops with visits being either weekly or monthly. Stops consist of either street sites, sheltered accommodation, and schools or nurseries.

Anne Clarke, cabinet member for culture, leisure, arts and sports, said the mobile library service ending would not affect the home library service, which takes books and other resources to people unable to get to a library.

Hannah Richens, the council's head of libraries, explained: "It is very important to say we do retain the home library service and we will be able to transition any of those residents who are currently using the mobile library,

but feel that they can't reach a static service point, on to the home library service so that they are still receiving a library service."

Hannah also confirmed the schools library service would be continuing.

It is hoped that no longer purchasing hard-copy newspapers, which was halted in October last year, will save the council around £28,000 annually. The decision was taken, according to the report, in response to "budget pressures".

The report stated the borough was "not alone" in proposing this measure with many library services in London and across the UK choosing to only provide access to newspapers and magazines in electronic format.

Prior to their removal, Barnet libraries subscribed to numerous titles including *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *Daily Mail*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Voice*.





ABOUT

Barnet Post is the borough’s free community newspaper: written by and for local people, giving you the chance to learn more about what is going on in your area and to read (and write) stories about what matters to you.

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# Residents slam estate firm for leaving trees like ‘totem poles’ during nesting season



Tree damage at Adastral Village Credit Fiona Cameron

**BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER**

**C**olindale residents have described the felling of dozens of trees on their housing estate as “unprofessional” and “destructive”. Residents who live at Adastral Village, a 320-home estate managed by Notting Hill Genesis (NHG), said staff suddenly turned up without notice and began cutting the trees last month.

Fiona Cameron, one of the residents, said people on the estate were concerned the trees had been “killed forever”.

An NHG spokesperson said in response it had asked contractor BLR Property Management (BLR), which had arranged the work, to provide evidence “the trees were in poor condition” but had not yet received it.

Fiona said the incident had left the community “saddened and incensed” and they’d received “no help” from either NHG or BLR.

She said work was carried out without proper safety equipment, that bird nests were destroyed, and the results contravened tree work standards for the UK.

Birch trees and other varieties were affected and Fiona highlighted

the fact it was bird nesting season. The Royal Horticultural Society advises anyone cutting trees or hedges between March and July to check for active nests before pruning or to delay work until after the nesting season is over.

Fiona said residents were still confused about who authorised the work and its quality.

She said: “We’ve been left with what I can only describe as totem poles of trees with all the branches cut off at different angles with no green growth remaining.”

Fiona added that after trying to get a response, eventually staff from BLR told residents a report “from ten years ago” had recommended the action but despite asking for a copy, one was not provided.

A spokesperson for NHG said: “This work was carried out by the managing agent for Adastral Village, BLR, who are appointed by the resident management company [Adastral Village South Residents Limited] to maintain communal areas on the estate. We understand the frustration of residents and share their concerns.

“Felling trees should only ever be a last resort and we have asked BLR to provide us with the report indicating that these trees were in a poor condition.

“We know residents are concerned and are arranging a meeting next week so they can discuss these issues, and what happens next, and have invited BLR and the resident management company.”

Fiona said residents had complained about BLR to NHG “numerous” times over the last 15 years and residents wanted the company “dismissed”.

However, she said the director of BLR had historically refused to hold meetings with the residents.

BLR Property Management was approached for comment.

*“We understand the frustration of residents”*

# Young people in Barnet invited to have say on council youth services

**BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER**

**B**arnet Council is inviting young people in the borough to provide feedback on its youth service.

The council is asking people aged 13 to 25 to share their thoughts on the borough’s youth offer.

A survey, which launched last month, is asking what issues they worry about, if they’re aware of the service provision, and what they like about their local library and park.

The council says it is interested in finding out what young people “value most”, “what there isn’t enough of” as well as what they’d like to see in the future.

The survey results will be used to inform the council’s upcoming

youth offer strategy, which involves the council and youth organisations planning “what activities should be delivered for young people and where”.

Young people are being asked to say how happy they are with the activities and facilities available to them and the reasons they use them.

For those who don’t use them, the council is asking why, with options including the location, time, and difficulty making bookings as reasons for not engaging.

The council is also asking how it should best communicate information about its youth offer provision.

The consultation will run until Sunday, 15th June, with results expected to be published in October.

**For further information and to take part in the consultation go to:**  
**Visit** [engage.barnet.gov.uk/youth-offer-for-young-people](https://engage.barnet.gov.uk/youth-offer-for-young-people)



Young people taking part in a local arts project Credit artsdepot



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# North London Grammar School Praised in Recent ISI Inspection Report



North London  
Grammar School



**North London Grammar School** in Colindale is more than a place of learning—it's a diverse and inclusive community where students excel academically and feel supported pastorally. This selective, co-educational independent school serves students aged 4 to 18. In September 2025, the school will expand to include Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes, becoming a complete all-through school.

Here, senior students achieve outstanding results, ranking in the **top 1% for 2024 GCSE performance**. Blending high academic achievement with pastoral care at the heart of its mission, ensuring every pupil has a supportive environment that balances high expectations with feeling supported, confident, compassionate individuals.

Success is measured not just by grades, but by the strength of its community and the

character of its students.

In its latest Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspection report, released this month, North London Grammar School has been recognised for its commitment to educational excellence, effective leadership, and strong pastoral support.

Following a comprehensive and almost forensic review of the school, every test across the five areas found that North London Grammar School meets all inspection standards:

- Leadership, management and governance
- Quality of education, training and recreation
- Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Social and economic education and contribution to society
- Safeguarding



## Leadership That Inspires

The inspection of North London Grammar School found that leaders clearly communicate the school's values to students, and that these values are well understood and consistently upheld.

"Leaders and staff work closely together to ensure that policies, especially those related to pupil behaviour, assessment and learning, are consistently and effectively implemented. This helps pupils have a clear understanding of how to behave in school and to work well."

## Academic Progress Shines Through

The report praises the school's teachers for their effective training and understanding of individual pupil needs. Inspectors noted that staff are well equipped to support pupils in securing knowledge and understanding, and that feedback policies are applied consistently. This results in pupils having a clear sense of how to improve their work and leads to strong academic progress across the school.

Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are described as being built on mutual respect and understanding. Pupils were seen to take pride in their school and of their achievements, reinforcing the school's positive culture.

"Pupils are confident and articulate communicators. They want to achieve, show determination and resilience and engage well with their work in lessons. Teachers plan lessons that take account of pupil's prior attainment and what they know and understand."

Additionally, the wide-ranging extra-curricular programme helps pupils to develop leadership, communication, and a broader understanding of global cultures and current affairs.

Pupils are able to develop their interests, skills and knowledge through a range of sports, clubs and activities which take place at a time in the school day that allows all pupils to participate."

## Wellbeing is Prioritised

The inspection recognised the school's attentiveness to student physical, mental health and emotional wellbeing. It was observed that mutual respect is the norm. Pupils consistently demonstrate consideration for both peers and staff, embodying the schools values. Students take pride in their school community and value the guidance they receive.

"Leaders provide a number of opportunities for pupils to develop their self-knowledge and self-esteem well.

Pupils find helping others a rewarding experience. Pupils from different year groups mix freely and respect and help each other."

Boarding provision at North London Grammar School also received positive remarks. "Boarders are well supported and cared for by dedicated and well-trained staff who know and understand their needs."

The Headteacher of North London Grammar School, Mr Fatih Adak comments "The findings of this ISI report is not simply a validation of our school's approach – it is a testament to the partnership between our dedicated staff, pupils, and supportive families that makes North London Grammar School so special. The inspectors have captured what those in our school community experience daily: a culture where high expectations and mutual respect create the perfect conditions for learning."

**Our full report can be found on ISI website: [www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)**

If you would like to learn more about North London Grammar, please contact our Admissions Team at [admissions@northlondongrammar.com](mailto:admissions@northlondongrammar.com) or visit our website [www.northlondongrammar.com](http://www.northlondongrammar.com)

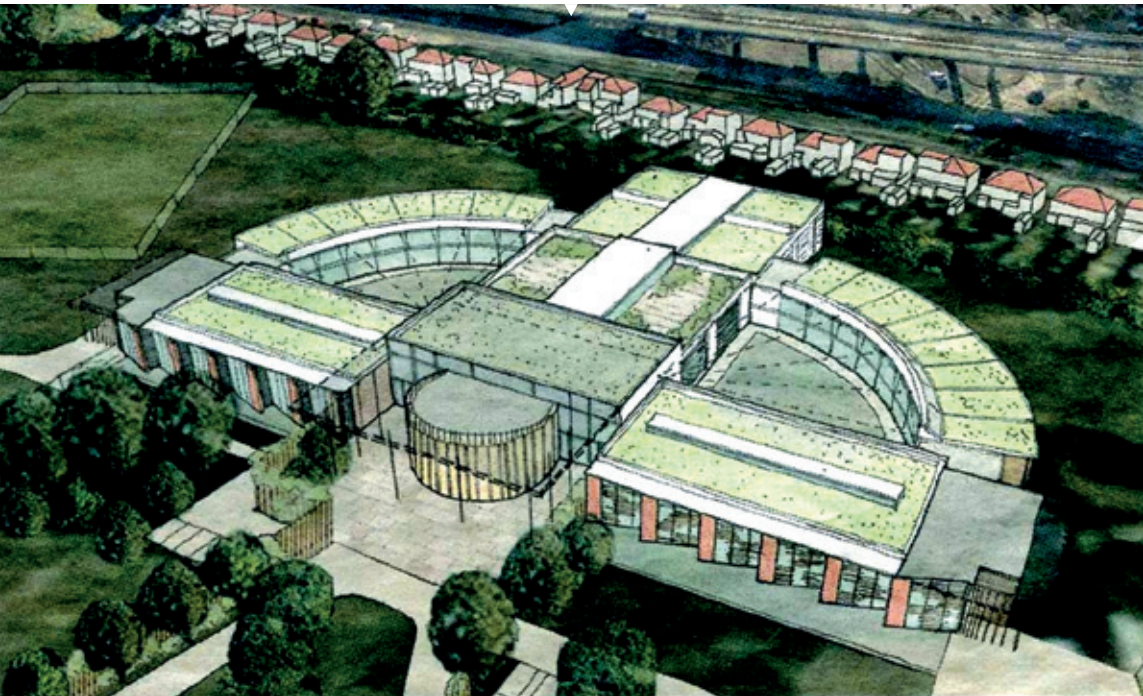
**North London Grammar School, 110 Colindeep Lane, Colindale, London NW9 6HB**





NEWS

Plans for the combined school in Mill Hill Credit Hasmonean Schools



Plans for new school in Mill Hill rejected over impact on wildlife

BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

Plans to merge a girls’ school in Mill Hill with a local boys’ school have been dashed over fears they may impact Green Belt land. An application to demolish Hasmonean High School for Girls in Page Street and replace it with a new combined school was rejected at a planning committee meeting last month. The entirety of the proposed site, including the current girls’ school, is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt. The new school would have been located partly on the existing girls’ school as well as on adjoining open space, which currently constitutes Copthall Fields and is a designated site of importance for nature conservation (Sinc). Barnet Council officers recommended the plan for refusal, saying the council lacked the information needed to assess certain habitat regulations and could be at risk of “potentially very serious breaches”. Emily Benedek, a parent whose child attends the boys’ school, was supportive of the plans and said the boys’ school currently did not have sufficient capacity. Hasmonean High School for Boys has two locations, one in

Belsize Park in Camden for year seven and eight pupils and another in Holders Hill in Hendon. The Belsize Park school is approximately five miles away from the Holders Hill school. Emily said this “fragmented structure” separated younger and older pupils and denied parents “locally provided education”. Labour committee member Philip Cohen said he understood the convenience of having the boys’ and girls’ schools on the same site but asked Emily about the impact on the local environment. She said parents were concerned about the impact but added her son having to travel “several miles every day and to a different borough” made her “deeply concerned”. Andrew Beard, an agent speaking on behalf of the applicant, said there were no “suitable other alternative sites” other than the girls’ school. He said: “It’s very important not to lose the fact we’re not proposing just to insert this school on to this site, the school partly exists. There was a big effort to try to keep it just on the developed land of the girls’ school.” However, Andrew said if there was no expansion of the site, it would need to be up to six

storeys tall. Labour committee chair Nigel Young concluded that in order to develop the new school it would be necessary to remove nearly three acres of woodland and he struggled to see how an alternative plan that “still preserved that wildlife” could not be proposed. Confusingly, the same application was approved by councillors at a previous meeting back in February 2017, with councillors voting against officers’ recommendations to refuse. However, the approval was subject to referral to London mayor Sadiq Khan because of its Green Belt impact, who then advised the council to refuse planning permission. In response to concerns over the committee changing its position on the application, Cllr Cohen said despite the “long history” biodiversity needs “have been strengthened by legislation” since the first application. He said: “It’s not about ‘oh we considered this in 2016’, we’re dealing with it now.” Committee members voted along party lines, with five Labour votes in favour of refusal and two Conservatives – concerned about the committee being seen to be inconsistent – voting against refusal.

Driver mistakenly fined after apparent ‘car cloning’ incident



Philip's real car Credit Philip Mathew

BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A driver was mistakenly fined by two North London councils – following a case of apparent ‘car cloning’. Philip Mathew, who lives in Essex, received two penalty charge notices (PCNs) when a car similar to his with the same number plate was spotted twice by Barnet Council violating parking restrictions. Explaining the differences between the two vehicles, Philip said: “My car has all black badges, vents in the bonnet, a different front end, a spoiler on the rear boot lid, a black interior not cream, no line round the number plate, and four exhaust pipes.” However, despite the pictures he had sent of his car pointing out “all the differences” the council still didn’t seem to “recognise the evidence”. Philip had spent the last couple of months reporting the identity theft to the Metropolitan Police, Action Fraud, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) as well as Barnet and Haringey councils. Haringey Council had also given Philip a fine, but this was

cancelled. Barnet Council confirmed last month that its two PCNs would also now be cancelled. In a letter, the DVLA told Philip there was no evidence another vehicle was displaying the same number plate. Alana Owen, from the vehicle casework unit, said: “Unless an application is made in relation to the other vehicle we would be unable to trace the vehicle.” “In the majority of these cases the number plates are only used on another vehicle for a short period of time.” She concluded that if he continued to receive fines to send copies of them and pictures of the differences between the vehicles to the DVLA. The confusion was put down to a lack of photo evidence, which Philip refuted, and the DVLA’s response, which the council also received, saying there was no evidence in their records another vehicle was displaying the same number plate. Philip, who has been undergoing chemotherapy, said he didn’t need the “stress of it all” but was thankful the fines had been cancelled.



The cloned car Credit Philip Mathew



NEWS



20mph sign  
Credit TFL

Barnet residents set to be given power to demand local 20mph zones

BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL DEMOCRACY REPORTER

**B**arnet residents could soon be given the power to request 20mph zones in their local areas.

At a Barnet Council cabinet meeting last month, senior Labour councillors agreed to make it easier to introduce 20mph zones in the borough.

Residents could soon be able to make an application for a 20mph zone on their road or in their area via the council’s website. If support for the application can be demonstrated, the council will then assess and prioritise the road or area for implementation.

The draft policy is now going out for public consultation, after which responses and the final policy will then be reported back to cabinet for approval.

Alan Schneiderman, cabinet member for environment and climate change, told the meeting on Monday, 19th May: “The way we’re doing this policy is, rather than having a borough-wide 20mph zone, we actually

prioritise and focus on the areas where evidence shows that there is a problem and where residents have highlighted that there is a problem.”

Cllr Schneiderman told the meeting that, according to collision data, pedestrians struck at 30mph had a 45% chance of being killed compared to a 5% chance if the vehicle is travelling at 20mph.

“*The difference between zones and limits is zones require traffic calming*”

He reiterated his belief the policy would “make roads safer for residents”.

Salisbury Road and Stapylton Road in High Barnet are being prioritised for lower speed limits, from 30mph to 20mph, due to resident and local councillor concerns over speeding.

The draft policy states “in most cases” 20mph zones are “likely” to be the main

tool used to reduce traffic speed, however “there will be cases” where the council considered 20mph limits.

The main difference between 20mph zones and 20mph limits is that zones require traffic calming, such as road narrowing and speed humps, whereas limits use signs and lines alone.

Cabinet members Simon Radford and Alison Moore both voiced their support of the new measure.

Cllr Radford said some “clarity around the process” of making roads a 20mph road would be “welcome” and concluded the policy was a “big step forward”.

Cllr Moore reiterated “a clear policy” would be “really helpful for residents to understand and have an informed discussion during the consultation”.

The draft policy has already gone to the overview and scrutiny committee for debate “on a couple of occasions”, where it was decided ward councillors’ roles would be further stressed during the application process.

Danny Rich sworn in as Barnet’s new mayor

BY DAVID FLOYD

**W**est Finchley councillor Danny Rich has become the 61st mayor of Barnet having been officially sworn in during last month’s Annual Council Meeting.

Cllr Rich takes over from the borough’s previous mayor, Tony Vourou. The mayoress will be his wife, Laura Lassman. Cllr Rich has selected Unitas Youth Zone and the Jewish Deaf Association as the charities he will support during his year as mayor.

The deputy mayor will be Edith Ngozi David and her husband Flint David will be the deputy mayor’s escort.

Speaking after being sworn in, the new mayor said: “I am honoured and delighted to have been elected mayor of the London Borough of Barnet.

“When I moved to Barnet, having spent the first 50 years or so of my life south of the River Thames, such a possibility would never have



Cllr Danny Rich receiving the chains of office as mayor  
Credit Barnet Council

crossed my mind. It is true that I once stood unsuccessfully for Elmbridge Borough Council, Surrey, and have served as Christmas Day driver and a member of the chaplaincy team for a number of mayors of Kingston.

“When I was approached to stand for Barnet Council I agreed because I saw an opportunity to assist local residents in receiving services, to support voluntary group efforts and to enhance the borough we live in.

“These remain my objectives as your mayor and it is my fervent hope to meet as many of you as I can.”

Cllr Rich was born and

brought up in South London before studying politics and modern history at Manchester University. After ordination from the Leo Baeck College in Finchley, he served as rabbi to Kingston Liberal Synagogue for two decades. He was senior rabbi and chief executive of Liberal Judaism between 2005 and 2020.

He is currently senior rabbi at Southgate Progressive Synagogue, while also serving as a magistrate and a hospital chaplain.

Cllr Rich was first elected as a councillor for West Finchley in 2018 and has previously chaired the overview and scrutiny committee.

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# MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY: A YEAR OF STUDENT SUCCESS IN BARNET

Students Fuat and Claire with their anti-misogyny poster for bus shelters



As Middlesex University prepares to mark Graduation 2025 this month, we reflect on a year of success for our students and graduates.

Based in Hendon, we are University of the Year in London, (2nd in the UK) and committed to preparing our students for rewarding careers across Barnet and beyond.

## Taking home top national awards

BEng Mechatronics and Robotics students Omar Maaouane Veiga and Arun Ananthakumar took home Gold at the WorldSkills UK Finals, a competition designed by industry experts to test technical and employability skills through cutting-edge challenges.

Student creativity in the arts also flourished. Three final-year BA Film students took top prizes at the Royal Television Society Student Awards (London region):



Scene from short film A Bigger Bear which won Best Writing at the RTS Student Awards

- *Anomaly*, directed by Arturs Voblikovs, was awarded Best Animation
- *A Bigger Bear*, written by Isaac Morgans, won Best Writing
- *Midnight Crisis*, by Dafne Sanchez, was recognised for Best Production Design

In healthcare, Nursing Associate apprentice Felix Peachey was named Student of the Year at the Whittington Health NHS Trust Nursing and Midwifery Awards 2025. He was praised for his curiosity, initiative, and dedication to learning.

## Strengthening our community

Outside the classroom, our students are embedded in the local community, leading projects that raise awareness and drive positive change.

Art created by BA Graphic Design students Claire Bath and Fuat Hassan appeared across Barnet in a powerful poster campaign highlighting misogyny and sexism. "We hope the posters inspired people to stand up against misogyny or reflect on their own behaviours," said Claire.

Middlesex PhD graduate Deepika Nallathambi, who is almost completely blind, ran the 2025 London Marathon, raising over £2,800 for the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB). She was supported by former Middlesex academic and world-class triathlete Professor Christine Broughan.

## Improving lives and futures

In a prestigious annual event called Posters in Parliament, students presented their innovative work

to MPs and policy-makers. Business Management students Joshua Palmer and Vicky Papadima showed an app to help people with disabilities locate accessible facilities. Architectural Technology student Yashvi Bhagat displayed her housing development design, saying: "I took great pride in presenting my designs and elaborating on the innovative concepts behind them."

Meanwhile, our commitment to schools and colleges in Barnet continues to grow. Through our new Lifelong Learning Agreement with Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS), students at local schools are now guaranteed a university interview or offer, as long as they meet course criteria and take part in Middlesex's dedicated support programme. It is a bold step towards widening access in Barnet to higher education.



MDX students at Posters in Parliament event

## Celebrating graduate success

Our final-year students are putting their creative work centre stage at The North London Degree Show Festival which features fashion shows, exhibitions, and film screenings. Public exhibitions in the Grove Atrium continue until 17 June, weekdays from 10am-4pm.

Later this month, we will celebrate the graduation of 6,824 undergraduates, 2,752 postgraduates, and 123 Doctoral students from our Hendon campus – a fitting end to a year of success and community impact. Congratulations to all our students and graduates.

## Experience Middlesex for yourself

**Undergraduate Open Day: Saturday 22 June**  
**Middlesex University, The Burroughs, NW4 4BT**

To find out more about studying at your local North London University, come to our Open Day to tour the campus, hear from current students and meet academics to explore how Middlesex can help shape your future or that of someone in your family.

**Book your place at:**  
**[www.mdx.ac.uk/opendays](http://www.mdx.ac.uk/opendays)**



FEATURES

On call for the community:  
a day at Finchley Fire Station

When they’re not responding to emergencies, what are firefighters doing during their shifts? The red watch opened Finchley Fire Station’s doors to Leïla Davaud

“Fire!”  
Dozens of high-pitched voices erupt in unison but instead of alarm, the word sparks a ripple of giggles and raises a smile from firefighter Rabi Rafi. With his comrades from Finchley Fire Station’s red watch, he’d taken a moment out of his morning routine to meet the students of Brookland Infant and Nursery School in Hill Top. “It’s important to teach kids how to react in case of a fire from a young age”, he explained.  
“But if my house is in flames, I need to save my pet fish so it doesn’t burn”, one worried child cried out, finding the leave-your-pets-behind rule “horrible”.



“He is perfectly fine in the water, and it would be our job to go back in and get him for you while you get to safety,” Rabi answered reassuringly and the little frown turns quickly to awe.  
The session, which included a brief Q&A, is followed by a demonstration of the station’s hoses, much to the little ones’ amusement.  
“We ask the fire station to visit the school so the children can truly understand the meaning of our current theme: everyday heroes and heroines”, explains their teacher, Vikki.  
Part of a major awareness campaign from the London Fire Brigade, this visit was possible thanks to a quieter morning, cut short by the first call of the shift.  
“A fire alarm was turned on by food burning in a kitchen. Thankfully, no-one was hurt,” adds station officer Chris Baldwin. “This is the kind of emergency we try to avoid by taking the time to educate people, sometimes even in their own house thanks to home fire safety visits.” This programme consists of assessing risks in vulnerable people’s homes. “We ask many

“  
This is the  
kind of  
emergency we  
try to avoid  
by educating  
people  
”

Firefighters from Finchley Fire Station taking part in a drill  
Credit Leïla Davaud



questions, guide them on smoke alarm usage or how to plan an escape route free of obstacles,” Chris adds.  
As soon as the team return to the station in Long Lane, leading firefighter James Hoad supervises a drill to maintain readiness for any upcoming emergency. Using the training tower, they participate in a simple scenario of a third-floor apartment domestic fire. Using the ladder and pump engines, the team practises in what looks like well-synchronised choreography.  
This relatively quiet shift is not representative of the station’s normal level of activity. Finchley is the biggest of four stations in Barnet and “there is never a dull moment”, confirmed firefighter Jamie Miles. After seven years at the station, he knows his way around its halls “almost better than my family home”, he jokes while making his way to the storage room.  
Surrounded by holey hoses and solar panel isolator sprays, the 30-year-old explains: “After a dry start of the season, our main concern is wildfires. Barnet has a large amount of open spaces, we will soon start bringing awareness about

barbecues and smoking. Most of this will soon be put in the OSU.” The operational support unit is what Jamie calls “the relief engine”.  
He adds: “Because we have fewer calls than other boroughs, we often go out in support of other stations. We can assist with major floods or fires, like what happened last March at Heathrow Airport.”

In a single day, Finchley’s firefighters have stepped into the roles of heroes, rescuers, educators, and community support. It’s a lot to take on for a watch of 14 but, to paraphrase Borough Commander Peter Johnson, their ultimate goal is to help people put themselves at less risk, so the firefighters don’t even have to put on their uniforms.





## FEATURES

# Half a century of environmental education

**E**ighty invited guests gathered at the Barnet Environment Centre in Byng Road last month to celebrate its 50th anniversary. The Centre was set up by Denis Bland in 1975 on seven and a half acres of old school playing fields as part of Barnet Council's education service and it was very successful for many years, employing fulltime staff. Careful planning was done to develop as many natural habitats as possible, including woodland, ponds and meadow.

When council funding was withdrawn in 2002, the Friends of Barnet Environment Centre (FoBEC) took the site over and have run it since then as an educational facility and nature reserve. A qualified science teacher is employed and the centre currently welcomes around 2,500 young people every year from more than 30 local schools and colleges to work on national curriculum, GCSE, A level and BTEC courses as well as Scouting and Guiding badges.

The site was sold to Noah's Ark Children's Hospice in 2007 but an agreement was made for environmental education to continue. A new centre building was opened in 2016; this environmentally friendly wooden building has classrooms, toilets, a kitchen and a board room. FoBEC shares the building with Noah's

### Bernard Johnson on the 50th anniversary celebrations at Barnet Environment Centre



▲ Friends of Barnet Environment Centre at its 50th anniversary event  
Credit Jim Jenkins

Ark and the friends maintain the nature reserve and work with the teacher to prepare for educational visits and events throughout the school year.

At the event on Sunday, 18th May, members, volunteers, Dan Tomlinson MP, councillors and many people who have been involved

with the centre over the last 50 years listened as I outlined the history and current work of the centre and explained how important it is to prepare young people to explore and understand nature so that they can value it and can help protect our world in the future. I thanked



◀ Dan Tomlinson MP cuts the birthday cake  
Credit Jim Jenkins

all the members and volunteers for their constant efforts in maintaining both the nature reserve and in preparing for school visits, and thanked donors whose generous contributions make the work possible.

Tomlinson expressed his admiration for the centre and its work and commented how important this is for environmental understanding and that we should "cherish a nature reserve like this". He was then very pleased to cut the 50th birthday cake baked by one of the trustees. The guests enjoyed the refreshments and took the opportunity to both meet old friends and to explore the reserve. New paths, which are wheelchair friendly, were laid in 2021 as part of an improved access project, funded by the Hadley Trust, which also included the creation of a sensory trail with pause and ponder points along the way, an improved tree trail and re-landscaping of the garden ponds.

The site is open to visitors each Monday afternoon from 2pm–3.30pm and on the first Sunday of each month from 10.30am–12pm, when volunteers are present.

**Bernard Johnson is vice chair of The Friends of Barnet Environment Centre. To find out more about the centre go to: [fobec.org.uk](http://fobec.org.uk)**

## The 'Roundabout Garden' is growing stronger

**A** new chapter in community-led greening continued on Cloister Road last month, as local residents gathered for another community garden day, continuing the transformation of the roundabout into a vibrant, shared green space.

Supported by local councillor Giulia Innocenti and a visit from Sarah Sackman MP, the event marks growing momentum in reclaiming urban space for people, plants, and pollinators. Sarah was able to speak to residents of all ages and join in planting some kale.

Led by The Roundabout Garden NW2 group – a collective of residents living adjacent to the roundabout – the initiative is turning an overlooked traffic roundabout into a flourishing hub of flowers, herbs, fruits, and vegetables. Barnet Council provided the initial funding to set this project up and the community purchased six durable planters installed, designed with input from horticulturists and landscape designers to ensure long-term sustainability and visual appeal.

Since the initial session earlier this year, local residents have stayed actively involved – keeping in touch to water and maintain the plants between events. This ongoing care has not only helped the

### Local resident and organiser Poppy Fishman on a community day at the Cloister Road garden



► Sarah Sackman MP gardening with Cloister Road residents  
Credit Poppy Fishman

garden thrive, but also strengthened the bonds among neighbours.

This isn't just about growing plants – it's about growing community. People are already stopping to chat, share tips, and offer help. It's incredible how quickly a bit of green can bring people together.

Situated at the end of Cloister Road, a quiet street near Granville Road Estate, the roundabout lies on a busy route for families walking to St Agnes and Childs Hill primary schools, and is regularly passed by Childs Hill allotment holders. The space now inspires

both residents and passers-by with a glimpse of what can be grown in a small urban setting.

As green space in the area has decreased due to development, the community garden offers a much-needed lift. "It's a small but powerful step toward bringing back biodiversity and beauty, I have lived on the street 60 years and remember playing ball when I was a kid, the garden is a great addition," one resident noted.

Cllr Innocenti added: "as a council we are keen to support greening community projects wherever we can. They play a vital role in community cohesion and wellbeing. The Cloister Road roundabout garden is a beautiful example of how a tarmac roundabout can become a vibrant green hub. I hope we see more of them popping up around Barnet!"

Organisers hope the roundabout becomes a long-term focal point of pride, learning, and connection for the community. With more residents arriving from new developments, the garden is already showing what's possible when neighbours work together.

"This is just the beginning," said a resident volunteer. "We're not only growing plants – we're growing something much bigger."



# FEATURES



## Shouting to be heard: the political divide

Betty Iamandi highlights the barriers that keep young people from engaging in politics

Politics impacts my day-to-day life; the cost of my clothes, toothpaste, and overall living expenses are all tied to decisions made by people I don't feel connected to. My voice feels small and overpowered. No one seems to hear me, and I often feel like I'm fighting a losing battle. But I don't want to give up – I'm ready to shout until I'm heard. I want to be able to shape the decisions that affect my future.

The Electoral Reform Society's report *A System Out of Step* highlights the deep disconnect between voters and political outcomes. It reveals how the current voting system fails to reflect the voices of many people, particularly young

“The challenge lies in a system that feels distant”

people, with the 2024 election marked as the most disproportionate in UK history. From my view, this disconnect isn't just about voting, it's about feeling excluded from the entire political process. Many young people, myself included, feel that politicians don't hear us or understand what we go through.

According to the *Power, Trust and Change* report by YoungMinds, 60% of young people believe politicians don't listen to them, and 70% feel powerless as a result. Additionally, only 25%

think politicians understand what it's like to be a young person today. As a young woman, I can relate to this sense of disconnection even more acutely, with the lack of representation leaving me feeling marginalised.

The Electoral Commission's overview on modern voting proposes changes like same-day voter registration and e-voting to encourage more people to vote. But, from my perspective, the real issue isn't about knowing how to vote, it's about feeling excluded from the entire political process.

A major barrier to engagement, highlighted in the MYPLACE (Memory, Youth, Political Legacy, and Civic Engagement) study, is the exclusionary nature of political language. Political terms can be confusing or intimidating, making it hard for people to engage. This alienation only widens the gap, and it's crucial that political messages be communicated in a more inclusive and accessible way.

The problem isn't that young people don't care about politics; we care passionately about issues like the cost of living, climate change, equality and education. The challenge lies in a system that feels distant and disconnected from our realities. Writing this has given me some hope. If we can address these barriers and rethink how politics engages with young people, change is possible.

This article was first published by youth communications charity, Exposure: [exposure.org.uk](https://exposure.org.uk)

## London Festival of Architecture comes to Barnet Libraries

BY CATHERINE LUSTED

The London Festival of Architecture (LFA) is a month-long celebration of architecture and city-making, taking place every June across London. This year the festival theme is 'Voices' and for the third year running Barnet Council will be a LFA destination, delivering a series of events celebrating architecture, local art and cultural assets within the borough.

Barnet Libraries are proud to be taking part again with lots of events tailored around the theme for adults and children, including creative Lego building activities and a walking tour through the woods of

East Finchley. Find out more at [londonfestivalofarchitecture.org/destinations/barnet](https://londonfestivalofarchitecture.org/destinations/barnet).

**Book Detectives**

Something strange is happening around Barnet. Books are disappearing and a mysterious Book Crook is on the loose. They love to read but want all the books for themselves and won't share! Join the 'Barnet Book Detectives' and help Detective Woof pick up the scent.

Children aged 4–11 will Embark on a reading journey, helping

the detective chase the Book Crook, who has been leaving clues at libraries and locations around the borough of Barnet. By reading 6 books over the summer holidays, children will solve the mystery and receive a certificate and other rewards for completing the challenge. They'll also be entered into a very special prize draw.

For more information on Barnet Book Detectives and other library news, sign up to the library newsletter for children and families at [barnet.gov.uk/librarynewsletters](https://barnet.gov.uk/librarynewsletters).

# 10

## Croissants and cognition

A new event in Barnet offers much food for thought, writes facilitator Andreas Koumi

The launch of the Philosophy Café – the first of its kind in Hampden Square, Southgate – was a resounding success. Paris-Brest Patisserie proved to be the perfect venue and a fitting spiritual home for this new community initiative.

Originating in Paris in the 1990s, the concept of a 'philosophy café' is simple yet powerful: a welcoming space where people can come together, face-to-face, to explore life's big questions – about society, ethics and the nature of reality – sharing ideas across generations and backgrounds.

A diverse group of around 20 local residents attended the inaugural session, bringing energy, curiosity and a range of perspectives that enriched the discussion and deepened understanding for all.

The evening's debate focused on a question of profound relevance: "Are we living in a simulated universe?" With rapid advances in artificial intelligence and virtual reality, this topic seems especially urgent and resonant today.

Many thought-provoking avenues opened up – exploring the ever-increasing impact of technology: on politics, education, employment, communication, and ultimately on our notions of truth and reality. While some participants expressed deep concerns about the direction of society, others offered a more hopeful view: that, used wisely, the powerful tools now at our fingertips could help solve many of humanity's most pressing challenges.

"We were blown away by the response, and even had a waiting list. It shows that there is a need for open-minded people to congregate in person, and share ideas, in a safe community space – particularly in these uncertain, scary times, post pandemic," said organiser, Mirella Issaia.

"It was a real privilege to benefit from the insights and perspectives of such a broad range of people, most of whom I was meeting for the first time. I'm sure everyone will agree it was a great success and, I hope, the first of many such events," commented participant, Terry Fanning.

Our launch couldn't have gone any better – there was genuine enthusiasm for more gatherings like this going forward. We're very grateful to *Barnet Post* for supporting this venture with promotion and helping to raise funds.

The next event is planned for September.



The first Philosophy Café meeting at Paris-Brest Patisserie in Hampden Square



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ARTS & CULTURE

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Review: *An Ideal Husband*



The cast of 'An Ideal Husband'  
Credit: The Garden Suburb Theatre

Christiana Rose on a witty, whimsical frolic from The Garden Suburb Theatre

Adapted and directed by Mary Groom and Ömer Warman, Oscar Wilde’s *An Ideal Husband* is the tale of deception, ruin, honour and hope.

Performed Upstairs at The Gatehouse Theatre from 1st–4th May by The Garden Suburb Theatre (GST), Groom began editing the script during lockdown, enchanted by the 130-year old play’s witty and stirring writing. Reimagined, the play was set in the 1980s, featuring a bold aesthetic, elevated by a range of admirable costumes by Danielle Flower and uplifting toe-tapping 80s music.

The standout performance in melodrama must be credited to Kirsty Newman as Mrs Cheveley, who skilfully brought the conniving, manipulative and intrepid character to life, in

a brilliantly humorous and vibrant way. Clad in chic Madonna styling, Newman was irresistibly watchable as the calculating crook, dedicated to a life of swindling and villainy.

With excellent chemistry and rivalry between them, acclaim must also be given for effortless clarity and charm to Tom Osborne as Lord Goring, who gave the character a sense of calm, insight and resoluteness.

Exquisite one-liners delivered by Debbie Lane as Lady Markby and Samantha Charles as Lady Caversham, both offered hilarious and stimulating moments. The remaining cast rounded out the play with solid, enjoyable performances by Jessica Curtis as Lady Chiltern, Edward Smith as Sir Robert Chiltern, Ari-Miyuki Kondylis as Miss Mabel Chiltern and Pablo Gomez Rodriguez as Mason and Phipps.

The themes transfer well to the modern day, where a fall in honour threatens the destruction of status, and scandal is exposed and hunted distastefully. However, integrity and principles remained key in the action throughout, reiterating the fragility of image and the very real dangers of a fall from grace.

*An Ideal Husband* was a witty, whimsical frolic, playful, lively and entertaining, enjoyed by a large jovial audience.

The Garden Suburb Theatre are one of North London’s oldest amateur dramatics groups with a history of exploring modern classics to Shakespeare, staging shows in local theatres and their own Little Oak Wood amphitheatre. GST are committed to creating brilliant, fun, and artistic theatre for and by the community: [gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk](http://gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk) ★★★★★

Advertisement



Review: *Flare Path*

Harriet Joyce enjoys Incognito Theatre’s production of Terence Rattigan’s wartime play

Hitting the stage just in time for the 80th anniversary of VE Day, Incognito Theatre celebrated with a sell out run of their amateur production of Terence Rattigan’s *Flare Path*.

Based on the playwright’s own experiences in the RAF the play, first performed in 1942, centres around the emotional turmoil of the second world war and former actress Patricia Graham’s love triangle with pilot Teddy Graham and Hollywood idol Peter Kyle.

The production at the Friern Barnet theatre featured a mixture of new and returning faces. Margaret Johnson, who has previously worked as a costume designer for Incognito’s *A Streetcar Named Desire*, showed the opposition between the characters especially in terms of class.

Ciara Healy, who joined Incognito Theatre this year, marked her return from her long break from acting with the role glamorous Patricia Graham: appearing in a green floral dress, blue lids and rouged cheeks.

Johnson chose this make-up to appear stark against

the more muted tones seen on laundry Maudie, played by Julianne Mullen, who most recently starred as Blanche in *Streetcar*, and barmaid Doris, played by Alexandra Charalambous, who most recently starred as Judy in *Home, I’m Darling*.

The costume’s colour symbolism was also heavily anchored by performance, Patricia’s received pronunciation against Doris’ cockney accent helped represent class differences. Peter Kyle, played by David Parson, wore green, an extension of the envy already apparent in his scornful expression. Whilst

juxtaposition from the previous act where he had been kitted in a blue jumpsuit, symbolising that opening up about his fears came at the cost of surrendering his pride.

While Patricia awaits his return in the second act, the blue hues remain consistent in the lighting and express her lingering worry. Chris Mason, who most recently worked as a lighting designer for the theatre’s production of *The Revlon Girl*, also utilised colour. The window located lower centre stage helped convey a fallen aircraft through the use of amber strobes and by differing the intensity and warmth of its hues, Mason managed to showcase the passage of time through early morning to noon.

Overall, it was not only the performance of Moira Wallace, returning to the theatre as Mrs Oakes, and Harry Gunner, debuting as Percy, that helped add light-heartedness to an otherwise heavy play, but the enthusiasm of the audience on opening night that made this amateur theatre production an enjoyable one.

“The play centres around the emotional turmoil of war”

Jordan Dickson’s debut as Teddy Graham saw him in a white turtleneck, a white bandaged arm and kneeling to the ground as he pleads with his wife. The costume and use of levels paired together was a powerful

To find out more about Incognito Theatre:  
Visit [incognitotheatre.co.uk](http://incognitotheatre.co.uk)

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ARTS & CULTURE

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# From Finchley to the West End

Andrew Parfitt Credit Simon Derviller



A dance student from Finchley’s London Studio Centre is making his debut on the Lyceum Theatre Stage. Andrew Parfitt went back to school to share his inspirational story with Leïla Davaud

Just a few steps away from our meeting spot, Andrew Parfitt smiles apologetically. The dancer walks into Finchley’s Artsdepot for the first time in two months. At just 19 years old, the London Studio Centre student is making his debut in the West End.

“It hasn’t sunk in...I’m dancing in the biggest musical in the world. I’m part of the *Lion King* ensemble, isn’t it crazy?” he says shyly. Andrew is in his third and final year in the jazz and commercial dance program. Unlike his classmates, he won’t be assessed based on his performance as part of the centre’s student shows but on the Lyceum Theatre stage. “I’ve been in 16 shows in two weeks, surely that should get me through...” he jokes.

If the exhaustion is there, Andrew is far from letting it control him. Each gesture is calm, measured, graceful: “Honey, I haven’t worked so hard for all these years to take a break now”, he states. Saying that

he’s had a busy decade is an understatement. His career started in the middle of his living room with *Strictly Come Dancing* in the background. “I was obsessed to the point where my parents signed me up for ballroom and latin dance classes when I was 7”, he recounts. A few years later, Andrew became the world champion of disco freestyle. He notes: “I know, it’s not the same vibe. It’s what I love about dancing: it comes in such different forms you can never get bored of it.” And he spends every waking hour sculpting his art.

At the age of twelve, he joined the Italia Conti School of Performing Arts. “I remember feeling like Conti was sometimes more like a home than my actual home. Training there never felt like work. I truly embraced who I was and fitted in like never before. I wasn’t mocked for being a boy who liked dancing, I was praised for it. It built my confidence and turned my very shy self into a performer.”

It is this side of him that convinced London Studio Centre alumni and choreographer Dane Bates to mentor him. “We built a really close relationship while doing *Britain’s Got Talent*, the London Fashion Week and concept videos. Having someone who was quite influential in the industry to guide me and also give me some validation was key. He introduced me to LSC and it changed my life.”

Along with dancing, Andrew has also trained in singing and acting. Without realising, he was getting ready for something he didn’t even allow himself to dream about. “While I was in class, I got a message from a choreographer. She was complimenting me. It was all very sweet but I didn’t think anything of it at the time”, he explains. The next day, he was staring wide-eyed at his phone. “I was offered a role in the upcoming *Wicked* film. I didn’t even audition, it just landed in my inbox. I thought it was a joke!” The next thing he

knew, he was smiling at himself in the mirror with a ginger wig on and ready to walk on set as a Munchkin-lander. “I was 17 years old among people with decades of experience and knowledge.” But instead of letting it affect his confidence, he did what he knew best: “I had the time of my life. I genuinely thought nothing would top this adventure.” Until now.

“  
*I wasn’t mocked for being a boy who liked dancing, I was praised for it*  
”

For the first time, he is part of a very diverse cast. “We don’t have the same origins, but we do have common experiences. Another dancer said this musical was a breath of fresh air and I couldn’t agree more. I look around and see people looking like me,

it’s very special in a white-dominant industry.”

While he may have thought he would have to wait longer for his big break, he wouldn’t put it down to luck. “Everything happens for a reason, I truly believe this. And it didn’t just fall on me, I worked most of my life to get to this point. It might look easy when I dance, but it’s because I’ve rehearsed so much and poured my heart into it. I deserve to be on this stage even if it’s still surreal to me.” So, eight times a week, his tall, graceful figure shape-shifts into a gazelle, a zebra or even a hyena. “It’s quite far from my usual collection of jeans, it’s incredibly special to wear these costumes.”

Andrew Parfitt is exactly where he is meant to be, dancing not only with skill, but with purpose. The young talent confides: “Today, I feel exactly as the kid twirling in my living room. I’m free, I’m having fun and I have the confidence to truly be myself...” Isn’t it the true meaning of *The Circle of Life*?

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## WHETSTONE

## Labour retains council seat after by-election – but vote share drops



Ezra Cohen (centre) campaigning in Whetstone with Dan Tomlinson MP and Cllr Ella Rose Credit: Barnet Labour

BY GRACE HOWARTH,  
LOCAL DEMOCRACY  
REPORTER & DAVID FLOYD

BARNET LABOUR SUCCESSFULLY defended a council seat in Whetstone following a by-election last month. Ezra Cohen was elected as the ward's new councillor on Thursday 15th May replacing Liron Velleman, who quit both the Labour group and the council for unknown reasons in April.

Cllr Cohen was elected with 965 votes, 147 more than the runner-up, Conservative candidate Tom Smith, who won 818 votes.

In third place, Reform UK candidate Adrian Kitching won 592 votes, while Green Party candidate Charli Thompson was fourth with 208.

Candidates representing the Liberal Democrats, Rejoin EU, Independent Trade Union and Socialist, plus an independent, finished fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth respectively.

Reacting to his win, Cllr Cohen said: "I want to thank all the residents who put their confidence in me, and all of the volunteers who supported me through the campaign."

"I am so excited to join the Labour administration's work in transforming Barnet into a well-run council that prioritises residents' safety and the state of the borough. I will work for all residents, whether they voted for me or not."

However a Conservative group spokesperson dismissed the win, insisting Labour had "failed" Barnet. They said: "Barnet Conservatives are incredibly proud of our campaign and the efforts of our candidate, Tom Smith, although the by-election didn't deliver the result we hoped for."

"Labour's vote share dropped significantly by 18 percentage points, from 51% in 2022 to around 33% in 2025 – a one-third reduction."

Reform UK's Barnet branch chairman, Cllr Mark Shooter told *Barnet Post*: "The results represent a fantastic achievement for our party. We secured nearly 21% of the vote despite a very low turnout, a significant increase from our performance in previous by-elections and last year's general election."

Whetstone remains a single-party ward with the other seat being held by Labour's Ella Rose.

## CRICKLEWOOD

## Plans to redevelop trades hall revealed

BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL  
DEMOCRACY REPORTER

A RUN-DOWN TRADES HALL is set to be revamped with plans to build a new community facility and 36 flats.

The existing Cricklewood Trades Hall Club building at 134 Cricklewood Lane is "not fit for purpose" and the site "underutilised", according to planning documents submitted to Barnet Council.

Proposals to demolish the trades hall and develop a seven-storey building in its place have been brought forward jointly by applicant Malcolm Terry and the club itself.

Although used by a private members club the current two-storey building is also available to the wider community to rent. Last year, the club hosted over 100 'non-member' events but due to an "ongoing reduction in members",

"lack of investment" and struggle "attracting a younger audience" proposals to replace the hall were brought forward.

The development will consist of 14 one-bedroom flats, 16 two-bedroom flats and six three-bedroom flats.

However, despite the London Plan stating that developments of ten or more dwellings should seek to provide a minimum of 35% affordable housing, no such homes are included in the proposal.

A planning statement states the proposed scheme "cannot technically

support on-site affordable housing" but added "discussion will continue during application with the London Borough of Barnet".

Feedback from a public consultation was overall "positive" but some concerns were raised. These included the impact of the development on parking pressures on local roads, the lack of affordable housing provision and the impact on neighbours arising from the placement of balconies.

**For more information:**  
Visit <https://publicaccess.barnet.gov.uk/online-applications> using reference number 25/1474/FUL



The seven-storey plans by MJP Planning (left) and (right) the existing Cricklewood Trades Hall Credit: Google



## FINCHLEY

## Foodbank chair completes London Marathon raising over £9,000

BY ANN CAMPBELL

FINCHLEY FOODBANK is proud to share the news that its chair Brittany Jones completed the London Marathon in April in aid of the foodbank.

Brittany has been a volunteer with the foodbank since 2021 and became chair of their management group last year.

Brittany said: "What an incredible experience. I'm grateful to the Finchley Foodbank team for the amazing love and support during my preparation and on the day. And thank you to the donors, friends, family and volunteers who contributed so generously to our fundraising total."

Finchley Foodbank has been distributing emergency food items to people living in financial hardship in Barnet for twelve years. The foodbank supports over 625 people a week through



Brittany Jones with FFB poster at mile 17 Credit: Finchley Foodbank

two weekly sessions where clients can choose items of food and toiletries.

The foodbank is supported by St Mary's Church in East Finchley, the local community, grant makers, charities, local businesses and organisations. Its services are dependent on funders and supporters, and over 200 local volunteers.

Brittany's fundraising page had raised over £9,000 at time of going to press: [2025tcs.londonmarathon.enthuse.com/finchleyfoodbank/profile](https://2025tcs.londonmarathon.enthuse.com/finchleyfoodbank/profile)

## FRIERN BARNET

## Playground consultation launches

BY GRACE HOWARTH, LOCAL  
DEMOCRACY REPORTER

BARNET COUNCIL HAS launched a consultation on plans for a new play area at a popular park in Friern Barnet.

Halliwick Recreation Ground is set to see improved play facilities including a new play tower with slides and bridge, a wheelchair accessible roundabout, a swing set and a picnic table.

An online survey has been launched asking residents to select their three favourite and least favourite pieces of equipment out of the 15 pieces that have been proposed.

Funding to the sum of £150,000 was allocated to the project by the council's east area committee and the Friends of Halliwick Recre-

ation Ground are "securing the remaining funding" bringing the total budget to £200,000.

The council said it has worked with the friend group on the proposals. The council clarified that only the playground under the large tree would be refurbished while play equipment next to the tennis court "will remain unchanged".

The deadline to complete the online survey is Sunday, 8th June.

The council said following the consultation it would review the outcomes to see if there's "interest in changing" the facilities and will discuss the results with the friend group and play contractor.

**For more information on the consultation and to take the survey:**  
Visit [engage.barnet.gov.uk](https://engage.barnet.gov.uk)



SPORT



The Bees clinched the title with a 4–0 win against Aldershot at The Hive  
Credit Nick Sandamas

Record breaking Bees return to the EFL

BY NICK SANDAMAS

Saturday 27th April 2024 was a sombre day at The Hive as the Bees were played off the park by Solihull Moors in the play off semi finals meaning that they had to prepare for another season in the National League, but twelve months later sadness turned to joy as the Bees clinched the title and a return to the EFL for the first time since 2018.

Days after that disappointment against the Moors, boss Dean Brennan went to town in the transfer market, signing twelve new players including the permanent signing of midfield kingpin Anthony Hartigan.

An unbeaten pre-season was followed by a stuttering start to the league campaign, with three defeats from the opening seven games, alongside early wins including a 7–0 thrashing of Tamworth.

Then the Bees went on a seven

match unbeaten run, including a win over local rivals Wealdstone and progression to the FA Cup first round.

Successive defeats followed against Solihull Moors and then to title challengers York to leave the Bees trailing in third place.

What followed was quite astonishing as the Bees went on a magnificent 25 match unbeaten league run which put them well clear at the top of the pile by the first week of April with the title within sight.

The only defeats suffered during that period were to Exeter City in the FA Cup and to Altrincham in the FA Trophy.

Highlights during that memorable long unbeaten run included a 4–3 win at Dagenham & Redbridge after coming back from a 3–1 deficit and a stoppage time Ryan Glover goal to salvage a point from a six-goal Boxing Day thriller against Sutton to maintain their unbeaten home record.

Probably the signing of the new

year was goalkeeper Owen Evans from Cheltenham to replace the out of sorts Nick Hayes.

In his 20 games for the club, he conceded a paltry seven goals and, in his first 13 games in the league, conceded only one goal.

Bees’ top goalscorer for the last two seasons, Nicke Kabamba departed to Bromley which rather surprised The Hive faithful but seemed to galvanise the team.

The most crucial game in February was the visit of fellow title chasers York.

The Bees put on a brilliant display of attacking football to brush aside their visitors 3–1 and go seven points clear.

The 2–1 defeat to Braintree which ended that long unbeaten run was then followed by successive draws allowing York to close the gap to four points with three to play.

However Easter Monday brought relief as two Mark Shelton penalties put the leaders on the way to a 3–1 win at Sutton and, when York could only draw, a win against Aldershot would spark celebrations.

And what a party it was as in front of a sell out Hive: an early Shelton penalty calmed the nerves with the Bees eventually running out 4–0 winners to seal the title and remain unbeaten at home throughout the season with 18 wins and five draws from 23 games.

Both Anthony Hartigan and Danny Collinge lifted the National League title as the Bees celebrated with their fans.

A final day win at Fylde capped a fine season with the win giving the Bees the magical 100-points for the first time in their history.

The Bees broke plenty of records along the way including the longest run of away games without conceding a goal (a run of eight successive games from 14th January to 22nd March) and going unbeaten at home in a league season for the first time since the 1976/77 season.

Already preparations for the upcoming League Two campaign are underway with some players being released, among them stalwart Ben Coker.

However, Brennan has also started shopping, bringing in defenders Ollie Kensdale from Eastbourne Boro and both Adam Senior and Ryan Galvin from FC Halifax.

So as we look forward to the first Bees Football League campaign since the 2017/18 season – and for the gaffer (his first ever at managerial level) – we wait to see what impact they will make.

EVENTS

Join the Barnet Unity Parade

BY CHARLI ANNE THOMPSON

On the eve of Refugee Week, we are inviting everyone in Barnet to take part in the Unity Parade, a family-friendly procession celebrating creativity, diversity and solidarity across our borough.

On Sunday 15th June at 2pm, we will be walking from Swan Lane Open Space in Whetstone to Victoria Park in Finchley. We will be carrying three large quilted banners made up of over 150 patches created by individuals and groups across Barnet for the Community Quilt Project. Each patch tells a story of belonging, identity, and care, stitched together as a collective act of resistance to the rise in far-right activity and threats to our Finchley community in August last year.

This is a grassroots, community-led event and everyone is welcome, whether you helped make the quilts or are simply showing up to stand for unity in Barnet.

Bring your family and friends, bring a picnic for the park afterwards, and bring your energy!

We warmly welcome community groups, cultural organisations, trade unions, and others to walk with us, and invite anyone with a drum, instrument, costume, or dance to bring it along and add to the atmosphere. Let’s make it colourful, joyful and reflective of the diversity that makes Barnet home to us all.

We would also love to see local cafés and shops along the route join in the spirit by decorating their windows or simply waving us on as we pass.

This is more than a march, it is a celebration of the community we are building together.

The walk is about 1.5 miles and is accessible using a wheelchair, but feel free to join us at any point along the route. We will have stewards to help guide the procession and keep us safe on the road.

To find out more or to get involved:  
Visit [communityquiltbarnet.carrd.co](http://communityquiltbarnet.carrd.co)

Advertisement

Licensing Act 2003 Notice of Application for a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that **ERHAN MICO** has applied to the Licensing Authority of London Borough of Barnet for a Premises Licence to permit:

- Sale of alcohol: Monday to Sunday from 09:00–00:00
- For the premises: The Chocolate Box 2, situated at 225 Deansbrook Road HA8 9BX

A register of licensing applications can be inspected at 8th Floor, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, London, NW9 4EW. Appointments to inspect the register can be made by telephoning 020 8359 7443 during office hours.

Any person wishing to submit relevant representations concerning this application must give notice in writing to the London Borough of Barnet, Licensing Team at the address above, giving in detail the grounds of the representation no later than: **16/06/25**

The Council will not entertain representations where the writer requests that his identity remains anonymous. Copies of all representations will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Authorities Sub Committee and will therefore pass into the public domain.

Representations must relate to one or more of the four Licensing Objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

It is an offence liable on conviction to a fine up to £5000 under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003 knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application.

Dated: 21st day of May

Licensing Act 2003 Notice of Application for a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that **ION TARALUNGA/ GOLD CLUB AND RESTAURANT LTD** has applied to the Licensing Authority of London Borough of Barnet for a Premises Licence to permit:

- Provision of live music, provision of recorded music - provision of performances of dance (indoor & outdoors), Monday to Sunday, 10:00hrs–04:00hrs; Provision of anything of a similar description to live music, Recorded music or performances of dance (indoors) Monday to Sunday, 10:00hrs–04:00hrs; Late night refreshment (indoor & outdoors) Monday to Sunday, 10:00hrs–03:30hrs; Supply of alcohol (indoors) Monday to Sunday 10:00hrs–03:30hrs
- For the premises: Atmosphere Restaurant, situated at 218 Burnt Oak Broadway, Burnt Oak Edgware HA8 0AP

A register of licensing applications can be inspected at 8th Floor, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, London, NW9 4EW. Appointments to inspect the register can be made by telephoning 020 8359 7443 during office hours.

Any person wishing to submit relevant representations concerning this application must give notice in writing to the London Borough of Barnet, Licensing Team at the address above, giving in detail the grounds of the representation no later than: **24/06/2025**

The Council will not entertain representations where the writer requests that his identity remains anonymous. Copies of all representations will be included in the papers presented to the Licensing Authorities Sub Committee and will therefore pass into the public domain.

Representations must relate to one or more of the four Licensing Objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

It is an offence liable on conviction to a fine up to £5000 under section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003 knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application.

Dated: 23rd day of May 2025 Signed: AEC



# Support your local paper during Indie News Week

Indie News Week, which launched last year, is an annual celebration of the independent local news publishers who are stepping in to fill the gaps left by the collapse of traditional local media.

Last year, the *Post*'s not-for-profit publisher, Social Spider CIC raised over £9,000 during the month of June as part of the celebrations. This year we're aiming to increase that to £12,000.

The week itself runs from 9th June to 16th June but we are raising money towards this target throughout the month of June. All money raised from *Post* readers will support us to continue and grow our local journalism in Barnet.

Please donate via this link: [paypal.com/ncp/payment/8WQP2LHN755TW](https://paypal.com/ncp/payment/8WQP2LHN755TW) or the QR code below.



To support us, scan the QR code or visit the link

[paypal.com/ncp/payment/EYWX9XLSSQUNG](https://paypal.com/ncp/payment/EYWX9XLSSQUNG)

## INDIE NEWS WEEK EVENTS

### LONDON

**London Newsmakers x Goldsmiths**  
Monday, 9th June, 6–9pm  
Goldsmiths, 8 Lewisham Way  
SE14 6NW

London Newsmakers – a group of independent publishers in London including Social Spider CIC – is holding an event at Goldsmith College on local news in London.

**Free**  
**Visit** [bit.ly/4jzOkA0](https://bit.ly/4jzOkA0)

### BARNET

**Meet the Journo – Why Local News Matters**  
Thursday, 12th June, 7pm  
Mill Hill East Church, Salcombe Gardens NW7 2NT

The Mill Hill Residents' Association and Barnet Post invite you to a

special event about the future of local journalism and how it can better serve our community.

You'll hear from journalists at Barnet Post and other respected news outlets about the growing importance of local reporting in today's media landscape, and how residents like you can help shape the stories that get told.

**Panelists:** Grace Howarth, Local Democracy Reporter for Barnet, Enfield and Haringey; David Floyd, Editor of Barnet Post and Managing Director of Social Spider CIC, the not-for-profit publisher; David Brindle, former Public Services Editor at The Guardian and long-time Barnet resident; Professor Kurt Barling, former BBC Special Correspondent, now Professor of Journalism at Middlesex University

**Free**  
**Visit** [millhillresidents.org.uk/meetthejourno](https://millhillresidents.org.uk/meetthejourno)



We love printing Barnet Post but it does not bring in enough in advertising income to cover costs. Please sign up as a supporter to keep the paper in print.

If you like what we do and want us to carry on, become a supporter to make it happen:

**barnetpost.  
co.uk/support-us**



## We are thankful to our current supporters:

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