CPZ splits Suburb

(continued from front page)

Gary adds: "The seeds for this were sown in 2006 with the setting up of the Temple Fortune CPZ at which time opponents of the scheme included a substantial majority of Hampstead Way residents. Not to be denied by something as inconvenient as democracy and despite pledges from councillors that 'resident wishes would be paramount' much of the Temple Fortune area including a stretch of Hampstead Way was incorporated into the new CPZ on the grounds that without it controls in Asmuns Place would not be viable.

"The effect of this was predictable to any observer. Within a short time the displacement of traffic from the newly zoned roads began to cause parking problems for residents living further afield who had never previously suffered from these. It was apparent that in particular this would affect the unrestricted part of Hampstead Way which was now being squeezed by controls at both the Temple Fortune and Golders Green ends.

"It is hard to imagine a more unintelligent policy for controlling parking than a scheme which creates a parking problem for many more people than had one in the first place but that is what the CPZ operation has achieved. There was no need for local authorities across London to respond to the grievances of a small number of people who had knowingly chosen to live in areas of high parking demand and there was no scope for them to do so until the control of parking was decriminalised in the 1990s. At that time powers were handed to councils to create an array of new controls and to retain charges and fines. The outcome has been an epidemic of largely superfluous traffic regulations which are informed less by necessity than by the councils' thirst for easy revenue.

"The worst of these, the CPZ schemes were grossly unfair as councils used the system to encourage certain groups of residents to export parking problems to their neighbours. In due course these secondary groups were themselves reluctantly forced to submit to CPZ extensions schemes in order to shift the problem along to the next group and so on. Thus did the policy impose on ever more citizens the heavy cost and absurd complication of removing a relatively tiny amount of traffic from areas far distant from their own roads.

"The pressure for a new Suburb CPZ (effectively an extension of the existing Temple Fortune and Golders Green zones) has come mostly from residents in the central part of Hampstead Way. They did not create the traffic problem in that road and it is easy to understand their frustrations. They cannot be blamed for feeling fed up and desperate for any solution. Whether they will still believe a CPZ was the best deal for them five years from now remains to be seen. Many existing CPZ residents object to the cost and the inflexibility of the zones but once a road is inside a CPZ it is all but impossible to have it removed. The pledge that 'resident wishes are paramount…' tends in practice to mean 'resident wishes are paramount as long as they are in favour of a CPZ'."

The opposite view, expressed by some on the RA Council, is that the existence of CPZs in other boroughs cannot be ignored as it has pushed commuters into the Suburb, as shown by the heavy parking in Wildwood Road near the footpath to Golders Green station, and similarly the existence of the Temple Fortune CPZ cannot be ignored when it causes the current misery in Hampstead Way.

An open meeting, held in December, considered five discussion topics, including both Barnet's proposal and dismantling Suburb CPZs. 90 residents crowded into Fellowship House and at least 20 could not gain entry. The room was divided, as some were against CPZs on principle, others were in favour, and some had views led by their location.

Gary says "Understandably this was disproportionately attended by residents with a current parking problem. This left an impression on representatives of Barnet Council that the Suburb is crying out for parking controls. Yet Barnet's own parking survey last summer found that roughly three quarters of residents living outside Hampstead Way were opposed to a CPZ extension in their roads."

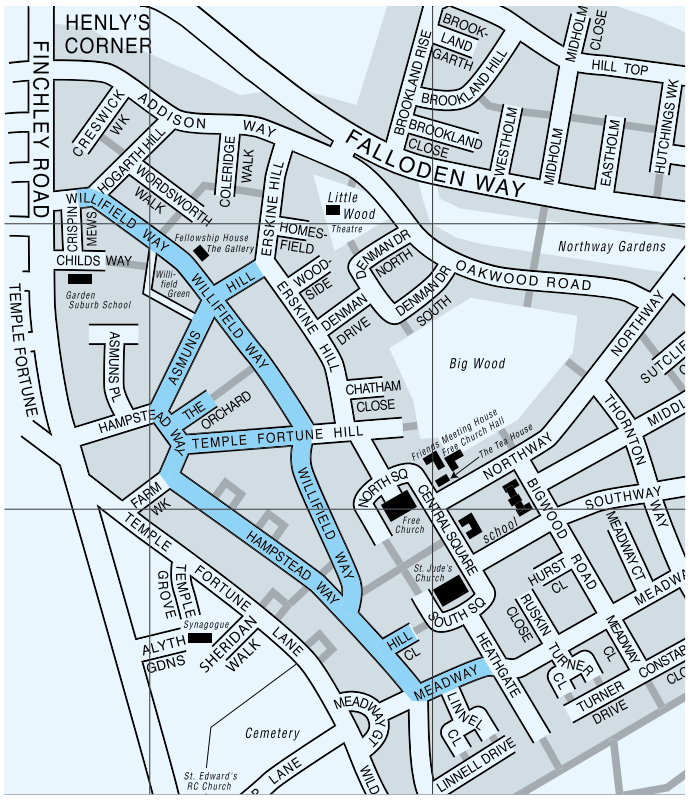
The RA's January Council meeting passed the following motion: "The RA Council remains opposed in principle to the extension of the Suburb CPZs as currently operated and calls upon the London Borough of Barnet to introduce a revised approach to local parking problems which better balances the needs of different groups of road users. Nonetheless, it recognises the parking problems experienced by residents of Hampstead Way (and some neighbouring roads) and acknowledges that a CPZ may satisfy their immediate requirements."

An amendment to remove the opposition to CPZs and establish a Working Party, in consultation with the Roads and Traffic Committee, to research and put forward proposals for an RA strategy on parking and related traffic issues in the Suburb, was defeated by one vote.

At a Barnet forum in Golders Green, in January, Councillors spoke in favour of the CPZ and added to the proposal the section of Meadway from the Hampstead Way junction to Heathgate. Gary characterises this, and indeed the whole of the CPZ proposal, as a "land grab". He says that the Barnet survey of last summer showed only Hampstead Way in favour of a CPZ, and that of the five streets consulted, which include Willifield Way and the streets in between, 75% of the respondents were against the proposal. Residents of that stretch of Meadway say that their life is currently intolerable, regardless of the proposal, and seek a CPZ there anyway. This leads to concerns in Heathgate, where displaced parkers can be expected to move and there are similar concerns in Erskine Hill and Hogarth Hill. All this supports both Gary's arguments against CPZs and the amendment to the January motion which he helped defeat. The RA response to Barnet states "It has been LB Barnet's public position that CPZs will not be introduced where it is against the wishes of a majority of residents. If the results of the statutory consultation indicate significant opposition to a CPZ in those roads (Willifield Way, Asmuns Hill and Temple Fortune Hill) we ask the Council to honour that undertaking in this case," while pointing out that it was clear from the open meeting that "some residents of Willifield Way (and nearby) whose properties are closest to the junction with Hampstead Way, do most strongly wish to be included as part of a new CPZ".

Two discussion topics at the Open meeting were a one-hour CPZ across the whole Suburb and the complete opposite, the de-adoption of most Suburb streets so that residents could control and manage the parking.

Meanwhile, the Barnet proposals were issued at the end of March to all affected streets, and many adjacent streets, as a statutory consultation. Barnet hopes to analyse the results and, if moving ahead, implement a scheme by the end of the summer.



Proposed Controlled Parking Zone

Almost invisible

Andrew Dismore, Labour London Assembly Member for Barnet and Camden, has obtained figures from the Mayor of London that one loading bay on Falloden Way in Hampstead Garden Suburb alone issued 1490 penalty notices in 2012.

Mr Dismore said: "Since May I have asked nine questions on this loading bay. To date only limited changes have been made. It is mad that it is not marked and one small loading bay, on a small parade of shops such as this can generate such vast amounts of money. They still have not answered my question from early January as to how much these fines have generated. However given the rate of fines it cannot be anything less than £89,400 and could be as much as £178,000 extra income for the Mayor in 2012.

TFL now claim that they have asked the Department for Transport for permission to perform a simple task such as painting 'LOADING BAY' on the road.

This has taken ten months to get to this point. Anyone would think that the Mayor is reluctant to get on and fix this profitable error."

Group acupuncture clinic at Fellowship House

Acupuncture is an ancient therapy originating in the Far East, which has gained much popularity in the UK. It is a complimentary therapy therefore it can be used alongside conventional medical treatment. Acupuncture triggers the body's immune system to help deal with a problem. In cases of complicated chronic diseases that are irreversible, acupuncture can help alleviate the symptoms, improve the feeling of well being and make everyday life a lot easier.

This clinic is being run by Orly Barziv, who moved to the Suburb last year and is keen to offer a service to the local community. She completed her degree in Chinese medicine-Acupuncture in London after completing courses in Shiatsu and Chinese medicine in Greece, where she comes from. She has practiced acupuncture for over 10 years

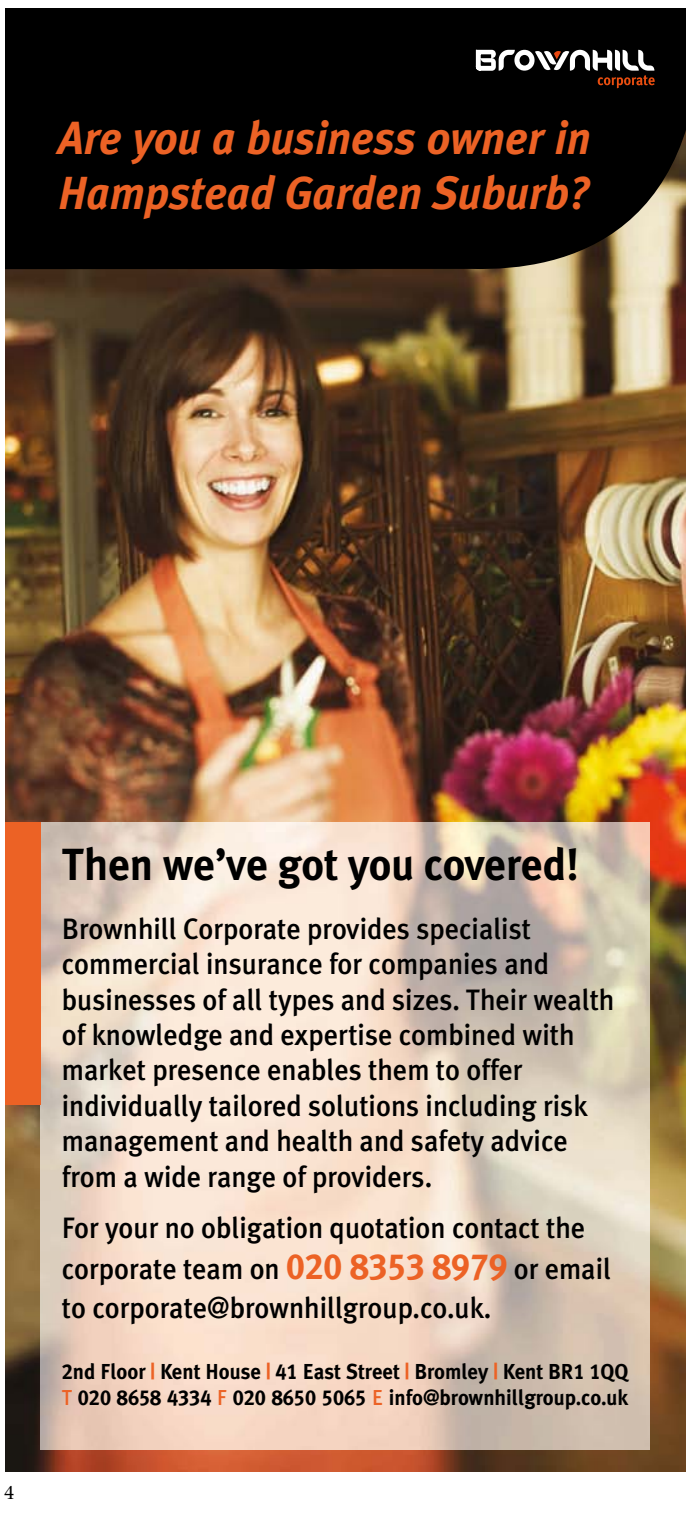
Fellowship is promoting this group clinic which will start in May on Thursday afternoons. Details are available on the front desk at Fellowship House in Willifield Way or by emailing orlybarziv@googlemail.com.

Anete Graudina's Violin Class Student Concert

(age 5-17)

Sunday 30 June at 3pm

Free Church, Central Square, Hampstead Garden Suburb

Admission £1, children free

For more information please ring 07931 902923