WOODHOUSE NEWS

Weekly News and Events for Residents of Woodhouse Ward
Friday 4 September 2026

At The Town Hall this week: The **Environment Cttee** sat on Tuesday 2 September, to consider the situation of e-bikes in the capital. Quote from the committee papers: "Currently, across London there is a mix of formal and informal (or no) arrangements between boroughs. This lack of coordination has led to inconsistency of standards." E-bikes are frequently abandoned or badly parked. ***The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act (2026)*** provides local authorities in England with new powers to license e-bike operators, setting requirements around safety and accessibility. Within London, TfL would be responsible for the licensing powers, enabling a single London-wide regulatory framework for e-bike operators. Proposed to commence by mid-2028. Cabinet met yesterday, 3 September, to agree *to proceed with TUPE transition of the whole IT workforce from incumbent supplier, Capita Business Services Ltd, to London Borough of Barnet from 1 October 2026.*

Next week Finance & Growth Committee meets on Monday 7th to consider 'Development & Regeneration Projects in Barnet', as well as 'council processes to achieve debt recovery' and 'fixed price electricity procurement through Long-term Purchase Agreement'. Planning Committee meets on Wednesday, 9th where there is one Woodhouse item with regard to an application to add two floors to Gloucester House in Woodside Lane. There is quite a lot of local opposition.

Local News: There have been several accidents at the junction of Ashurst and Buxted Roads since the roundabout was replaced by a speed cushion as part of the new 20mph zone in the spring. Officers are going to look at this junction again to try to iron out any problems. Planning applications for two padel courts in Summers Lane and off Porters Way will be considered at Committee at a date to be determined.

AGEUK Barnet: Next in-person Book Club meet-up is Tuesday 8 September 2026 (2pm-3pm) at Wilmot Close Community Centre, Tarling Road, London N2 8LB. Books they will be discussing are - Land by Maggie O'Farrell, The Long Valley by John Steinbeck and The Book Shop by Penelope Fitzgerald. All over 55s welcome. For details on how to join, contact Helen on 07384 466840 or email activities@ageukbarnet.org.uk

Children who have signed up to the Summer Reading Challenge should complete the challenge and visit any Barnet library to collect their prizes by tomorrow! **Saturday 5 September.**



Lodge Lane looking very smart as work to resurface and install traffic-calming measures come to an end this week.

Though the very obvious pristine double yellow lines didn't stop this motorist from parking up to nip in for his coffee!

You may have noticed some of the 'pop up' community safety hubs around the borough over the summer. The one at Tally Ho corner on 16 August was very busy. Staffed by officers from the Community Safety Team, they have been engaging with residents and handing out leaflets and advice. Oh yes! And trying to stop some from feeding the pigeons! All in a day's work! For more information: www.barnet.gov.uk/community-safety:

Woodhouse Safer Neighbourhood Police Panel meets regularly. The next one will be on **Wednesday 9 September.** For details of how to get involved email the chair, Tony Kirkham, at tk5000@btinternet.com. As always, please call 101 to report any incidents so that they can be recorded - 999 if an emergency of course.

Woodhouse Councillors' Advice Surgeries are held on the third Saturday of each month 2.00pm to 3.30pm at: North Finchley Library, Ravensdale Avenue, N12 9HP Tel: 020 8359 3845 – or by arrangement. The next surgery will be on **Saturday 19 September.** These are 'drop in' sessions – no appointment needed.

Attached is short tribute to former Woodhouse Councillor, Geof Cooke, who sadly passed away on 23 July. His contribution to local politics is very much missed by all.

Newsletter edited by:
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Geof Cooke

Though we weren't aware at the time, Geof and I were born and grew up within a few miles of each other – Geof on the Isle of Wight and me just across the Solent in Portsmouth. That said, about the only thing we disagreed on was that for some reason Geof would insist on supporting Southampton football club, even proudly wearing the Saints T shirt around Barnet, whereas I support Pompey of course! So, he was a bit misguided there! However, the differences mainly stayed on the south coast, and we managed to work together representing the residents of Woodhouse Ward for the past twenty years without too much disagreement!

Geof's political career started early, joining the local Labour Party whilst still at school in East Cowes in the 1960s. Moving to London as a student in the 1970s he actually first stood in Woodhouse fifty years ago this year, in a by-election in 1976, it was under the old boundaries, and he wasn't successful on that occasion. He came a credible third though three years later in the 1979 General Election in Chichester, in West Sussex, even saving his deposit, though by then he was already a Barnet councillor having won a seat in Colindale the previous year. He became Leader of the Barnet Labour Group in 1980, and thereby Leader of the opposition, for six years retaining his Colindale seat in the local elections in 1982.

After taking a break from politics for a few years he returned to stand for Chipping Barnet in the General election in 1997, coming a credible second to Sir Sidney Chapman, polling over twenty thousand votes. Undaunted, he won a council seat in Brunswick Park the following year and was Cabinet member for the Environment during the coalition years of the late 1990s. He stood again in Woodhouse in 2006 – where he remained until his retirement this year.

To quote a piece he wrote for the Barnet Post in 2023 Geof said "I am passionate about the importance of fairness in our community life, about the need for advocates who listen to their constituents and speak up for what is right in a democracy and about the role of councils and governments being active for the common good." *Barnet Post November 2023.*

His long experience meant that Geof was very knowledgeable about local government and during the boundary review in 2022, for example, he was able to offer much advice and expertise. He was passionate about local transport and an enthusiastic supporter of the West London Orbital, which in fact, now looks if it may finally be coming to fruition.

Thank You Geof!

Cllr. Anne Hutton, Woodhouse Ward
September 2026