

barnetfirst

issue 51 September 2012



A changing council

See page 7

Contents

Leader's column	2
News in brief	3
Changes to parking in Barnet	6
Boost for road and pavement repairs	6
One Barnet	7
Crowds flock to welcome the Olympic Torch	11
Launch into literacy	12
Domestic violence services	13
Contact your councillors	14
What's on	15
Working hours	16

Leader's column



Nothing in life stands still. Change is inevitable and the council is no different. In business, I have noticed that organisations have to reinvent themselves every 15 years or so. It is how they manage this change that is a mark as to how successful they are and indeed whether they survive at all.

In this magazine, there is information as to how Council Tax Benefit is charged and how it will be funded by the council rather than central government. Being in the time that we are in of course, this comes with a sting in the form of a 10% funding cut. There is consultation as to how this will be managed in the interests of residents and taxpayers alike and the council would value your views.

The 'One Barnet' programme is also outlined. It must be right to look at everything the council does and the way it is done to get the best result for the taxpayer. In the context of the council having to make savings of £72.5 million over four years, change is inevitable.

Barnet is already a high-performing council in schools, children's services and adult social care. Our waste collection gets very high approval ratings from residents.

How we cope with change, however, will determine how well we perform for you in the future.

Yours

Richard Cornelius

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

email: parking@barnet.gov.uk

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 contact us by email

barnet.first@barnet.gov.uk

news in brief



Second borough street 'adopted' by its residents

An Edgware street has become the second in the borough to be 'adopted' by its residents under a pioneering scheme run by Barnet Council. As part of the council's 'Adopt-a-Street' initiative, households of the adjoining Manns Road and Garden City were officially handed ownership of their street's look and feel.

'Adopt-a-Street' encourages local volunteers to care for their area by carrying out extra work which will make their neighbourhoods look more attractive. With support and training from council staff, residents agree to regularly collect litter, prune overgrown greenery, sweep leaves and plant new bulbs ready for spring.

When residents sign up to adopt their street through the council's Pledgebank website pledgebank.barnet.gov.uk, they will automatically be provided with litter pickers, shovels and rubbish sacks. Prior to the winter months, 'adopted' streets will also receive a delivery of grit and equipment to remove snow and spread grit on their pavements.



Community clear-up

Barnet Council and Brent Cross Shopping Centre have been working to introduce community clear-ups in the area around the shopping centre.

The first of these, a clear-up of Sturgess Park, saw 40 volunteers from the shopping centre work with Barnet Council staff, local councillors and residents to clear litter, weeds and graffiti from the park.

This was followed by a similar clearing of the River Brent, with volunteers from Hammerson and Brent Cross centre management working with leading waterway charity Thames 21 to clear away rubbish.

Councillor Dean Cohen, Cabinet Member for Environment, said: "Brent Cross Shopping Centre is one of the major employers in the borough, and it's great to see them working with the local community to make a difference to our open spaces."

The shopping centre is hoping to develop a model for regular clear-ups, working in partnership with environmental charity Groundwork.

news in brief

Pre-paid cards launched to give residents more control over their social care

Barnet Council has introduced a system of pre-paid cards to give adults requiring social care control over how they pay for their support.

The pre-paid cards, which work in a similar way to a debit card, give residents who qualify for financial assistance from the council a straightforward way to pay for services to meet their social care needs.

The cards are pre-loaded with an agreed amount of money needed for the person's support. They can use the cards to purchase support from a provider

of their choice over the telephone, internet or in person.

Up until now, people receiving direct payments have had to open a separate bank account to receive the money and pay for their care, as well as having to provide proof of payment.

The money can only be used to meet someone's social care needs, with the council remotely monitoring usage of the pre-paid cards each month.

For more information visit:

www.barnet.gov.uk/prepaid-cards



Assist alarms boost independence

Help is at hand for people who wish to live independently in their own home but want some reassurance if anything goes wrong.

The borough's Assist Alarm service, run by Barnet Homes, operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and has just gained its 3,600th customer.

Customers have a small push button alarm to wear around their wrist or as a pendant. They can press this if ever they get into difficulty and speak to Assist staff, who can summon help from a key holder, the emergency services or their dedicated callout team.

Assist also offers telecare services. Non-intrusive sensors pick up any unusual activity in your home and send an alert if a potential problem has arisen.



Staff are ready to respond to anything from life threatening situations to people locking themselves out of their home.

For more information call 020 8359 4841, email assist@barnethomes.org or visit www.barnetassist.co.uk

news in brief



Innovation Bank paves the way for medical response service

A project to set up a 'blue light' emergency medical response service manned by off-duty doctors and police officers is to be launched thanks to the council's Big Society Innovation Bank.

The London Ambulance Service Voluntary Responder Group successfully bid for more than £28,000 from the Innovation Bank to purchase a fully equipped medical response car.

Keys to the car were officially handed to members of the group in July by Councillor Robert Rams, Cabinet Member for Customer Access and Partnerships.

The service will see off-duty doctors and police officers give up their spare time to respond to serious medical emergencies across the borough in addition to paramedics dispatched by the London Ambulance Service.



The project was one of nine to successfully bid last year for some of the £200,000 on offer in the first round of applications for Big Society Innovation Bank funding.

Free Entitlement to Early Education places for two, three and four year-olds

Some two year-olds and all three and four year-olds are entitled to a free early education place (FEEE).

The FEEE funds eligible two-year-olds (the term following a child's second birthday) for up to 10 hours per week, 38 weeks per year (term time only).

Every three and four-year-old (the term following a child's third birthday) can access up to 15 hours per week, for up to 38 weeks per year (term time only) of free early education.



The FEEE can be accessed through Quality Assured Childminders, Children's Centres, pre-schools/nurseries and maintained nursery schools/classes.

To find out how your child can access either of the schemes, visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/free-childcare

Changes to parking in Barnet

A new half-day visitor parking permit is to be introduced to controlled parking zones across the borough.

Following consultation, the council is expecting permits to be available from 17 September. The new permits will cost £2.20 and this new option will compliment the current full-day visitor voucher priced at £4.16.

The council is also moving to make scratch card parking vouchers more readily available across the borough by offering them to retailers at a discount for resale. Vouchers are also available from any library in the borough.

The vouchers are an alternative way of paying for parking, in addition to paying by phone. Over a million parking spaces have been paid for by phone since November last year.

Residents signed up to pay-by-phone parking in Barnet are automatically signed up for the same service in Enfield, Islington, Westminster, Croydon, Ealing, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, Hackney and The City of London.

Visitor Parking Vouchers can be ordered at: www.barnet.gov.uk/parking



Boost for road and pavement repairs

Barnet Council has allocated an extra £3.5 million to repair roads and pavements across the borough.

This investment is in response to a recent residents' perception survey which indicated that improving the borough's roads and pavements was a top concern for residents. This figure is on top of a £3 million

capital funding for roads and pavements agreed in January 2012.

A full list of the roads to be repaired can be found at: www.barnet.gov.uk/plannedroadworks





One Barnet

A changing council

The council is restructuring the way it provides many of its services to residents.

The restructure will let the council meet the spending challenge it faces. Ongoing cuts in government funding (26% over the spending review period), mean that the council will have to have made savings of £72.5 million over a four year period (2011-2015).

The council is running a major change programme, called 'One Barnet' that covers many different services. These projects are outlined overleaf.

One Barnet will allow the council to make the majority of its savings in back office costs and minimise the impact of spending cuts on frontline services. It will also bring private sector investment into key services. The changes will also bring improvements to services as investment is made in new technology or new ways of working.

The changes proposed by the council vary across services. Some services, notably the council's legal services, will be run in partnership with other local authorities. This will allow savings to be made through economies of scale.

Other services, especially back office functions like payroll and Human Resources, will be run with specialist private companies. Companies will bring experience of delivering these services for the private sector and other government bodies to Barnet. The council has also moved some services into a separate Trading Company with Barnet Homes. This will give users of Adult Social Care greater control over the service they receive from the council as they use benefits to personally 'buy' services.

Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of Barnet Council, said: "All councils are facing major cuts in funding, but I very much believe we are ahead of the game in being properly prepared to meet that challenge. Our aim of improving some of our services while saving money across the board is an ambitious one, but this programme of change will let us do just that."

Saving back office costs

The council is looking for a private company to run several of its back office functions. The council aims to reduce back office costs and improve customer service to residents. The council is currently in talks with two companies about running the following services: Switchboard and Call Centre, Property Management, Finance and Payroll, Human Resources, IT, Procurement, Revenues and Benefits, and Commercial Services.

The council expects to save at least 11 per cent of the cost of running these services over 10 years.

That is a saving of £41 million to the taxpayer over the length of the contract.

Other advantages would include a single point of contact for all customer enquiries and private sector standards of customer service right across the council.

Development, Planning and Regulation

The council is looking to work with a private sector partner to manage the administration of planning and environmental services to minimise the cost of these services to residents. The council is currently in negotiation with two potential bidders to run services including building control, planning, regeneration, highway maintenance and environmental health.

Council staff would move to work for the successful bidder next spring. Residents will not immediately notice any difference in the way the services are delivered but investment from a new provider would mean that services become more efficient.

This project is expected to save the council at least £26 million over the next 10 years.

Parking Service

The council's Parking Service provides and manages on and off-street parking facilities and enforces on-street parking controls in the borough.

After running a competitive procurement process, Barnet Council awarded the contract to run the council's Parking Service to the specialist parking company NSL.

The new contract for the Parking Service, which went live in April, will save the taxpayer £600,000 each year.



A joint Legal Service

The council has previously had an in-house legal service. But in the past few years there has not been the range of skills needed for the specialised legal advice required for some large council schemes such as the Brent Cross Regeneration and Primary Schools building programme.

Barnet has now agreed to run a joint legal service with the London Borough of Harrow from this month.

Less work will need to be sent to external legal firms as the larger single service will have a greater range of skills and expertise available in the new joint service.

Passenger Transport

Barnet Council is working with five other London boroughs – Brent, Harrow, Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow – to improve passenger transport services for Vulnerable Adults and Children with Special Needs.

The council doesn't expect to make huge savings but there will be improvements to the service. These will include a single point of contact for all users, more effective scheduling of routes and better use of resources across five boroughs.

Housing and Care

The council transferred its Learning Disability Services, Physical and Sensory Impairment Disability Services and Housing Needs Service to a new trading company, the Barnet Group, earlier this year.

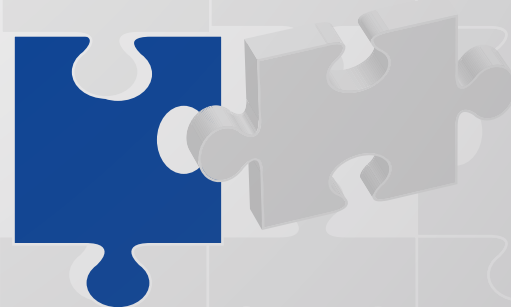
The Barnet Group is wholly owned by Barnet Council and acts as a parent company to Barnet Homes, who manage the borough's 15,000 council homes and Your Choice Barnet, an adult social care company that provides services to adults with learning and physical disabilities.

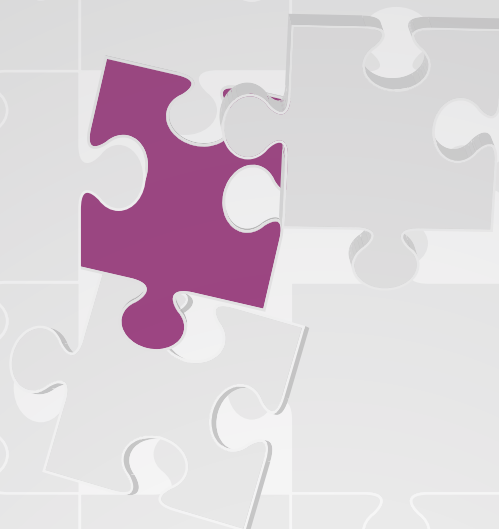
Service users and their carers now have greater choice, independence and control over the services, having been allocated personal budgets that they can spend to suit their own needs.

It has also created an easier end-to-end service for people in housing need and simplified the system for them.

Two councillors sit on the Barnet Group Board.

The improved efficiency of the LATC is expected to be worth over £1 million to the Barnet taxpayer over the next three years.





Community Coaches

'Community Coaches' is a project that matches families and individuals with a team of volunteers who help them develop life skills to stop them falling into a chaotic lifestyle.

The project has been run through an outside agency, Home Start Barnet, that has recruited and trained a team of local volunteers. Over the past six months they have coached 22 families and individuals living in Stonegrove and Grahame Park. Many of the families referred to the scheme are often in rent arrears and at risk of eviction. Others have been referred from a range of sources including the Intensive Family Focus Team and health visitors.

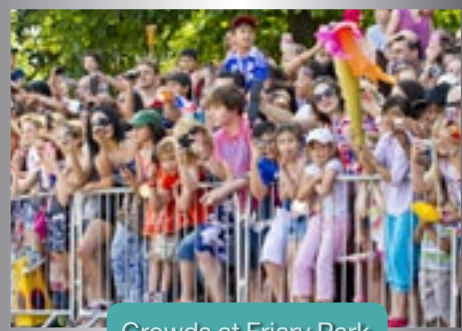
Many of the solutions appear to be remarkably simple, such as setting up a direct debit to repay

debt. The volunteers have found a lot of unmet needs such as people not receiving the right benefit, or not understanding what they can do themselves to improve their lives. By working with the volunteers to improve their life skills these families and individuals have been able to settle into a more stable lifestyle.

The pilot has reduced the costs associated with people being at risk of eviction by around £70,000. Longer term financial benefits will come through encouraging more stable lifestyles and reducing truancy, anti-social behaviour and homelessness.

So far, families and individuals supported have shown a 46 per cent reduction in use of public services following support from Community Coaches volunteers. As importantly, the impact of anti-social behaviour on others is also greatly reduced.

Crowds flock to welcome the Olympic Torch



Crowds at Friary Park



Diana Gould and Mayor of London, Boris Johnson



Celebrations at North Finchley

Tens of thousands of people lined the streets of Barnet on 25 July as the Olympic Torch passed through the borough on the 68th day of its journey to the Olympic Stadium.

100-year-old Diana Gould carried the torch along The Burroughs in Hendon to Middlesex University, where she was greeted by Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, Mayor of Barnet, Councillor Brian Schama, and Middlesex University vice-chancellor, Professor Michael Driscoll.

Later in the day, the torch moved east across the borough passing a number of town centres and parks,

including Victoria and Friary Park, where residents and businesses came out to celebrate the torch passing by.

Following the Olympic Torch passing through the borough, nearly 5,000 people marvelled at the 'Bells' spectacular event held in Victoria Park, Finchley, where crowds enjoyed the aerial theatre and dance spectacle involving angels suspended in the air from cranes, combined with Kathak dancing. The action was provided by Theater Tol and Akademi as part of Showtime presented by the Mayor of London.



Torchbearers passing the flame



Rupert Grint carries Olympic flame



Bells by Theater Tol and Akademi part of Showtime

Launch into literacy

Find out about some of the exciting ways we're encouraging people of all ages to boost their love of reading and improve their literacy

The Bookstart Bear Club

- The Bookstart Bear Club is a new club for under-5s run by Barnet Libraries. Sharing books with very young children and babies is key to helping their early communication skills. As well as creating a love of books you'll be supporting their learning now and in the future.
- Families joining the Bookstart Bear Club will receive a stamp in a special passport every time they borrow books or attend an early years' activity. Once you've collected six stamps you'll get a beautiful Bookstart Bear Club Certificate. There are ten different certificates to collect, all featuring the Bookstart Bear.



Family Learning Festival

- A range of creative reading activities is taking place in October in celebration of the national Family Learning Festival.
- Your family can discover stories, songs and crafts from around the world, with planned activities including foreign language rhyme times, chess workshops, and a range of other creative activities linked to reading.

Reading Groups

- Reading groups are run in most Barnet libraries and are a fun and relaxed way to meet others and discuss some of the best writing available in a wide variety of styles.
- As well as discussing the novel, you might also get the chance to meet the author. This September, the Chipping Barnet Crime Reading Group will be reading Mark Billingham's 'From the Dead', and on Friday 21 September at 6.30pm best selling authors Mark Billingham and Martyn Waites will visit Chipping Barnet Library to discuss their books.
- Our 'Barnet Book Club' service can offer advice on setting up a group, and can supply sets of titles for discussion for free. For more information email:

barnetbookclub@barnet.gov.uk



For further information contact
your local library or visit

www.barnet.gov.uk/library-events

Barnet Domestic Violence Services



In the event of an emergency, please call 999

Solace Women's Aid

The Barnet domestic violence service is a confidential free service available to women and men aged 16 and over who live in Barnet.

If you are experiencing domestic violence and would like to seek advice and information, call us as soon as possible on 020 8733 4113.

If you need to go into a refuge as a place of safety call the National Domestic Violence helpline which is free and open 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

DVIP

A new Perpetrator Service is available in partnership with the Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP).

DVIP offers a Domestic Violence Prevention Programme for men who have been violent and abusive towards a partner or ex-partner. The service also supports the partners or ex-partners of perpetrators of domestic violence. To make a referral call 020 7633 9181.



Yuva

Yuva works with young people (age 11–18) who have used violent or controlling behaviours towards their parents/carers or towards their girl/boyfriends. They help them to stop the abuse and find healthier, safer ways of being with people who are close to them.

If you live in Barnet and think this service could help you or someone you know call 020 7633 9181.

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 Evangeli

cllr.b.evangelis@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 Gideon 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 Thompson

cllr.r.thompson@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

Conservatives

Cllr Richard Cornelius

leader@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Brian Coleman

cllr.b.coleman@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Alison Cornelius

cllr.a.cornelius@barnet.gov.uk

Underhill

Conservative

Cllr Andrew Strongolou

cllr.a.strongolou@barnet.gov.uk

Cllr Rowan Turner

cllr.r.turner@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 or email first.contact@barnet.gov.uk

what's on



Computer courses for beginners



It's never too late to learn – do you feel you're being left behind by technology or need some extra help using a computer?

If you answered 'yes' then help is at hand. Barnet and Southgate College, in partnership with Barnet libraries, is offering FREE computing courses for adult beginners.

These well established courses run two hours a week, over five weeks (totalling 10 hours), and are being offered at Grahame Park library, East Barnet library and Hendon library.

Classes are small and informal and are taught by friendly and experienced tutors. There are two types of courses available throughout the year: 'Switch on to IT' and 'Click on to the Net' course.

'Switch on to IT'

Ideal for beginners, and beginners 'plus', teaching basic word processing skills and use of the internet, including email.

'Click on to the Net'

Offers more advanced internet learning such as form filling, internet security, emailing/attachments, online shopping, social networking and finding work/volunteering opportunities online.

For further information about the Grahame Park library courses contact Nicola Borthwick on **020 8266 4211**.
For courses at Hendon or East Barnet library contact Nick Black on **020 8275 5053**



The 16th East Finchley Arts Festival

Date: 5 –14 October 2012

Venue: All Saints' Church, East Finchley N2

London Mozart Players, Pop-Up Opera, recitals by Young Artists, Choral Scholars of King's College Cambridge, East Finchley Writers, Paprika (Balkan Band), Finchley Children's Music Group. Art exhibition in aid of the Noah's Ark Hospice for Children. For more details visit: www.eastfinchleyartsfestival.org.uk

Black History Family Fun Day

Date: Saturday 27 October, 12noon – 4pm

Venue: Hendon Library

Children and their families are invited to join the Family Fun Day. African drumming and dancing, followed by creative crafts. For more information call 020 8359 2869 or email justina.gore@barnet.gov.uk

Big Draw Family Day

Date: Sunday 28 October, 11am – 5pm

Venue: artsdepot, £2, ages 3+

Another bumper Play-Day with giant sketchpads, workshops, face painting, games and prizes. Box Office: 020 8369 5454.

Celebrate Diwali: Festival of Lights

Date: Thursday 8 November, 5pm – 6.30pm

Venue: Edgware Library

A family friendly event to celebrate Diwali, the biggest and the brightest of all Hindu festivals by decorating Divas and New Year greeting cards. Call **020 8359 2626** to book your place.



Working hours

Richard Buckman has worked at Rosa Morison for the past 21 years. He became manager of the centre in July 2012. Richard lives in Enfield with his partner and enjoys collecting and selling antiques and collectables in his spare time.

What is the prime purpose of Rosa Morison?

Rosa Morison is a specialist adult social care service for people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD). We have a range of therapeutic programmes and make sure that people's health and wellbeing is maintained. Our programmes are devised by a Multi Disciplinary Team and then implemented by our highly skilled staff.

What does your work and that of your team involve?

We make sure each and every service user's diverse needs are met and fulfilled. Some of these include personal care activities like sensory and hydrotherapy sessions, reviewing people's needs, and liaising with health professionals

What is the most rewarding aspect of your role?

There is nothing better than seeing service users enjoying the activities that we offer. It's also very rewarding when working on a one to one basis and you experience fantastic non-verbal interactions with them – especially a big smile.

What drew you to work within the centre?

Before supporting people with PMLD, I worked with people who had experienced

long term mental health issues. A very close friend of mine fostered a young boy who had PMLD and it was because of this that I applied for my initial position as a support worker at Rosa Morison.

What is the most challenging aspect of your role?

We do our best to give service users the same opportunities and choices as everyone else. Simple activities like accessing the community and breaking down social barriers are a challenge we face every day.

We also have to ensure that the service runs as smoothly as possible, given the current changes and issues faced by the social care sector, and looking at further ways of developing the service with less money while maintaining our high level of standards.

The centre contains a hydrotherapy pool, how does this benefit users?

The hydrotherapy pool is a very important activity/service for people with PMLD. Our staff are able to help our service users carry out passive stretches in a warm environment to help maintain individuals' range of movement. Equally important, it is also a fun and enjoyable activity for people who have PMLD.

To find out more about Rosa Morison, visit: www.yourchoicebarnet.org

