



# The Woodsider

SEPTEMBER 2019  
[www.woodside-park.com](http://www.woodside-park.com)

## Letter from the Chairman – a personal view

I am writing this Newsletter at the end of August and the political landscape is swilling around in a rather scattergun approach. I just wish someone somewhere would make a decision about Brexit and things and then perhaps we can all get on with the rest of our lives.

In the interim, we should congratulate our current MP, Theresa Villiers, who has been promoted to Boris's Cabinet as Environment Minister. She has previously been Secretary for Northern Ireland so I suppose dealing with the likes of Extinction Rebellion will be a doddle. Good luck to her.

I hope you all enjoyed a good summer. The weather was a bit mixed but I trust you found sunshine abroad. I always stay in London over the summer period because it is nice and warm and much more peaceful (usually). This year we seemed to have been inundated with the sound of early morning lawn mowers, low flying helicopters, hedge trimmers, leaf blowers, squawking parrots and large planes. Ah! The joys of living in suburbia.

Have you noticed that the roads just seem filled with roadworks with these incredibly annoying traffic lights that supposedly control the traffic (when they work)? Roadworks have cropped up all over the place including Lullington Garth, Longland Drive, Holden Road, Frith Lane, Holders Hill Road, Long Lane, Squires Lane – the list is endless.. I am sure it was not like that in the good old days when the side roads were filled with smaller cars and no lorries. I suppose we now have gas and water leaks with fibre optic cables and goodness what else laid under the road. It is very frustrating, nonetheless.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, in his infinite wisdom has decided (under the auspices of TfL) that huge blocks of flats, some twenty-seven storeys high should be built over Finchley Central and High Barnet tube stations. These would be the highest buildings in the Borough of Barnet and would provide some 1100 new flats in total, remove all of the commuter parking and provide no parking for the new flats.

The proposals may be outside our area, as such, but the knock-on effect of all these additional people, lack of parking and strain on services would devastate the area - including Woodside Park. The proposals are out to consultation at the present time, so do feel free to add your comments, not that the dictatorial TfL will take notice of anything you say, of course.

Similar proposals have been made for Woodside Park Tube Station but on a smaller scale. Only (?) 86 flats were proposed there. The first planning application was quite rightly refused by the Council. But a new application has now been submitted which partially addresses the Council's concerns. I think it is going to be very difficult for the Council to turn this application down, despite the damaging effect it will have on the locally listed building that is St Barnabas Church, the lack of car parking and the gross overdevelopment of the site, which is contrary to the Council's planning policies. The developers say that the tiny flats will be affordable for people earning a salary of up to £90,000 per annum. What?!! There is no way that a person earning that sort of salary will not own a car. And so car parking will continue to creep into our leafy suburb. You can object to (or support) this flats proposal if you so wish. The planning ref is 19/4293/FUL and if you type this into the Barnet website - <https://publicaccess.barnet.gov.uk/online-applications/> you will be able to make your comment.

Planning seems to be the big local issue at the moment but there are other matters which should be noted. One is the increase in crime in the area, particularly car thefts. This includes stealing the car itself or stealing from the car. Burglaries are on the rise too and there have been some recent cases of robberies in the surrounding streets (although not actually in our part of Woodside Park). Please be careful out there. Hopefully, one day there will be more police on the street and these issues can be properly addressed.

Enjoy autumn, hope to see you at the carol singing – see below.

*Robert Shutler*

## Planning Applications

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

The Association is objecting to all planning applications where the developer is trying to turn a suburban family house into two flats. This is not only out of keeping with the area, but it increases traffic and people density and puts more strain on local services including doctors and dentists. Woodside Park Garden Suburb is characterised by self-contained semi-detached houses as originally envisaged and constructed by Fred Ingram. Flats only exist in Sussex Ring over the shops although there appear to be one or two that have been built illegally which exist in the Suburb. The Association is urging the Council to resist the principle of turning these houses into flats. There is a strong architectural uniformity throughout the area which defines the character of the area and this includes the density of the various properties. The Council has increased the number of Planning Enforcement Officers to three and now enforces more planning issues than any other Council in the country. So .... stick to the planning rules.

## Greener Cars

Of course making cars cheaper, cleaner and greener should be applauded because the petrol/diesel cars are adding to the pollution in the air that we breathe. Barnet Council has installed forty lamp column charging points for electric vehicles and is planning forty more by the end of this year. There do not appear to be any around the Woodside Park area but a number are being proposed at Cophthall.

The problem with charging electric cars is that they take such a long time to charge and in this day and age everyone is very busy and do not have the patience to spend half an hour or so recharging their batteries. Electric cars may not be the future but hydrogen fuel cell cars might be. They take just five minutes to refill with enough hydrogen to go 300 to 500 miles and the exhaust is pure water. The hydrogen fuel cell car also cleans the polluted air around it. Like electric cars, these are very expensive. The way forward could still be electric cars if the batteries can be made smaller. You could go to the garage, change your battery for a new one and then move on. This would seem the most simple way of ridding the roads of petrol and diesel cars but the technology in batteries and hydrogen fuel cells is not quite there yet and it is a question of whether there really is the political will.

## More Greenery

Barnet Council currently manages around 30,000 street trees and 848 hectares of green space including 154 hectares of woodland. The Borough is also home to London's oldest tree which is the Totteridge yew by St Andrew's Church in Totteridge Lane. It is more than 2000 years old and has been awarded "Great Tree of London" status. Wow! It must have been around when the Romans were here.

The Council proudly announces the so-called proposed "Barnet Tree Programme" which will improve air quality, support biodiversity, reduce the risk of flooding and provide protection from the sun during heatwaves. The trees may be quite nice to look at as well. It is said that this will improve the long-term health and well-being of residents across the borough (but not, of course, if they keep building these massive blocks of flats, tarmacking front gardens and replacing real grass with plastic grass). And so it seems that Barnet Council has won the London Borough Tree Award for 2019 after pledging to plant 900 trees per year for the next five years. They have won the award on a pledge, hardly a tree having been planted. What on earth are the other 31 London Councils doing?

Darlands Lake lies in the Darlands Nature Reserve, just north of Woodside Park, and accessible along the footpaths leading from Woodside Park towards Totteridge. Darlands Nature Reserve comprises some 32 hectares of woodlands, wetlands and grasslands within the Green Belt which are home to a diverse community of wild life. There are some wonderful rural walks with spectacular views across the valley. Recently, the Nature Reserve has been taken over by the Darlands Conservation Trust (a charitable organisation) which has essentially protected Darlands from being built on. But the area needs cleaning up and the Trust is in the process of raising some £2 million to enable this to be done. This is worthy charity and keeping the green belt is vital for our health and well-being. You can donate on [https://darlandsconservationtrust.org.uk/support\\_us.html](https://darlandsconservationtrust.org.uk/support_us.html)

## CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING

SATURDAY 21<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER at 4.30pm  
at Sussex Ring  
CHILDREN ESPECIALLY WELCOME  
Free Refreshments



printed for the Association without charge by MDC

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