

FINCHLEY & GOLDERS GREEN RESIDENTS FORUM

VENUE: Avenue House, 17 East End Road, Finchley, London N3 3QE

Wednesday 26th October 2016 – 6.30PM

Chairman: Councillor Shimon Ryde
Vice Chairman: Councillor Reuben Thompstone

ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE FORUM MEETING

Items must be submitted to Governance Service (f&gg.residentsforum@barnet.gov.uk) **by 10.00am on the fifth working day before the meeting** (for example, if a meeting is due to take place on a Thursday evening, questions must be received by 10am on the preceding Thursday).

	Issue Raised	Response
1	<p>Subject: Status of consultation on Victoria Park redevelopment Submitted by: Tal Potishman Ward: West Finchley</p> <p>Background: A few months ago there was a rumour of a consultation that took place with a small number of neighbours on one side of Victoria Park.</p> <p>Question: Can you please advise if this consultation is likely to expand to include all neighbours of the park and what is the status of the redevelopment project?</p>	
2	<p>Subject: Bird, rat and vermin nuisance, owing to continuous bird feeding and food thrown in the open Submitted by: Tal Potishman Ward: West Finchley</p> <p>Background: We are bordering Victoria Park and are badly affected by huge flocks of birds (pigeons, crows). These flocks are growing in size abnormally as a result of constant feeding by the public and local shops/restaurants. This attracts not only birds but also rats, mice and other vermin, which then get into our houses. Due to this endless supply of food, the wild animals multiply at an unnatural rate exacerbating the problem. Their droppings are soiling the pavements, our driveways and gardens. The droppings are dangerous - they are slippery and carry disease (such as Psittacosis).</p> <p>Question: Can the council put up a large and visible sign to</p>	

	Issue Raised	Response
	discourage (or possibly Ban?) feeding the birds and clear up the area near the Ballards Lane Entrance to Victoria Park (NW side), which is constantly dirty with food.	
3	<p>Subject: Refuse Collections Submitted by: Betti Blatman</p> <p>When will the refuse collections be improved as it seems the staff should refer to the list of residents who are on "assisted collection" to ensure their refuse, whether general, recycled, food waste or garden waste is collected and wheelie bins returned to their original location. Despite numerous scenarios and various excuses, e.g. there is a new crew, which is irrelevant as they should all receive the same training and follow the same specification.</p> <p>In addition to collection scenarios, I've recently had my green wheelie bin "disappear" although after lodging my complaint, a new one was promptly replaced.</p>	
4	<p>Subject: Abbots Gardens, N2 ,Roads Works, Tarmacking Submitted by: Local resident Ward: East Finchley</p> <p>The Council has recently resurfaced the road. This has not been delivery to a satisfactory standard and it must be reviewed.</p> <p>Can you outline how this work was completed and who carried out the work during September 2016.</p>	

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5	<p>Subject: Bus route 263/ 214 Submitted by: Mead Stuart</p> <p>The 263 bus service is unsatisfactory. We need another route running between Archway and North Finchley coming from a different route to the 263. One option could be to extend the 214 from Highgate Village to North Finchley. Lobby TFL as they don't take any notice of single complaints.</p>	
6	<p>Subject: Bus 13 Submitted by: Andrew Dismore</p> <p>Will the Council be making representations to TfL against the proposed changes to the 13 bus?</p>	
7	<p>Subject: Rat issue in Old Farm Road in Strawberry Vale Submitted by: Andrew Dismore Ward: East Finchley</p> <p>Will the Council work with the Peabody Housing Association to reduce the problem of rats in the bins on Old Farm Road in Strawberry Vale?</p> <p>Will you ask the refuse team to ensure that bins are placed properly in their cages and bin lids are closed after they are emptied, with the supervisor checking every week that this is being done.</p>	

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8	<p>Subject: Beresford Road Submitted by: Andrew Dismore Ward: East Finchley</p> <p>Many residents of Beresford Road in East Finchley have written to me to express their dissatisfaction with the asphalt repaving of the entire footway. Will you listen to the residents and re-do the work as paving slabs.</p>	
9	<p>Subject: Abbots Gardens Submitted by: Andrew Dismore Ward: East Finchley</p> <p>Abbots Gardens in East Finchley has been resurfaced in an extremely poor quality, with uneven surfaces, lumps, lines from the roller etc. Will you re-do the work to a satisfactory standard.</p>	
10	<p>Subject: Victoria Park – trees in parks Submitted by: Mary O'Connor Ward: West Finchley</p> <p>Why is the Park's Department so secretive about works in parks? Signs were placed in Riverside Walk just before works began so there was no opportunity for input from users of this space regarding what was to be done there. The sign gave an email address (parks@barnet.gov.uk) for more information but an email to this was not responded to. Further, there are rumours of works planned for Victoria Park but there has been no consultation with users. Additionally, when trees are felled in parks, notices are not placed on them 7 days in advance of their being felled. Why?</p>	

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11	<p>Subject: Victoria Park tennis courts and fences Submitted by: Mary O'Connor Ward: West Finchley</p> <p>Two of the tennis courts in Victoria Park were recently resurfaced and the fencing replaced. Where did the funding come from for this and how much did it cost? Was there a condition that the tennis courts be free for the public to use?</p>	
12	<p>Subject: Parking controls – Ballards Lane/ Manorside School Submitted by: Theresa Musgrove Ward: West Finchley</p> <p>Why is the parking service so selective in the areas in which attendants patrol and give PCNS to residents? Specifically, why, despite raising the issue with local attendants, do all of them deliberately ignore the long term parking - often by cars for sale - along Ballards Lane, where there is a yellow line on the section parallel to Moss Hall Crescent? Why do they refuse to come to Manorside School and prevent parents from parking in the disabled bay or causing dangerous obstruction for children? Is this because quotas are easier to meet in busy high streets?</p>	
13	<p>Subject: Pothole- Finchley Central Submitted by: Theresa Musgrove Ward: West Finchley</p> <p>Outside Tesco in Finchley Central, by the bus stop, there is a pothole which keeps forming that is so deep, when it rains it fills with water and drenches those waiting for buses, often elderly travellers and children. It has been refilled at least twice, so badly, that it inevitably happens again: the filled in material is never properly flattened, and the line sometimes not properly repainted. Presumable contractors are paid again each time they have to repair their own shoddy work. Is this good</p>	

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	value for money for Barnet residents?	
14	<p>Subject: Alley/service road back of 170-192 Cricklewood Broadway, NW2 3EB Submitted by: Sonia Bryant Ward: Childs Hill</p> <p>The condition of this alley is much the same as first reported in March 2015. Some days it's reasonable but the same old problems duck up associated with fly tipping, inadequate cleaning and collection of both commercial and private rubbish and bad drainage. Rubbish still collects over the drains resulting in puddles of dirty water in many places. Exactly what action has Barnet council taken with regard to any of this over the last year particularly with regard to site visits and contact with management agents. Is this on a regular basis or just when someone complains about it? I had a walk down to the end just today. It's like a third world country and does not belong in a London borough.</p>	
15	<p>Subject: Loose utility cover in middle of A5, Cricklewood Broadway - Ref 110647 Submitted by: Sonia Bryant Ward: Childs Hill</p> <p>This utility cover is located in the middle of the crossroads with Ashford Road, Depot Approach and the A5, in Cricklewood.</p> <p>Having given up trying to speak to TFL I reported it to Barnet's Highways Dept on 3 Oct 2016.</p>	

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	<p>Every time a vehicle passes over this utility cover it makes a dreadful clanging noise and has been doing so for about the last three or four months. The LBB officer said she would find out which utility company was responsible for it (she didn't think it a matter for TFL). I have spoken to the manager of Martins the newsagent on the corner of Ashford Road who had customers complaining that they couldn't sleep at night because of the noise and had contacted Brent council who had said it was Barnet's responsibility!</p> <p>Here we go again same as the Ashley saga ref 103074.</p> <p>Who is supposed to check and report this and see something's done about it? It can't just be a member of the public, surely? Just think what it must be like to have to live with this and not get any sleep. It can be heard in Kara Way</p>	
16	<p>Subject: Ashley Fruit and Veg, 180 Cricklewood Broadway, NW2 3EB Submitted by: Sonia Bryant Ward: Childs Hill</p> <p>Obstruction of the pavement outside this shop was first lodged again on 28 June 2016, Ref No 91907, latest ref 103074 dated 1 September 2016. This has been an on-going matter for the last three years and well known to Barnet's Highways Department.</p> <p>Ashleys have persisted in putting out too many boxes of their produce resulting in inadequate room for passers-by and creating, at times, a dangerous surface particularly in wet weather from fruit and veg squashed on the pavement. I have now learned by email from Cllr Jack Cohen that following a licencing meeting, Barnet are introducing specific street trading designated areas and Ashleys is one meaning they will have to stay within an area of pavement marked out by studs.</p> <p>This, of course, is good news but raises questions.</p> <p>Why has it taken so long?</p>	

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	<p>What happens when, as they surely will, Ashleys just cover the studs with their boxes? Who is supposed to report this and to whom? We have been told before that studs were to be put on the pavement but it never happened. Why?</p>	
17	<p>Subject: Street Cleaning In Cricklewood Submitted by: Jessica Howey</p> <p>I would like the Residents' Forum, Barnet councillors and officers to know and indeed to take note of the fact that in Cricklewood they have two outstanding employees - both members of the street cleaning team. One is Michael Jackson who does is utmost to keep the litter and general detritus under control in Gratton Terrace - we would be lost without him. The Town Keeper, Anatoilly Somokha litter picks Cricklewood Broadway most mornings and when the traffic lights turn to red, he runs in front of the stationary cars and picks the litter from the carriageway. Both deserve to be recognised for their work. The Barnet side of Cricklewood Broadway would be buried under a mass of litter if it was not for these two very conscientious, dedicated employees.</p>	
18	<p>Subject: Archer Academy Submitted by: Andrew Dismore Ward: East Finchley</p> <p>What support can the Council give to the Archer Academy's bid for a 6th Form?</p>	

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19	<p>Subject: Pavements and driveways Submitted by: Mary O'Connor Ward: Various</p> <p>Until recently, pavements at resident's driveways had about two-thirds of the pavement flat with about a third on a slant to the kerb. Why are new pavements being placed on a slant from the properties to the kerb so that there is no part of the pavement that is flat? On some pavements there will be hundreds of pedestrians each day but each driveway will only have a few vehicle movements. Why has Barnet Council changed its design of pavements to the detriment of pedestrians?</p>	
20	<p>Subject: Council notices Submitted by: Mary O'Connor Ward: Various</p> <p>Barnet Council notices lately regarding a property are placed in flimsy plastic and wrapped around a pole. Can they please be laminated, like they used to be, so that they are more noticeable and easier to read? Also can they be placed outside the property in question, rather than some distance away? Do they need to be signed by someone from Barnet Council?</p>	

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21	<p>Subject: Planning application consultation - documents Submitted by: Mary O'Connor</p> <p>When a planning application is displayed on the website, there are often more documents added later. Other times the description of the planning application is changed. If these occur, can the consultation expiry dates be forwarded to be 3 and 4 weeks from the last document loaded or description changed date? Additionally, parts of documents are separate files and so the document list is very unwieldy. Can they be combined into one file to make them more user friendly? The planning website often displays, "Document Unavailable. This document is unavailable for viewing at this time". Why is this?</p>	
22	<p>Subject: Planning consultation Submitted by: Mary O'Connor</p> <p>Why does the planning website stop accepting comments when the last consultation expiry date passes? Additionally why does it display the message, "Comments may not be submitted at this time. The consultation period for this application has ended" when by law all comments must be considered up until a decision is made?</p>	
23	<p>Subject: Planning team Submitted by: Mary O'Connor</p> <p>FOI request (3040897) regarding the Planning Department last month shows interim and acting staff as well as 12 temporary workers. Given the number of planning applications being received, is the planning department able to process and assess the applications in a timely and competent manner?</p>	

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24	<p>Subject: Copthall Planning Submitted by: Mary O'Connor Ward: Mill Hill</p> <p>Copthall is considered a borough-wide facility. When the draft plan was released in January, there was no mention in it of granting Chase Lodge a 125 year lease option. Yet in the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee's documents of 5 September with regard to the Land at Copthall Playing Fields Page Street, it stated that, "A number of Stakeholder meetings have taken place over the last 12 months, to enable the Council to arrive at this position. Stakeholders have been engaged in design meetings, and a number of informal meetings to discuss the Heads of Terms leading to this paper." Why was the Chase Lodge probable lease option not included in the draft plan? Given that it is in the Green Belt, why is there no ecology assessment in the 'Copthall Planning Brief'?</p>	
25	<p>Subject: FOI responses Submitted by: Mary O'Connor</p> <p>Why are 'Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests within the last 180 days' displayed on the Council website sorted by 'date requested' rather than 'date displayed on the website'? At present, if a request is not fulfilled for well over 20 working days, as often happens, the response is not obviously available to other residents as it will be displayed well down the scroll down list. Additionally, the date on the FOI Response is not necessarily the date that it was replied (emailed) to the requestor, so can this be changed to the replied date? When part of the response is in a separate attachment why is this not included with the FOI Request response available online?</p>	

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26	<p>Subject: The Lodge IT information Submitted by: Mary O'Connor</p> <p>Much library information was lost due to an IT problem. Now there is no longer the information available on why it would cost an estimated £100,000 to bring The Lodge to decent homes standard. Was this information lost due to an IT problem and if so what other information has been lost? If not, how was it lost?</p>	
27	<p>Subject: Library staff Submitted by: Theresa Musgrove Wards: Various</p> <p>Tory councillors insist that the 60% cuts in library budget are necessary because of the demands of 'austerity', which means £2.85m will be culled from the Libraries service total of £4.8m, in itself a modest amount for a service that was already independently assessed as representing good value for money. Of course at the same time they are spending £6 million on gutting libraries, shrinking the space, and preparing them for a DIY, staffless service.</p> <p>The impact on the well being of residents, especially children who will be barred from the new unstaffed libraries, is incalculable and will affect the most disadvantaged residents.</p> <p>At the same time as cutting this vital service, Tory councillors are happy to sanction the eye watering high level of expenditure - of £18 million in the last year alone - on private consultants and agency fees.</p>	

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	How is that morally or economically justifiable?	
28	<p>Subject: Budget Submitted by: Theresa Musgrove Ward: Various</p> <p>Half of the library staff who currently help members of the public when they visit their local libraries are about to lose their jobs, supposedly because of the need to save money.</p> <p>Please explain, therefore, why those same Tory councillors have just handed half a million pounds, ie a substantial amount of the 'savings' they claim we need from the library budget, to the RAF Museum, a national and well funded museum - especially when they shut our own local museum, again on the pretext of economy. Also explain why another £800,000 has been spent on creating additional posts on the council's PR team, specifically to 'manage the council's reputation', as we head towards the next local elections.</p>	

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29	<p>Subject: Library staff Submitted by: Theresa Musgrove Ward: Various</p> <p>Tory councillors believe that a professional library service can be run by unqualified volunteers. Are they willing to become unpaid volunteers, and carry out their civic roles without their allowances, and free parking permits?</p>	
30	<p>Subject: Fees for renewal of travel passes Submitted by: Theresa Musgrove Ward: Various</p> <p>The council was recently exposed as allowing Capita to charge another £100,000 fee, on top of the normal massive contractual charges, to renew travel passes for disabled residents which did not need renewing, and in some cases were unlawfully cancelled, causing enormous distress to their users, often finding themselves stranded, unable to access public transport.</p> <p>Why was Capita not asked to return this fee, and why was no one held accountable for this 'mistake'?</p>	
31	<p>Subject: Footpath damage at crossovers Submitted by: Mr Hale Ward: Various</p> <p>The significant increase in private resident parking in front gardens has resulted in damage to footways and verges from new vehicle crossovers and damage resulting from the poor quality of existing crossovers.</p>	

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	<p>Paving slabs are broken and often dangerously projecting and rocking. Damage is also caused to kerb stones. Badly damaged crossovers remain for months outside properties. Existing crossovers often do not relate to the width of the off street parking which in some circumstances extends to the whole width of the property. Vehicles may pass over crossovers just a few times a day while many pedestrians walk on that pavement, the priority needs to be addressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the council doing about addressing this matter ? • Who pays for the repairs to crossovers, the general public or the property owner? 	
32	<p>Subject: The pedestrian environment Submitted by: Mr Hale Ward: Various</p> <p>With reference to officers reports to the Environment Committee meeting of 11th January 2016 entitled 'Highways Planned maintenance Programme 2016/17' and 'Whole Life costing of Footway Maintenance treatments and Scheme Prioritisation'</p> <p>I notice that Barnet Council has a serious backlog of footway maintenance.</p> <p>This backlog of maintenance has been obvious to pedestrians for many years. Pedestrians are discriminated against by this backlog of street scene maintenance and other factors not being addressed which include:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Worn surfaces and broken paving due to lack of maintenance. 2. Parking on pavements obstructing and degrading the pavement. 3. Parking in front gardens leading to broken paving and obstruction at crossovers. 4. Overgrown hedges and vegetation 5. Leaves and rubbish un-cleared. 6. Obstructions caused by refuse bins before and after collection. 7. Damage adjacent to building sites by contractors. 	

	Issue Raised	Response
	<p>8. Lack of dropped kerbs. 9. Redundant crossovers. 10. Poor junction design. How is the council addressing these problems?</p>	
33	<p>Subject: Anti-social and dangerous behaviour Submitted by: Ms Howey Ward: Childs Hill</p> <p>For the past 18 months at least, there have been on-going issues with pupils from Hampstead School using Kara Way playground after school. These issues have been raised with our councillors, the SNT team and the school but the situation has now deteriorated to such an extent that last week there were fights between pupils on two consecutive days. 999 calls were made to the police. The first police car on the scene was surrounded by Hampstead pupils and had to call for back up – another two police cars attended. Residents of the terraces cannot call for such back up. One of the fights appears to have been pre-planned with 40 to 50 Hampstead pupils in the playground as spectators.</p> <p>Fireworks were thrown in the playground and in the street in front of people. One small child arriving home with a grandparent was terrified when the firework exploded in front of him and screamed and screamed. This is very dangerous.</p> <p>Another resident was surrounded by the pupils, who were threatening him and had to shout for neighbours to come and help him.</p> <p>Two laser torches have been used in the playground. These can be</p>	

Issue Raised	Response
<p>very dangerous if used irresponsibly eg aimed at a driver in Kara Way, helicopters, etc</p> <p>Other examples of anti-social and dangerous behaviour by Hampstead pupils include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Hampstead pupils racing around our streets overturning wheelie binsStones being thrown with one hitting a residentDrink cans thrown at windowsAggressive, intimidating behaviourCannabis being smoked openly in the playground and in our streetsA group walking around the terraces carrying a folded up belt in an intimidating and threatening mannerAnti-social behaviour, loud shouting, swearing and foul language that is so bad that genuine playground users, parents with children or toddlers have no choice but to leave <p>A meeting took place with the school head, Mr Szemalikowski, two or three weeks ago but the situation has not improved. The standard response (if any response) from the school is how do we know they are from Hampstead School. They wear the school uniform, so there is no doubt.</p> <p>Kara Way playground is for everyone and it is totally unacceptable that small children and parents have to leave when Hampstead School kids are present. It is intolerable that residents of the terraces should feel threatened by out of control school children. Those causing the problems are aged roughly between 14 and 18. They are young adults, so can be quite intimidating.</p> <p>We need help urgently before someone is badly hurt.</p>	

	Issue Raised	Response
34	<p>Subject: Prohibit parking around roundabout on Horton Avenue NW2 Submitted by: Leanne Sangster Ward: Childs Hill</p> <p>Recently the roundabout on Horton Avenue (London NW2) has become congested with cars and this is posing a real safety issue for those using the road. Those living around the roundabout cannot access their driveways and those trying to use the roundabout are blocked from doing so, including the emergency services - a fire engine and an ambulance to date!</p> <p>Those reversing from their driveways cannot see safely what is coming, posing a risk to drivers and pedestrians.</p> <p>Something needs to be done before an accident occurs.</p>	

	Issue Raised	Response
35	<p>Subject: Council agendas – public participation Submitted by: Mary O'Connor</p> <p>As the Agenda is available online for all Barnet Council meetings, can the opportunities for public questions and comments be displayed on the main screen for the meetings where this is appropriate, rather than the separate 'Agenda Frontsheet', as residents are more likely to scroll down the main screen with the items listed. They may be unaware that they have the opportunity to participate. Additionally that the Residents' Forum screens state the closing date and time for questions.</p>	
36	<p>Subject: Overhanging front hedge Submitted by: Mr Stern Malcolm</p> <p>I just want to compliment the Council on their swift and effective action. A couple of weeks ago I reported (online) a dangerously overhanging front hedge in an unoccupied house in Cumbrian Gardens. It has now been trimmed. Well done, LBB!</p>	

Contact: Iphigenia Christophoridou, Governance Service, Assurance Group, London Borough of Barnet, NLBP, Building 2, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP.

Tel: 020 8359 3822, Email: f&gg.residentsforum@barnet.gov.uk

Future meeting dates:

Date of meeting	Location
24 January 2016	To be confirmed