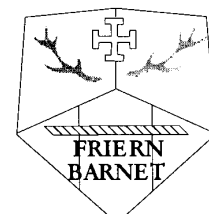


newsletter

Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents' Association

www.fbwra.co.uk



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Council agrees to install outdoor gym in Friary Park



In early March of this year, this image shows the outdoor gym in nearby Oakhill Park is equipped with modern highly robust apparatus

Outline plans have been announced that Barnet Council intend to install an outdoor gym in Friary Park. The use of the gym will be free and it will be self-organised. The site has been cleared but it is not known when building works will start.

As a society we have a tendency to have an unhealthy lifestyle, do not take enough exercise and many are overweight. The Council is taking some responsibility for public health. Although health and fitness is the responsibility of the individual, the Council can help by providing the means to help improve the

general fitness of the residents.

It is supposed that this gym will be similar to the one already installed by the Council in Oakhill Park, East Barnet—which has proven to be very popular (see above picture). The Friary Park outside gym will be located near to the skate park.

The equipment is made up of very sturdy metal devices which use the person's own body weight to provide resistance (there are no adjustable springs or weights for resistance).

A typical set of equipment would include

items like a cross rider, air walker, body twist, skier and arm bike. Although the fitness equipment is designed for those older than fourteen years, a visit to Oakhill Park shows that children like to play with the apparatus.

Every morning there are many power walkers to be seen striding out; the more elderly walk at a gentler pace but there are many more of them. Soon they will have another tool to help them get fitter and healthier.

An Internet search for the cost of the equipment and installing it shows that the sum involved is quite modest.

Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents' Association

AGM on Thursday xx June 2013 7:30 pm

at St John's Church Hall, Friern Barnet Road

All Members Welcome— The meeting will be followed by a talk by

Richard Selby on "Some Women I Have Married"

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 Finchley Society
- Friends of Friary Park
- Open Spaces Society

- The Friern Barnet & District Local History Society
- Coppetts Wood Conservationists
- The London Green Belt Council

Changing face of Whetstone— the closure and sale of our local police station

Residents of Whetstone have seen their local police station put up for sale. Latest reports suggest that it will be turned into a school. In one way this is news, since it means that the site will **not** be turned into another high rise block of apartments.

In the modern London, current policy for policing to be concentrated in a few big stations. Nearby stations Southgate, Golders Green, Muswell Hill and Winchmore Hill have gone. Even the rich and powerful folk of Hampstead could not 'save' their local station.

There are many good reasons for concentrating resources in one place. However, there are a few disadvantages. In the case of Friern Barnet and Whetstone residents, the nearest real station is at Colindale.

A visit to Colindale (next to the RAF museum) has some disadvantages. First there is the difficulty in parking. The small car park at the police station is always full up, which means that a visitor has to park on Graham Park Way (or in the Graham Park estate or pay in the RAF museum car park).

Another disadvantage is that there are long waiting times to see an officer. On



arrival, a visitor to the Colindale station has to make a mental note of the others in the waiting room to determine their position in the queue.

There is another police station in Barnet at the top of the hill but it is only open between noon and 8 pm and is not

heavily manned.

Another alternative is the Safer Neighbourhood Teams for Oakleigh and Totteridge. They are available via phone and email.

Friary Park News

The Friends of Friary Park have been active in monitoring the state of the Park and notify the Council of any issues which need attention.

There are a number of dead trees and branches which users consider to be safety concerns. The Council will be undertaking a survey of all the trees and will send a copy to the Friends Group once they have decided on the best course of action. This will include the dead trunk in the children's' play area.

The Friends have been campaigning for some time about the unsightly green box container which stands on the grass near the toilets. It seems that agreement has been reached with the café owners over storage issues and it is expected that the container will be removed soon.

Funding has been allocated to expand the skate park. The youngsters who use it were consulted and it is hoped that work to develop the site will begin shortly. It is expected to make it a more exciting area for the skateboarders to practice their skills.

The Finchley Society in conjunction with the Friends Group has embarked on a

project to tidy up the 'Peacemaker' statue and the area surrounding it. They have allocated a sum of money to produce a plaque to be sited inside its fence giving its history. It is also hoped to be able to fund the planting of rock plants to enhance its appearance. Many years ago the lower part of its spear disappeared and only the 'dagger' end survives. The possibility of replacing the missing part is under discussion, but it will need substantial funding to give it the same appearance as the original.

The Friends of Friary Park circular flowerbed which is situated by the main drive was planted with a Photinia tree surrounded by shrubs, some of which have been taken but are regularly replaced thanks to the efforts of Secretary Yvonne Ruge.

The Council also envisage converting one of the tennis courts to multi-use to include such sports as basketball, although it will still be marked out for tennis, but again this depends on the availability of funding. The possibility of applying for grants is being looked into.

One issue that has been causing great

concern to all Park users is the state of the toilets. They are badly maintained and are often in a disgusting condition. They have been monitored by the Friends on a daily basis, and the Council have been asked for an explanation for the poor quality and regularity of cleaning.

The Friends Group have held some litter-picking activities with the help of volunteers, although this is an ongoing problem. The depletion of Council funding to the Park has had an effect on the standard of maintenance which has fallen since the loss of Friary Park's own full-time park keeper.

Community Focus is a charity dedicated to using the arts to develop and transform communities through many activities. Currently based in the ArtsDepot it is expected to take up residence on the unused floors of Friary House in the summer. For further details of their work see their website communityfocus.co.uk

The Friends also purchased a Union Jack which now adorns the flagpole outside Friary House.

Friern Barnet Village Green Long Gone

Inspector turns down local residents' plea to formally make a village green of the land to the west of Friern Barnet library



In response to the wishes of the local community, your residents' association, together with the nearby Friern Village Residents' Association, made an application for the land to the west of Friern Barnet Library to be made into a formal village green.

The reasons for this are twofold. Firstly, a village green has greater protected status than, say, green belt land. Secondly, this piece of land has been used for community events, and is effectively a village green.

An application was made to Barnet Council, and the Planning Department opposed it. Their reasons for opposing the application were never made clear.

Consequently, the matter had to be decided by an "independent inspector".

Our hearts sank when we found out the inspector was to be the barrister, Mr William Webster, who commonly represents local councils when they oppose applications for village green.

The formal hearing was held at Barnet Council's offices in Hendon, both sides represented by barristers. The chairmen of both associations attended the hearing as did a number of local residents

The legal arguments hinged on whether the land, in the past, had been used "by right" or "as of right". This seemingly fine distinction made all the difference to the application.

Although our barrister, Mr Paul Wilmhurst, landed a number of heavy blows, unsurprisingly, the inspector recommended that the land should not be a village green.

The council did not have to accept the inspectors decision. Our proposal was put to the Council's Planning and Environment Committee who turned it down by 5 to 4.

In the course of finding out the origins of this piece of land, it was discovered that it was purchased by the old Friern Barnet & District Council as part of a road widening scheme for Friern Barnet Road.

Tesco have another go at controlled access

Shoppers accessing our local Tesco at Tesco from Colney Hatch Lane, will have noticed that they have installed another barrier at the entrance to the car park. This will be their third attempt at installing a controlling mechanism at this point. The other two were effectively destroyed by some vehicle or other knocking into them.

The purpose of the barrier is to prevent their customers taking the initiative and exiting their car park via Colney Hatch Lane slip road, especially on those days when the North Circular is so jammed, that using the regular exit can involve a thirty minute wait.

The congestion situation on the North Circular is as bad as ever, possibly worse. There is a long line of traffic heading east all day, every day. The major road works of recent years involving



"widening" and "enhanced" traffic light control has done nothing to alleviate the congestion problem.

Environmentalists and regular shoppers

at Tesco differ in their view as to whether Tesco should install a second exit which would lead onto Colney Hatch Lane.

Len Bull

It is with great regret that we have to announce that after a short illness Len Bull, our Deputy Chairman, passed away on Friday 28th March.

Len Bull was born September 28th, 1931 in Islington, North London. He was the middle of three children, the other two being sisters Janet and Dorothy. He was educated at Highgate School (London, N6) where he boarded in Cordell.

He met his wife, Julie, at a local tennis club in Barnet (the family had moved from Islington to Woodside Park), and married her in 1954, aged 21. They had four children and moved to 153 Friern Barnet Lane in 1960.

At boarding school he played for the First XI and continued to play for the Old Cholmeleians after school. Sport was always a feature of his life ... he played squash for many years before taking up golf, and in later life explored croquet, bowling (a 'natural' apparently!) and also Scottish Dancing to keep active. At one time he and his wife, Julie, owned a racehorse, although it was not a serious interest.

Len spent his entire working life in the family business, T H Bull & Sons Ltd., a company established in 1890 in Islington, by his grandfather, Thomas Henry Bull. The company was one of the London newspaper wholesalers, and one of very few to survive the fallout from the 1980s Wapping dispute between Rupert Murdoch's NewsCorp and the union SOGAT.

Having taken over as chairman and managing director when his father retired, he was chairman of the Fed-



eration of London Newspaper Wholesalers at this time. He was also chairman of Great News (London) Ltd., a newsagent chain of about 20 shops owned by T H Bull.

After pulling out of newspaper distribution, Len oversaw the merger of the magazine distribution business with two other wholesalers and then the sale of the trading company in 1997. He continued to work in the family property company and was still going to the office twice a week and chairing meetings up to his death on March 28th.

Len involved himself in local affairs. In recent years he made a significant contribution to the local community. His big recent success was sorting out the environment problem for residents of Ribblesdale Avenue.

A modest man, he said that he felt more nervous when having to act as Chairman of the Residents' Association AGM, than he did when addressing shareholders meetings.

He met old school friends from Highgate regularly at their monthly lunch in Highgate, and joined Probus, a local lunch club for retired businessmen. He was also a long-standing member of Hadley Wood Golf Club.

Len's other interests included theatre (he and Julie were founder members of Hampstead Theatre) and they went to the Ballet and Glynebourn regularly. He loved Scotland, and for a few years he and Julie owned a cottage on the Moidart peninsula to follow that passion.

His other most-frequented destination was the Caribbean, and Len and Julie became well-travelled visitors there. He tried his hand at sailing, both here and at the company's waterside cottage in Salcombe, South Devon, although it is true to say he never really took to it, preferring a more sedate canal boat through France with friends.

Oh yes...and his favourite summer tippie was a Pimm's, preferably round the pool at home on a hot summer's day!

He is survived by his wife Julie, his four children Simon, Jeremy, Serena and Oliver, as well as seven grandchildren: Kimberley, Emily, Toby, Victoria, Henry, Lucy and Matthew.