



Photo courtesy Ray Poole

Highgate Wood still flying the flag

By Daphne Chamberlain

“...And the Green Flag goes to Highgate Wood”, – again. East Finchley’s near neighbour has now won the Civic Trust’s award for the seventh year running, which only five other open spaces in England and Wales have achieved.

Ray Poole, Conservator of Trees, runs the wood for the Corporation of London with a staff of seven. He told *THE ARCHER* that a Green Flag-winning open space must be clean, well-maintained, safe, and professionally managed, with a long-term plan that shows improvement every year. It also has to be sustainable, using pesticides responsibly. None at all are used in Highgate Wood. Neither is peat, which is a dwindling resource. They use coir (coconut shell) instead.

A delicate balance

A Flag-winner has to keep a balance between wildlife, visitors and amenities. Visitors shouldn’t expect too much of the garden round the café at the moment though, as Mr Poole says there are major digging operations going on.

The Civic Trust look for community involvement, and Highgate Wood has a consultative committee of local people. There are guided walks, and free cricket coaching for local schools, with the guides coming from Middlesex Cricket Club. (Local generally means Haringey, Camden and Barnet.)

How do the judges decide if a site is meeting their criteria? “A desktop marking and two visits. One visit is official, but the other one is surreptitious!”

They obviously like what they have seen. In fact, they suggested that next year the Wood should apply for a Green Heritage award as well. To qualify for one of these, a site must have historical value, and Mr Poole could cite some ancient earthworks and a Roman kiln.

What is a nutritionist?

By Simone Baroke

Most people’s perception seems to be that nutritionists just deal with weight loss issues and spend their time drawing up punishing dietary regimes, but nutritional therapy has a much broader application. It harnesses the medicinal properties of food, and works on the basis that targeted dietary changes can help alleviate specific health problems. Nutritional supplements are often employed to kick-start and support the body’s healing process.

Nutritional therapy combines very well with other treatments, orthodox medical as well as complementary. Personally, I take the view that virtually everyone could benefit from professional nutritional advice, and that even quite small changes can have lasting, positive effects on a person’s health. There are many conditions which often respond particularly well to nutritional therapy, such as digestive disorders, viral infections and other conditions affecting the immune system, stress-related disorders, food allergies and intolerances, cardiovascular disease, neurological disorders, diabetes, high cholesterol and blood pressure, hormonal imbalances such as PMS, menopausal symptoms, as well as arthritis, osteoporosis, and general fatigue.

When potential clients first approach a nutritionist, it is important to talk about their health problems, treatment goals and expectations and to explain that Nutritional Therapy is not a quick fix, but requires a certain level of commitment. The client should be asked to complete a question-

naire, detailing their full medical history and recording any medication they are currently taking. These details are very important to get a full picture, and also from a safety point of view to make sure that there aren’t any known interactions between

their medication and any supplements or herbs that might be recommended.

Qualifications are important. In my case I hold a degree in nutritional therapy as well as in health sciences, which gives me a very broad knowledge base in addition to my nutritional expertise. I ask the clients to complete a 3-day food diary to bring to their first consultation, which provides valuable data for me to work with. Changing the way you eat can be a real challenge, so



Nutritionist Simone Baroke. Photo by Rick Scorza

I like to place special emphasis on negotiating achievable goals with each client.

Simone is a Member of the British Association of Nutritional Therapists and can be contacted on 020 8883 0915 or 07950 054754

Many readers will know Simone from her student days working in the Natural Choice shop in the High Road. She is one of the therapists who will be involved in Cootes new health venture in Ballards Lane.

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