



Your ideas to bring people together

The East Finchley Altogether Better team met more than 80 new people and heard their views at a Pop Up Shop at the Finchley Youth Theatre in February.

Some ideas for new initiatives in the area emerged, including a book club, meditation group and a loyalty card scheme for local shops. Organiser Lisa Smith said EFAB was looking to help start these up or link them with projects already happening where possible.

EFAB is looking for volunteers to help lead or take part in their projects. Here's the current list:

- **Back to Work Boost Workshops:** first workshop to take place at the Bobath Centre in May for anyone out of work/looking for a change.
- **Cooking Skills Share Workshops:** simple, nutritious meals for those who lack confidence in the kitchen.
- **Evaluation Group:** could you help as part of our borough wide evaluation team, measuring Altogether Better's progress and effectiveness?
- **EFAB Festivals Group:** volunteer to help at the EFAB Community Stand as part of the East Finchley Summer or Winter Festival.

• **Green Fingers Gardening Group:** share gardening tips together.

• **Homes & Away:** bringing the opportunity for activities and excursions into local homes.

• **IT & Biscuits: IT for all:** a chance to gain confidence in technology to those who thought it was not for them!

• **Mums Who Run:** get fit and socialise together, at your own pace.

• **Shop Assistance:** delivering shopping home to those less able to carry it.

• **Table Tennis:** get fit together with ping pong.

• **Winter Warmers:** don't stay cold at home, come to a local communal space to warm up together.

• **Young Person Hub:** somewhere safe and fun to hang out and learn, to be run by young people for young people.

If you would like to volunteer for or participate in any of these projects contact EFAB via www.efab.org.uk or phone Lisa on 07909 998453.

A chance to participate

An experiment in democracy has been launched in East Finchley bringing together people from across the borough of Barnet with the aim of getting things done and making changes.

Barnet Participates was taking over the Shree Aden Community Centre in Church Lane on 30 March, shortly after this issue went to press, inviting along all Barnet residents, voluntary groups as well as councillors.

"How can we make Barnet a better place?" was the starting point of the day and the hope was that group collaboration would uncover new ways to work together on various local issues and find practical solutions to local problems.

"The future of this project will depend on the discussions that take place on the day," said one of the organisers Rosie Rogers before the event. "We want to bring people together, to get to know one another and form connections. Local politicians will be there but they won't be given any special treatment"

The impetus for the experiment comes from a group of people who found through local meetings and online communities that they have a mutual interest in local politics and participation.

So how might it fit with a group like East Finchley Altogether Better (EFAB), which has been up and running for a year, with many of the same aims?

Dora Meade, of Barnet Participates, said there was no intention to encroach on existing projects and that the new experiment was a Barnet-wide initiative that might be able to give extra power to a local group like EFAB.

To find out more visit <http://barnet.participates.org.uk>



Lily up the allotment with Claire, sporting her Crufts rosette

Happy soul Lily takes a rosette

By John Lawrence

You won't see many dogs like Lily around. The six-year-old is a Hovawart, a rare breed of which there are only 200 in England and possibly as few as half a dozen in London.

She's a regular visitor to East Finchley Allotments, where her owner Claire Scully has a plot, and was looking particularly proud recently after returning from the Crufts dog show with a runners-up rosette in her class.

The Hovawart is a German guard dog, originally bred for life on farms. Nowadays they can be great companions in the city: excellent for security, very watchful and always alert for threats or unwanted visitors.

Lost keys

Once they know you, they are also extremely loving... and useful. Lily's party piece is to locate a set of lost keys by following the scent of the person who dropped them. When she does it for me, Lily comes back with the keys in her mouth, jangling them triumphantly.

Claire says Lily is a happy soul who does everything with gusto and joy. "She likes

walking on Hampstead Heath because she can swim in the ponds," says Claire. "She does enjoy chasing squirrels but she always slows down if she looks like catching them. It's just the chase she enjoys."

Lily was a puppy when she first visited the allotments and knows the etiquette there perfectly. Vegetables, plants and beds are not to be walked on so even if she's in a rush she'll always move in straight lines and right angles.

Low maintenance

Her coat looks like it needs a lot of work but in fact, even for Crufts, she is very low maintenance. She needed just two baths beforehand and a good groom. Normally, it's a stiff brush once a week.

Mixing with the other well-trained dogs at the show was no problem. And for winning a rosette she chose her own treat from one of the food stands there... liver muffins!

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