



The Woodsider

MARCH 2018
www.woodside-park.com

Letter from the Chairman – a personal view

I am not sure where time goes but it seems to be flying by at the moment - unless you live at the top end of Chanctonbury Way where major construction works are being carried out, which means the daily grind of heavy lorries, noise, dust and pollution, day after day after day.

I am sure we all sympathise with the plight of people who live in Chanctonbury Way and have to put up with this - but as our houses become more and more expensive, so it becomes more viable to dig basements, rebuild, extend and goodness knows what else, sometimes legal and sometimes not. We have been badgering our Council to bring in more effective rules to govern the construction of basements in the area but they seem rather slow to do this.

The carol singing at the end of last year was hugely successful. The weather stayed reasonably fair and we were serenaded by Bridget and Andy from St Barnabas Church (big thank-you) together with multitudes of children and residents of all denominations. Our MP Theresa Villiers also joined us. Coffee and drinks were provided by Vero Caffé, with their compliments, and we are extremely grateful to Vero Caffé for providing the drinks and people to serve the drinks. Thank you very much and I hope everyone who reads this will support the café during this coming year. The children sung "Silent Night" and "Jingle Bells" with great gusto and were rewarded with sweets. There was some scotch whiskey for the adults and all-in-all it was a jolly afternoon. Thanks to everyone who helped and to everyone who attended to make it a most memorable occasion. This year the carol singing will be held on the afternoon of Saturday 22nd December (from 4.30pm) so please make a note in your diary.

I am sad to report the death of Alan Hill who was Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee during the 1990s and up to 2002. He was a very proactive and practical member of the committee. Our condolences go to his family in Sussex Ring.

Unbelievably, we have now reached the dizzy heights of more than a million hits on our website which, after three years, I am told is not bad at all. We are presently averaging around 20,000 hits a month.

We are thinking about sponsoring local businesses on our website, especially reliable and honest builders, plumbers, electricians and suchlike whom we all need to employ every now and then. For a link on our website we would charge the business £100 per annum but this would be halved if the person is a resident of Woodside Park Garden Suburb. If you know reliable and honest people who might be interested in this promotion, please ask them to contact me, through the website or via the address on the back of this newsletter. I am sure that business will come their way as I am constantly being asked if I know anyone who can carry out such works. We will of course promote or sponsor other types of work as well including cleaning, nannying, legal, care, gardening, window cleaning, etc.

As you may be aware, for many years we have collected a £2 subscription from residents in the area in order to provide sufficient funds to keep the Association going. For various reasons this has become more and more difficult, year upon year and we have now reluctantly been forced to abandon the collection. We are hoping to make up this loss by promotions on the website. Nevertheless, your financial help would be appreciated and if you would like to make a small contribution, please feel free to let a Committee member or myself know.

We are also contemplating setting up a Facebook page which will be linked to our website. This is in the throes of being put together at the present time.

Lastly, we are hoping to arrange a "Big Lunch" at Riverside during the summer, so please look out for the date and arrangements in this respect.

Have a great Spring!

Robert Shutler

The Woodsider is produced by the Residents' Association. There is no membership fee any more but all money contributions would be most welcome. Please contact a committee member or send to Robert Shutler at address overleaf.

For sponsorship deals on the website, please contact the Association via our website or Robert Shutler's address overleaf.



Planning Applications

Current planning applications can now be found on our website www.woodside-park.com.

We are pleased to say that the application at 105 Chanctonbury Way to turn the house into two flats has been refused by the Council. The Association will continue to object to planning applications which propose to divide any house within the suburb into two or more separate residential units. The loss of single family sized dwelling houses to flats is not appropriate in Woodside Park Garden Suburb.

Council Elections

On May 3rd we all vote (well, some of us do) for Councillors to be our representatives on the Council. In comparison with other London Councils, we should regard the existing Barnet Council with some approval as they have managed to maintain our Council Tax at a sensible level. They have preserved bin collections to once a week, progressed on education and care, filled in some of the potholes in the road and retained the roads as hump-less, helped us with Riverside Park and generally gritted the roads fairly well when the snow has arrived. Most of all, the Councillors have listened to the Association when we have a very strong point to make and need some action. After four long years of whingeing they have actually put double yellow lines around Sussex Ring so there must be an election looming!

Woodside Park Underground Station

It seems that Woodside Park Underground Station is going to have a facelift. Much political mumbo-jumbo has been made of this by the London Mayor Sadiq Khan and TFL but, apparently all they are going to do is remove a few redundant cables and bits of equipment and give the ticket office a coat of paint. Wow! It will hardly be recognisable after the refurbishment. Enjoy the new experience, people!

Other news

We are pleased to welcome three new committee members namely Greg Thornett (who used to be on the committee of West Finchley Resident's Association), Deborah Laikin and Susana Palmer. An injection of new blood and new ideas is most welcome as we move the Association into the digital and social media age.

Many properties in Woodside Park have shared driveways which give access to garages located at the rear of each of the adjoining properties. At all times, each occupant has the right to use the shared driveway without encumbrances. This means that no-one can extend their house onto the shared driveway without written permission from the adjoining owner/neighbour. Furthermore, you should not park your vehicle, skip or other object on the driveway to the detriment of the adjoining owner/neighbour which prevents the adjoining owner using the shared driveway as an access and restricts their right of way.

Why do politicians kid themselves that London properties described as "affordable" are affordable when they are patently not affordable. Who can afford "affordable"? The only way properties will ever become affordable is if the Councils or Housing Associations are given sufficient funds to build properties which can be let at much cheaper rents. This probably won't happen because Councils and Housing Associations do not have sufficient expertise to be able to build and maintain affordable properties. But if this obstacle could be overcome, the values of houses which are being let at exorbitant rents will eventually reduce. It will be a long process. There are houses in Woodside Park which are being let at £5,000 or more per month. Who can afford that?

This newsletter has been written from my hospital bed. I ate an onion but it turned out to be a daffodil bulb. The doctors have said that I should be out by the Spring! Ahh! The joys of Spring and a bit of Spring humour.



printed for the Association without charge by MDC

Edited on behalf of the committee by Robert Shutler of 5 Saddlescombe Way N12 7LS
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The Woodsider

JUNE 2018

www.woodside-park.com



Letter from the Chairman – a personal view

Woodside Park has been awash with colour this Spring. I was trying to think of an expression to describe this. We have Glorious Goodwood so the thought of Wonderful Woodside Park springs to mind! April and May have provided us with excellent weather this year and haven't we all enjoyed the daffodils, tulips, cherry blossom, camellias and lilac with roses to follow shortly. Whatever you may think about royalty, Harry and Meghan's wedding lightened the gloom so let's forget about Brexit and England's footballers, tennis players and cricketers and look forward to a bright and joyous summer, starting with the "Picnic in the Park" – see below for details.

The Council turned a brighter blue at the elections held in May and the Conservatives now have a majority of thirteen. The Council is again to be led by our local Councillor Richard Cornelius. Councillor Caroline Stock has been appointed as Deputy Mayor. We extend our congratulations to them both and hope that the new Council will be able to stifle some of the anti-outer suburbia planning, police and traffic policies presently being promulgated by the irrational Mayor of London and the even more unhinged Government.

The constant attacks by the Mayor and the Government on the Borough of Barnet and London generally with regards to massively increased housing programmes, building on green belt, pollution, traffic control (which causes more pollution), total disregard for infrastructure, destroying our local police force and various other ludicrous ideas and policies will eventually, irrevocably, reduce our quality of life and way of living.

Having said all that, there is a real problem in London with property not being "affordable" for younger people. Here, in Woodside Park, houses have now reached the one million pound mark and goodness knows how the average family can afford this. Unfortunately, only by splitting houses into two or three flats will the area become close to being "affordable".

Even then, the flats will need to sell for £600,000 upwards.

As outlined in the Council's so-called Characterisation Study which was produced some five years ago, the suburb is designed as single houses for families and we do not have the infrastructure to manage the extra homes and additional masses the creation of flats would bring. We are already not coping with the additional homes at Millbrook Park which has been 80% built with barely no infrastructure in place.

Maybe it is NIMBYISM but the Association will strongly resist splitting any of the houses in Woodside Park into flats. I hope we have your support for this.

As usual, builders have been causing havoc in the area with early morning deliveries, lorries backing up and "beeping" at some unearthly hour of the morning as they reverse, huge trucks trundling over the roads and causing the roads to break up, parking on and churning up the grass verges and general noise, disturbance and nuisance. The builders don't care. They don't live in the area. It is down to YOU as the home owner to keep your builders in check and make sure they respect the quiet enjoyment of your neighbours and the community as a whole. Is this too much to ask?

I do hope that we shall see you at the Picnic in the Park to be held in Riverside Park (near the playground down by Dollis Brook) on Saturday 7th July 2018 starting 1.30pm and continuing through the afternoon. Bring your own food and drink. Coffee and tea will be provided free of charge. Bring a cake and enter the Bake-Off competition and there will be a quiz with questions about Woodside Park which everyone is invited to enter. Meet your friends and neighbours. It should be a lot of fun

So, see you at the Picnic in the Park for fun, sun and frolics.

Robert Shutler

Picnic in the Park – Everyone welcome

Sat 7 July 2018, 1.30pm onwards
Riverside Park (by Dollis Brook)

-- Great fun -- bring your own food & drinks --

There is a Bake-off competition so bring your cake to enter and a quiz prize draw

Tea and coffee will be available.



Planning Applications

Current planning applications can now be found on our website www.woodside-park.com.

For the first time ever in Woodside Park, the Council has issued a Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of an extremely dilapidated property at 46 Cissbury Ring South. The house has been left empty for some time and is a blight on the neighbourhood. We fully support the Council taking over the property. It is not right that properties should be allowed to become so dilapidated that they become a blight in the area. It is also unreasonable in this day and age to leave a property unoccupied for such a long time, especially when there is such a shortage of homes around.

There is another property at 86 Linkside which has been empty for nine years and, as you might imagine, is also becoming very dilapidated. The owner had better be careful otherwise they will find that this property has been compulsorily purchased as well (or worst still –squatters).

Transport for London (Tfl)

Do you know what the income for Tfl was last year to March 2018 – more than £6.5 billion!! You would think that, with this sort of income, Tfl might be able to make a profit but, alas, we leave the running of these things to a bunch of amateurs with questionable political motives and they manage to lose money (more than £1 billion). It is of course just tax money (ie your money and my money) so it doesn't matter – does it? The same logic applies to the railways generally who have made a right bosh of the new timetables and, of course, the NHS who, unfortunately, manage to spend money like it is going out of fashion. Why does this happen? There are three reasons, firstly, the businesses are just too big, secondly there is not the skill and expertise out there to run these businesses, thirdly there is just too much political interference that takes place.

Facebook

We now have a Facebook page up & running to help residents share news and views from around the area. It is an ideal way to let people know about upcoming events or seek recommendations for trades and services.

You just need a Facebook account to use it but it is easy to set up an account at www.facebook.com if you don't already have one. Once in Facebook, just search for "Woodside Park Garden Suburb Residents' Association" and request to join. It is a closed private group, so only other members can see the posts made.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Woodside Park Facebook Community!!

Other News

Barnet is supposed to provide 35000 extra homes over the next 15 years. The Borough presently produces some 1500 new homes a year. Many of these new homes will end up at Brent Cross/Cricklewood but a large number are proposed at the Medical Research Unit which is presently being demolished on The Ridgeway in Mill Hill, Copthall (which we thought was supposed to be Green Belt) and North London Business Park. The Mayor of London has pledged to deliver 116,000- affordable homes across London by 2022.

So, they have decided to build the third runway at Heathrow. This should mean that our skies will be less crowded because the planes circling London will not need to do so. However, all of this third runway stuff could be stopped by simply making Heathrow a 24 hour airport. People living in the area would soon move away, the properties could be bought by the Airports Authority and eventually the third runway could be built! Brilliant!



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The Woodsider

DECEMBER 2018
www.woodside-park.com

Letter from the Chairman – a personal view

We've had a sizzling hot summer and a lovely warm autumn when all the trees in Woodside Park turned delicate shades of amber, sepia and rust. So I suppose we shouldn't complain too much about the cold winter. 2019 is almost upon us and this promises to be a fairly momentous year. Why not prepare yourself with the annual carol singing which will be held on Saturday, 22nd December 2018 at Sussex Ring, kick-off 4.30pm.

We will again be joined by a couple of members of the St Barnabas choir with drum and guitar and the event would not be complete without the refreshments provided by Vero Caffé, a dash of whiskey for the adults and sweets for the children (all completely free of charge). Last year the rain kept away and it was an outstanding occasion, enjoyed by all denominations, children and adults alike.

As luck would have it, we did not hold the Woodsider Party this year which was just as well because the Old Finchleians Clubhouse was flooded out. But we did hold the Picnic in the Park in July. The weather was hot and England were playing football in the World Cup against Sweden. You can check out what happened on our website. We are going to have to try to organise these events so that they do not clash with other events!

It is with great sadness that I have to announce the demise of the blue spruce in Sussex Ring. It was planted some fifteen years ago and we have watched it grow very, very slowly inch by inch each year. We would lovingly adorn the tree with fairy lights each Christmas but someone or something has killed it off. We are hoping to obtain a replacement before Christmas but the wheels of bureaucracy can move very slowly. As the land is common land and owned by the Council, we are not allowed to plant our own tree.

On the subject of common land, the grass verges in the Suburb are common land and we are apparently allowed to tend to the grass and apply non-invasive weedkiller.

But, what we need to try and prevent is people parking on these grass verges, causing huge ruts in the grass and generally making a completely mess of the area. Most of the offenders tend to be white van man and, ironically, gardeners who, of course, do not live in the area and, therefore, couldn't care less. If you see or employ people who park on the verges, could you please ask them nicely not to do so.

Unsurprisingly, Barnet Council seems to be having a few problems with their Capita outsourcing contracts. This does not just relate to poor services, performance and financial control but also to fraud. The Council's options are somewhat limited but I am reliably informed that they are being sorted out. Don't be surprised though if there is a fairly hefty hike in Council Tax next year.

Is it me or has the suburb become more and more noisy. Gardeners (not them again!) seem to start mowing lawns from eight in the morning, six days a week. Thank goodness they don't work Sundays but that is when everyone else mows their lawn! Having said that, please do not think that I am advocating getting rid of the lawns and flower beds. Far from it! The more greenery the better!

And around where I live, there is a large distressed dog which barks incessantly. I cannot comprehend the minds of people who own a dog like this and then do not seemingly look after it properly.

May I, along with my committee, take this opportunity of wishing everyone in Woodside Park a happy, healthy and brilliant 2019. Goodness knows what is in store for us. I have carefully avoided any comment about Brexit!

I hope to see you all in Sussex Ring at the carol singing on 22nd December. Please show your support and be there.

Robert Shutler



CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING

SATURDAY 22nd DECEMBER at 4.30pm
at Sussex Ring
CHILDREN ESPECIALLY WELCOME
Free Refreshments

Planning Applications

Current planning applications can now be found on our website www.woodside-park.com.

The Association will continue to resist planning applications which propose to divide any house within the suburb into two or more separate residential units. There are one or two houses where this has been done (illegally) but we are now experiencing planning applications to convert houses into two or more flats. The Suburb is characterised by single dwelling houses and the roads are set out within a setting of single dwelling houses. Increased residential units in the area cause a strain on roads, parking, schools and public services. The loss of single dwelling houses to flats is not appropriate.

The Association will also resist basements which cause massive disruption to adjoining neighbours and, if not correctly constructed, can also cause damage to adjoining buildings. Basement submissions without proper and professional hydrology and soil reports will be resisted at all times. This is required to avoid the catastrophes in some other London Boroughs where basements are causing all sorts of difficulties especially with ground water flow.

The Council does not seem to have a recognised planning policy regarding basements. There are quite a few basement cowboy builders out there – please be aware.

There are plans afoot to build 88 new homes adjacent to Woodside Park Underground Station. These will all be “affordable” (20% off) shoe-box type starter homes mainly aimed at younger folk.

Finchley War Memorial and Dr French Home

In the past, we have mentioned in the Woodsider about the Finchley War Memorial which is being proposed. I am pleased to say that many generous Woodsiders made contributions to the War Memorial Fund which is to be erected in the grounds of Finchley Memorial hospital. The Memorial is now fully funded and your generosity is much appreciated.

The Dr French Memorial Home which is a charitable old folks home in North Finchley seeks financial assistance to buy some “magic tables” for the elderly folk who suffer from various degrees of dementia and who reside there. They need to raise around £10,000. Any help would be appreciated and a donations page can be found at <http://drfrenchcarehome.co.uk>

Barnet Council's Future Housing Strategy

On 10 October, Barnet Council's Housing Committee provisionally approved a new draft Housing Strategy for 2019-2024, pending further consultation. The draft Strategy identifies five key themes - raising standards in the private rented sector; delivering more homes that people can afford; safe and secure homes; promoting independence for vulnerable adults in general and tackling homelessness and rough sleeping. All very laudable but there are conflicting projections for housing need which if interpreted one way could mean the construction of 2,600 new homes in one year, but with a different methodology could be interpreted as 2,000 per year. This is the sort of mis-information that seems to emanate from the Mayor's office.

But either way, Barnet is going to become very crowded, very crowded indeed with little or no added infrastructure. A report which can be found on the Council's website outlines the next steps - namely a public consultation on the aims of the draft strategy, followed by a review of responses by the Committee and a further draft to be considered for adoption, at its meeting just around Brexit time in April 2019. It is quite possible that Brexit will have a profound effect on the amount of housing needed in the borough and so, all of these expensive consultations and projections could all be for nothing. Meanwhile, the Council is working on yet another new Local Plan - expected to be adopted in 2020 – while its Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee is working to prepare a Regeneration Strategy, whatever that means.



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