



Wetland: The flooded main field in Cherry Tree Wood. Photo Jackie Briggs

## Cash injection to relieve flooding in the Wood

By John Lawrence

**Barnet Council has been awarded £40,000 in government funding to help with environmental projects and there are hopes the majority of the cash will be spent on relieving the long-running flooding problem in Cherry Tree Wood.**

Part of the park's playing field and areas around the tennis courts flood regularly in the winter and spring thanks to water run-off from surrounding land and poor drainage under the surface.

Anyone who visits the wood will be familiar with the 'lake' that often appears on the grass from late autumn onwards, sometimes with geese and ducks using it as a stopover. There is also a less visible high-water area behind the courts.

**Nine months to act**  
The funding handed to Barnet Council has been designated

to cover three projects in the borough, the largest of which is the Cherry Tree Wood flood problem. It has to be spent by the end of March 2026.

The Friends of Cherry Tree Wood have worked with the council and with Thames Water for the past four years to identify the causes of the poor drainage. This development gives them a chance to put some of their solutions into practice. Once the work is approved, it will be Barnet Council staff or contractors who carry it out.

## Mass walk to help homeless



Walk Joint enterprise: Participants in the Hindu community sponsored walk

**A sunset 10km charity walk organised by the local Hindu community raised more than £2,000 for Homeless Action in Barnet. More than 170 people of all ages from the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (UK) Finchley and Depala communities came together on the evening of Friday 25 April for the circular walk setting off from Victoria Park in N3.**

These include creating grass-lined ditches to divert water flow away from the field and into specifically designed biodiverse wetland zones around the perimeter.

There could also be water butts to capture run-off from the toilets and pavilion roofs and prevent it from entering the ground around the tennis courts.

Roger Chapman, chair of the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood, said: "With the money we have available, we are aiming for a range of smaller-scale interventions. They won't necessarily lead to a wonderfully dry field, but they will certainly make it less wet."

"Seva is at the heart of Hinduism," said one of the event organisers. "It's about serving others without expectation, and tonight was a beautiful example of that. By coming together for this cause, we are living out our values and giving back to the wider community."

Marcin Nocek, the Night Shelter Coordinator from Homeless Action in Barnet joined the event and expressed his gratitude for how the donation would help the charity to support many people facing homelessness in the borough.

## Campaign for schools to teach social cohesion

By David Melsome

**Twenty years ago this month, East Finchley resident Miriam Hyman went to work and didn't come home. Miriam was killed in the London bombings of 7 July 2005. She was 32.**

On the tenth anniversary of the bombings in 2015, the Miriam Hyman Memorial Trust launched Miriam's Vision, an online educational resource about social cohesion for teachers based on Miriam's story.

With the change in government in 2024, the Department for Education launched its Curriculum and Assessment Review and the trust urged it to explicitly include teaching on social cohesion in the curriculum.

There were hopeful signs when the government review issued an interim report and acknowledged the importance of the subject, saying: "The curriculum plays a crucial role in... promoting social cohesion and sustaining democracy."

### Education is vital

Miriam's family and the trust have kept up the pressure by writing to the Minister for School Standards,



Inspiration: Miriam Hyman

Catherine McKinnell MP, who responded positively. Esther Hyman, Miriam's sister, said: "Our experience is testament to the devastating consequences of failing to address social cohesion in a meaningful way. Education is vital. Our message is clear: Include social cohesion in the National Curriculum."

Mavis Hyman, Miriam's mother and Chair of MHMT Trustees, said: "The fact that social cohesion is mentioned in the Executive Summary of the CAR interim report is encouraging."

"Miriam's Vision proposes democracy as a viable alternative to violent extremism, so we are aligned with the report's general ethos. However, we are now advocating that social cohesion should be overtly included in the new National Curriculum." Find out more at [www.miriam-hyman.com](http://www.miriam-hyman.com).

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