

Suburb woods nature reserve

Big Wood and Little Wood are now a Local Nature Reserve. A Nature Trail, written and researched by RA members of the Big Wood Management Group, has been produced by Barnet Council, and a Friends of Suburb Woods group is well on the way.

The Mayor of Barnet, Cllr Usha Chopra, launched the new Local Nature Reserve on 16 May in Little Wood theatre. Year 6 pupils from the Garden Suburb School were present to receive prizes for an RA sponsored painting competition. Afterwards a large

group followed the nature trail which was guided by Barnet's Countryside Officer Mel Lloyd.

Barnet has entered Big Wood for the 'London in Bloom' wild-flower and environment trophy. Judges visited the wood on 14 July.

GEORGINA MALCOLM



(above) The outgoing mayor of Barnet was also presented with a bird box at the prizegiving in Little Wood
(below left) Cllr Jasmin Naghar and RA council member Alan Brudney



Rudi Vis MP keeps an eye on his young sons

Traffic schemes for Suburb roads

The Garden Suburb LA21 Partnership and the RA are discussing with Barnet a number of options for calming between Deansway and Hill Top.

Brim Hill and Deansway will be funded as part of the A1 red route. Calming could be by use of speed tables, which are bus friendly, at the Vivian Way and Brim Hill junctions in Deansway and more speed tables and a pinch point in Brim Hill.

Hill Top is not in the A1 scheme but the RA is arguing that the road is used as a cut through from Fallogen Way and is asking that funds be available for three speed tables or speed cushions.

Ossulton Way would have speed reduction measures too plus width restrictions into Ossulton Way and Deansway to prevent heavy vehicles cutting through the Suburb.

A fuller explanation will appear in the next issue.

Meanwhile residents views are sought by the Chairman of the RAs Roads & Traffic Committee,

Ken Murrell. Please contact him by writing to 167 Hampstead Way, NW11 7YA.



This year is the Horticultural Society's 90th, and to celebrate, there was a birthday cake at the Summer Flower Show ceremonially cut by minister of the Free Church Tony Spring, with secretary Joan Rees Phillips and chairman Norman Wheatley assisting.

Barnet officers reject eruv compromise

Barnet officers have rejected a compromise suggestion by the RA's Conservation and Amenities Committee that instead of the proposed seven Eruv poles to be placed at the edge of Sandy Heath in Wildwood Road, the Eruv wire should be attached to the lamp posts.

John Koster, the Barnet official in charge of implementing the Eruv, told Consam Chairman David Lewis, that "he had run into a brick wall" over this suggestion.

"Having the wires attached to lamp posts seems such a sensible proposal. It would allow Eruv supporters to have their Eruv and opponents not to have unsightly metal poles in the middle of Hampstead Heath in a Conservation Area of outstanding beauty," said David Lewis who has written several letters to Barnet with this suggestion. Barnet officials insist that their

policy is that no one else can fix things to their lamp posts. "In my view the reasons given are totally spurious - and indeed they do allow other organisations to fix things to some lamp posts," said David Lewis. "This is the sort of lack of flexibility in the Public Sector which the Prime Minister complained about recently. Unfortunately conserving our heritage seems very low in the level of priorities of the officials concerned with the Eruv at Barnet." The Eruv committee does not want to use wooden poles because they would be more difficult to maintain.

It is eight years since the proposal to create an Eruv around North West London was discussed. The purpose of the Eruv is to recreate a biblical walled city in which the Sabbath Laws can be relaxed allowing Orthodox Jews to carry keys and

push prams. In drawing up the NW London Eruv boundaries, the Committee has tried wherever possible to use 'natural features' such as the M1 and Northern Line, but where there are gaps, poles and wires are used. The total area of the Eruv is 6 square miles and the perimeter 11 miles. The section in Wildwood Road is designated site 13.

In other parts of the world Eruvs have not required poles and wires because existing features have been used, such as canals in Antwerp and phone and electricity poles in the USA.

The application to build the Eruv was refused planning permission by Barnet in February 1993. The decision was overturned by the Secretary of State for the Environment in September 1994 following a public enquiry. Since then a slightly modified scheme has been approved by Barnet in June 1998 (Development and Protection Committee) and October 1998 (Public Works Committee).

Barnet has agreed to grant the Eruv Committee a Licence and the details are being negotiated by John Koster. This includes insurance, indemnity and the exact details of each site. Meanwhile the Eruv committee are also negotiating with the Highways Agency to string wires across the A1, A41 and A406. This again will involve a licence.

RICHARD WAKEFIELD

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Thanks from Henrietta Barnett

"This is our way of saying thank you to you all," said Francesca Barnes, head of the governing body of Henrietta Barnett School, as she welcomed some hundred or so guests to a champagne and canapés celebration of the acquisition of the school buildings and the site from the Institute.

In a lively double act, school head Jane de Swiet and Francesca Barnes managed to put aside the traumas of the past seven years "some of us were beginning to think we would never see this moment arrive" and enthusiastically gave thanks to all the people who had in one way or another by hard work or moral support made the final agreement possible.

Heading the list were the DfEE, the Secretaries of State for Education and the Borough of Barnet. Tribute was paid to the patience of John Whittaker, Terry Grant and especially Anne Barlow at the DfEE; Barnet's chief executive Max Caller, MPs John Marshall and Rudi Vis for their behind the scenes support.

There were thanks too for the Trust. "We particularly admired the way they continued to broker creative solutions between the two sides" and especially for the staff, pupils and their parents. "Throughout the dispute the staff acted as if nothing was

amiss, with the result that the school has consistently raised its standards and received two glowing Ofsted reports." The Institute principal Fay Naylor and her staff "had co-operated throughout" and Carol Boulter's painstaking research of the archives had established the historical background.

The PTA, chaired successively by Alan Sheena and Patrick Phillips, was "an organisation which has been a great source of financial and moral support throughout."

Francesca Barnes praised her predecessors as chairs of governors, Pam Edwards and Eleanor Miller, and reminded us of the enormous burden of work the dispute had placed on the governing body. "Some may not know that early in the dispute the governors were personally served with eviction notices - for a volunteering governor that must have been terrifying."

Special thanks were due to what was known as the "ad hoc" group, a team with authority to negotiate with the Institute - "each of them committed extraordinary amounts of time, energy and emotion to the resolution we now have." "Our lawyer Alan Langleben, unsurpassed in the art of the diplomatic letter;

Anthony Furlong, a parent governor and a key architect of the dispute resolution and Jane de Swiet who has become a legal and property expert" said Francesca Barnes.

Head Governor and School Head paid tribute to one another and toasted the future of the school.

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