



Barnet YHA Group

SUMMARY SHEET

August 2009 Edition

Welcome to the Barnet YHA Group! This sheet of frequently asked questions is for people new to the Group.

1. WHO ARE WE?

- The Group is affiliated to the national Youth Hostels Association (YHA). Anyone who shares our aims and interests can apply to join, 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 Youth Hostels 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 - we organise walking weekends out of London. We have visited Devon, Cornwall, Hampshire, Somerset, Yorkshire, Peak District, Lake District, Wales and The Cotswolds.
- Day walks - We organise weekend day walks of 8 to 15 miles in the south-east about once a month.
- Evening walks – in the summer we offer weekday evening walks in south Hertfordshire, Central and North London. They cover 3-4 miles of local field, woodland paths, bridleways, alleys and towpaths. We start usually about 7pm and finish around 9.30pm, not too far from a pub!
- We encourage you to participate in some of these events soon, to get to know people and find out how the the Group works.
- Social events – individual members often organise social events and invite each other via the group e’mail. Events include cinema, theatre, music and comedy.

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 invite members to join their weekend. They collect all hostel accommodation money 2 months in advance, as hostels require this.

This means that we have to plan things well in advance. Please be ready to pay the organiser when asked, or you may lose your place.

- The weekend organiser co-ordinates transport. Usually we share cars and petrol costs.
- On a Friday evening, we normally meet outside the Barnet 'Odeon' Cinema around 6.00-6.30 pm (occasionally earlier - check with the weekend organiser before you book). We usually return to the Odeon by 8-10pm Sunday evening (or Bank Holiday Monday), depending on traffic and distance travelled. We make our 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. We like to stop at a pub or tea shop if possible.
- On the Saturday evening we either cook a meal in the hostel (possibly a communal meal), buy a meal provided at the hostel or eat out.
- On Sunday a shorter walk is organised. We try to finish by 3-4pm for the drive home.

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.
- We also do some city weekends in the UK and elsewhere – 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 base the costs on a fixed price per passenger mile, to compensate for petrol and wear and tear to the car. Please be ready to pay your driver your share of the travel costs before the end of the weekend. Here are some examples as a guide - Day walk in the Chilterns (£3.50), Salisbury (£14), Derbyshire (£20), Lake District (£35).
- Travel is arranged about a month before the trip. At this 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.
- It's your responsibility to make sure you know how you're getting to the hostel. Turn up on the Tuesday evening meeting before the weekend to find out the final arrangements.
- The meeting point is at Barnet Odeon, about ¼ mile south of High Barnet underground station on the Great North Road (A1000) at the junction of Station Road. Check with your driver beforehand.
- Many of our trips are 3 or more hours' drive away and the hostels lock up at 11pm. We return Sunday (or Bank Holiday Monday) at 8-10pm. For some local

weekends, we leave on Saturday morning. If you're going to be delayed, let the drive know urgently.

- 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 HOSTEL LIKE?

- It could be a cottage, a large house, a mansion or even a castle. Some are in remote places. They vary in standard from simple to almost hotel like.
- Typically, a hostel has shared single sex bedrooms for 4-12 people with bunk beds. A sheet, pillow and duvet are provided. There is usually has a members' kitchen, a common room with books, magazines and TV and a drying room. Many hostels serve breakfast and evening meal and can provide a packed lunch for a fee.

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

- The short answer is food and clothing! Full details are in the Fact Sheet No 3.
- You need to bring food for dinner on Saturday unless a communal meal is planned, or there is a pub serving food near 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 on Saturday and Sunday walks unless we are stopping at a pub which is known to serve food and you don't mind buying 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 often available, but bringing a packed lunch is 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 invite you to join us for up to four Tuesday evenings and one weekend away to 'Try the group out'. After this, if you wish to join us, you need to become a member. 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. (Keep this carefully, 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 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 national YHA (England & Wales) Limited or 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 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? eg Tuesday evenings / weekend away / 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