



No park keeper for Cherry Tree Wood

Cherry Tree Wood will be losing its park keeper because of budget cuts by Barnet Council.

In the autumn Chris Ward, park keeper for nine years in Cherry Tree Wood, was moved to one of the parks that the council is putting up for Green Flag status. He was replaced by another park keeper but now she has been relocated as well.

Barnet Council has issued a statement saying that "park keepers are only allocated to a specific park if the park requires a full-time maintenance presence. Cherry Tree Wood is one which does not require a full-time presence, but a park keeper will still regularly be on site to carry out necessary work along with other grounds

maintenance staff. There will be no reduction in the level of maintenance to the park."

Local councillors have voted against the cuts. Councillor Alison Moore says: "I'm deeply concerned that the park will not get the attention it deserves and will deteriorate. It's just not good enough."

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood would like your views before they attend the next Barnet Council meeting.

Emails can be sent to info@cherrytreewood.co.uk. Letters to The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, 88 Summerlee Avenue, N2 9QH.



Lauren Chapple and Alice Pearson. Photo by Bev Studdard

Making a splash

By Daphne Chamberlain

Two local 14 year-olds were hoping to make a big splash at the British Long Course Swimming Championships last month. Alice Pearson, a former Martin School pupil from Hertford Road, was contesting the 100m and 200m backstroke, while Fortismere student Lauren Chapple, from Alexandra Park, was entered for the 200m backstroke, 100m and 200m butterfly, and 200m and 400m individual medley.

Alice and Lauren represent Cophall Swimming Club, which they both joined five years ago, at the age of nine.

Veterans of national competitions for three years, Alice has already made backstroke finals, while Lauren has been national butterfly champion each year.

The girls train eight to ten times a week, with each session lasting for two to three hours, backed up by several land training sessions each week. The worst part for both of them is getting up at 4.30am to be at the pool just after 5am on the

days when they train before school.

They say the social life makes up for it, though. They enjoy travelling round the country for competitions, and especially like the annual training camp in Barcelona.

Cophall has three more swimmers, Charlotte Creager, Chris Eddon and Karolina Siwicz, in the British Championships, while at the same time Joao Matias was due to represent Angola in two World Championship events in Melbourne.

We will report on how

things went for all of them in our next edition.

Meanwhile, you don't have to be a potential champion to join Cophall Swimming Club. Currently it has about 300 members of all abilities, with ages ranging from seven to 70 plus. To join them, contact 020 8457 9900.



Previous park keeper Chris Ward preparing to plant spring bulbs with Luisa and Rafael Attwood. Picture by Diana Cormack.

New playground for Oak Lodge

Barnet Council has approved plans to provide an Astro-turf playground to replace the field at Oak Lodge School, Heath View, East Finchley. This will be of great benefit to pupils there who are often unable to play on the present school field as it gets water logged.

Oak Lodge caters for 11 to 18-year-olds with learning difficulties and includes youngsters with autism and cerebral palsy. It is of great importance that they all have the opportunity to benefit from playing in an open area, rather than be confined to a small playground along with more

than 150 other youngsters.

The original plans had to be modified because some local residents objected to the proposals for floodlights and for the playground to be made available for use at weekends. They had concerns about security as well as an increase in traffic and noise in the vicinity.

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