



**From 14 October, we are making
it easier to recycle more**

October



One month to go
See page 11

Contents

Leader's column	2
News in brief	3
Keeping Barnet safe	7
My Barnet	8
Neighbourhood services	10
Employment	11
Public health	12
Contact your councillors	14
What's on	15
Working hours	16

Contacting your council

Corporate Customer Services

tel: 020 8359 2000

email: first.contact@barnet.gov.uk

Contact us and we will identify the correct service or person you are looking for

Street-based services

tel: 020 8359 4600

Covering refuse collection, holes in the road, abandoned vehicles and graffiti

Parking enquiries

tel: 020 8359 7446

www.barnet.gov.uk/parking

Planning and licensing advice

tel: 020 8359 3000

Social Care Direct

tel: 020 8359 5000

Out of hours emergencies

tel: 020 8359 2000

Barnet First is published by Barnet Council's Communications Team.

Please email us on:

barnet.first@barnet.gov.uk

Or write to us

First Contact, London Borough of Barnet, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP

Leader's column



In an eight-week period in the summer, the council received the results of two legal challenges, both of which will have a substantial impact on the finances of the council.

In the second of these decisions the Court of Appeal upheld a previous judge's decision that a legal challenge into the council's major change programme, the One Barnet programme, should not be allowed.

This has allowed the council to sign two major contracts (see opposite) for the provision of public services in the borough.

To date we have emphasised the cost saving, a total of £165 million, for the taxpayer. As important however, will be the investment in new services. Residents rightly expect public services to match the efficiency of those they receive from the private sector even as our income falls. The major investment brought to the council by these contracts will do just that.

Less beneficial for the council finances was a decision by Lord Justice Davis that the council was not entitled to raise charges for Residents Parking Permits and Visitor Parking Permits as dramatically as it did in 2011 and in such a blunt manner.

There are times in Government when you just have to accept that a decision was incorrect and I am sorry that this decision was made in the way it was. If you bought a Residents' Parking Permit you can find details of how they can get a refund on the page opposite.

Yours

Richard Cornelius

news in brief



Saving Barnet's taxpayers £126million



New contracts to save millions

Barnet Council and Capita plc have finally signed two key contracts which will together generate savings to the local taxpayer of £165 million over 10 years.

The signing follows a Court of Appeal ruling on Friday 2 August which found in the council's favour following a legal challenge brought by a resident against parts of the council's One Barnet change programme.

A 10-year contract to run the council's back office services which include customer services, human resources, finance and payroll, IT, revenues and benefits, estates, corporate procurement and commercial services will save the taxpayer £126 million over that time.

A second contract will see a new jointly-owned company set up with Capita's property and infrastructure business to deliver development and regulatory services (DRS) in the borough. This is worth £39 million to the council through a combination of savings and income. Both contracts will see investments made in new technology to improve the service to residents.



Parking prices

Barnet Council is to reduce the price for a Residents' Parking Permit back to 2006 levels following a ruling by a High Court judge.

In response to a legal challenge brought against the council, the judge ruled that the council was wrong to use the Road Traffic Act to raise the price of a permit in 2011 from £40 to £100.

The council has decided not to appeal the decision. Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of Barnet Council, said: "I am sorry that this was done in the way that it was. The court has ruled that the increase was wrongly implemented and so we will go back to the old charges. Any change to these will have to go through the proper process."

Residents who made payments at the increased rates for their annual charges and/or for visitor vouchers will be refunded the difference and should fill out an e-form on Barnet Council's website, providing details of their name, telephone number, address, permit ID if they have it and car registration number.

Alternatively, email the council at CPZParkingRefunds@barnet.gov.uk or write to: Parking Team, CPZ Parking Refunds, London Borough of Barnet, NLBP, London N11 1NP.

news in brief

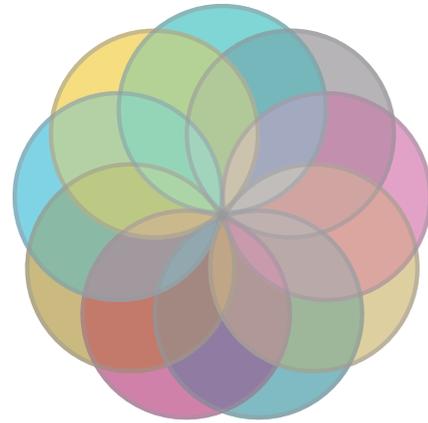
Benefit Cap Task Force launches

A multi-agency task force has been launched in Barnet to support households likely to be affected by the national Benefit Cap.

The team combines staff from Barnet Council, Barnet Homes and Jobcentre Plus, and will primarily focus on supporting affected households into work, with some support to find affordable accommodation where necessary.

The cap, which was due to come into effect in August for Barnet, will affect just over 1,000 households, with the majority living in private sector accommodation. The task force has been created to provide joined-up advice and support on getting in to work, housing options and benefits advice for residents as seamlessly as possible.

For more information on welfare and benefit changes visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/benefits-changes



New process to help keep children and young people safe and supported

Barnet has introduced a new way of working aimed at improving the support and safeguarding process for children.

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) went live this summer and provides a 'single point of referral' system that makes sure that all of the agencies involved in child protection are effectively communicating with each other. The MASH consists of a Children Social Care team working closely with other agencies such as the police, education, health and early intervention services. This is to identify the most appropriate team to meet children's needs either at the early intervention stage or where there are welfare and child protection concerns. The information in the MASH is shared in a secure environment in line with the Data Protection Act. Further information can be viewed online at www.barnet.gov.uk/MASH

Members of the public who have any concerns about the welfare of a child can get in touch by calling 020 8359 4066.





Emergency cover for carers

A scheme has been launched to give carers peace of mind if an emergency prevents them from providing their usual care.

The free to use initiative allows people who care for a relative or friend to set up an emergency plan which can be set in motion should an emergency arise. Carers are able to draw up the plan which includes contact details for up to three other people who would be able to provide support, along with other information such as the medical needs of the person being cared for.

This is then logged with 'Assist', a 24-hour community alarm response centre.



Carers are issued with a pocket-sized emergency alert card which includes the Assist telephone number.

Carers can create an emergency plan by visiting www.barnet.gov.uk/carers or calling Assist on 020 8359 4841.

From 1 September 2013, some two-year-olds from low income families will be entitled to a free early education place.

Children who live in Barnet and whose families are in receipt of a range of support payments including income support will be eligible.

Parents can make an application online at www.barnet.gov.uk/free-childcare where details of participating childcare providers can also be found. Parents will need their National Insurance number to confirm eligibility.

Once an application is checked, parents will receive a letter confirming their eligibility and they can then find a childcare place at a participating childcare provider in Barnet.

Parents can also contact Families and Young people information on 0800 389 8312 for more details.

Free Early Education

for two, three and four year olds



Working to cut crime

Well over half of all crime in Britain is committed by people who have already been prosecuted for a criminal offence.

So Barnet Council and its partners in the Metropolitan Police, the Probation Service and Barnet Homes, have been targeting reducing re-offending to reduce crime in the borough.

Much of this has involved specific coaching for offenders and the success of this is demonstrated by a marked drop in re-offending in the borough.

Barnet now has the fifth lowest level of re-offending in London - two years ago Barnet had the 13th lowest.

As part of a plan to reduce re-offending even further, Barnet Community Safety Partnership will be launching Neighbourhood Justice Panels in the autumn.

The panels bring together the person affected by the crime and anti-social behaviour and the person who committed the offences to talk about what happened,

the impact it has had and what can be done to make things right and stop further incidents.

Neighbourhood Justice Panels have already been trialled in other parts of the country and have succeeded in reducing repeat cases of anti-social behaviour and crime.

The panels will consist of volunteers, who will be trained in restorative justice, and who are able to facilitate meetings between victim and perpetrator.

Events will be taking place soon to provide more information on the changes. For a schedule of events, visit the web page below.

The council will start to recruit volunteers in October 2013, if you are interested in becoming a volunteer please email communitysafety@barnet.gov.uk

For more information visit:

www.barnet.gov.uk/community-safety



Safe Places Scheme

This year also saw the launch of a scheme to help keep people with learning disabilities safe while out and about in the borough.

The 'Safe Places' scheme allows people to go into any business displaying the Safe Places logo to seek help if they become lost, anxious or are harassed.

The scheme was backed by the council's Supporting Independence Fund and is run by Your Choice Barnet, Barnet Mencap and Mill Hill Safer Neighbourhood Team.



For more information visit:

www.barnet.gov.uk/safe-places



Make something great
with an extra plate



The popular Casserole Club is coming to Barnet. Co-ordinated by The Barnet Group, Age UK Barnet and All Together Better, the Casserole Club connects people who like to cook with neighbours who could benefit from home cooked food.

The scheme has residents signing up as either a Cook or a Diner – Cooks save extra portions of their meals and then deliver them to registered Diners at an agreed time.

Casserole Club, an initiative set up by FutureGov, also gives those who do not have internet access an opportunity to take part in the scheme by signing up through personal meetings, phone and text.

Use the contact details below if you or someone you know lives in Barnet and could contribute or benefit.

For more information call: 020 3289 4170
visit: www.casseroleclub.com
or email: hello@casseroleclub.com



Big London Energy Switch

Barnet is working with other councils in London to save you money on your gas and electricity bills.

By gathering together lots of people who want to lower their energy bills, the Big London Energy Switch (BLES) can encourage energy companies to offer their lowest prices.

After registration closes, all the companies are invited to offer their best prices to everyone who registered. You will then receive details of how much you could save by switching, but you don't have to accept the offer if it is not right for you.

To sign up or learn more go to www.biglondonenergyswitch.org.uk before 15 October and enter your details. Don't forget to have your most recent gas or electricity bill to hand when you do this.

The BLES has already saved many people around £120 a year on their bills. There is no guarantee the switch will save money however, for example if you are already on the best tariff. If you are in debt to an energy company you may not be allowed to switch.

If you encounter any difficulties registering you can call the helpline on 0800 0488 112 Monday – Friday from 8am until 5.30pm. If you can't register online please contact the council for further information on: 020 8359 2000.

The Big London
ENERGY
SWITCH

My Barnet



As founder and Chairman of Barnet's Somali Bravanese Welfare Association, Abubakar Ali has seen the best and worst sides of human nature in recent times.

In the early hours of the morning on 5 June arsonists set fire to the Bravanese Community Centre based on Coppetts Road, on the Barnet side of Muswell Hill. Within a few hours the whole site was razed to the ground.

The months that have followed have seen Mr Ali, a softly spoken man devoted to his family and faith, catapulted into the media spotlight as spokesman for the group.

For someone who had fled Somalia during the civil war in 1992 in the hope of finding a peaceful life in the leafy suburbs of Barnet, this was the last thing he could have expected.

"When I arrived here people were welcoming," Mr Ali recalls talking from the centre's temporary home at East Finchley Library. After a spell living in Colindale he settled in Finchley with his wife and family.

"I chose Barnet because it is a quiet area, it's a good area, it's a safe area where you can trust your children to go around by themselves. That's what made what happened here even more of a shock."

Mr Ali got a job working with people with mental health and substance misuse for the mental health charity MIND in Brent and set about helping others.

"The first generation that came over had suffered and been pushed out of their country by the civil war and into refugee camps," he says. "For them arriving in the UK was a totally different culture to what they had been used to. They had a lot of hurdles to face including overcoming the language barrier, finding a livelihood and settling into a whole new way of life. I

helped as best I could." In 1993 Mr Ali founded the association from East Finchley Neighbourhood Centre, but growing demand led them to seek larger premises. In 2000 they moved to the centre in Coppetts Road which they rented from the council.

"We started other projects such as sport and business support as well as teaching English and cultural studies," said Mr Ali. "It was rewarding to see some of the young people going on to university and becoming role models for the next generation."

The fire may have put a temporary hold on some of the centre's projects, but it is clear Mr Ali will continue to do all he can to keep his community together until the centre is rebuilt.

"One of the positive things to have come out of this is the way the multi-faith community has united together in such a positive way," he says.

"They shared our feelings of shock and revulsion at the cause of the fire and stood next to us shoulder to shoulder."

No greater example of this can be seen than the offer from two local synagogues which stepped forward and invited the group to use their buildings as places of worship, and two local schools who offered them temporary classrooms for them to continue preparing their children for their exams. All this came through the support from Barnet Citizens, part of London Citizens alliance.

The huge outpouring of support was also evident when 500 people joined together for a Unity walk through the borough's streets. "It was heartening to see so many people come together like that," he says. "We've had so much support, from the council, the police, the fire brigade, Barnet Citizens and the whole community during what has been a difficult time.

"With everyone's help I am sure our community, and Barnet as a whole, will come out of this stronger than before."



Mr Ali



East Finchley Library	
Monday	9.30am-5pm
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	9.30am - 8pm
Thursday	9.30am - 5pm
Friday	10am - 5pm
Saturday	9.30am - 5pm
Sunday	Closed



The centre's temporary meeting place

Neighbourhood services for older people

A new approach to providing activities and social opportunities for older people across the borough has begun to take shape.

The new Neighbourhood Services model was launched earlier this year as a way of making sure day opportunities reach as many older people in the borough as possible.

The services are being delivered by a lead provider, Age UK Barnet, in partnership with 16 other voluntary sector organisations.

The range of activities has been developed to reflect what people would like to see available in their area.

The service also aims to give older people the chance to volunteer and use their own skills to actively play a role in running activities.

There is a particular emphasis on exercise and healthy living, with activities including Tai Chi classes and dance sessions already up and running.

There is also computer tuition available and the chance to get together through coffee mornings, lunch or afternoon tea.

Providers are also working on providing other opportunities including reading and gardening clubs, health talks, advice on falls prevention, befriending services, Zumba classes and information and advice sessions on a range of other subjects.

Some practical support can be offered to people in their home such as help with shopping, collecting prescriptions and individual befriending services.

Service user Robina Spinks from Finchley said: "It's good to know there are so many new things happening for older people locally through Neighbourhood Services. I've just enjoyed learning how to use a tablet at IT classes.

"They are a really good way to meet people and the internet gives you more ways to find out what's going on.

"It does make it easier for people to take the plunge and do new activities if they don't have to go too far for them."

For more details, and for information on volunteering, contact Age UK Barnet's Neighbourhood Services Manager Helen Newman on 020 8432 1420 or email helen.newman@ageukbarnet.org.uk

More information can also be found by visiting www.ageukbarnet.org.uk



For a list of the organisations involved:
www.barnet.gov.uk/neighbourhood-services



Barnet Jobs website



OPEN

Do you own a business but sometimes struggle to find the right candidates to fill vacancies?

Barnet's online jobs portal, jobs.barnet.gov.uk, has an average of 32,675 visits every month, and the council is now giving local businesses the opportunity to advertise their vacancies through the portal.

The upload charge is £25 per advert and there is a £45 production fee for each batch of adverts placed. There is no further charge for any supporting

documents such as job descriptions or application forms submitted with the advert.

The council's HR department will get your job online within three days of receiving your request.

Any businesses who are interested in taking up the council's offer can ask for an advert request form from hr.connect@barnet.gov.uk

→ Platforms programme

Making a difference to 350 young people's lives

One year on since its launch, Barnet Council's Platforms Programme has helped hundreds of young people gain a foothold into the world of work.

In June 2012, the council launched the £1million programme piloting a series of initiatives to give Barnet's young people aged 16 – 24 not in employment, education or training, the skills required to find their first job. Since its launch last summer, Platforms has made a difference to the lives of 350 young people.

Family business SQS Limited, which operates near Staples Corner in West Hendon, is working with Barnet Council to fill eight apprenticeship opportunities that it has recently created. SQS has seen its highway reinstatement company double in size over the last 18 months. Steve Pickering, Training and Development Manager at SQS, said: "We are very keen to make use of the high level of skills that exist within our local community.

"The local interest generated by Barnet Council has been amazing. We've worked closely with staff who've taken the time to understand our business. We will be looking to repeat this experience next year." Over 70 local employers have taken part in Platforms, either through recruiting new staff or supporting young people to get work experience.



For more information, visit:
www.barnet.gov.uk/platforms



Healthy eating on a budget

Public Health Improvement Officer Lauren Hayes has put together some useful hints and tips on some of the best ways to eat well for less.



Frozen fruit and vegetables

Keep a supply of frozen fruit and veg, they tend to be cheaper than buying fresh, cut down on wastage and still count towards your five-a-day.



Tins and cans

Tinned oily fish like sardines and salmon are usually cheaper than fresh fish but are still full of heart-friendly omega-3 fats. Canned fruit and veg (in juice not syrup) are just as good as fresh.



Stock up on staples

Canned tomatoes, beans and dried pulses are cheap, healthy and a good way to add bulk to meals. They are all excellent forms of protein and cost very little.



Veg out

Vegetables cost less than meat and have less fat and more fibre. Try to buy just enough for the next couple of days.



Go seasonal

Keep an eye out for what is in season. Seasonal fruit and vegetables are cheaper and taste great. With autumn on the way look out for sweetcorn, squashes, leeks, cabbages, apples, pears and plums.



Shop with a friend

A lot of supermarkets offer 2 for 1 or other bulk buys so share the bargains.



Oats the way to go

Porridge is a great choice for breakfast, it is cheap and has no added salt or sugar.



'Waist' not want not

Keep an eye on your portion sizes and try not to cook more than you need by measuring out pasta and rice.

For more information and advice on saving money on healthy food and reducing food waste visit: www.lovefoodhatewaste.com



Ask the Doctor

Dr Andrew Howe, Barnet's Director of Public Health, answers questions about healthy eating on a budget.

I am receiving benefits and have a one-year-old child, is there any help I can get to eat more healthily?



If you are at least 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under four years old you could get Healthy Start vouchers. This means-tested scheme provides vouchers to spend with local retailers on some basic foods. Apply online at www.healthystart.nhs.uk, ring the Healthy Start helpline on 0845 607 6823 or ask your midwife, health visitor or GP surgery for one. You can spend the vouchers on plain cow's milk, fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables and infant formula milk. You will also receive vouchers for free Healthy Start vitamins.

It is easier to just get a takeaway – and it costs much less than fruit and veg.

Fruit and vegetables don't need to be expensive, buy what is in season and shop around in local stores as they may be cheaper than the supermarkets. Adding vegetables to meat based meals makes the meat go further and cuts down on saturated fats.

Is it expensive to grow your own fruit and vegetables?

Growing your own is by far the cheapest way if you have got the time. If you live in a flat plant some herbs or salad plants in a window box. Even in a small garden you can find space for low-maintenance vegetables, such as potatoes and carrots. For more information on allotments visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/allotments

How can I get enough protein if I cut down on meat?

Pulses like beans and lentils are a high protein alternative and great in chilli or curry. Alternatively try eating tinned oily fish like sardines and salmon.

For healthy recipe ideas visit:

NHS Livewell

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/loseweight/Pages/Eatwellcheap.aspx

British Heart Foundation:

www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/prevention/healthy-eating/healthy-eating-on-a-budget.aspx

Netmums:

www.netmums.com/family-food/guide-to-cooking-on-a-budget/cooking-on-a-budget



Contact your councillors

Brunswick Park

Conservative

Cllr Lisa Rutter

cllr.l.rutter@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Andreas Tambourides

cllr.a.tambourides@barnet.gov.uk

Labour

Cllr Andreas Ioannidis

cllr.a.ioannidis@barnet.gov.uk

Burnt Oak

Labour

Cllr Alex Brodtkin

cllr.a.brodtkin@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Claire Farrier

cllr.c.farrier@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Charlie O-Macauley

cllr.c.omacauley@barnet.gov.uk

Childs Hill

Liberal Democrat

Cllr Jack Cohen

cllr.j.cohen@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Monroe Palmer

cllr.m.palmer@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Susette Palmer

cllr.s.palmer@barnet.gov.uk

Colindale

Labour

Cllr Geoffrey Johnson

cllr.g.johnson@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Gillian Sargeant

cllr.g.sargeant@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Zakia Zubairi

cllr.z.zubairi@barnet.gov.uk

Coppetts

Labour

Cllr Pauline Coakley Webb

cllr.p.coakleywebb@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Barry Rawlings

cllr.b.rawlings@barnet.gov.uk

Conservative

Cllr Kate Salinger

cllr.c.salinger@barnet.gov.uk

East Barnet

Conservative

Cllr Barry Evangelii

cllr.b.evangelii@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Robert Rams

cllr.r.rams@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Joanna Tambourides

cllr.j.tambourides@barnet.gov.uk

East Finchley

Labour

Cllr Arjun Mitra

cllr.a.mitra@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Alison Moore

cllr.a.moore@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Colin Rogers

cllr.c.rogers@barnet.gov.uk

Edgware

Conservative

Cllr Helena Hart

cllr.h.hart@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Joan Scannell

cllr.j.scannell@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Darrell Yawitch

cllr.d.yawitch@barnet.gov.uk

Finchley Church End

Conservative

Cllr Eva Greenspan

cllr.e.greenspan@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Graham Old

cllr.g.old@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Daniel Thomas

cllr.d.thomas@barnet.gov.uk

Garden Suburb

Conservative

Cllr Andrew Harper

cllr.a.harper@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr John Marshall

cllr.j.marshall@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Daniel Seal

cllr.d.seal@barnet.gov.uk

Golders Green

Conservative

Cllr Dean Cohen

cllr.d.cohen@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Melvin Cohen

cllr.m.cohen@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Reuben Thompstone

cllr.r.thompstone@barnet.gov.uk

Hale

Conservative

Cllr Thomas Davey

cllr.t.davey@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Brian Gordon

cllr.b.gordon@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Hugh Rayner

cllr.h.rayner@barnet.gov.uk

Hendon

Conservative

Cllr Maureen Braun

cllr.m.braun@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Anthony Finn

cllr.a.finn@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Mark Shooter

cllr.m.shooter@barnet.gov.uk

High Barnet

Conservative

Cllr David Longstaff

cllr.d.longstaff@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Bridget Perry

cllr.b.perry@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Wendy Prentice

cllr.w.prentice@barnet.gov.uk

Mill Hill

Conservative

Cllr John Hart

cllr.j.hart@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Sury Khatri

cllr.s.khatri@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Brian Schama

cllr.b.schama@barnet.gov.uk

Oakleigh

Conservative

Cllr Sachin Rajput

cllr.s.rajput@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Brian Salinger

cllr.b.salinger@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Stephen Sowerby

cllr.s.sowerby@barnet.gov.uk

Totteridge

Conservative

Cllr Richard Cornelius

leader@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Alison Cornelius

cllr.a.cornelius@barnet.gov.uk

Independent

Cllr Brian Coleman

cllr.b.coleman@barnet.gov.uk

Underhill

Conservative

Cllr Andrew Strongolou

cllr.a.strongolou@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Rowan Quigley Turner

cllr.r.quigleyturner@barnet.gov.uk

Labour

Cllr Anita Campbell

cllr.a.campbell@barnet.gov.uk

West Finchley

Labour

Cllr Ross Houston

cllr.r.houston@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Kath McGuirk

cllr.k.mcguirk@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Jim Tierney

cllr.j.tierney@barnet.gov.uk

West Hendon

Labour

Cllr Julie Johnson

cllr.j.johnson@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Agnes Slocombe

cllr.a.slocombe@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Ansuya Sodha

cllr.a.sodha@barnet.gov.uk

Woodhouse

Labour

Cllr Geof Cooke

cllr.g.cooke@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Anne Hutton

cllr.a.hutton@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Alan Schneiderman

cllr.a.schneiderman@barnet.gov.uk

For details of surgeries, call 020 8359 2000, email first.contact@barnet.gov.uk or write to us: Members' Room, Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, Hendon, NW4 4BG

what's on



Training Ship Broadsword Fete

Sunday 22 September 2013

11am-4pm (Car boot sale 9.30am-4pm)



The Sea Training Corps, based at Training Ship Broadsword, is a voluntary youth organisation for boys and girls aged 7 – 19 years. Based on Naval routines and traditions TS Broadsword aims to develop young people in the skills of self-discipline, leadership and provide a sense of community through a range of weekly parades, fun weekend activities and camps throughout the year. The unit also runs events and activities, including a band, for all ages and abilities with current members ranging in age from 20 to 93 years.

The TS Broadsword Fete and Open Day, raising funds for the Corps' activities, will include band displays, a barbeque, a soft air range and other family activities. Families are also invited to the car boot sale starting at 9.30am with all proceeds going to TS Broadsword to improve facilities and access for those using wheelchairs or with mobility requirements.

For more information on the event, joining the Corps or volunteering visit: www.seacadet.org
or email: geraldandjean@seacadet.org
or call Commander Beck on 020 8205 4492



Sensory Rhyme and Play

Date: Wednesday mornings

Venue: South Friern Library,
£4.95 per session (booked)

Introduces parents to the wonderful world of picture books and supports babies learning and development through action rhymes, tactile songs and a stimulating sensory play environment. Each session is inspired by a fantastic picture book, which is read aloud for parents and babies to enjoy. The same book is used as the inspiration for sensory play activities.

This is a new library activity for non-walking babies.

For further details please contact sarah.ginn@barnet.gov.uk

artsdepot events

Lucy Porter: Northern Soul

Date: Saturday 28 September, 8pm

Venue: artsdepot, £14 / £12
concession, ages 16 and over

Join the star of 'Never Mind The Buzzcocks' and 'Mock The Week' on an hilarious quest to find her spiritual home.

Aliens Love Underpants

Date: 28 – 29 Sep, 11am and 2pm

Venue: artsdepot, £13 / £11 (£40 for 4)
/ £7, ages 3 and over

An action-packed adaptation of the best-selling children's book with stunning effects, music, and lots of aliens of course.

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Working hours

Nathan Hill is a Refuse Loader in the Waste and Recycling Service based at Mill Hill Depot. He joined the council in 2010 and works in the Waste and Recycling department collecting waste and green garden waste.

What does your job involve?

I empty the black refuse bins during the week and work on the green waste collections on Saturdays. I have just passed my Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) Level 2 training so I will be driving the refuse truck shortly.

How early do you have to wake up?

I get up at 4am. We have to be at the depot for 6am so the team can get briefed on anything particular for the day like road closures or special collections. We are out on the road by 6.20am and start emptying bins at 6.30am.

What is the weirdest thing you've found that someone's thrown out?

Residents throw everything away, even new bikes and wedding rings. We had a lady phone up four hours after her collection to see if we could look for her ring. By that time the load would have been taken to either Hendon or Edmonton waste disposal site and it would have been worse than trying to look for a needle in a haystack.

What is the most challenging thing about your role?

Motorists who have to wait behind the refuse vehicles in their cars can be quite impatient sometimes. We work as quickly and safely as possible to try and keep the traffic moving, but this can be hard especially during the morning rush hour.

What's been your favourite memory of working in the borough?

During the heavy snow period it was difficult to do some of the collections as roads get closed and traffic has to move much slower. It is also difficult for some elderly residents to put their bins out. On one of my collections Jonathan Ross came out and had a chat with us, he thanked us for working through the snow.

Has the job changed over the years?

I have seen gradual change over the last year especially with new rounds being created ready for the new refuse and recycling collections. This means, for the majority of residents, their recycling and refuse is collected on the same day.



To find out more about the new waste and recycling service, visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/14-October, email: first.contact@barnet.gov.uk or tel: 020 8359 4600

