

Goldfinger: it's a first for Robin in Islington in Bloom Awards



Islington lad, national hero: Dickie Bull wins national award for 'lifetime contribution'

News came in just before the last *Barnsbury News* went to print of former caretaker Dickie Bull's well-deserved scoop in the national **Housing Heroes Awards**.

Dickie's 43 years of unbroken service to Barnsbury HA tenants, many of you also his neighbours, saw him walk off with the award for **tenant lifetime contribution** in the competition run by England's Chartered Institute of Housing.

It's a fitting tribute to a man whose team of caretakers got a 97% satisfaction rating in our tenants' survey last year. Dickie also single-handedly ran the emergency repairs service until his retirement in March, aged 73.

Dickie is a local lad and life-long Islington resident. He was born in Drayton Park and has been a BHA tenant since 1977. Dickie lives on Morland Mews with wife Jean, who worked for us for 38 years.

Robin takes gold!

This lush balcony, nurtured by Morland Mews artist Robin Don, deservedly won gold for best container garden in the *Islington in Bloom Awards* in October.

Robin, pictured, was photographed showing how he managed to keep his coffee mornings going during lockdown. In spring we'll be launching our own competition for those of you with green (or gold) fingers. Look out for details in *Barnsbury News* early next year.

PICTURE CREDIT: FRANCK LEBOUIC-MAZE

Can we call you?

Do we have your phone number? If you have changed your phone number recently please let us know in case we need to get in touch. If we don't have your email address, that too may prove very helpful. Call ☎ 020 7704 2324 or email ✉ info@barnsbury.org

Football pitch at top site closed for lockdown

We have closed the football pitch and it will stay closed until the lockdown is lifted. We are however letting Thornhill Primary use the pitch for PE lessons. We are also keeping the play area on the top site open.

Parking/storage arrears

At the last resident panel meeting we discussed the problem of tenants who owe us rent for their storage and/or parking spaces. The panel supported our taking a much tougher stance so we will be doubling our efforts to collect arrears in the coming weeks.

Morland Mews news

Garage conversions

We will on 18 November hold the first meeting with residents to appoint a tenant steering committee to oversee consultation with residents over the garage conversion works.

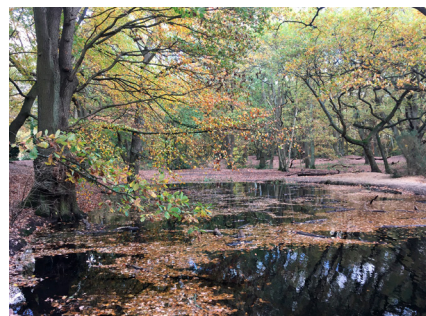
Tenants & Residents Association members have been invited along with other residents who have told us they are interested in taking part. If we haven't invited you and you would like to be involved, contact Dean. We'll make sure all of you know meeting outcomes and topics, and when meetings take place (all are online for now).

Rubbish and recycling

Islington council is reviewing our planning bid for better rubbish and recycling services on the estate. One that can go ahead now is converting a garage into a bespoke recycling facility. All going to plan, this will be installed in December.

And here's some good news: first, how very wonderful you are!

We were blown away by the goodwill and kindness towards neighbours shown by so many of you in the earlier lockdown. We hope more of you will feel able to help out if needed over the next few months. Even little gestures can make others feel less lonely.



Enjoy the autumn sights

If you aren't able to go for long walks, pop over to **Thornhill Gardens**, where Janice and other volunteers toiled over spring and summer to gorgeous effect.

Hampstead Heath, where Jeanetta from Gissing Walk took these stunning pictures, may be too far for now, with non-essential travel banned. So see page 5 for another lovely local alternative.

Time to dust down the Barnsbury spirit of goodwill again

This is our second chance to stop the virus circulating. Please stick to the rules. They are there to save lives. And breaking them could lead to a very stiff fine

A very worrying 92.8% of north Londoners, most from Islington, broke social distancing rules during the first lockdown.

These findings, published in September, followed research by London Metropolitan University. We hope that won't be the case this time. So here's a refresher.

The rules

- * No indoor meetings with any people not from your own household, unless it is the one other adult in your 'bubble'.
- * Keep a 2m distance from anyone from another home.
- * You are encouraged to go out to exercise, with others from your own home or with one other adult from another household, at a safe distance.
- * You should otherwise only go out for essential journeys.
- * Wear a face covering in public.
- * Wash your hands regularly, and for at least 20 seconds.

If you or anyone else in your home (or your support bubble) has Covid-19 symptoms or has been told to self isolate you must stay at home. You should only leave home if you have been told to get a test. To book a test call ☎ 119 or use the NHS app.

Household bubbles

Bubbles are a welcome change from the first lockdown but come with rules. Make sure you understand them. Bubbles can only be between the same two households.

Support bubble

One household can form a support bubble with one other adult, if the adult lives alone *

Childcare bubble

The lets you share child care with one other adult living on their own, for a child of 13 or younger. It is an informal deal - no one gets paid *

* **Rules on support bubbles:** www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household and www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-high#childcare

Our services over lockdown

Estate caretaking

To make sure all our estates stay in good order, caretaker Spencer will be staying on normal duty during lockdown.

Our offices

Our offices are still closed and staff are working from other sites, mainly their home. You can contact us in working hours by phone or email.

How to contact us

Emails sent to info@barnsbury.org are checked throughout the day and sent on to the best person to deal with the matter.

Phone between **9.30am-1pm** and **2-5.30pm** and one of us will pick up your call. We will transfer your call or take a message if the member of our team picking up the phone cannot deal with your query. ☎ 020 7704 2324

NEWS IN BRIEF

Food, vouchers and one-off grants to help you through hard times

With London under lockdown again, unemployment rising and some of you again furloughed, we know finances are strained.

But between us, the council, government grants and charities like the Cripplegate Foundation and Pillion Trust Foodbank, there are ways to help you get through the next few months.

See page 7 for some of the options. If nothing seems to fit your situation and you are struggling, give us a call and we'll do our best to help.

Antisocial behaviour: did our response help?

We've sent out a survey to all of you who in the last couple of years have made a complaint to us about antisocial behaviour in or around your neighbourhood.

Getting your homes shipshape for winter to avoid call-outs

We're doing our best to get all your homes winter-ready and catch up with the repairs backlog.

Our contractors are calling on those of you who need a repair and doing gas and electrical safety checks where needed.

They are wearing full PPE and keeping a safe distance for your safety and their own.

Winter repairs leaflet

Please read the winter repairs leaflet we distributed to all homes. We don't want any of you left without power, coping with a flood or burst pipe or finding the heating won't work. It's stressful for you and emergency call-outs run some risk of spreading Covid-19.

Don't forget to tell us if you haven't had your boiler checked since the start of 2020. This is an extremely important inspection and it has to be done every year for your own safety.



To report a repair

To report a repair or tell us if you have not had the gas appliances in your home checked this year, call us on ☎ 020 7704 2324 or log your repair using our website www.barnsbury.org

To report an emergency out of hours

For emergencies only when our staff are off duty: Mon-Thurs 5:30pm to 9:30am ☎ 0772 530 2389 Weekends, 5:30pm on Friday to 9:30am on Monday ☎ 0300 131 7300



Thornhill Gardens: an easy walk and lovely destination

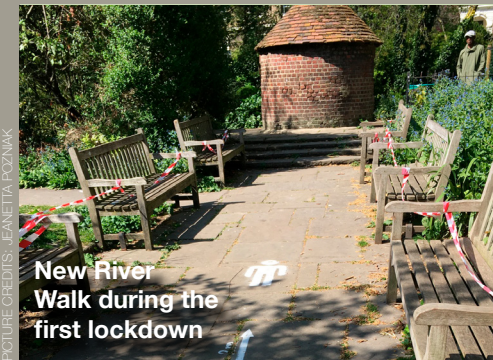
Thornhill Gardens now has its autumn colours and magnificent bare trees, writes Janice, and by spring it will be absolutely glorious as we have planted about £300 worth of bulbs.

One of our new

volunteers ran a street sale in front of her house, raising a magnificent £450, which we've spent on the gardens.

Another who loves being in the garden but is unable to do hands-on work, has given £200 for our new

noticeboard. Look out for regular information and updates posted there. Please come along to relax and enjoy the space. With lockdown back upon us, the beautiful garden can refresh and delight.



New River Walk: Islington's secret

It's not a natural river, nor is it new, but it is a lovely walk full of bridges, ponds and trees. The New River was built 400 years ago by labourers paid by Sir Hugh Myddleton, to carry water into London from the Lea Valley. You can find one

entrance by the Myddleton Arms in Canonbury Road, opposite Canonbury Gardens. It emerges on St Paul's Road. To find out more and maybe plot a longer walk, see www.londongardenstrust.org/features/NewRiver.htm

Voice of wisdom: tenants officially back on board

Janice Walsh and Chris Bell are now officially members of our board of management. Janice, a retired teacher and *Barnsbury News* regular, was one of our very first tenants. Chris works in housing for a north London council.

In their own words

In the February issue of *Barnsbury News* we will ask Janice and Christ to say, in their own words, why their being on our board makes for better decisions for all of you.

Thornhill Road now safer for children

If you haven't already noticed, Thornhill Road is now a 'school street', open only to cyclists and pedestrians during school opening and closing times.

This temporary road block is to make the road safer for children and cut pollution and congestion. It's an experiment by the council, which plans to review how well it's working after the first 18 months.

Not all vehicles are banned. If you live or work on Thornhill Road you can register for a School Street permit. Also exempt are Blue Badge holders.

Here we go again!

Our special tree in the garden has blossomed, grown green then red and now has bare boughs. And we're in lockdown again! **Dot Gibson** reports

Since we Highbury View residents are mainly older people, we are being especially careful, but I am sure we are smiling at each other underneath the mask!

Don't be a stranger

One result of the pandemic is we have had no chance to properly meet our new neighbours. So let's take this opportunity to say a big hello to all of them and explain what we'd do in normal times.

We would meet to elect the chair, secretary and treasurer of our residents' association.

We have morning coffee on Tuesdays and afternoon tea on Thursdays in the bungalow and we celebrate our birthdays.

We also have our annual party in our lovely garden with lots of food, drink and music for all residents and their families.

We have at least one spring/summer outing, a Christmas party and a visit to a pantomime.

We are guests at the friendly 'Big Sunday Lunch' put on by the residents of Highbury Mews and also at their Christmas event, both with great food, drink and music.

Some of us came to Highbury View when we were comparatively young pensioners (in our 70s!) and now we are older and keen to properly meet the new young pensioners who have moved in.

We're sure you will be able to help us all spread our wings and suggest new things to do.

Already there are thoughts of an outdoor table tennis table and/or exercise equipment. We also want to encourage the young front-line workers living here to take part and get to know us better.

So lots to look forward to and news of the vaccine means we are moving nearer to the light at the end of the tunnel and our special tree will blossom again. In the meantime, take care.

SHARE YOUR GOOD NEWS

In grim times we all need a spot of cheering news. Let us know your own bright spots to help us lighten up *Barnsbury News*. Maybe someone in your home has passed a tough exam (or more than ones) or you've finally passed your driving test or welcomed a new member to your family (pets or children!). No matter how trivial, we'd love to hear from you! Contact dean@barnsbury.org

LOCAL HISTORY

How Barnsbury's roads got named

In the late 1960s Islington Council had thought the Barnsbury Street buildings so dilapidated they were ready to pull them down, writes **Janice Walsh**. Local architect Ken Pring, with friends and associates, fought to keep them and the germ of an idea for Barnsbury Housing Association began

The area behind Barnsbury Street, on Lofting Road, was a municipal dump so Pring & Associates were able to restore much of Barnsbury Street. They also sent plans to the council to grow 'social properties', now our homes.

The new Lofting Road homes won a government award for good housing in 1977. They were judged 'possibly the most important housing development of the 1970s'. But Ken and his associates now had to name their new streets.

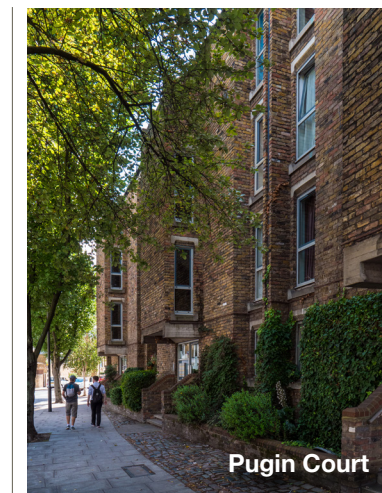
Some were already named. **Lofting Road** had been named after Dutch merchant John Lofting, born around 1695. After settling in London he manufactured fire-engines but then turned to making thimbles with Prince Rupert brass. It earned him a fortune and made for many new jobs in Barnsbury. **Liverpool Road**, once a drove road, was named after Robert Banks Jenkinson 1770-1828, prime minister from 1812-1827 and the Earl of Liverpool.

Milner Square had been named after the ground landlord of the square - Thomas Milner Gibson. Of course the adjoining square was Gibson Square. Fancy that!



George [Morland] was a precocious and fluent worker and produced a huge amount of work, in spite of leading a dissolute life and often being drunk, in hiding from his creditors, or in prison.

The Oxford Dictionary of Art and Artists (Oxford University Press)



And so to the new names.

Morland Mews The Lofting Road estate owes its name to celebrated artist George Morland who 'Imbided deeply of alcoholic refreshments'. George generally lived in inns around rural Islington. Born in 1763, he died in 1804.

Pugin Court Named after famous Gothic revivalist Augustus Pugin, a French immigrant architect and right-hand man to John Nash. His even more famous son of the same name worked with local architect Sir Charles Barry, who designed Cloudesley Church and the Palace of Westminster. Pugin was an exceptional designer and his designs have long been repeated and revered, notably by the Arts and Crafts movement.

Gissing Walk Named after author George Gissing, born in the USA in 1857. Gissing later moved to Islington where he wrote the first of 14 novels describing the degradation caused by poverty. *New Grub Street* was set in Clerkenwell. A close friend of author HG Wells, he died in 1903.



FREE ADVICE: DO YOU QUALIFY FOR THE WARM HOMES DISCOUNT?

Have you tried calling **Green Doctors** for **free help and advice** that could cut your power bills but still keep your home warm and cosy in winter?

Green Doctors can tell you if you qualify for the **warm homes discount**, which could save you up to **£140 a year**. They can also help you apply for this government discount.

To book a time to talk to Green Doctors, at absolutely no cost to you, in person or over the phone, call ☎ 0300 365 003 or email ✉ greendoctorsLDN@groundwork.org.uk

SOLACE IN ISLINGTON DOMESTIC ABUSE: NEED HELP NOW?

CALL THE LONDON FREEPHONE ☎ **0808 802 5565**

Reports of domestic abuse have risen by over 66% this year. If you need help because of domestic abuse, contact **Solace in Islington** for free, confidential support. **Solace helps men and women affected by domestic abuse.**

Call ☎ 020 3795 5070 or email advocacy@solacewomensaid.org, Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm.

IF YOU ARE IN DANGER NOW CALL THE POLICE ☎ **999**

New to the staff team - Michael Bunker



Michael Bunker, pictured, has joined us as our new asset manager. Michael is responsible for making sure our homes and estates are well maintained and that our staff and contractors work to the highest standards. Michael is now also in charge of the work we are planning to make your homes cheaper to heat by improving their energy efficiency.

Taking Barnsbury HA one tiny step closer to zero-carbon homes

A recent calculation by home energy experts Enhabit has estimated that your homes and our services send around 625 tonnes of greenhouse gases into the air every year. And 97% of that comes from your homes

By 2030 all our homes will have to be much more energy efficient than they are now to meet a tough new government standard.

In for the long haul

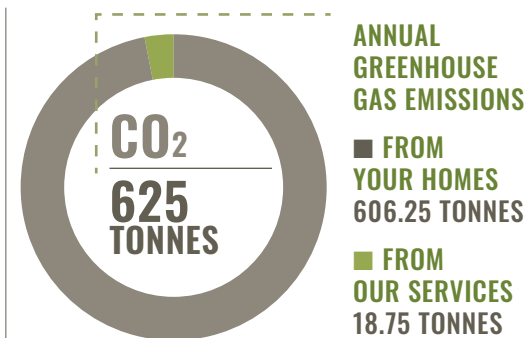
Over time we want to bring all of your homes up to a higher standard of energy efficiency, making them more liveable and more affordable to heat. But it won't be a quick fix.

Most people would probably also do the hardest work last. But that would mean leaving those of you in the hardest homes to heat paying the highest bills for longer.

So that's where we plan to start. And if we can make our Barnsbury Street homes models of energy efficiency then your other homes will be a walk in the park.

We will shortly start work on an empty flat in Barnsbury Street to transform it into a warm, cosy and quiet home. You will all be able to visit it to see the proof yourself.

Helping us with this work are two of the UK's leading home energy specialists, Sarah Wigglesworth Architects and consultants Enhabit.



Enhabit has given us a very clear idea of the scale of work needed to all your homes and the likely costs. If we move quickly we may qualify for government grants to help cover our costs.

It sounds good on paper but real life is more complex. For some of you it will mean some or even a lot of disruption. And of course we have the pandemic.

We will shortly begin talks with those of you living on Barnsbury Street to talk through our ideas and discuss the challenges of making your homes energy efficient. All things going to plan, work should start in spring.

Fire safety works and clearing your gutters

Over the next few weeks you may find workers outside your building clearing leaves and other debris from the **gutters and drains** to avoid problems with rain water.

Work at Highbury View to bring all flats up to the **highest fire safety standard** is now underway. New or upgraded front doors will offer the best protection against smoke and flames, and carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are being fitted throughout.

A reminder to all not to store items or leave rubbish in **shared areas** in your building. If a fire broke out this could be deadly.

HOW AND WHERE TO GET HELP

Track and trace payment if you have to self-isolate

If you have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or you have tested positive for Covid-19 you may qualify for a one-off £500 grant. It comes with conditions, like having a low income and being unable to work at home. The grant scheme is run locally by Islington Council.

Apply via the council's website at www.islington.gov.uk or, if you find this difficult, call **We Are Islington** ☎ 020 7527 8222

Claiming extreme hardship support

The council may be able to help if:
*you're on a low income and struggling financially
*you need a vital household item
*a housing benefit or income cut is making it hard to pay your rent.

To apply, email the RSS team at the council (ResidentSupportTeam@islington.gov.uk) or contact our housing manager Felicity.

Crisis grant

Levels of violent and controlling behaviour were horrifying even before the first lockdown. It then got worse. Please get help if you need it. See above for details of *Solace in Islington*.

If you're confused by the many different possible options, and you certainly won't be alone, or nothing seems to fit your circumstances but you're struggling to get by, please get in touch with housing manager Felicity for advice or a friendly steer in the right direction. ✉ felicity@barnsbury.org | ☎ 020 7704 2324 | www.barnsbury.org

If you have to leave home for your safety, Islington Council may be able to help with a **crisis payment for vital items for any children** with you. Get in touch with Felicity for details.

Funding pots set up by Barnsbury HA

BHA tenant hardship fund if the pandemic has cut your income

We set up a new fund to help any of you struggling with costs due to Covid-19. It could help pay for fuel bills, white goods (like a fridge or cooker if yours has broken) or an essential piece of furniture.

BHA bursary award scheme for further education or training

Our bursary award scheme can help you with the cost of gaining new skills that could lead to your getting a well paid and rewarding job. The bursary can be used to cover the cost of school, college or university fees, books needed for courses, for other learning materials, and educational trips.

Struggling to pay your rent or now in arrears?

If you are in arrears or struggling to pay your rent, please get in touch with Felicity. We can offer advice on welfare support and maybe able to help in other ways. Please don't ignore the problem as it will likely get worse.

Food and hygiene items from Pillion Trust Foodbank

A lot of you have now been helped by the Pillion Trust Foodbank, the last still running in Islington. So we're pleased to have been able to help it in return, with a £500 donation.

The foodbank stocks food and hygiene items for anyone who needs them. You can find it at the Ringcross Centre on Lough Road, open Monday to Friday, from 12 noon to 4pm.

- *You can call in for food and hygiene items twice a week, but not two days running.
- *You are not limited to one parcel or pre-packed bag.
- *No referral needed but if it's your first visit please bring proof you live in Islington.



A Morland Mews tenant who ripped off fire-safe doors without our consent, then dumped them on the estate, can expect our bill for getting the doors refitted to the flat.

ABOUT BARNSBURY *News*

Editor: Dean McGlynn

To contact us or contribute write to 16b Cloudesley Street, N1 OHU, email info@barnsbury.org or call ☎ 020 7704 2324. We have limited space so may edit contributions. We will not print anything cruel, libellous or defamatory.

Your contributions welcome

If you or a group of you would like to write an opinion piece or share good news (or bad!) or just ask what others think, send it in. We'd also love your photos or pictures. Please send them to Dean formatted as large jpg files.

* SEPT ISSUE SUDOKU

9	8	6	2	5	7	1	3	4
2	5	4	8	1	3	9	7	6
1	7	3	9	6	4	5	8	2
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REVEAL YOUR POETIC SIDE - THEN STRIDE AWAY WITH £20



We're pleased to declare Dean of Barnsbury Street winner of the fiendishly tough quiz by Janice in the last *Barnsbury News*. Definitely no relation to dean@barnsbury.org!

[I resent the insinuation! - Ed]

Tenant board member Janice Walsh found this poem by 18th century satirist William Hone that suggests he had a softer spot for Barnsbury than he did for British politicians at the time.

From William Hone's Table Book, written around 1827

“You who are anxious for a country seat,
Pure air, green meadows
and suburban views,
Rooms snug and light
not over large but neat.
And gardens water'd
with refreshing dews,
May find a spot adapted
to your taste,
Near Barnsbury Park,
or rather Barnsbury Town
Where everything looks
elegant and chaste
And wealth reposes
on a bed of down.

It reminded us of a 1977 poem in then highly esteemed publication *News of the Mews*, crafted by Morland Mews tenant Byron Lord, whom some of you might know. We're sure more of you have a talent for iambic pentameter or just ribald limericks. **Send in your poems to dean@barnsbury.org and we'll reward the best with the usual Amazon voucher.**

For your inspiration, a sample from Byron Lord's masterpiece

“There was a room full of people,
bodies heaving about
A voice from the back says his
boiler's gone out
Someone's heating's gone off,
another's toilet won't flush
And it looks the mews could do
with a brush.



SUDOKU

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		7					1	
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To solve the puzzle, each 3x by 3x box and each column going across and down must have all the numbers 1 to 9, with no number used twice. The sum total of each box = 45.

Answers to this sudoku will be given in the next issue of *Barnsbury News*.

Are you grieving, isolated or lonely?

This year has been hard. Many of you have been isolated, unwell and some are grieving.

Support is available. **We Are Islington** is run by the council with local charities. If it cannot help you it will direct you to an agency it thinks suitable.

If you are 50 or older, **Age UK** may also offer you support.

We Are Islington
☎ 020 7527 8222

Age UK Islington
☎ 020 7281 6018

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