



# The Woodsider

MARCH 2020  
[www.woodside-park.com](http://www.woodside-park.com)

## Letter from the Chairman – a personal view

We've had a wet and windy couple of months this year but at least it has not flooded, although Riverside Park is looking very damp.

We regard the annual Christmas Carol Singing at Sussex Ring as the start of Christmas and, despite a very poor weather forecast, the rain held off for the whole event. We were joined by several members of the choir from St Barnabas Church who sang throughout the event in melodious tones. The Church also supplied a splendid organist and background music with loud speakers so that the event could be heard across the Suburb (well almost!!). More than 120 people attended the occasion along with a number of children who were given the opportunity to sing their hearts out using the microphone. They were all in key and obviously superstars for the future.

Our special thanks go to Vero Caffé who supplied us with coffee and drinks for the children. Scotch was also on tap to add a bit of warmth to the occasions. Gingerbread men and mince pies were distributed amongst the attending persons and free sweets were given out by a very portly Santa Claus. The Christmas tree in Sussex Ring, which must have grown at least 600mm during the year, was decked with multi-coloured fairy lights although, unlike last year, we could not now reach the top of the tree. The event was also supported by our re-elected MP Theresa Villiers and by two of our Ward Councillors, Richard and Alison Cornelius. We were also blessed to find two characters from Charles Dickens' times and a number of people wearing Father Christmas hats! It was our best ever carol singing event to date and our thanks goes to everyone who performed, helped, participated and attended the event.

This year the carol singing will be held in Sussex Ring on the afternoon of Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December (from 4.30pm) so please make a note in your diary.

You may have seen that Barnet Council has drafted a new Local Plan which is presently out to consultation. The whole plan is based on the premise that 46,000 new homes will be required by 2036. The present population of Barnet is just under 400,000 and it is expected to rise to half a million by 2036. The whole document is ridiculously 340 pages long and I do not know how people are supposed to digest all of this and then makes sensible and proactive comments. Who has decided that we need another 100,000 people in the borough with what appears to be little added infrastructure and no spare land? If the principle upon which the whole Local Plan is based is unsound, then the whole Plan is flawed.

Coronavirus appears to have attacked us with a vengeance and, according to the experts, it is only going to get worse. We should all try and be good neighbours and look out for any folk in our immediate vicinity who may require help. This is particularly relevant for elderly folk who are more vulnerable than others. They may be asked to self-isolate and therefore any help which can be given, will, I am sure, be gratefully received. Woodside Park is blessed with hundreds of really nice people so I am sure if we all stick together, we will get through this unscathed.

For all you car drivers out there, the half term week turned into an absolute nightmare. No matter where you looked, they were digging up the roads with those wretched traffic lights holding up the traffic and causing general mayhem. There was a time when half-term and summer months meant that the roads were running on 30% less capacity and it was a joy to be able to drive around. Now, it's a nightmare. But I might not mind so much if I saw someone actually working on the holes in the ground. The Utility Companies have destroyed the large roundabout at Mill Hill which, despite now being a complete muddy heap has still managed to produce a few daffodils to indicate the arrival of Spring.

So .... have a great and infection-free Spring!

*Robert Shutler*



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

## Planning Matters

Current planning applications can now be found on our website [www.woodside-park.com](http://www.woodside-park.com).

The Council has approved the eighty-six flats proposed at Woodside Park Underground Station which are contained within two five storey blocks with no parking and very little amenity space. This is a scheme backed by the Mayor and TfL (Transport for London) and, in the end, the Council had little choice. And, because of coronavirus we are now stuck with the current mayor for another year to enable him to destroy our borough.

In the past three months there have been no nasty planning applications attempting to turn a house into flats. We will object to any application made along these lines and the Council has made it quite clear that they do not support such an application either.

## Boundaries in Barnet

The Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) has been deliberating over the boundaries for the electoral arrangements to Barnet Council. They attempt to even out the different wards in population terms and the new Council will comprise 63 Councillors. We sit in the Totteridge and Woodside Park ward and unsurprisingly, after the LGBC have done their tiddling, we still do sit in the Totteridge and Woodside Park ward. There was a point when most of Millbrook Park was going to be thrown into our ward but, after consultation with ourselves and others, Millbrook Park is now part of the Mill Hill ward. We have an electorate of around 11,000 people and we will be served by three Councillors. So, actually, not much has changed.

## Green Bin Collections

The Council has now decided to charge you £70.00 per annum for about twenty-three green bin collections. You need to contact the Council and pay up before 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Go to:- <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/gardenwaste> or call 020 8359 4600.

for all information and to pay your £70 if you want to participate.

## Grass verges

This very wet weather means that the grass verges, which grace either sides of many of the roads in our Suburb, are being churned up mercilessly by selfish drivers of cars, vans and builder's lorries who seem completely oblivious to the fact that they are destroying our beautiful suburb. We have asked the Council if they would erect posts on the grass verges to prevent the ugly tyre marked furrows and troughs but the answer was "No". So it falls upon us residents to install large rocks on the grass surface to stop the parking. Rocks can be bought from Finchley Nurseries for about £5 each or you might find one or two on the many building sites in the neighbourhood!

## Birds

And now for something completely different! In Woodside Park, we are fortunate to have quite a large number of feathered friends visiting our gardens. In fact, we have counted twenty-eight different type of bird – wren, house sparrow, dunnock, blue tit, long-tailed tit, coal tit, robin, goldfinch, greenfinch, chaffinch, yellowhammer, bullfinch, swift, swallow, blackbird, song thrush, jay, starling, magpie, woodpecker, jackdaw, raven, rook, crow, tern, ring-necked parakeet, collared dove and feral pigeon. You may have noticed some birds in your garden that are not listed here. We would be interested to know. There are in fact 620 different types of birds to be found in the UK and 4.52% can be found in Woodside Park!



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Edited on behalf of the committee by Robert Shutler of 5 Saddlescombe Way N12 7LS  
Telephone no: 020 8445 4050 email: robert@mdclondon.com