



Questionable questionnaire

By Daphne Chamberlain

The feedback we have had at *THE ARCHER* is that many older people had difficulty filling in the recent questionnaire on day opportunities. They found it complicated, too long, repetitive, and not always relevant. One visually impaired person was very frustrated at not having a Braille version.

Many were disturbed at being asked to make an either/or choice between models of service, when they thought all models were necessary, and they felt they could not comment on negative impacts on different groups.

A lot of older people said it was not worth filling in consultation forms, as the decisions were probably already made, and this was just a tick-box exercise. Conversely, all the Advance volunteer advocates, themselves older people, who were helping with the form-filling, were disappointed that senior citizens living in the community were not involved in the consultation. They had heard about it only through the Advance project.

A request to delay the deadline so that older people in the community could be involved was refused, even though those people may well be using the services under discussion before too long.

A Cabinet meeting on 27 September will decide how to go ahead with proposed changes. At the moment we know that the borough will be divided into seven (possibly eight) neighbourhoods, a number of services could be put out to tender, and that existing and potential service providers have made presentations to Barnet. Budget reductions will probably not come into force until next financial year.

Current consultations

Running at the moment online are Barnet consultations on Council Tax Support, Sex Entertainment Venues and Gambling. Details on www.barnet.gov.uk.

Comments on the older people's questionnaire are often just as relevant to others. So, think carefully about how you answer, and make sure your views and opinions are known to the Council.

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Sami pays tribute to Kay. Photo by Robin Dunn.

Pre-school group leader retires

By Diana Cormack

Kay Dunn of Springcroft Avenue recently retired after working with young children for 47 years. At her retirement party, one of those paying warm tributes to Kay and her achievements was a pupil from 44 years ago! Sami Moxon (the daughter of Cy Grant) spoke about Kay's exceptional work and commitment to the hundreds of children to whom she had given "the best and most loving initiation into education".

As a child Kay lived in Highgate and attended Highfield School, run by her Auntie Elsie, from whom she learned a lot. Kay knew from the age of eight that she wanted to work with children. When she was twelve, her family moved to Summerlee Avenue. She attended Clarks College School on Ballards Lane and at seventeen began training as a nursery nurse. Kay is still in touch with the first baby she looked after, now 47 and living in New Zealand.

Playgroup stalwart

After teaching a nursery

class at Highfield (where her mother taught for 38 years) Kay eventually became involved with play-groups (now known as pre-schools). One of her earliest jobs was from 1977-79 at the play-group held in the Elim Chapel behind Budgens.

In 1979 Kay moved on to Haringey, becoming a stalwart of the community playgroup run by parents, first at the Quaker Meeting House in Church Crescent, Muswell Hill and then at Springfield in The Grove, Alexandra Palace. Kay left for a while after having her first daughter Rebecca but subsequently became Leader

at Springfield in 1987. Ten years later it became the 345 Pre-School for which her late daughter Emma designed the logo still used today. Full circle was reached in 2001 when Sami Moxon's son joined the pre-school and became the first of Kay's second generation pupils.

Kay told *THE ARCHER* of the many changes she has seen over the years and how she will miss the children. However, she intends to carry on using her talent for story telling with youngsters. She also plans to travel with her husband Robin, outside the school holidays at last!

Festival on the Grange Estate

By Nick Young

The East Finchley Festival may have been called off this year due to the weather, but residents of The Grange had better luck when the sun shone for their festival on Sunday 22 July. Over 300 residents of all ages got together to enjoy a sunny afternoon of music and entertainment at the Barnet Homes Festival on the estate. Among the attractions were face painting, a bouncy castle, a "beat the goalie" competition and DJ demonstrations.

The festival was organised by Barnet Homes with the help of Angela Purcell and the Grange Residents' Steering Group. The intention was to help foster community spirit on The Grange, and the feeling afterwards was that this goal was certainly achieved. "It was an exceptional event and people are still talking about it several days later," said Angela, who lives on the estate. "I don't think The Grange has had a unified feeling like that for many a year. People were incredibly sociable."

Looking at what it could mean for the future, Angela added: "We hope to set up a

residents' association on The Grange and we really feel we've now got something to work with and build on."

This positive feeling was echoed by Tracey Lees, the chief executive of Barnet Homes: "The fun day at The Grange enabled families to

enjoy themselves for an afternoon while also getting to know their neighbours," she said. "We hope that will generate a greater sense of community on the estate, so that more people will work to make the estate a place where they feel proud to live."

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