



# Small shops v supermarket giants

By Stella Parkinson

Seventy-five per cent of our grocery needs are now met by the four major supermarkets in Britain: Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda/Wal-Mart and Morrisons. With this alarming statistic in mind, I decided to find out how the shops on the High Road in East Finchley compete with these four shopping giants.

Guilty of being one of the 75%, I was overwhelmed by the quality, variety and, perhaps surprisingly, value of the goods I found in local shops. From everyday necessities to fresh fish, fruit, vegetables, pasta and a whole range of organic produce, the High Road met and surpassed my needs every time. What really stood out for me was the taste and quality of the fresh goods I bought compared with most supermarket produce.

Michael Paphitis, of Tony's Continental, renowned for their huge range of fresh fruit and vegetables, not to mention recipe tips, says that this is a

major attraction of shopping locally. He said: "Supermarkets generally aren't able to compete with the fresh produce we provide. We carefully select our goods from the markets every morning, the same ones we have gone to for 25 years".

And the price test? My shopping basket came to £14.02 on the High Road, compared with an average of £11.61 in the supermarkets. So that was a little over £2 extra in this personal sample but the clinchers for me were the variety, quality and personal service I got on the High Road. I am converted and aim not to be one of the 75% any longer!

## Digging for garden treasures

Is your garden a hidden gem? The National Gardens Scheme (NGS) is looking for gardeners in East Finchley who would be willing to open their patch to the public.

The NGS is a national charity that encourages garden owners to share their passion and creativity in aid of charity.

A first for East Finchley this year will be Paul Harrington and Patsy Joseph's cottage-style garden in Elm Gardens, which won them the title of Daily Mail Plantsman of the Year in 2005.

Packed with Mediterranean and tender exotic plants, the garden will be open for viewing on Sunday 6 August from 12-6pm.

For a glimpse of another green oasis, visit actress Maureen Lipman's favourite garden in Muswell Hill which opens to the public on Sunday 30 April from 2-7pm.

Owned by Susan Bennett and Earl Hyde, the garden in St Regis Close is described as a magical retreat behind a 1960s terrace, complete with ponds, waterfalls, archways and an oriental pagoda.

Admission will be £2.50 with children admitted for free. Plants and homemade teas will be on sale.

To enrol your garden with the scheme or to get details of all local events, contact Susan and Earl on 020 8883 8540 or visit [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk).

## Park House future unresolved

By Diana Cormack

**The future of Park House, opposite the tube station, is still uncertain as discussions about its possible sale continue.**

The HGS Institute, which occupies the site, has moved its main offices and many of its classes across the road into the McDonalds headquarters. It is not certain if the Institute will retain offices in Park House.

The Institute Arts Centre, now under construction on the old Neurological Hospital site on the other side of the station, should be completed in November.

## Memorial service for Lynn Cornelius

Many readers of *THE ARCHER* will be aware of the death last November of Lynn Cornelius, former teacher and art and special needs coordinator.

Martin Junior School is holding a memorial service to celebrate Lynn's life on Wednesday 26 April at 7pm in the school hall.

Many former pupils and their families have already expressed a wish to join with staff on this occasion. Invitations have been sent to some people where the school still holds postal details, but there may be many more who knew Lynn who will wish to be present.

If you have not received an invitation and would like to be there, please telephone the school office by 6 April on 020 8883 7404.

## Fired to fame

One luxury house on the outskirts of East Finchley has been fired to superstardom by its role in the hit BBC TV series *The Apprentice*.

Gable Lodge, just the other side of the A1 on The Bishops Avenue, has been acting as home away for home for the 14 contestants in the BBC show.

When they're not facing the wrath of Sir Alan Sugar - catchphrase "You're fired" - the business hopefuls can enjoy Gable Lodge's eight bed-

rooms, eight bathrooms, three reception rooms, 140ft garden and swimming pool.

Filming was completed at the house last year and it is now on the market for a cool £5.25 million. At that price, even Sir Alan might have to think twice.



Photo by Erini Rodis

## Library space needs ideas

By Daphne Chamberlain

**The meeting room on the first floor of East Finchley library is largely under-used. Lack of disabled access, plus non-availability of attendants, are two reasons.**

Local councillor Colin Rogers also blames the hire charge. Speaking at last month's Barnet Council budget meeting, he said the cost of £31 per hour deterred community use.

Adam Gee, Chair of East Finchley Library Users' Group, would like Barnet to use the

space as a commercial development, which he believes would be a more effective cost-saver than reducing already overstretched library staff.

*THE ARCHER* would welcome your suggestions for making the best use of our library meeting-room (contact details on page 2).

## Art for Stanley Field

**Members of the East Finchley Open art group are working on an exhibition about the past, present and future of Stanley Field to be shown at the new police office in the High Road in May.**

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