



# Blood service seeks donors

The terrorist attack on the London Underground last July tested the emergency plans of the National Blood Service (NBS) to the full. Not only was there a sudden urgent demand for blood but, with traffic at a standstill, special measures had to be taken to transport supplies to the nine hospitals caring for the bomb victims.

Staff at the West End donor centre had to walk to work, where they were kept on their feet by the many donors who came through the doors that day. Although stocks were good, donors were encouraged to keep future appointments in order to replenish and replace the blood used following the attack.

On an average Thursday, the NBS helpline receives up to 3,500 calls. On 7 July the NBS received its highest ever call-rate of over 10,000.

In addition to the needs of the bomb casualties, normal

services to all other hospital patients had to be maintained. It was through the fantastic support of donors that the National Blood Service was able to meet the demands placed on it at that terrible time.

If you would like to give blood, a mobile unit of the NBS will be parked outside East Finchley tube station on Friday 24 March. It will be open from 1.15pm to 4pm and from 5.15pm to 7.30pm. Appointments are not necessary, but if you wish to make one, please ring 04587 711 711.



Helping hands: Barnet Carers Centre Mental Health Carers Support and Outreach Officer, Paulina Filippou, right, provides support to carer Pamela Wells, left, at the Centre.

# Caring for the carers

By Paulina Filippou

Do you provide free help and support to a friend, relative or neighbour who could not manage otherwise because they are ill, have deteriorating health, or live with a disability or addiction?

If so, did you know that you now have rights and entitlement backed by legislation and that a local organisation can give you support?

Since 1996, Barnet Carers Centre, based in Ballards Lane, North Finchley, has been providing an increasing range of services to meet the needs of many people who are often isolated, socially excluded, suffering financial hardship and experiencing health difficulties themselves.

### Hidden carers

Three in five people will, at some time, be carers. Yet many people do not consider themselves as "carers" and so do not

access services that are available to them. The Centre's Primary Care Development Officer works with GPs and other health professionals to identify 'hidden' carers and offer them support. Referrals can be taken directly from carers themselves and also from professionals in statutory and voluntary organisations.

Barnet Carers Centre helps each of the 3,000 carers currently on its database by providing advice and information through drop-in sessions and a telephone helpline, and emotional support through one-to-one counselling and carer support groups.

It offers welfare benefits sur-

geries to check carers' benefit entitlements, relaxation days and stressbuster evenings, training and information sessions, respite breaks and day trips, other social groups and a Carers' Nurse, who carries out home visits.

The Centre also offers specialist services aimed at mental health carers, multicultural carers, older carers and carers of older people, learning disabilities carers as well as young carers and siblings.

For more information, contact the Carer Support Team at Barnet Carers Centre on 020 8343 9698 or email [admin@barnetcarers.org](mailto:admin@barnetcarers.org).



Photo by John Dearing

# No picnic for this teddy bear

By John Dearing

"If you go down to The Grange today, you're sure of a big surprise,  
If you go down to East View House, you'd better go in disguise,  
For in the tree, there's lurking a bear,  
We'd love to know just how he got there,  
But now he's there, he'll probably stay forever!"

This hapless teddy has been in the tree outside East View House on The Grange estate for some weeks. Has a rescue been attempted? Is anyone even missing him? Get in touch if you can shed any light on his predicament. Our contact details are on page 2.

# Waste not, want not

By Stella Parkinson

Residents in Barnet are being urged to follow water-saving tips to help stave off a water shortage that is threatening the south east region.

Thames Water and the Met Office say we started the year with the driest January in 10 years following a 15-month period where rainfall was well below average.

A water shortage is considered to be a real threat but it can be averted if all consumers cut down on the amount of water they waste each day. Here are the tips to remember:

- Wash fruit and vegetables in a bowl rather than under a running tap and use leftover water for house plants.
- Use the minimum amount of water required when you boil

water in saucepans and kettles; that way, you'll save energy as well as water.

• Keep a bottle or jug of water in the fridge instead of running taps until the water runs cold.

• Turn the tap off while you brush your teeth, shave or wash your hands, as this can waste up to five litres of water per minute.

• A five-minute shower uses about a third of the water of a bath. But remember that power showers can use more water than a bath in less than five minutes.

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