



The Woodsider

JUNE 2019

www.woodside-park.com



Letter from the Chairman – a personal view

We have been blessed with a warmish Spring and May sunshine. Woodside Park is in full bloom. This is such a wonderful time of the year with the grass lush and green, the white and pink cherry tree blossom and the vivid yellows, blues and reds of the plants, flowers and shrubs which populate a number of the gardens in the Suburb. It is one of the reasons that we live in this leafy suburb although it is becoming less leafy as people replace their front gardens with paved parking areas. Whilst I understand why this is done, can people not be a little imaginative and add some planting at the same time?

The answer to that is generally “No!”. And this is primarily because many of the properties are now rented and the absentee Landlords seemingly just don’t give a fig.. Sad times for us owner/occupiers who want to keep the Suburb as an eco-friendly, green environment and a “nice” place to live.

Increased numbers of people now live in Barnet and this means that our political constituency is going to grow in size (from 9,635 in 2018 to apparently 12,191 by 2024). The difference is mainly made up with people from Millbrook Park who will now form part of our constituency to be renamed Totteridge and Woodside ward. Quite how they work out that there will only be a 2500 increase in the number of people in the constituency when there are 3000 homes in Millbrook Park most of which have two adults at least making 6000 in total, is a bit beyond me. I have asked the question but like most of this administrative mumbo-jumbo, I have received no answer. Consultation (as has been shown in many previous examples) about these matters is just a complete whitewash. We are however retaining three Councillors. The Council presently contains 63 Councillors and it is not proposed that this number changes. That’s more than enough in any event.

Talking of Councillors, we should congratulate our Councillor, Caroline Stock who has recently been elected as the 55th Mayor of Barnet. I am sure we will all support her and her proposed charities as best we can Cherry Lodge Cancer Care and Home-Start Barnet).

Mayor Caroline’s new position is non-political which means that we will not be able to rely on her diplomacy over the next year.

One of our other Councillors, Richard Cornelius, has decided to stand down as Leader of the Council. He has been Leader for some eight years (which is long enough for anyone to be a Leader!) and in that time he has overseen a number of dramatic changes, mainly concerned with contracting out various Council services..

Richard has had his many critics about the policy of contracting out but the result generally is that Barnet Council is in a much better financial condition than many of its fellow Councils. Richard has been replaced by Dan Thomas who has been Deputy Leader for the past seven years or so. No doubt, he will pursue his own ideas.

I don’t know about you, but I was very surprised to find twenty-two names on the European Election ballot paper, which was so long it extended down beyond my knees! Who were all of these people? There was nothing in the local paper about them nor were there any leaflets. Of the individuals, one of them achieved 167 votes but the remainder couldn’t muster more than fifty. Alan Kirkby and Ian Sowden collected 9 votes apiece! Wow! They must have had some amazing policies! We will probably never know! Apparently 96,549 people voted in Barnet which is about a third of the total. More voted for the Liberal Democrats than any other party.

We have an interesting summer ahead of us in political terms. Anything could happen but, hopefully, we in Woodside Park will be secure in our little suburb, away from the scourge of indecision, uncertainty and ambiguity with no red lines but just a few yellow lines, petty criminals and creeping CPZ to worry about.

Enjoy the summer. Revel in the fact that May has passed us by! But what the future holds, who knows?

Robert Shutler



Sussex Ring in a bygone time

Planning Applications

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

There have been the usual crop of rear extensions and loft extensions in the past three months but the applications are slowing down as there are less and less houses left to convert.

A planning application for the eighty-six flats at Woodside Park Underground Station has been submitted to the Council and is awaiting a decision.. These are small, supposedly affordable, flats with no parking facilities. The developers say that the flat owners will not have cars but this seems fairly unlikely. The flat owners will have visitors and will have deliveries – all requiring cars or vans.. All of these additional cars will need somewhere to park and there is no room in Holden Road. So the cars will all disperse into Woodside Park. We have objected to the proposal. If this goes ahead we will eventually end up with a Controlled Parking Zone in our Suburb and everyone will be paying their £200 or so to enable you to park outside your own home (if you can find a space). A Transport Assessment Plan is attached to the planning application which tries to tell us that everything will be all right. Transport Assessment plans are just a twist of the truth as we have found out with the Millbrook Park development.

Burglars - leave Woodside Park alone!

There have been a spate of burglaries just recently in north-west London which seem to involve a calling card being left squeezed between the door frame and bell. If the card is left there for a few days it seems to indicate that the occupants are away. So ... if you see this at all on your own door bell or even on your neighbour’s door bell, please remove as soon as possible. Better safe than sorry.

Other News

The Council has resurfaced the pathway running next to Folly Brook which extends from the Woodside club up to Michleham Down. This makes the path rather less than a quagmire and is now a very pleasant walk. Work is to be carried out to upgrade Darlands Lake soon.

Barnet Council is presently consulting on whether to increase Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) relating to car offences from £110 to £130. In 2017/18 the Council issued 148,141 PCNs – that equates to fines annually amounting to more than £16 million!! And the Council wants more!! This is just a cash cow!! Selfish parking on zig-zag lines, double yellows or in disabled parking bays may warrant such fines, but offences related to parking in pre-determined parking spaces or edging into yellow boxes by mistake do not.

A Landlord in Barnet, who illegally sub-divided his house into four flats without planning permission, has just been fined £223,751.31. Quite how they arrived at this figure is a bit of a mystery although it was apparently based on the rental received. The house was dilapidated and very poorly maintained. The Landlord was cautioned a number of times but chose to ignore the Council enforcement officials and their warnings. Maybe the Council has some bite after all? Those two or three houses in Woodside Park which are illegally divided should perhaps think again.

Hate crime has no place in society. This can include verbal abuse, intimidation, harassment, assault and damage to property. So ... Trolls (you know who you are) .. please stop sending these crazy communications. Thank you.



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