



barnetfirst

issue 57 March 2014

**Clean sweep
for Barnet's streets**

See page 5

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

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Contacting your council

Corporate Customer Services

tel: 020 8359 2000

email: first.contact@barnet.gov.uk

Contact us and we will identify the correct service or person you are looking for.

Street-based services

tel: 020 8359 4600

Covering refuse collection, holes in the road, abandoned vehicles and graffiti.

Parking enquiries

tel: 020 8359 7446

www.barnet.gov.uk/parking

Planning and licensing advice

tel: 020 8359 3000

Social Care Direct

tel: 020 8359 5000

Out of hours emergencies

tel: 020 8359 2000

Barnet First is published by Barnet Council's Communications Team. Please email us on: barnet.first@barnet.gov.uk

Or write to us

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North London Business Park, Oakleigh
Road South, London N11 1NP

Privacy

Barnet has revised its Privacy Statement. If you want to know more visit:

www.barnet.gov.uk/privacy

Leader's column



Earlier this year the council voted to move from a 'cabinet' process of decision making to a new broader committee system for the next five years.

I appreciate the minutiae of how a council runs itself is not the most gripping of subjects for many residents, but I think this is important. Whoever wins the next council election in May, and indeed the general election next year, will still have to save many millions of pounds from council budgets over the rest of the decade.

I think it is important that decisions about this are openly discussed and all alternatives publicly explored. A system of open committees does just that. I am determined that the council is open and transparent in dealing with the challenges we face and we are currently consulting on how we best involve residents in decision making. More details are available on the council's website.

We are also asking residents what information you want us to publish. Councils sit on a lot of local information and I'd like to see more of it made available to residents. We currently send details of local planning and licensing applications to all residents who sign up for e-mail updates. I would like to know what else you would like to see us publish. Details are also on the council website.

Yours

Richard Cornelius

news in brief



Dementia Cafe

The Alzheimer's Society, with support from the council, has launched new Art and Culture Cafes across Barnet to support people with dementia and their families.

The cafes are a chance to take part in a range of activities including pottery, poetry and photography.

They also offer those living with dementia and their carers emotional support and access to information in a relaxed environment. The overall aim of the cafes, which meet monthly, is to reduce isolation experienced by those affected by dementia.

The first cafe opened at Lyonsdown Hall in New Barnet in December, and this cafe meets on the first Monday of every month from 1 – 3pm. A second cafe, launched on 28 February, is held at the Eversfield Centre in Mill Hill, and takes place on the last Friday of every month from 10.30am – 12.30pm.

From 18 March a third cafe will meet every third Tuesday, 2-4pm, at the Quaker Meeting House in Hampstead Garden Suburb.

To find out more about the cafes, call
020 8937 7171 or visit:
www.alzheimers.org.uk/barnet



It's never too late to learn

Barnet and Southgate College, together with Barnet Libraries, is offering FREE computing courses for adult beginners.

These courses run for two hours a week over a period of five weeks. The courses are offered at Grahame Park library in Colindale and Hendon library. Classes are small and informal and are taught by friendly and professional tutors. The 'Switch on to IT' courses are ideal for beginners and beginners plus, teaching basic word processing skills, use of the internet for searching for information, using email or online shopping.

For courses at Hendon Library, please contact Nick Black on tel: 020 8275 5053.

For students who already have some internet experience, there is the option of doing more advanced word processing or job/volunteering searches. Once you have completed 'Switch on to IT', there is the option to progress on to the slightly more advanced 'Click on to the Net' internet course, which the tutor will discuss with you.

Course dates are available throughout the year.

For further information about courses at Grahame Park library, please contact Nicola Borthwick on 020 8266 4211. Or drop into the library on Friday mornings between 10am and 12noon. You can contact the library on tel: 020 8359 3930 to confirm 'drop-in' availability.



news in brief



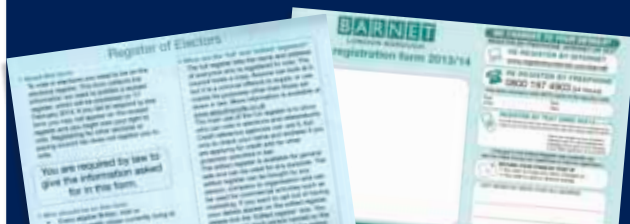
Don't lose your chance to vote!

As Local Government elections and European Parliamentary elections will be held on 22 May this year, it is important to make sure you are registered to vote.

Voter Registration Forms were sent to all homes in October last year and between 17 December and 14 February canvassers from the council visited households which had not completed a form.

Households are required by law to register everyone living in the property who is eligible to vote. If your name is not on the electoral register you cannot vote in any elections. In some cases your credit rating could be affected.

The last date to submit a registration application in time to vote in the upcoming elections is Tuesday 6 May and the deadline for a postal vote application is 5pm on 7 May.



For further information call 020 8359 5577
or visit www.barnet.gov.uk/elections



Are you eligible for a free education place?

If you are receiving benefit and have a child aged between two and four years old, you may be eligible for a free early years' education place (FEE).

Families must live in Barnet and be in receipt of one or more of a range of support payments to apply, including income support, Jobseeker's Allowance and income-related Employment and Support Allowance.

From September 2014, families who receive Working Tax Credit and are not eligible under the current scheme can take part in a new trial. If you have an income of less than £16,190, contact the council's Families and Young People information (FYi) team for details (see below).

Expansion of the FEE service is also under way, with 326 new places currently being created for two-year-olds.

For further information, visit www.barnet.gov.uk/free-childcare or call FYi on tel: 0800 389 8312.





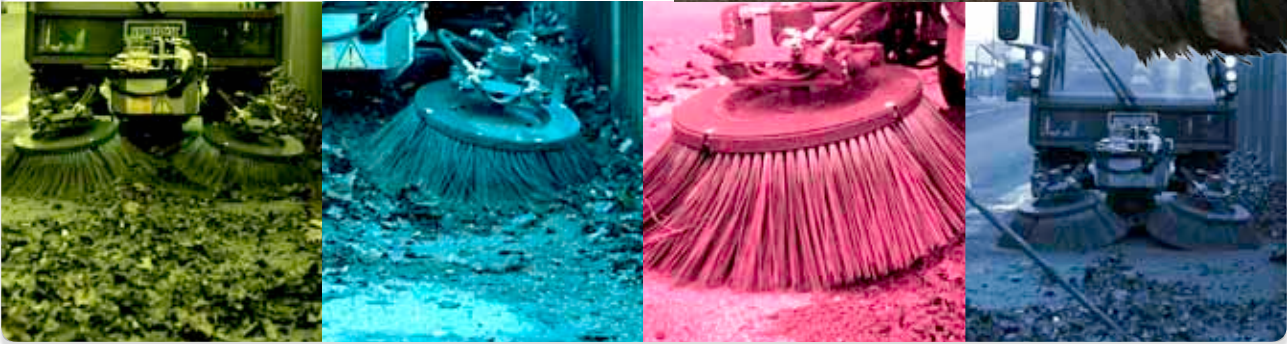
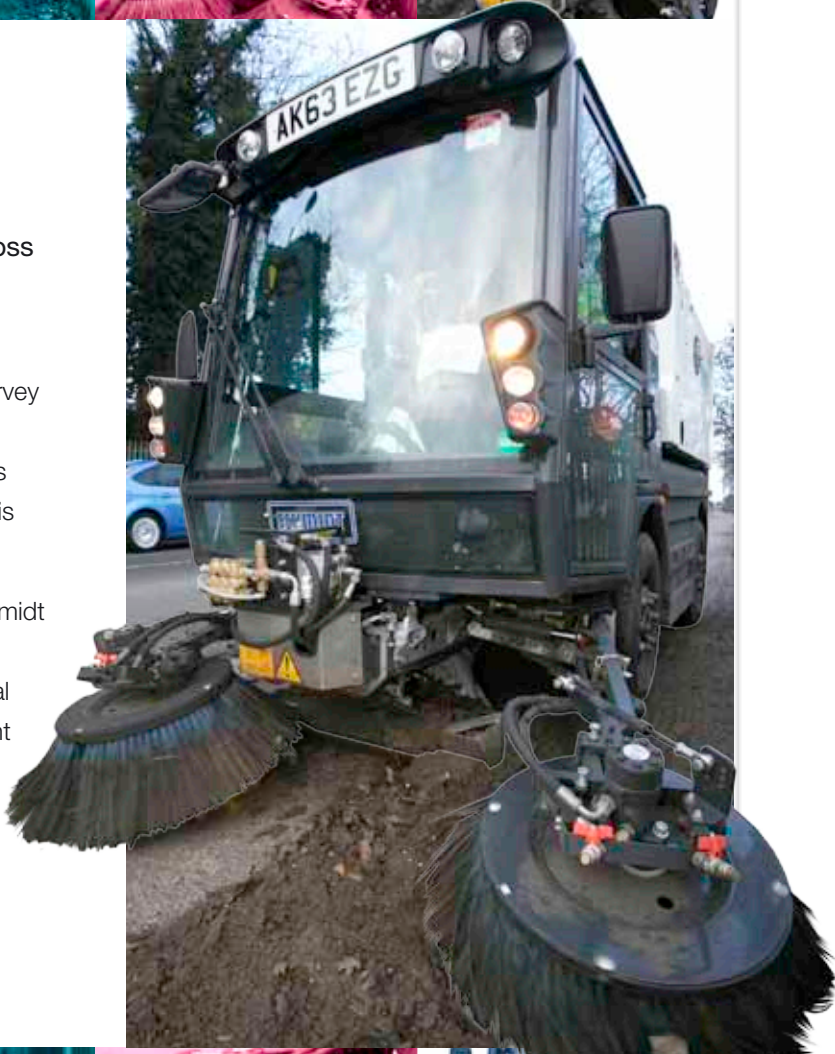
Spring clean for borough's streets

Barnet's streets are getting a spring clean thanks to a fleet of new street sweeping machines helping reduce litter and dirt across the town centres and residential roads.

The new machinery has been bought as a direct response to the 2012 Residents' Perception Survey which identified street cleanliness as a growing concern for residents. Major roads, priority roads and town centres will be swept on a weekly basis instead of the previous five-weekly schedule.

A key change is the introduction of 10 new 'Schmidt Swingo 200s' which will clean the town centres each morning before moving on to the residential road cleansing schedule. The council has bought 10 more pedestrian 'Applied 414 sweepers' to add to the existing fleet of 12 machines. These will also be used in town centres.

In addition the council has replaced three truck-mounted sweepers with newer machines.



We asked, you said, we did

The council is committed to listening to the views of local residents to help shape our services and our policies. This gives us an understanding of what is important to you so we can continue to make further improvements to the services we provide.

In the last issue we told you about our online 'engage' space, where we publish all our consultations and engagement activities. You can use the 'engage' space to find out how to take part in current

consultations that interest you, and how the council has acted on what you have told us.

The council has recently published how it is acting on residents' feedback from the following consultations:

- Saracens Event Day – Controlled Parking Zone consultation
- options for change in the system of governance
- fitness activities in parks
- sport and physical activities review (SPA)



For more information on what is planned, please go to 'We Asked, You Said, We Did' at engage.barnet.gov.uk



What you think of Barnet

According to the latest Residents' Perception Survey, overall satisfaction with Barnet Council has risen to an all-time high of 74 per cent. This is a rise of 11 per cent in the past

year and is now well above the London average. The council saw ratings for most of its services rise and remain above the London average.

The council commissions ORS Ltd, an independent market research company, to conduct the telephone survey twice a year, with around 1,600 residents from across Barnet. ORS is currently conducting the latest survey for 2014. If you do receive a telephone call from ORS Ltd, please take the time to have your say. Your views and opinions on your local area and the services we provide are important to us.



The full survey results can be found at: engage.barnet.gov.uk/consultation-team/residents-perception-survey-2013



Timebanking is coming to Barnet

A new approach to volunteering is being launched in Barnet this month. Timebanking gives people a way to 'earn' credits by offering practical help and support, which can then be 'spent' by drawing on the time and skills offered by other timebank members. For every hour you 'earn', you have one hour to 'spend'.

Time can be earned and spent by doing anything from helping a neighbour with shopping to showing someone how to bake a cake or sharing a skill like painting.

Across the country there are already around 300 timebanks which are easy to join and free of charge.

During March, leaflets, drop-in sessions and community talks will be available in Barnet to explain timebanking to anyone interested in taking part. Timebanking will initially be launched in East Finchley before being rolled out to other parts of the borough.

For details, or to register interest, visit www.timebanking.org, call Lex Karlin on mob: 07887 249 910, or email: barnet@timebanks.co.uk



Give your good intentions a **kick start**

With spring around the corner, now is the time to think about clearing out your old clutter and starting afresh.

It's also a good time to think about becoming a volunteer or setting up a charity.

If you want to start up a charity of your own, CommUNITY Barnet can offer a broad range of services and information, including advice on how to set up a charity, and support with business and project planning.

There is money available that could help you kick-start your venture and CommUNITY Barnet has a fundraising coaching service which can help you find it.

If you're more interested in helping your community by volunteering, CommUNITY Barnet's volunteer centre can help you find something interesting and worthwhile.

Volunteer Centre Barnet allows you to search for volunteer opportunities within Barnet and has a wide variety of causes, such as the environment, children and young people and older people, for you to choose from to support.

Get in touch with CommUNITY Barnet for help on tel: 020 8364 8400 or email: members@communitybarnet.org.uk



Want to feel FABulous in 2014?

Do you want to get fitter and healthier in 2014?

Fit and Active Barnet (or FAB for short) aims to increase levels of physical activity among residents, and improve opportunities to access sport and physical activity for all ages, abilities and disabilities.

The campaign will promote existing events and leisure activities already taking place in the borough, as well as a series of “one-off” activities.

The health and well-being benefits of physical activity are difficult to overstate: prolonging independence and life expectancy, preventing illness and enhancing mental health to name just a few.

Latest medical advice shows children and young people aged five to 16 should be active for at least 60 minutes every day, children under five need three hours activity daily, while adults and older adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderately intense activity a week (30 minutes a day, five times a week).

Look out for the FAB logo to find out what's happening and when!



What is available?

There are lots of ways to get active in Barnet, and it doesn't have to cost a fortune.

Why not try building activity into your daily routine? Walk up stairs instead of taking the escalator, or walk to school instead of driving. Or try walking the dog, dancing or gardening.

As the weather improves, take advantage of the borough's parks and open spaces.

Following the success of our outdoor gym at Oak Hill Park in East Barnet, the council is currently installing seven other outdoor gyms at the following locations: Barnet Playing Fields, Friary Park, Childs Hill Park, Hendon Park, Watling Park, Mill Hill Park and Edgwarebury Park.

Outdoor gyms provide workout stations which aim to improve different areas, such as strength, flexibility or toning. They are suitable for all ages and abilities and, best of all, they're free!

Look out for the volunteer activators (trained gym instructors) who'll be available to help you learn how to use the machines.

If you prefer running, walking or cycling, our Marked and Measured routes are for you. These are pre-plotted routes of 1km, 2.5km or 5km in or around a park – 10 are being installed in Barnet this year.

For more details, visit:
www.barnet.gov.uk/fab2014



Dr Andrew Howe

Will you take the DPH's challenge?



Barnet's Director of Public Health is challenging residents to become more physically active, or help family, friends or others in the community to do so.

Dr Andrew Howe and his public health team will offer helpful hints, tips and encouragement via a blog – dphchallenge.blogspot.co.uk, and on social media.

And they are keen to hear about residents' success stories via Twitter ([#DPHchallengeBarnet](https://twitter.com/DPHchallengeBarnet)) or email: publichealth@harrow.gov.uk. Prizes will be awarded to the three most inspiring stories, a community group and primary and secondary school. Winners will be invited to the first Public Health Awards Ceremony later this year to celebrate their success stories.

Help for older adults to get active

Small grants are available to charities or not-for-profit community organisations to provide physical activity sessions for older adults in Barnet.

Physical inactivity is one of the major risk factors for poor health and death amongst older people. Increased activity can improve physical and mental health, reduce early mortality and improve life expectancy.

Most grants will be from £250 – £750 although larger sums may be available.

Applicants will need to fulfill the eligibility criteria included in the application form.

Funds can be used for:

- one-off setting up costs to start up physical activity sessions
- expanding existing activity and/or trying it out in different locations.

The provider will be expected to find ways of sustaining the activities once funding ends.

Physical activities eligible for funding could include walks, dancing, movement to music, chair-bound aerobics sessions, swimming, cycling or gardening, and all projects should promote the benefits of physical activity.

For more information on physical activity grants visit: www.barnet.gov.uk/physicalactivitygrants

Find out more

The NHS Change for Life website provides information and advice about eating well, moving more and living longer: www.nhs.uk/change4life

Better (formerly Greenwich Leisure Limited) manages seven Barnet sports and leisure centres. Find out more at: www.better.org.uk



My Cricklewood

Danny Maher is a man with a vision. Whether it be transforming a former Victorian soup kitchen into a modern community centre, or finding the best ways to improve Cricklewood town centre, he has clear ideas about what he wants.

At the heart of his philosophy is a goal to give residents a sense of pride in their community, but also to hand responsibility back to them.

“You could call it a tough love approach,” he smiles.

Danny applies this same strategy in his day job as Chief Executive for Ashford Place, a local community centre which supports homeless people, as he does as Chairman of the Cricklewood Town Team.

“If a person comes and asks me to find them a house I send them up the road to the estate agents,” he says.

“Equally, if someone asks me what I’m going to do to improve the local area I ask them what are they going to do to help.”

Born and raised in County Limerick, Ireland, Danny came to London in 1975 looking for a job and stayed here. After working in mental health services for the NHS, he applied for a job as manager of what was then called Cricklewood Homeless Concern in 1996.

“It was still an old Victorian soup kitchen, where we fed people and not much else,” he recalls. “We tried to change little bits of the environment, but the major changes came in 2008 when we rebuilt the place.”

With the new building came a fresh outlook.

“Now we work on a 51 per cent-plus rule which means you are in charge. We will support you to get off the streets or deal with your alcohol or drug problems, but we are not going to do everything for you,” he says.

The centre now runs a range of activities including a community choir and bingo.

“Before, the old building was a ghetto. Now residents sing in the choir alongside someone living on the streets,” he says.

It was Danny’s desire to create a more positive environment that led to the formation of the Cricklewood Improvement Programme (since renamed Cricklewood Town Team) in 2008.

Danny sets out the challenges; “Cricklewood is at the meeting point of Barnet, Brent and Camden. We have three council leaders and had three sets of Safer Neighbourhood Teams. We were up against it.”

The five local residents’ associations came together as a single group with Danny at the helm.

In 2011 the group successfully bid for a £1.7m grant from the Mayor of London’s Outer London Fund. With match funding from Barnet and Brent Councils, the total fund rose to £2.2m.

Now the money has been put towards four successful summer and winter festivals, new granite pavements, cleaning up shop fronts, planting trees and restoring a large clock. Cricklewood now has one single police unit.

The space in front of B&Q is also being formed into a strip for farmers’ markets and community events.

Danny is modest about these achievements.

“If I didn’t do it who else would? I feel driven to keep changing the area,” he says.

Danny’s a well-known face and often gets stopped as he browses around the Broadway’s many shops, or pops into the Crown Moran Hotel for a pint.

“Although I’m sometimes challenged I find people are generally quite positive when you throw it back at them,” he says.

“Now we’ve raised awareness of what is possible in a local area. It could be the start of something, a positive move for the local area.”



Danny is Chief Executive of Ashford Place



Danny shows off the new granite paving slabs



The Broadway's shop fronts get a facelift



Danny's tough love approach works well



Ashford Place is now a community hub



Cricklewood green space will be transformed

Subletting crackdown success

The successful key amnesty campaign aimed at recovering illegally sublet council properties has already seen residents in genuine housing need given new homes.

The campaign, which was launched in October last year, saw 17 sets of keys handed back by tenants illegally subletting their homes; 15 Barnet Homes properties and the remainder managed by Registered Social Landlords.

The initiative was carried out by the council's Corporate Anti-Fraud Team in partnership with Barnet Homes' Tenancy Fraud Team in response to a change in the law.

Changes introduced through the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 mean people illegally subletting their property can now face a fine of up to £5,000, a prison sentence of up to two years, or both, and a criminal record.

The amnesty allowed people illegally subletting their council home to hand their keys back rather than face prosecution.

The cost of building 17 new homes would be in excess of £2.5million based on each property costing an average of £150,000 to construct.

One resident able to move into one of the newly recovered homes was mother-of-one Nabiye Uzun.

After receiving the keys to her new ground floor property Ms Uzun said: "I am very happy with the move as I have a medical condition and lost my job as a result. My previous property had stairs, which made getting about at home very difficult for me."

"I love the Friern Barnet area and my son is still near his school, so getting this property has worked out really well for me."

Residents wishing to report somebody who may be illegally subletting their home can still do so by emailing tenancyfraud@barnet.gov.uk, by visiting www.barnet.gov.uk or by calling the fraud hotline on tel: 020 8359 2007.

Denise Bracken, Barnet Homes' Fresh Start Officer, with Nabiye Uzun



The Valley Way of supporting carers

Providing a lifeline for adults with learning disabilities and their families.

Valley Way in the Dollis Valley Estate provides much needed respite for parents and carers of adults with learning disabilities.

The respite service, which is one of six specialist services provided by Your Choice Barnet, offers a six-bedroom respite centre for adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities, autism and challenging behaviour.

The service gives families and carers a chance to take a break from their caring responsibilities overnight, for a weekend or even for several weeks, and provides each person with an individualised service specifically tailored to meet their needs.

Valley Way is focused on enjoyment, offering new experiences and activities and encouraging independence wherever possible.

Christine McKee, whose daughter Rebecca is a frequent guest at Valley Way, said: "Going to Valley Way is a little holiday for Rebecca and she loves it. It also gives our family a bit of a break and time to do the things other people take for granted, like shopping or going to the hairdressers."

The specialist care provided by Valley Way has led to referrals of residents from other London boroughs as people take more control over how money for their care is spent using personal budgets.

Valley Way is run by the council's Local Authority Trading Company, Your Choice Barnet (YCB).

YCB offers specialist care and support to adults with a wide range of learning and physical disabilities.

It helps people to live their lives as they choose, giving them the support they need to become as independent as possible.

YCB also offers a number of other specialist services including the Rosa Morison Centre which provides day services to adults with profound and multiple learning and physical disabilities; and Flower Lane, a day service providing support to people within a wide range of the autism spectrum.

To find out more about what Valley Way offers, please call Leanne Graham, Service Manager, on tel: 020 8441 6515 or email: valleyrespite@yourchoicebarnet.org



For further information on any of the services offered by Your Choice Barnet visit www.yourchoicebarnet.org



Contact your councillors

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or write to us: Members' Room,
Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs,
Hendon NW4 4BG

what's on



Photography exhibitions at the RAF Museum

The Royal Air Force Museum is staging two free exhibitions of striking photography.



© English Heritage Aerofilms Collection

The annual RAF Photographer of the Year showcase features 80 images taken by serving service and civilian personnel that reveal life behind the scenes in the RAF.

It is open daily from 10am to 6pm (last entry 5.30pm), until 28 April 2014, in the Museum's Milestones of Flight gallery.

The multi-media display 'Britain From Above' includes images from the unique aerial archive of Aerofilms, a short film 'Across England in an Aeroplane' – about the company's work – and a stereoscopic viewer through which visitors can study aerial photography. Also open daily from 10am to 6pm (last entry 5.30pm), until 31 March 2015.

Admission to the RAF Museum, in Grahame Park Way, NW9 5LL, is free. There is a parking charge: £2.50 (up to 3 hours)/£3.50 (up to 6 hours).

For more information, visit:
www.rafmuseum.org.uk/london
 or call 020 8205 2266



North Finchley Feast

Date: last Saturday of every month, 10am – 4pm

Venue: Lodge Lane car park, North Finchley, N12 8JG

This new monthly market offers a wide range of unique, high quality food products for shoppers to try and buy. For further information email: northfinchleyfeast@mynorthfinchley.co.uk

Ruby Wax: Sane New World

Date: Saturday 29 March, 8pm

Venue: artsdepot, £19.50/£17.50/£15 concession, ages 16 and over.

The comedian and mental health campaigner explains how we can rewire our thinking to find calm in a frenetic world.

Roundhouse Circusfest: Clockwork

Date: Wednesday 16 April, 7.30pm

Venue: artsdepot, £15/£12 students

A gravity-defying performance by Swedish company, Sisters, featuring Chinese poles, slack rope and acrobatics.

artsdepot bookings: 020 8369 5454
www.artsdepot.co.uk

Staying Safe Online – workshop for over-55s

Date: Monday 31 March, 10.30am – 12noon

Venue: Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley, N2 8LT

iPad workshop for over-55s

Date: Wednesday 2 April, 10.30am – 12noon

Venue: St Andrew's CE Primary School, The Green, Totteridge, N20 8NX

Booking essential for both these workshops, tel: 020 8432 1420

Working hours

Tony Lewis is one of the council's Youth Offending Team Officers and joined the council in 2009

What does your job involve?

The Youth Offending Team is here to help prevent young people from offending or re-offending. The majority of my work is around assessing and supervising young offenders aged between 10 and 17-years-old to help make sure they stay on track, meet their required personal targets and make positive changes.

What does a typical day involve for you?

Normally it would involve completing assessments of young people, preparing reports for the courts and meeting one to one with young offenders to help them work on addressing their offending behaviour.

Each young person under our supervision has various conditions imposed upon them by the court for their offences, such as a curfew, and I will make sure they are complying with those requirements or, if necessary, get in touch with other specialist services for extra support.

In what ways is the team working to help prevent young people from re-offending?

We use all sorts of methods. If a young person is not complying with the conditions imposed on them we can ask the courts to issue a summons for example.

Perhaps more importantly, though, is the one to one work we do to strike up a rapport with the young person and help them address their behaviour.

This could mean making sure they are in education, training or employment, seeking help for alcohol, drug or mental health problems or undertaking anger management work. We also look to advise parents on parenting skills if they are experiencing problems with their child.

What other organisations do you work with?

The nature of our work means we are always working closely with the probation service, police, schools, colleagues in Family Services, mental health workers and drug and alcohol services.

What's the most rewarding aspect of your work?

It has to be seeing a young person making a positive change, however big or small it might be.

Preventing re-offending is a key aspect, but also witnessing a young person develop the confidence to get back into education, motivate themselves to stop using drugs, or try out a new positive activity for the first time is immensely rewarding.

A number of our young people have a significant range of risk factors and welfare needs and a reduction in any of these is always positive. Our work is paying off - the number of young people coming into contact with the justice system for the first time is decreasing, and at the moment almost 86 per cent are in some form of education, training or employment.

To find out more visit:

www.barnet.gov.uk/youthoffending

