

# North Side Broadband problems

Some readers have probably noticed posters like the one shown here, received flyers or, if members of the RA's HGS List e-mail forum, have received an e-mail entitled, "Want Super Fast Broadband and live on north side of Suburb?"

A small group of residents, frustrated by attempts to get sensible answers from BT about why the broadband connections for so many houses and flats between Westholm and Gurney Drive were so bad, and with no improvement on offer from BT in the foreseeable future, decided to do something about it.

They enlisted the active support our MP, Mike Freer, who, after receiving replies to his own survey of households, engaged directly with BT. The outcome is that the residents in the streets named in the panel will be able to get super fast broadband if they help pay for the installation and infrastructure.

BT are prepared to contribute £40,000, but there remains a funding shortfall of £25,000 for residents to pay. The amount demanded by BT will depend on how many people are prepared to pay. If everyone chips in the estimate is £45. If only half of those affected join up each will pay £90, although non-payers will get the benefit too.

Residents of the named streets are being asked to answer

some survey questions on [www.hgsfastbroadband.com](http://www.hgsfastbroadband.com). The survey asks if they would be prepared to pay £45, £90, £135 or £200 to receive high-speed broadband. It also asks if they would be willing to pay a greater amount as a contribution to ensure the success of the scheme.

BT have told Mike Freer that the difficulties caused by the existing underground network

of water, gas and electricity infrastructure meant the costs involved for these properties do not meet their commercial viability criteria. So affected households will just have to pay if they want to be able to view You Tube or BBC iPlayer videos without stuttering, download HD movies quickly or use services like Netflix or Sky On Demand. Likewise for business

users in this area who require a proper connection to meet their needs.

The group would like to hear from as many of those in the roads involved as possible. The online survey even starts with a tick box where you can register a no if you are not interested in making a one off payment at all to upgrade your phone connection.



## AFFECTED STREETS

- Blandford Close
- Brim Hill  
(odd nos 1 to 41 and even nos 2 to 52 only)
- Eastholm
- Faloden Way  
(north side: nos 153 to 263 only)
- Greenhalgh Walk
- Hill Rise
- Hill Top  
(odd nos 1 to 41 and even nos 2 to 80 only)
- Howard Walk
- Hutchings Walk
- Lyttelton Road  
(north side: nos 1 to 49 only)
- Market Place  
(north side)
- Maurice Walk
- Midholm
- Ossulton Way  
(odd nos 1 to 37 and even nos 2 to 44 only)
- The Leys
- Westholm

# Annemount summer fete



the highlights of the school calendar. Newly elected Mayor of Barnet, Mark Shooter, an Annemount parent, officially opened the fete, and the afternoon erupted into a happy buzz: face-painted toddlers, adorned with glitter tattoos, danced on the lawn, munching strawberries; Annemount parents, past and present, caught up over a glass of Pimms; children raced from hook-a-duck and hoopla to the bouncy castle and treasure hunt while those wanting a quieter moment decorated bags and pencil cases or created sand art keepsakes.

On Saturday June 13 Annemount Pre-Prep and Nursery, on Holne Chase, hosted another vibrant and successful Summer Fete. The Annemount families once again banded together to plan and run every aspect of this fun-filled afternoon, which raised funds for the PTA's chosen charity, Spread A Smile.

Head, Geraldine Maidment, welcomed the pupils, their families and friends to one of

The atmosphere was warm, friendly and community focused; a true reflection of the spirit of the school.

RACHEL RUSHBROOK

# Alexander Technique - who can it help?

When Jonathan Pryce, who played Cardinal Wolsey in the BBC's Wolf Hall, was asked in a recent interview which book had changed his life he said: "The one the teacher put under my head during the Alexander Technique sessions at Rada. I grew an inch and a half."

Most people initially book a lesson because they are in pain. It can help with chronic or recurrent backache, a stiff neck, shoulder pain, tendonitis, sciatica, osteoporosis and repetitive strain injuries.

In 2008 the British Medical Journal published a study of patients with chronic back pain. The conclusion was that the Alexander Technique offers significant long-term benefits.

It is not a treatment or a therapy although it can be very therapeutic. It's called a lesson because you are learning how to look after yourself, to recognise the warning signs and become adept at lessening or avoiding pain altogether.

A big part of the problem is that while our pace of life seems to have accelerated at breakneck speed, our lifestyle has become more sedentary.

The amazing ability to remain in constant touch with the whole world doesn't help. It's quite rare to spot someone walking down the street who isn't checking their texts or tweets. But the tilt of their head at an unnatural angle as they squint at the screen has given rise to a new affliction - 'text neck'.

The Alexander Technique is not trying to stop anyone living life to the full - far from it. In fact it enables you to do anything you want - go to the gym, work at a computer, prepare for a presentation, or play the trombone. You just learn to do it without injuring yourself.

Most of us don't realise how much of our life is spent on autopilot as we rush through the day leaving us feeling drained, uncomfortable or worse, in pain.

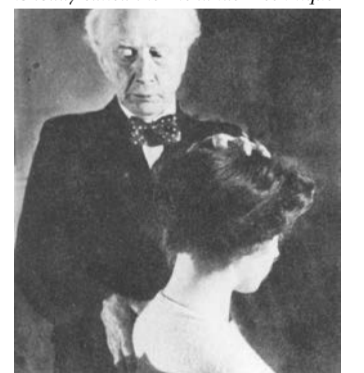
People often start to see changes after half a dozen lessons. Even after their first lesson many say they feel lighter, more comfortable, more energetic, as well as calmer.

What they are discovering is how not to squander their energy on too much effort and tension.

As Malcolm Balk, a Canadian Alexander teacher and running coach, says, "there's really no need to grip a pencil with the force needed to swing an axe."

ELIZABETH ABRAHAMS

Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869 - 1955) was an Australian actor who developed the educational process that is today called the Alexander Technique



# Poor signage and over-zealous enforcement still rife on the Suburb

The RA's Roads & Traffic Committee has been involved in several interesting cases recently with mostly successful results.

At the end of April the Committee was contacted by a resident who had just been given a parking ticket for leaving her car in a suspended bay in Temple Fortune Lane. A visit to the spot indicated that a number of motorists had been similarly unlucky and it seemed likely that tickets would have been issued all through the day to cars that had been left in a section near the junction with Finchley Road.

The confusion was caused by a Council sign, which indicated that only a single bay was suspended out of a set of three, all of which had been taken out of use. Anyone using the other two bays would have been perfectly entitled to believe that only the usual pay and display restrictions applied. With the aid of our ward

councillors we succeeded in having all that day's tickets cancelled across all three bays.

Whilst this outcome was satisfactory it arose only because we heard about the incident while there was still time to check the faulty temporary signage, which would probably have been removed the next day.

We have also settled a long-running case in which a visitor to Wildwood Road was ticketed earlier in the year for pavement parking. Although there is a general prohibition against parking with wheels on the kerb the rule is enforced variably within the Suburb.

We felt that it was unfair of the Council to target a driver in Wildwood Road when pavement parking is informally permitted in adjoining Ingram Avenue. The Council initially refused to cancel the visitor's ticket so she referred her case to adjudication on the grounds that Barnet was not operating a fair and transparent



policy over pavement parking. We are grateful for Cllr Marshall's persistence in arguing the lady's case on our behalf and this eventually led to Barnet withdrawing the ticket.

Pavement parking is a contentious issue. Barnet say they enforce this rule because when vehicles are parked partially on the pavement they can cause an obstruction to the blind or to mothers with pushchairs. We are curious though as to why this is apparently only an issue when the vehicle in question is privately rather than Council owned. Specifically we have asked Barnet to explain why the Council lorry shown in the picture above parked right across the footpath at Willifield Green in March did not represent such a hazard. We have had no reply.

In a repeat of one of last year's most outrageous enforcement abuses, Barnet sent parking wardens to Brookland School on the first of the May bank holidays to issue tickets to cars parked on single yellow lines which are active for a short time at either end of the school day when children may be crossing the road.

Anticipating that some motorists would assume that the restriction did not apply on

bank holidays the wardens were able to target a number of cars, which posed absolutely no danger as the school was closed. We have encouraged those affected to request cancellation of the tickets, but with Barnet having shown again that it will not behave reasonably over the enforcement of specific school restrictions on non-school days the Roads & Traffic Committee decided to put up its own signs outside Brookland School on the late-May bank holiday (see below) warning motorists not to park on the yellow lines. We shall continue to do this on future bank holidays but the experience is a lesson to residents about the spirit in which the Council may use new CCTV powers it has awarded itself for the prosecution of moving traffic contraventions.

GARY SHAW



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## G Cohen ANTIQUE SILVER

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