



# Front gardens in glorious bloom

By Sheila Armstrong

Front gardens are under threat with more of us trading them in for paved areas or parking. The Finchley Society is hoping to keep them front of mind with its Finchley in Bloom competition.

The idea is simple. If you're proud of your garden, or can nominate some one else, just enter, free of charge. The competition is open to anyone who lives in Finchley or Friern Barnet and maintains a front garden.

You could win a garden voucher worth £100 to spend at Finchley Nurseries and there are runners up vouchers worth £50 and £25, with a special prize of a £50 voucher for the best environmental/wildlife garden. Entries must be in by 11 July and entry forms are available in local libraries or from email Finchleyinbloom@gmail.com or phone 020 8346 5503.

There are opportunities for wild life in the smallest front garden. Bees, mini beasts, birds and even grasshoppers will quickly colonise it. And with just the smallest pond a whole different set of creatures will arrive.

### Parking problems

Front gardens add to the pleasantness of the environment we live in but increasing numbers of front gardens are now totally hard surfaced to accommodate cars. And as long as there is drainage this is

allowed. The crossovers needed to access the new front gardens/ car parks result in more limited on-street parking so neighbours then create parking on their own front gardens.

### Concerns about hard landscaping

In late March, with thoughts of spring and gardening in mind, The Finchley Society held a meeting entitled *Do Front Gardens Matter?* The panel included a representative of Ealing's Local Agenda 21 who referred to other results of hard landscaping front gardens: alterations to the water table, flooding and effects on wildlife (see their website www.ealingfrontgardens.org.uk). Jane Blackburn from the Garden Suburb Trust explained that Suburb residents are not allowed to change their front gardens, and trees or hedges cannot be removed, so it is a very green place.

If you want to park on your front garden the RHS recommends greener alternatives to hard landscaping, such as moisture permeable surfaces, which can address some of the problems. Visit www.rhs.org.uk .

# Get ready to vote

By Nick Young

The 2014 local elections, in which all councillor seats in all 32 London Boroughs are contested, will take place on Thursday 22 May. All 21 council wards of the London Borough of Barnet will elect three councillors.

The full list of candidates for the East Finchley council ward was not available at the time of going to press.

At the 2010 local elections, the Conservative Party retained control of Barnet Council with 39 councillors; Labour returned 21 councillors and the Liberal Democrats three. East Finchley returned three Labour councillors.

Usually, council elections are held on the first Thursday in May, but this year they have been put back three weeks to coincide with the elections to the European Parliament.

For the European Parliament election, East Finchley forms part of the London constituency which elects eight

MEPs using a method of party-list proportional representation.

If you are not already registered to vote, an electoral registration form can be downloaded from Barnet Council's website.



The hunt is over - who has the most eggs? Photo Mike Coles

# Chocs away for Monday youth club

An Easter egg hunt got everyone racing around at the Monday Youth Club in Oak Lane. The club operates on Monday evenings between 6pm and 8pm at the Ann Owens Centre and on Martin School field for football. If you are interested in joining the club, where you can take part in many different activities as well as go on organised outings, call 07931 586 740 for further details.

# A bench to remember Horace

By Diana Cormack

Part of Barnet Council's improvement work in North Finchley will include a memorial to the late Horace White. A bench and a plaque in his name will be situated outside Sainsbury's supermarket on the High Road, one of the places where Horace used to be found chatting to passers by.

This well known character was a long term resident of East Finchley and, after his sudden death at the age of 54 in September 2012, thousands commented on a Facebook page devoted to him. There was an online petition calling for a memorial to be established.

### Memorial garden

Subsequently in July 2013 Barnet Homes opened a new garden on the Grange Estate, where Horace had lived since 1972. It was created with the help of local residents and was dedicated to him.

Horace's sister Selina



A smile for everyone: Horace White. Photograph: barnet-today.co.uk

Higgins, who now lives in Edmonton, expressed her delight at this latest memorial to her brother, who will be long remembered by many for his wishing one and all "The best of luck."

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