



The Woodsider

MARCH 2019
www.woodside-park.com

Letter from the Chairman – a personal view

Happy New Year to everyone!! The year is a quarter gone and we are in Spring. The daffodils are out, greenery is appearing and soon the lawnmowers and the builders will be out in force, in the early morning, waking us all from our slumber. Ahh! Intoxicating days ahead!

We were blessed with fine but chilly weather for the carol singing held just before Christmas. The event was hugely successful and we were entertained by Bridget, Coco 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 as did Councillors Richard and Alison Cornelius. Coffee and drinks were provided by Vero Caffé, with their compliments. We are extremely grateful to Vero Caffé for providing the drinks and the people to serve the drinks. I hope everyone who reads this will support the café during this coming year. The children sang “Away in a Manger” and “Jingle Bells” with passion which started passively but rose to impressive enthusiasm by the time they were finished! Accordingly, the children were rewarded with sweets. Scotch whiskey for the adults, mixed in with the coffee, took away the afternoon chill. 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 21st December (from 4.30pm) so please make a note in your diary.

After some years in the doldrums, I am pleased to report that Frith Manor Primary School has recently fared well in the comparative performance tables for schools in the Borough of Barnet. Frith Manor School has been rated as one of the best performing schools out of the 126 in the Borough with “well above average” (the highest rank) for reading and maths. Like all of us, schools have been going through a tough time recently with reductions in funding. Despite the many increasing external pressures,

Frith Manor School is maintaining higher than average standards and for this the school should be commended.

You may have noticed that, tucked away on the south side of Sussex Ring, the Council have planted a new fir tree. The old one had lost the will to live and was removed. Thank you to Barnet Council for planting the new tree which arrived just in time for the Carol Singing event. And so, for the carol singing it was festooned with fairy lights of various twinkling colours and you can see how magnificent it appeared on our website. The tree on the North side also seems to be dying. It seems strange that both trees should expire at more or less the same time.

The new double yellow lines around Sussex Ring seem to be working and allowing the traffic to move more freely. There are still some selfish people who decide to park on the double yellow lines just to save a walk for a few minutes.

I am also pleased to advise you that the new Finchley War Memorial stone tablet has been carved, containing the 1311 names of people from Finchley who unfortunately lost their lives in the two twentieth century World Wars. Their names have been inscribed in gold on polished granite and this has been made possible because of generous donations by people from Woodside Park and surrounding areas. The stone is to be erected on the grounds of Finchley Memorial Hospital but there presently seems to be some bureaucratic quagmire preventing its erection. I am hopeful that goodness will prevail in the end.

Finally, I should inform you that there have been quite a few car thefts in the area, just recently. Car thefts seem to be more common than house burglaries these days. I expect that is because the end prize is greater. It is best to keep alert when locking your car and, if you have the remote type of car lock, store this as far away from the front door of your house as possible as thieves are able to access it and copy it. Alternatively, drive around in an old VW Polo like me!!!

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 the address overleaf.

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



Planning Applications

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

The additional house at 39 Lullington Garth was approved by the Council with a number of conditions attached to the approval. After the construction of this house, there will be 863 properties within the Suburb. This does not include those properties which have been illegally split into two. It is a shame that the open spaces of the suburb are being filled by new houses or house extensions. One day, when all of the open spaces have disappeared, people will turn around and say, why did we allow this to happen? Government policy - I'm afraid.

Totally Failed London

Iain Dale of LBC Radio suggested that TFL (Transport for London) should be renamed Totally Failed London. In fact, we can think of another word beginning with the letter “F” that might be more suitable. New traffic schemes turning Baker Street and Gloucester Place into two-way streets have been built. This has taken a year to build causing much congestion and pollution. It will take twenty years to recover from the pollution incurred by these works. TFL think the new scheme will be safer for pedestrians but they now have to look both ways to cross the road and most of the pedestrians in this area are tourists who generally look the wrong way. No cyclist in their right minds uses these roads and when they do they are generally cycling down the roads in the wrong direction.

And now they want to close down Tottenham Court Road. Are they crazy?

The closure of Oxford Street and the new cycle highway through Regents Park, Avenue Road and Swiss Cottage have been blocked for the time being. Whoever comes up with these hair-brained schemes should be sacked but the next London Mayor election is not until May 2020.

Mr David Howard

It is with much sadness to advise that David Howard passed into that Residents' Association in the sky on 14th February 2019. David had been chairman of the Federation of Residents' Associations in Barnet (FORAB) for as long as we can remember. FORAB conflates many of the RAs in the Borough so that, on very important issues, they can speak with one voice. David avidly read every missive from Barnet Council which would make any normal person comatose and he maintained a constant watch on the goings-on in the Council until the end. He had a long struggle with illness which he bore bravely and with great humour and he has left us a legacy to continue. It is sad that David's considerable work with the Residents' Associations was never formally recognised. He will be sadly missed. May he rest in peace.

Other News

Collection of rubbish over the Christmas and New Year period has been a debacle with some people not having collections for three weeks. However, it is believed that the bin collection procedures are now back in place and the site of black, green and blue bins scattered across the leafy Suburb roads is now history. Various excuses have been put forward as to why bin collection suddenly became a challenging subject. The work is currently carried out in-house and this is one of the few areas that Barnet Council have not sub-contracted to an independent organisation. Binmen beware!

Thank goodness Spring is here. The Suburb will soon be alive with flowers and the trees will be growing their leaves. And not one mention of Brexit in this Newsletter (oh! Whoops!)



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