

Barnet Museum & Local History Society (BMLHS)

Patron: MHC Russell Esq. MBE DL FCT
Charity reg. no. 1169214; Founded 1927



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

for the 98th Year – 2025 (Financial Year 2024/25) 13th November 2025

This report is a summary of Society activities over the last twenty months or so (ie from July 2024). Some points were also raised in last year's report.

Barnet Museum and Local History Society welcomes new members, currently we have approximately 300 members, of whom about 70 are life members; we have some 50 volunteers.

The Trustees in 2024/25 were: John Hall (Chairman), Terence Atkins (Deputy Chairman), Rebecca Smith (Secretary), Mike Noronha, Dennis Bird, Mike Jordan, Guy Wheatcroft, Helen Downes, Esme Smith and Scott Harrison.

The internal Management Committee is: Mike Noronha (Chairman, Curator and Treasurer); Terence Atkins (Deputy Chairman, Postcards and Calendar); Hilary Harrison (Deputy Curator, Education/Enquiries); Graham Willcocks (IT, Photo Archivist); Dennis Bird (Maps, Physic Well, Lectures); Margaret Luck (Deputy Curator, Archaeology); Irene Nichols (Shop); Claire El Arifi (Web, Social Media, Marketing); Mary Hayward (Library/Archivist); Kat Alston-Cole (Membership). The full Management Committee has met six times in this period. The Trustees give their unequivocal thanks to the entire volunteer cadre; special mention goes to Mary Hayward, Margaret Luck and Sue Chipp, whose extra efforts covered for unavoidable volunteer absences.

BMLHS is one of the founder members of Heritage Barnet, a body aiming to promote and coordinate the activities of the various heritage bodies in the Borough of Barnet.

We participated in the London Borough's New Year's Day Parade; particular thanks to Charlie Cullis and Kat Alston-Cole who received a commendation and medal from the Mayor of Barnet for their efforts.

2027 will be the 100th Anniversary of the founding of Barnet Museum and Local History Society. Strictly speaking the organization that was founded in 1927 was "The Barnet Records Society"; this later became the "Barnet and District Local History Society" and later yet, around 2013, "Barnet Museum and Local History Society". 2026 will be a year of preparation for marking the centenary. We are working on a major book (for a launch in 2027) based on the timeline around the rooms in the Museum. We shall be developing other projects through the year.

Museum

Visitor numbers have remained steady on weekdays but we have had high numbers during school holidays, on weekends and special events (such as Barnet Christmas Fayre). As in the past, visitor numbers have been difficult to estimate or predict. Our engagement with local schools and care homes and other societies has been good and we have a reasonably strong online presence.

In the FY 2024/25 The Museum hosted sessions for 605 pupils (note: this number does not include their adult supervisors) from 19 different schools. We hosted four Scout/Guide evening visits and a children's craft morning. We also visited three schools (Ark Academy, Belmont and Trent). We had group visits from ramblers/walkers, creative writing, art, history and heraldry groups.

The Museum operates three loan/demonstration boxes – "The Toybox" a loan/resource box of older toys (part of Key Stage 1/2 curriculum). This is for lending to schools and for visits to the Museum; A "Reminiscence Box" (of artefacts to remind people of the past – especially useful with dementia sufferers) and the "Battle of Barnet Loanbox" for schools. These have been in constant use over the year and have been well received by all audiences especially schools and care homes. We loaned banners and other battle-related items to QE Boys' School when they hosted an International Robotics Competition. Staff from the RAF museum visited to explore our archive for items to use in their VE Day commemorations. and attended summer fairs at St Andrew's Totteridge school as well as in Tudor Park. We presented a 'VE Day in Barnet' display at the commemoration at Stephens House. We held a book launch in October.

We have continued our lease/loan agreement for free use of a shop unit in The Spires shopping centre; we have set up exhibitions of Battle of Barnet Banners and had displays about the Barnet Environment Centre, Barnet College, CAMRA, VE/VJ Day, "Birth of the Borough".

The Museum has very little space for more artefacts, however we have squeezed in a number of new items over the year. The loan of Battle of Barnet artefacts from the British Museum has been renewed for a further three years. The loan was suspended

for a few months so that we could adjust and better control dehumidification in the Museum. We are grateful to Helen Downes for her liaison with the British Museum.

We have opened The Physic Well on the third Saturday of each month (except for December and January) per our agreement with the Council. It has proved consistently popular.

The established (and national) 12th Century reenactment group, Historia Normannis has a Barnet based section which is informally affiliated to Barnet Museum and rehearses in the Museum's back garden. HN has helped in local events and was prominent at the 2024 Christmas Fayre.

We are creating short films of the exhibits upstairs and in the basement of the Museum. These will be available to view on the ground floor screen, giving some access to those visitors with limited ability to use stairs.

Tudor Hall

BMLHS has represented the Barnet community in obtaining "Asset of Community Value" status for Tudor Hall. The Museum failed to work out a sustainable way forward for using Tudor Hall (despite a huge effort) and the initiative was abandoned.

Publications

In this period, BMLHS published a Local History Journal, 2025 BM Calendar, called "A Window into 1930s Barnet", was successful. The 2026 Calendar will feature "The Great and the Good of Barnet".

Lectures

We delivered a series of Monday lectures, at Barnet Church. Feb: Nick Jones (The Art of Class War); Mar: Mary Smith (A Schoolgirl's War); Apr: Daniel Snowman (The Marketing of Covent Garden); May: Mike Noronha (A Whistlestop History of Barnet); Jun: Scott Harrison (Behind the Battle of Barnet Banners); Jul: John Lynch (The East End At War); Sept: Kat Alston-Cole (Make Do and Mend); Oct: Guy Thomas (London Colney Airfield and The Royal Flying Corps).

Garden Party

The Society Garden Party was held again at Ian and Val Johnston's home in Wood Street in September 2025. A combination of sandwiches, cake, tea and Pimms and a quiz was in evidence. The Trustees thank all the organisers and those who helped with serving; thanks also to our quiz creator Grace Greenfield and, particularly, Ian and Val. The Garden Party is, apart from an excellent social occasion, a chance to meet and greet prominent Barnet folk; for example, this year, Martin Russell MBE, our Patron; Dan Tomlinson, our MP; and Anne Clarke our London Assembly Member all attended.

Battle of Barnet

- A continuing major initiative is The Battle of Barnet banners project. The Banners are designed, painted and crafted by the Museum volunteers; they are repaired and restored over the winter following their Spring/Summer hanging. They were hung again on the High Street lampposts from April 2025 to October 2025. We produced guide leaflets to accompany the Banners; these were well received but we again are disappointed that there is little media coverage of the initiative. Our thanks once again to Bay Media for hanging and removing the banners. Special thanks again go to the Banner team of volunteers, Hilary Harrison, Scott Harrison, Myra Pincherle, Margaret Luck, Chris Andrewes, Jackie Andrews, Colette Nicolle, Gwyneth Hibbert and Geoffrey Wheeler.
- We have a continuing focus on Battle of Barnet education for local schools visiting the Museum and /or using our lesson packs;
- Further Battle archaeology is scheduled to start in November 2025 with a focus on Hadley Green;
- The Barnet Medieval Festival was held at Lewis's Ice Cream Farm in June 2025.

Treasurer's Report

- Activity was steady in the Financial Year 2024/2025. Receipts were around the same at about £22K. Payments reduced from £24K to around £21.5K.
- Although costs continued to increase in line with inflation in telecoms/internet, security, insurance, and utilities, we re-negotiated a three-year electricity supply agreement through the Museums Energy Basket Facility. Because we received a 100% discount on our rates bill (80% charity discount and 20% discretionary) we again saved at least £2K.
- Our account is mainly run through our Bank Account with limited use of cash payments.
- We have been undertaking more maintenance work (painting etc) and that has caused most of the increase in discretionary expenditure.
- The Hadley Trust donated an annual grant of £10K to BMLHS. We are, as ever, most grateful.
- The Treasurer would like to thank Charlotte Smithers, Barbara Farnley and Margaret Luck who have managed our cash accounting; and Irene Nichols who has managed the shop and retail activity.

The Trustees

Barnet Museum & Local History Society



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Barnet Museum & Local History Society

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Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period
from

Period start date
01-Jul-24

To

Period end date
30-Jun-25

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
BMLHS Subs	1,519	-	-	1,519	2,051
DONATIONS	2,699	-	-	2,699	2,900
SALES	4,096	-	-	4,096	1,572
RECEIPTS	1,000	-	-	1,000	2,612
GRANTS	10,000	-	-	10,000	10,000
SUMUP	2,267	-	-	2,267	1,954
INTEREST	505	-	-	505	179
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	22,086	-	-	22,086	21,268
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	22,086	-	-	22,086	21,268
A3 Payments					
UTIL	2,705	-	-	2,705	3,259
PHYS WELL	216	-	-	216	457
COMMS	2,798	-	-	2,798	2,447
SECURITY	1,615	-	-	1,615	1,466
INSURANCE	2,192	-	-	2,192	2,111
ADMIN,MAINT,STORAGE	2,545	-	-	2,545	5,288
COLLECTION	315	-	-	315	302
COST OF SALES	2,951	-	-	2,951	2,095
MARKETING & MISCELLANEOUS	995	-	-	995	401
BMLHS	3,666	-	-	3,666	3,506
BATTLE PROJECT SPEND	1,585	-	-	1,585	2,490
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	21,583	-	-	21,583	23,822
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	21,583	-	-	21,583	23,822
Net of receipts/(payments)	503	-	-	503	- 2,554
A5 Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	49,568	-	-	49,568	-
Cash funds this year end	50,071	-	-	50,071	- 2,554

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash in Hand	3,292	-	-
	Cash at Bank	3,369		-
	Deposit Accounts	43,410	-	-
	Total cash funds	50,071	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £