

## Library needs more volunteers

The Garden Suburb Community Library in Market Place has been successfully run by volunteers since 2012 after the RA and many members of the local community campaigned to prevent its closure by the London Borough of Barnet.

The library is now run by over 40 trained volunteers with an ongoing grant from the LB Barnet of £10,000 and it has gone from strength to strength in the past five years. It is a friendly place that now has over 2,200 registered users of all ages and their number is growing all the time.

Apart from lending books it runs regular other activities such as the Story and Sing Song time for toddlers and small children on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, summer reading contests for school children, a monthly Book Club and occasional author talks. With regards to the latter, the library will be hosting local history author John Atkin, who will be giving a talk, with slides, about his book 'Hampstead Garden Suburb During the Great War' on Wednesday the 14th of June. Forthcoming events are always advertised on the library window notice boards.

There are also two computers for public use and a printer, which can scan and copy. The books are constantly replenished with the newest titles and the

Travel Books section has been recently significantly enlarged and updated. Apart from fascinating volumes covering many of the popular world destinations we also have publications that cover day trips within easy reach of the capital or fascinating walks in London itself.

The library is a registered company and charity and is supervised by seven trustees. The core of its strength lies in the volunteers who each commit fortnightly a little of their time to staff it from Tuesday through Saturday each week. The library opening hours are 10.00 - 17.00 and there are two shifts, a

morning one from 10.00 - 13.30 and an afternoon one from 13.30 - 17.00 each manned by a pair of volunteers.

The library is always looking for new enthusiastic, preferably local, volunteers, particularly for certain shifts. The work consists of issuing and returning books, registering new library members, cataloguing books, restocking shelves and various other related tasks. Full training is provided by experienced volunteers during the initial sessions. Even though no special knowledge is required, some basic computer skills would be useful.

If interested, please contact mail@gardensuburblibrary.org.uk.



## Plans for Golders Green stations



Transport for London has spoken to Barnet Council about the possible future development of Golders Green Bus & Underground Stations, the marshalling yard, depot and sidings.

In response the LB Barnet has produced a Draft Planning Brief and has put it out for public consultation. We welcome the fact that LB Barnet has asked residents what they think.

The responses from the public will be considered by the Planning Department and the Draft can be amended. Barnet's 'Policy & Resources Committee' will meet to consider the written views and decide whether to accept the plan or make amendments. The Draft suggests opportunities and constraints and provides guidance to anyone considering making a planning application as to the preferred approach of the Council. The final plan will form material consideration in the determination of any planning application.

It is important to realise that once the plan is agreed by the councillors, property developers may, in principle, be able to build within the parameters of the plan.

So residents of the Suburb should read the draft and then send their comments to the planning office by 11 May. The concern with a 49 page document is that people are likely not to read it fully or carefully.

The effect on the Suburb may not be immediately apparent. However, the detail is important.

The Draft's density figures would mean the building of a minimum of 1,300 flats and additional houses with a likelihood of at least 4,000 people living there.

The site is in the catchment area of one primary school, Garden Suburb School. There is nothing in this Draft plan to deal with the effect of a new village. Nothing about planned increase in school places and GP surgeries.

The Draft suggests that Golders Green needs more offices yet many are empty. It suggests more cafes at the station and other retail shops. Yet cafes are numerous and retail space is hardly in short supply.

The Draft says that the bus station must be able to deal with an expected increase in use. However, on Site A (the bus

station) the development is so comprehensive that it seems it would reduce the space for buses. This at a time when some National Express coaches are stopping at the London bus stop on Finchley Road and disgorging customers and their luggage.

The potential effect on the Suburb is large. For example, the tall building mentioned at para. 6.3.5 would be seen from many roads in the Suburb and the Heath Extension. The latter view is recognised universally as special. Indeed other countries send their planners to see how it was achieved. There are no tall buildings to be seen above tree height and a tower block would be a blot on the landscape.

The suggested new road from the Suburb into the development, possibly needing the demolition of homes, is unconscionable and must never be permitted.

Golders Green Station Action Group [GGSAG] has had hundreds of Suburb residents expressing their concern. On 27 April a large public meeting was held.

Please do not rely on others to respond to the Draft. The number of people responding does send a message to those who are deciding. Last time there was a possibility of developing this site a large number of individuals succeeded in reducing the scope of the potential development.

The 'Draft Planning Brief' can be seen at: [barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=6553](http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=6553).

Please make your submission to LB Barnet by 11 May 2017 at 5pm. The response can be made by e-mail to: [forward.planning@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:forward.planning@barnet.gov.uk).

RONNIE JAFFA, HON SEC GGSAG

## Problems with potholes, pavements and privets?

Many of the questions from attendees of the recent Residents Association (RA) AGM concerned issues with pavements, roads and overgrown hedges in the Suburb. The three elected Garden Suburb Councillors who represent us on Barnet Council were in attendance and took notice of these concerns.

The Councillors are John Marshall, Rohit Grover and Gabriel Rozenberg, and all can be contacted to assist if needed where residents run into difficulties in getting problems rectified. The Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust also had two of its elected members in attendance at the meeting and Claire Calman (Chair of the Estates Committee of the Trust) gave some advice on the matter of overgrown hedges.

The RA itself has a Roads & Traffic (R&T) Committee; details of the members are listed in the Suburb Directory available on line at [www.hgs.org.uk](http://www.hgs.org.uk) in pdf format or via the annually distributed hard copy. This committee meets quarterly and can be contacted in the event of particular problems or concerns by e-mail to [ratraffic@hgs.org.uk](mailto:ratraffic@hgs.org.uk).

However, Suburb residents will appreciate that there are potentially a huge number of road and pavement issues that need attention at any one time, especially after bad weather when roads frequently develop potholes. We therefore encourage residents to report any issues direct to Barnet. Ideally this should be done via their website which enables you to provide Barnet with precise details of the issue and the location.

Barnet advise that they assess reported potholes within 48 hours of receiving a report and carry out urgent maintenance if required. They work to a 10 day time table in assessing pavement issues: where there is a 2.5cm height difference in paving stones which is regarded as a trip hazard, the time frame is escalated.

Fly tipping can also be reported on this website again providing a precise location. I can report that Barnet seem incredibly efficient in this aspect and the 20 or so fly tipping incidents I have reported in recent weeks since joining the R&T Committee, have been dealt with incredibly quickly.

The Barnet 'report a problem' area of their website is fairly user friendly and can be accessed via [www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/report-a-problem](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/report-a-problem). If you register your details on this account, you will receive an email with a reference number for any problem you report. Barnet are working to improve the technology here and in due course you will be able to access a link that gives you an update on the issue. In the meantime they (sometimes!) send an e-mail to confirm when action has been taken.

You can also call the Highways Maintenance Line on 020 8359 3555 to report issues or e-mail the department on [highwayscorrespondence@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:highwayscorrespondence@barnet.gov.uk).

There is a lot of information on Barnet's website covering roads, pavements, abandoned vehicles etc. We unfortunately do not have room to cover everything here but do look at the website on [www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/parking-roads-and-pavements/Roads-and-Pavements](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/parking-roads-and-pavements/Roads-and-Pavements). You can use this to report overflowing bins, blocked drains, graffiti and many other everyday issues too numerous to cover here.

Returning to the AGM, it appears that dealing with overgrown hedges is a little less straightforward. Where hedges are obstructing pavements or twittens (the narrow footpaths between hedges on the Suburb), it seems that Barnet may take action and rebill the householder for the cost of the works to rectify the matter, but probably only in extreme circumstances.

Guidance on hedge height and maintenance is provided on the Trust's website [www.hgstrust.org/your-property/tree-work.shtml](http://www.hgstrust.org/your-property/tree-work.shtml) under the subsection Hedges and Hedge Height. Barnet also offer guidance at [www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/planning-conservation-and-building-control/conservation/high-hedges](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/planning-conservation-and-building-control/conservation/high-hedges). It can be wise to try to rectify the problem through discussion with the offending neighbour as resolution through other means is not easy and may result in costs.

There are issues with cars being abandoned or parked for long periods on the Suburb. A

tip I have for you here is to use the DVLA's on line check to see if a car that you think may have been abandoned is taxed and has a valid MOT. If it does not, then it will be easier to persuade Barnet to take enforcement action to remove the vehicle. All you need to check the car out is the vehicle registration number and the make (the model is not required). When you put these details into the website it tells you if the road tax and MOT are up to date or if they have expired.

I also have some advice for reporting water leaks and have found Thames Water very efficient on checking out and then repairing leaks reported through their website <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/report-a-problem/report-a-problem?type=leak>. You will need the location including postcode and you are asked to indicate the severity of the leak. By way of example, there was a leak on Hampstead Lane which resulted in the path from Sandy Heath across to Kenwood becoming impassable. I reported it and it was repaired within a few days- and they also rebuilt the path, which is now much improved!

I hope readers find this useful. In the event of particular unresolved issues or indeed any particular success stories the R&T Committee would be delighted to hear from you on [ratraffic@hgs.org.uk](mailto:ratraffic@hgs.org.uk).

EMMA HOWARD



EMMA HOWARD

## Food fundraise for Combat Stress

The HGS Combat Stress Fair Committee was delighted to be invited to provide the refreshments at the highly successful HGS Art Fair held at Fellowship House over the weekend of April 1 & 2.

Following a plea for cakes on the Suburb HGS List e-mail forum, wonderful goodies poured in. On each of the two mornings,

the scent of baking croissants filled the halls, and volunteers were kept busy filling plates, serving tea and coffee to exhibitors and visitors all day even after the kitchen door officially closed for business.

Over the two days, £877.67 was raised from refreshment sales and donations for the

forces' mental health charity, Combat Stress. Thanks to everyone who bought tea and cake so enthusiastically and donated so generously.

This year's Combat Stress Suburb Winter Fair will be held on Saturday 28 October at the Free Church Hall. Make sure you don't miss it!

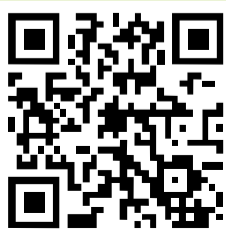


TONY BRAND

## Become part of the community

Join the Residents Association. It's a friendly group of 1,800 households in which you can either play an active role preserving the Suburb or just support it with a small subscription of just £15 per household per year. Join online, or download a standing order form from [hgs.org.uk/ra/joinnow.html](http://hgs.org.uk/ra/joinnow.html).

Alternatively, if you own a smart phone, scan the QR code.



Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association