



Residents playing table tennis in the Meadows Care Home Photo Mike Coles

Drug-free therapy on the table for Alzheimer's

By Daphne Chamberlain

A care home in Muswell Hill is providing table tennis therapy for people living with dementia, using a special table designed by the Bounce Alzheimer's Therapy (BAT) Foundation.

The table at the Meadow Care Home in Colney Hatch Lane has side panels that obviously keep balls in play for longer, but also increase spatial awareness and peripheral vision, and create a comfortably secure place to play. The brilliant white surface is supported on a black framework, and balls and bats are orange.

The foundation's creative director Ian Craigton-Chambers explained that the early stages of Alzheimer's affect vision. As well as spatial and processing slowness, there is also a need for higher contrast. White against white becomes virtually invisible.

Benefits to the brain

BAT work with neuroscientists at King's College, London. They say that research



Meadows staff with Haringey Mayor Gina Adamou. Photo Mike Coles

shows that after playing for 20 minutes, five parts of the brain light up. Hand-eye coordination, motor skills and long-term memory can all be improved by table tennis. A big added bonus is that it can be played standing or sitting, and with as many players alongside each other as

needed, making it very sociable.

Patrick Gray, Dementia Friendly Communities Co-Ordinator for Merton, Haringey and Barnet, told us that The Meadow table was one of three in the Haringey and Barnet area. Alexandra Palace has one for their weekly Wellness Café, open to all on the last Monday of the month, 1-3pm in the Transmitter Hall. The other is at the YMCA Fitness Centre in Tottenham Lane, Hornsey, with open sessions twice a week.

For more information on access to the tables, please email patrick.gray@alzheimers.org.uk, call 07484 079785, or follow PGray_DAA on Twitter. For more information on BAT, visit www.batfoundation.com.

Barnet political map set to change

By David Melsome

The political map of East Finchley could change after the independent Local Government Boundary Commission launched a consultation asking people for their help in drawing up a new pattern of council wards across Barnet.

The borough will continue to have 63 councillors but the areas they represent may change. In drawing up new boundaries, the Commission says each councillor should represent roughly the same number of voters and new wards should reflect as far as possible the identities of local communities.

Questions to consider

Professor Colin Mellors, chair of the Commission, said: "If you have a view about which communities or neighbourhoods should be part of the same council ward, then we want to hear from you. And if you think a road, river or railway makes for a strong boundary between communities in your part of Barnet, then this consultation is for you."

The types of questions the Commission is asking residents at this stage are: do you have suggestions about where your ward boundaries should be;

which areas do you identify as your local community; and where do people in your area go to access local facilities such as shops and leisure activities?

How to take part

Residents have until 3 December to submit their views and will have a further chance to have their say after a set of draft recommendations is published in February 2019.

Take part online at consultation.lgbce.org.uk where you will find more information and interactive maps of the current ward boundaries.

Submissions can also be made by email to reviews@lgbce.org.uk and by post to The Review Officer (Barnet), LGBCE, 1st Floor, Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0TL. The last review of ward boundaries in Barnet was in 1999. Any changes will be in place before the next scheduled London local elections in 2022.

Name that special person

Nominations have opened for Barnet's 19th annual Civic Awards for people who deserve recognition for their outstanding achievements and contribution to life anywhere in the borough.

This year, there are three categories of civic award: Young citizen of the year, Outstanding service to the community and Lifetime achievement.

Each nomination will be reviewed by a judging panel and winners will be invited to attend a ceremony at Hendon Town Hall in April

2019 to receive their awards. Submit your nominations online at barnet.gov.uk/civic-awards. You can also put someone forward by emailing mayor@barnet.gov.uk or phoning 020 8359 2652 to ask for a hard copy of the nomination form. The deadline for nominations is Monday 31 December.

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