

SUMMARY SHEET

October 2007 Edition

Hi! Welcome to the Barnet YHA Group! This sheet of frequently asked questions is for people new to the Group. Please give any feedback or comments you have on this sheet to any member of the Committee.

1. WHO ARE WE?

- The Barnet YHA Group is affiliated to the YHA. Membership is open to anyone interested in the activities and purpose of the group on application, regardless of sex, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs. Our members are in their 20s to 40+ and come from Barnet, Enfield, Potters Bar and the North London area. We have a common interest in outdoor activities, mainly walking and normally use YHA accommodation on our weekend trips.

2. WHAT IS THE YHA?

- The YHA is the YHA (England and Wales) Limited. It provides inexpensive accommodation for anyone, not only young people, in the countryside and in places of interest.

3. WHAT DO WE DO?

- Weekends - Roughly two or three times a month we organise walking weekends away from the Barnet area. On weekends we often visit various parts of England and Wales for example Devon, Cornwall, Hampshire, Somerset, Yorkshire, Peak District, Lake District, North, South and Mid Wales and The Cotswolds. See 'How are weekends arranged?' below.
- Day walks - We organise weekend day walks approximately once a month and range from 8 to 15 miles depending on the time of year and distance travelled from Barnet to the start of the walk. The areas chosen for the walks range from Hertfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey. See 'How are weekend day walks organised?' below.
- Evening walks - During the summer months we usually have a programme of weekday evening walks in south Hertfordshire, Central and North London. They cover 3-4 miles of local field and woodland paths, bridleways, alleys and towpaths finishing around 9.30pm, and finish not too far from a place of refreshment.
- Weekends away and day walks are the major part of the Group's activities. We encourage you to participate in some of these events soon, to get to know people and find out what the Group does.
- From time to time we also organise cycling weekends, canoeing or skiing trips and other weekends of an outdoor nature. This is all co-ordinated by the Outdoor Organiser (who is part of the Committee). A monthly newsletter provides details of events.

4. WHO ARE THE COMMITTEE?

- The committee is elected at the annual general meeting in October. All members are eligible to vote and any member can stand for election.

5. HOW ARE WEEKENDS ARRANGED?

- Weekend organisers encourage members to join their particular weekend and collect hostel accommodation money in full. Youth hostels require full payment for accommodation 2 months in advance so weekend organisers close weekend bookings 9½ weeks prior to weekend departure dates. Please be prepared to pay the weekend organiser on request or you may lose your place to someone who can pay.
- The weekend organiser also co-ordinates transport. Usually we share cars or hire a minibus.

- On a Friday evening, we normally meet outside the Barnet 'Odeon' Cinema around 6.00pm although it could be earlier in some cases (check with the weekend organiser before you book). We usually return to the Odeon by 10.00pm Sunday evening (or Monday on a Bank Holiday weekend). Of course this can't be guaranteed if there are traffic jams or we are driving back from a place (such as in the Lake District) that is very far from Barnet. Members make their own arrangements for travel to and from Barnet Odeon.
- On Saturday, the people on the weekend organise one or two walks depending on the size of the group and what people want to do. Of course, we like to try and stop at a pub and/or tea shop if there is one along the way.
- On the Saturday evening we can either cook our own meal in the youth hostel (possibly a communal meal), take a meal provided at the youth hostel or eat out.
- On Sunday a shorter walk is organised. We try to be finished by 3.00 or 4.00pm.

7. WHERE DO YOU GO ON WEEKENDS?

- Most of our trips are walking weekends, often involving hills (sometimes steep), mud, moderate to long distances and often away from major roads and public transport. We also can't guarantee good weather!
- If you're unsure about your ability, please speak to the weekend organiser before booking. Sometimes there are options to 'pootle around town' instead but you are responsible for keeping yourself entertained.
- Of course, we also do a couple of city weekends each year – where the walking is flat, mud-free and punctuated by shops, cathedrals, tea shops, castles and more tea shops...

8. WHAT ARE THE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS?

- We normally use members' cars and share the costs based on a fixed price per passenger mile, to compensate them for petrol and reasonable wear and tear to their vehicle. Please be prepared to pay your driver your share of the travel costs before the end of the weekend. Rough examples merely as a guide - Day walk in the Chilterns (£3.50), Salisbury (£14), Derbyshire (£20), Lake District (£35).
- The travel is arranged about a month before the trip, at which point you may be asked for a transport deposit to cover the potential costs of you dropping out.
- If you have to pull out of a trip for any reason please let the weekend organiser know asap. You may lose your accommodation and travel deposits otherwise.
- It's your responsibility to make sure you know how you're getting to the hostel. Turn up on the Tuesday before to find out the final arrangements.
- The regular meeting point is outside Barnet Odeon, about ¼ mile south of High Barnet underground station on the Great North Road (A1000) at the junction of Station Road. Always check with your driver beforehand.
- Expect to leave on Friday evening at about 6.00 p.m. but this will vary according to the distance. Many of our trips are 3 or more hours away and remember that the hostels lock up at 11.00 p.m. We return Sunday evening (Monday evening for Bank Holidays), typically getting back at about 8.00-9.00p.m. For some local weekends, we leave on Saturday morning. If you're going to be delayed, let someone know.
- If you are willing and able to drive please let the weekend organiser know. It makes their life easier and shares the burden of driving.

9. WHAT'S A YOUTH HOSTEL LIKE?

- The building could be a cottage, a large house or even a castle. Some are situated in remote places. They vary in standard from simple to almost hotel like.
- Typically, a youth hostel has separate dormitory style rooms for men and women with bunk beds. Each dormitory may accommodate from 4 to 12 or more. A sheet sleeping bag, pillow and duvet are provided. It usually has a small but usable members kitchen, a common room with books and magazines and a drying room. Many youth hostels serve breakfast and evening meal and can also provide a packed lunch for an additional fee.

10. WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING ON A WEEKEND?

- The short answer is food and clothing! Full details are in the Barnet YHA Members' Guide.
- You need to bring food for dinner on Saturday unless a communal meal is planned, or there is a pub in the vicinity of the hostel or you plan to buy a meal from the hostel (not all hostels provide meals). You also need food for breakfast on Saturday and Sunday unless you plan to buy a hostel breakfast.
- You also need food for lunches while we are walking on Saturday and Sunday. This isn't necessary if we are stopping at a pub which is known to serve food and you don't mind paying for a pub lunch.

11. HOW ARE WEEKEND DAY WALKS ORGANISED?

- Typically we meet at 9.00 - 9.30am at Barnet Odeon and transport is arranged by the organiser to the start of the walk. A pub lunch is normally an option but bringing a packed lunch usually works out cheaper.
- Depending on the time of year, we walk until about 4.00pm then travel back to Barnet to arrive by 6.00pm.

12. HOW DO I JOIN?

- We allow you to join us for up to four Tuesday evenings and one weekend away to 'Try the group out'. After this time, if you wish to join the group, you need to take out membership. This is currently £30 for a whole year up to 31st October or pro-rata if you join part way through the Group's year. (If you join in April you will pay £15, July £7.50 etc.)
- Please complete the details on the last page and hand to the Treasurer or any Committee member, who will issue you with a Barnet YHA membership card. (Do not lose this, as you may need it to book a place on weekends.) You can attend group events while your application is being processed by the Committee.
- For all Barnet YHA Group weekend trips that use YHA accommodation, you will be covered by Barnet YHA Group's Group membership Card so you do not need to be a member of YHA (England & Wales) Limited or of any other country's youth hostel association that is affiliated to IYHF.

Application to join Barnet YHA Group

I would like to join Barnet YHA Group and agree to abide by its rules. I understand that the Committee has the right to refuse or withdraw membership, and I agree to accept its decision. I understand that participation in any Barnet YHA Group event is entirely at my own risk, and that neither the Group, nor the organiser or leader of any event, nor any member of Barnet YHA Group will be liable for any loss or injury, howsoever caused. I have received a copy of the Barnet YHA Members' Guide. I consent to the information that I provide below being stored on a computer for the purpose of maintaining the Group's membership records.

Name and address (including postcode):

Home phone number: _____ Mobile phone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Fee Paid: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Committee member: _____

- Which Barnet YHA Group events have you been on? e.g. weekend / summer evening walk / day walk
- please specify.

- Do you suffer from any medical condition that might affect you during Group activities? Yes/No
- if yes please specify