



# YOUNG ARCHER



Joe Strong with his Community Award. Photo Mike Coles

## Joe honoured for his work with young people

By Diana Cormack

East Finchley worker Joe Strong was presented with an award at a ceremony in Hendon in September in recognition of the 23 years he has given to working with young people in the community.

## Celebration and prizes

The spirit of celebration was felt at the Archer Academy's prizegiving ceremony when former pupils were welcomed back to help mark the achievements of current students.

Former army officer turned adventurer Neil Laughton was the guest speaker and shared stories about climbing Everest and racing from Land's End to John O'Groats on a penny farthing. The audience were treated to both music and dance performances during

the event.

The secondary school in Eagans Close, N2, thanked members of the East Finchley community, including East Finchley Open and Beaumont Close Residents Association, for their continued support of the annual ceremony.



Prize moment: Sophie, from Year 11 at the Archer Academy, collects her award for art from Lesley Andrew and Peter Hale, of East Finchley Open, as guest speaker Neil Laughton looks on.

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It came from the AAA4S-UCCESS charity, founded in Leicester by Cheryl Armatrading in memory of her son and young murder victim Antoin Akpom to assist and support young people towards achieving their ambitions in life.

Joe's own life changed in 1995 when, after a career in night club management, he decided to do something different. He moved from Manchester to London and began working with youngsters, often vulnerable or problematic teenagers who had difficulties with mainstream schooling, as well as doing support work in the secondary sector.

**Monday, Friday and more**

Many Strawberry Vale residents will know Joe from his work with the thriving football section of the Monday Club and also from the Friday Youth Club. He told us that he has also been mentoring and working with young individuals in the community who have mental health issues.

Joe believes the reduction in social services has contributed greatly towards many of the problems young people are now experiencing. He told *The Archer* that when he started working in Barnet in 1996, the borough ran 23 youth centres but that today there are only two: Canada Villa in Mill Hill and Finchley Youth Theatre on the High Road.

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Helping each other: Monkey Puzzle pre-schoolers with residents at Nazareth House. Photo: Chloe O'Donovan.

## Nursery visits bridge the generation gap

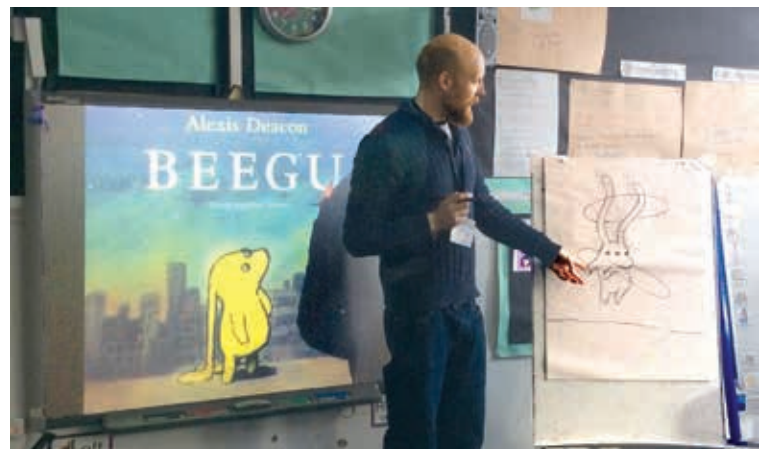
By Tamara Manrique Lago

Our Monkey Puzzle pre-schoolers had the opportunity to learn about our elders and share a space with them at Nazareth House Care Home, East End Road, N2, thanks to the JOY (Joining Old and Young) project founded by Jenny Kossew.

We walked up the High Road, which gave us the opportunity to develop our learning of road safety, sharing space with other pedestrians and "stranger danger". There was lots to see on the way. The children talked about the numbers they saw on the buses and on price labels for the fruit and veg stands.

JOY is all about joining old and young together. It is a

lovely experience for everyone involved, as each month the pre-schoolers go to the care home to visit the elderly, building relationships with them and learning to adapt to different social situations. Each child is paired with one of the residents and together do lots of singing and an arts and crafts activity, in this case decorating paper people. We're looking forward to our visit again next month.



Words and pictures: Author and illustrator Alexis Deacon at Martin School

## Stories brought to life

Year 2 pupils at Martin School have been completing projects inspired by the book *Beegu* by Alexis Deacon and, shortly before the half term break, the author himself popped in to run a workshop, read the book and talk to them about the story. Headteacher Miss Chater said the children were enthralled.

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