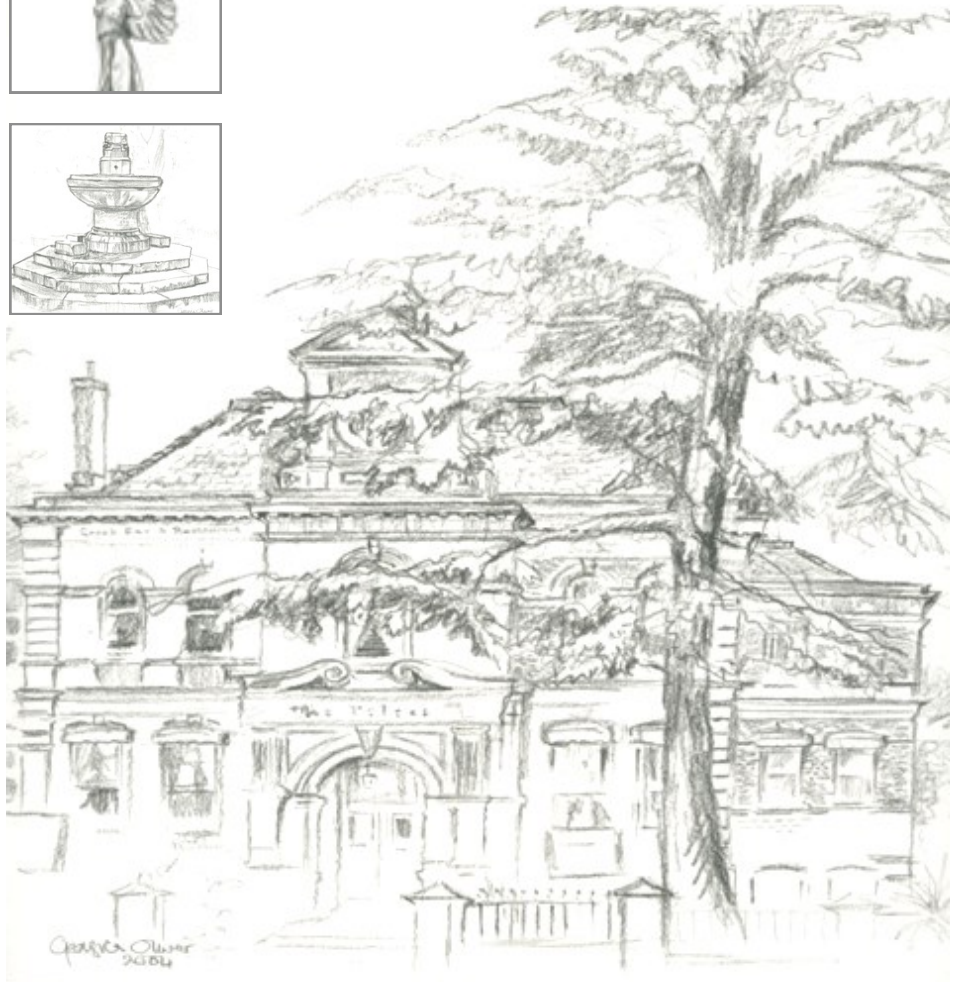


A Walk around

New Barnet



Barnet Walks Series, No. 2 (3rd edition: revised & updated)

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www.barnetmuseum.co.uk

The description of this walk around New Barnet begins at New Barnet Station. (The walk includes one steep section and there are some main roads to cross – at the time of writing there are crossings or traffic islands on these roads near to the route of the walk.)

Numbering of features and buildings in the text corresponds to those on map (p.4-5).

1. New Barnet Station opened in August 1850 (see back page). Originally just called 'Barnet Station', as the new town developed around it both the area and the station became New Barnet. The station's name was officially changed in 1872 when High Barnet Station opened (at the end of a new suburban line from Finchley), but it was probably known locally as New Barnet before this. The open space in front of the station once had a large canopied entrance that provided protection from the weather for travellers arriving in their carriages.
2. Cross the footbridge over the railway line. Many of the houses and flats on the opposite side have been built on the extensive former sidings associated with the station.
3. Turn right and walk along the road, following it round the edge of Sainsbury's car park into Margaret Road and down the hill to East Barnet Road. This was built following the opening of the railway station in 1850 to link the station with East Barnet. A wide range of small shops grew up along East Barnet Road. Many of these buildings are still used as shops today, although the large Sainsbury's supermarket has replaced those that stood at the northern end of the road.



New Barnet
Community
Centre
(see no.13)

4. Cross over to the other side of East Barnet Road. On the corner is the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. It was rebuilt in 1990, replacing the original corrugated iron building.

5. The area next door used to be Chivers, a builders' merchant's yard. This family business was founded in 1909, and was one of the earliest in the area. The site is still a building suppliers, but now trades as Fayers.

6. The next building along the road is St James's Church. Founded in the nineteenth century when Holy Trinity Lyonsdown became too small for the rapidly growing community of New Barnet, it began life as a temporary iron structure. This was damaged by fire in 1907, and the present building was constructed in 1911. Various features have been added since then, including the chancel in 1929-30, downstairs rooms in 1969 and an extension on the front of the building in the 1990s that updated existing facilities and provided more space for small group activities.

7. Walk back down East Barnet Road in the direction you have just come, crossing over the Margaret Road junction. On your left just beyond the car park is the Subud Hall. Built in 1905, it was originally St James's Church Parish Hall before being sold in 1971. It was used during both World Wars: as an auxiliary hospital during the First World War and for storing furniture for bombed out families during the Second. After a fire at the John Hampden School in 1961, the hall was briefly used as temporary classrooms.

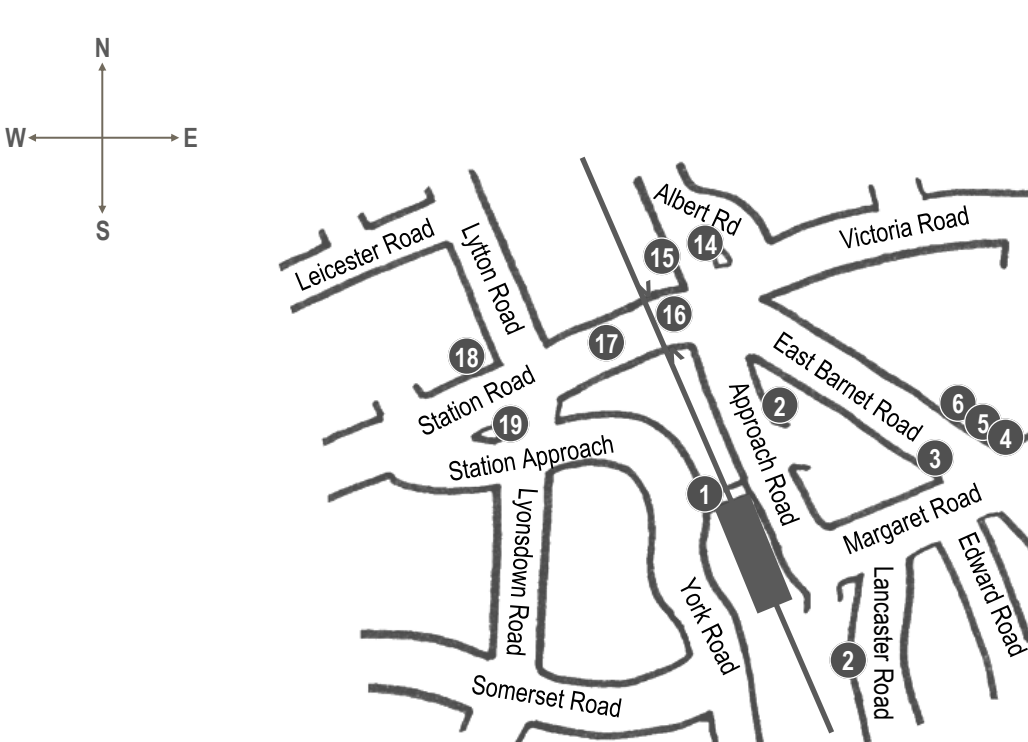
8. Walk back up the road to the Margaret Road junction and turn right. A little way down on the right you will see St Margaret's Nursery School and Children's Centre. This school first opened in June 1870 as an elementary school, with 63 children. During the twentieth century it became an infant school and then a nursery school.



Fountain in
Victoria
Recreation
Ground
(see no. 11)

9. Continue down Margaret Road, turn left into Victoria Road and then right into Park Road. A little way down on the left is Victoria Recreation Ground. This park used to be part of Folly Farm, run by local butcher and councillor Eli Frusher. He kept pigs and provided much needed food during the First World War. The farm was also a popular spot for Londoners to come to enjoy a walk in the countryside, the fun of a fairground (including slides, helter-skelters and donkey rides) and the Frusher's home-made ice-creams and ham teas. After the Second World War Folly Farm was gradually developed: 1200 houses were built and Victoria Park opened; later a school was also built on the site (replacing one in Victoria Road which had burnt down – see no. 13).
10. From the entrance to the park you can see a large gasometer. This is a surviving link with the former East Barnet Gas and Water Company that was established in Albert Road. In 1872 it amalgamated with the Potters Bar Gas and Coke Company and the Barnet Consumers' Gas Company.

Map showing the route of the Walk

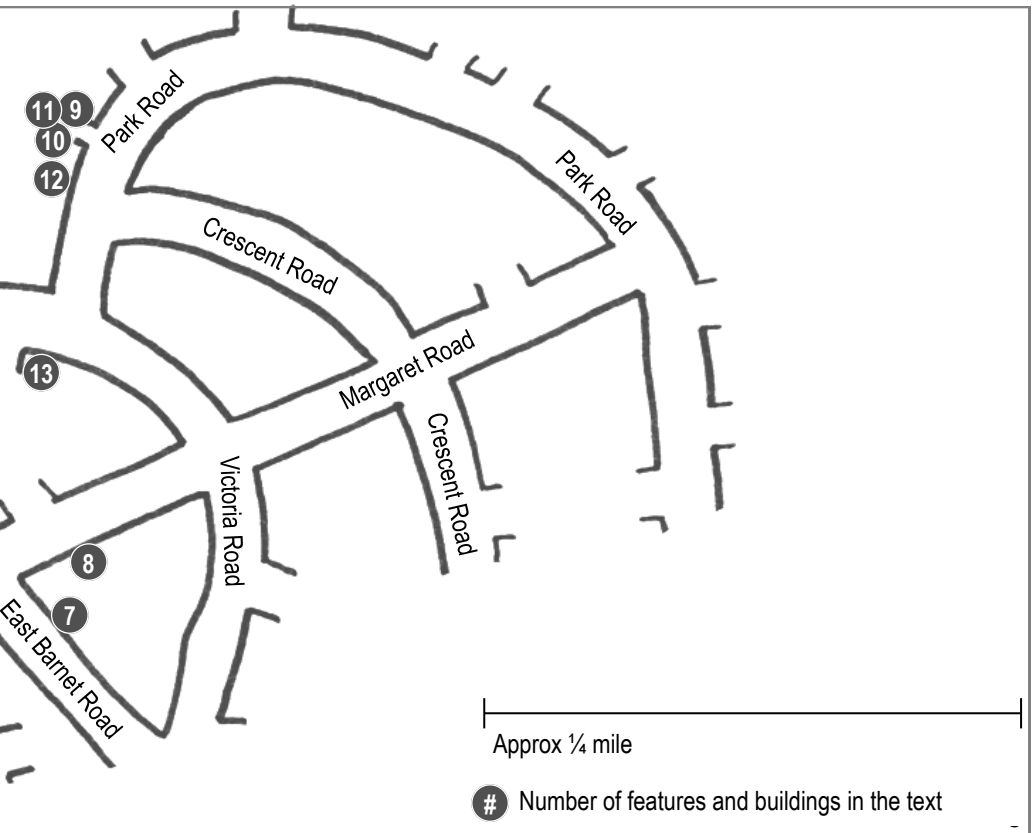


11.

A short distance into the park is a fountain which at one time stood next to the New Barnet War Memorial at the Triangle (where Station Road and Station Approach meet). On one side of the fountain are the words 'Honest water which ne'er left man in the mire. The gift of T. Morgan Harvey'. On the other side it reads 'Metropolitan Drinking Fountain and Cattle Trough Association'. There was a drinking trough for cattle and horses next to the fountain when it was on the Triangle.

12.

Turn right out of Victoria Recreation Ground back into Park Road and on your right is the Pymmes Brook. It runs under much of New Barnet, on its course from Jack's Lake in Hadley Woods down to the river Lea at Edmonton. It takes its name from the Pymme family through whose Edmonton estates it passed during the medieval period.



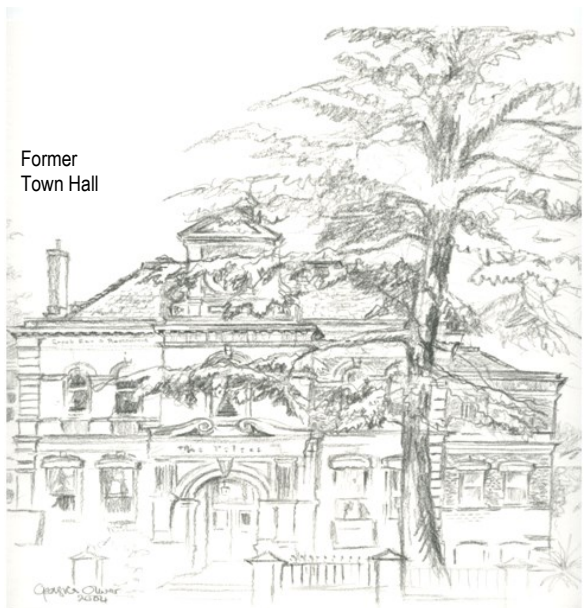
13. At the end of Park Road turn right into Victoria Road. On the left is New Barnet Community Centre. This building was once part of the John Hampden School (earlier called Victoria Road School). After a fire in 1961 the site was developed as a housing estate except for this building which survived the fire. It is now used for a wide range of community activities. The school was rebuilt on the site of Folly Farm, and later merged with East Barnet Grammar School to become East Barnet School (now located off Cat Hill in East Barnet). The Jewish Community Secondary School is now on the Folly Farm site (to the north of Victoria Recreation Ground).

14. At the end of Victoria Road turn right into the second entrance to Albert Road. On your right is the Salvation Army Citadel, which was built in 1886. The founder of the Salvation Army, General Booth, used to live in Hadley Wood.

15. On the other side of the road is the *Builders Arms*, one of many public houses that opened in New Barnet in the mid nineteenth century as the town grew up around the railway station, including *The Railway Bell* and *The Railway Tavern*. It is reputed to have been the place where the workers involved in building the railway at New Barnet were paid.

16. Return to the main road and continue along and under the Railway Bridge. In 1936 an earlier brick bridge was demolished and replaced with this one. In October of that year the Barnet Press reported that during the building work a 'pre-Roman' sword was found under the road.

17. Walk up Station Road which was constructed soon after New Barnet Station, to connect it with Chipping Barnet.



18. The second building along from the Lytton Road junction is a substantial red brick Victorian building with chimneys and a weather vane. This is the former East Barnet Town Hall. It was designed by Frederick Shenton, who won this right in a competition, and opened in June 1892. When Barnet became part of the new London Borough of Barnet in 1965 it ceased to be the Town Hall, but continued to be used as council offices until 1988 when the borough decided to sell it. After standing empty for a number of years, it became a restaurant in 1996, and has now been divided into flats. Bells from the building were displayed in the front garden of Barnet Museum, but were stolen in 2011.



19. In the middle of the road is the Triangle, on which stands the New Barnet War Memorial. It was erected in about 1922 to commemorate those who died the First World War. In 2011, after a fundraising campaign, a plaque to commemorate over 130 people from New Barnet killed in action in the Second World War was unveiled at a ceremony attended by over 200 people.

Also available in the Barnet Walks series: *East Barnet; Chipping Barnet*

Barnet Museum has further information about much referred to in this Walk.

Sources

Barnet & District Local History Society, *The Barnets & Hadley*
Gelder, W.H. (ed), *Historic Barnet* (5th edition)

Taylor, P. & Corden, J., *Barnet, Edgware, Hadley and Totteridge*
Barnet Museum archive

A brief history of New Barnet

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the area now known as New Barnet was part of the parish of St Mary the Virgin, East Barnet, and was populated mainly by large country estates. In 1850 the railway came to Barnet, with a station opening in August of that year. This was for the people of Chipping Barnet, but was built to the south-east, mainly to avoid the steep hill up to the town. Much of the line ran through the former Lyonsdown estate, which had been bought by the Great Northern Railway Company. (The Lyonsdown estate was bounded by Potters Road, the Great North Road, Pymmes Brook and Longmore Avenue). A town grew up around the station, and both became known as New Barnet.

The previous owner of the Lyonsdown estate, John Catley, bought back the land not required for the railway line and re-sold it to the British Land Company who developed the area, including building roads and houses. Many of these roads were named after personalities from the 1471 Battle of Barnet, inspired by a book written in the early nineteenth century by Edward Bulwer Lytton called *The Last of the Plantagenets* (for example, Plantagenet Road, Edward Road, Warwick Road, Henry Road and York Road). Holy Trinity Church was built near the site of Lyonsdown House in 1864-5.

The new railway service allowed those who worked in London to live in the suburbs and commute daily into the city. These people bought large houses, usually on the western side of the railway line, nearer to Chipping Barnet. The area also attracted a number of small traders, who tended to live in smaller, terraced houses on the other side of the railway line. One such family was the Waltons. Samuel Walton Senior came to the New Barnet area in the 1860s and his family firm, Walton & Sons (Contractors & Builders), built many of the houses in St Wilfrid's Road, Henry Road and Warwick Road, as well as St Mary's School in East Barnet.

The extension of the Piccadilly Line to Cockfosters in the 1930s encouraged the building of more housing for commuters to London. The Bevan estate, to the north-east of Park Road, was built after the Second World War, but the roads are reputed to have been laid out by Italian prisoners of war. The estate took its name from that of a local banking family.



Barnet Museum & Local History Society

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Barnet Museum's collection covers many aspects of life in Barnet, from ancient times to modern day, including objects relating to The Battle of Barnet, both World Wars, domestic life, shops, pubs, sport, leisure, costume and health, as well as temporary exhibitions. The museum has an extensive archive, and is a centre for family and local history research. Founded in 1938, the museum is a charity run by volunteers. Group visits are available by appointment. Admission free.

The Local History Society organises talks and outings.