



June 2008

Friern Barnet and Whetstone Residents' Association

- We are non-political
- We work for all residents in the area
- We discuss issues with Local Councillors and Council Officials
- Associated with the following bodies
 - The Federation of Residents Association of Barnet
 - The Post Office Advisory Panel
 - The Finchley Society
 - Friends of Friary Park
 - The Friern Barnet & District Local History Society
 - Coppetts Wood Conservationists
 - The London Green Belt Council
 - North Finchley Local Agenda 21

Vigilance keeps 'developers' at bay

The outwardly peaceful Friern Barnet Lane is the scene of three planning conflicts which may not be obvious to the casual observer.

One application, for the demolition of a large, detached private property and its replacement by a block of nine flats at 78 Friern Barnet Lane and on the edge of Friary Park, has been withdrawn thanks to the vigilance and prompt action of neighbours; but it is reasonable to remain on the alert for another attempt to cash in on the popularity of the area at the cost of destroying the character of the vicinity.

The battle over the yellow fortress erected in the back-garden of No. 101 Friern Barnet Lane continues, as reported in previous issues of this newsletter. The owner keeps on submitting fresh applications for the retention of this atrocity; and the Planning Department of the local authority keeps on refusing them. In this unfamiliar situation your association enjoys the comfort of a ring-side seat from which warmly to applaud the Council...

The third area of dispute covers the back-gardens of 143, 145 and 147 Friern Barnet Lane which run at an angle into the northern flank of St. James's Close. Various attempts to erect one or two houses there have been turned down over a number of years. The last of these refusals, a couple or so years ago, recently had an appeal lodged against that decision. Two residents of the Close and your planning officer attended the Inspector's Hearing at the Town Hall in Hendon and, a week or two later, were very pleased to learn that this appeal had also been turned down.

In his report the Inspector quoted two of his predecessors and added: the proposal "would destroy the natural and spacious character of the locality to the significant detriment of the appearance of the area and residential



The leafy appearance of St. James's Close has been saved

amenity." "The government is committed to the protection of the natural environment. Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS 1) suggests that our surroundings have a direct impact upon the quality of life and the conservation of the natural environment brings social benefits to local communities."

So, now we all have to look out for signs of trees being felled surreptitiously which will alert us to the prospect of undesirable building plans to emerge shortly after. **YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED, AND WE ARE WITH YOU ALL THE WAY.**

KR

Subscriptions

For those who have not already done so, It is time to renew your subscriptions for the Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents Association for the year 2008. Please complete the form and send a cheque for £5, using the envelope provided. The cheque of £5 for membership, made out to "Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents Association" to:

Treasurer FB&WRA
112 Oakleigh Road North
N20 9EZ

No way to treat a listed building

Barnet Council has special responsibility for listed buildings. As they should know, the old Friern Barnet Town Hall, now known as "the Chambers" is a listed building, and as such, should be treasured with respect.

What is a private public toilet doing outside a listed building? It certainly doesn't add to the visual appearance of the building or enhance the appearance of the Friern Barnet junction. Why hasn't the battered gleaming pod been removed?

The toilet isn't used. A piece of hair placed across the doors, James Bond style, was undisturbed for over a week. So, how much does it cost to spend a penny in this edifice? Can you have a pee for a penny? Or, would you be visiting a place of luxury which would ask for a £1. There is no indication on its sign. After a "trial and error" session we discovered that the cost is indeed 20p.

Does 20p buy you luxury or does it buy you something basic? The truth is for 20p you don't even get a toilet seat these days. The inside of the pod is rather claustrophobic and closing the door after you have entered is a heart stopping moment. You wonder if it will ever open again, and if it didn't open, would the next visitor (should there ever be a next visitor) be the finder of a bag of bones wearing your clothes.

Having no aesthetic merit it should be removed from in front of the listed building. Perhaps it could join its "brother" (usage is free) that has been installed in the car park behind the Autumn House in North Finchley (in the hope that drinkers will use the free toilet instead of residents front doors and front gardens). Or, given that our councillors seem to have little regard for aesthetics, it could



The public toilet outside the old Friern Barnet Town Hall

be installed in front of Barnet Town Hall in Hendon (another fine looking building which if it isn't listed, should be).

In the old days when the building was used by the Council, there may have been a case for the current location of a public toilet. More pertinently when buses terminated and turned around just outside the old Town Hall, the bus crews obviously needed a nearby toilet.

Since those days (thanks to the monumental efforts of our Environment Officer, Dr Ollie Natelson), the exquisitely designed old Town Hall was made a listed building.

Perhaps the toilet could be moved so it stands outside the Orange Tree public house, which is across the road. If the toilet was made free, such a move would be favourably received by local residents, who have long complained about their properties being misused by the drinking classes.

HG

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS OF FRIERN BARNET AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Wed 25 June
Comic and Satirical Postcards
by Hugh Garnsworthy

All meetings take place at St John's Church Hall, next to Whetstone Police Station, Friern Barnet Lane. Starts 7:45 p.m.; cost £2 to non-members.

incognito theatre

Tuesday 15th July to
Saturday 19th July 2008

Saturday, Sunday, Monday

by Eduardo de Filippo

Performances start at 8 p.m.
Doors open at 7:30 pm.

Incognito Theatre is located in Holly Park Road (behind the Health Centre) Friern Barnet, London N11 3EB
Tickets 0791 287 5700

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