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Spot the paintings: The tiny canvasses in position and close up. Top to bottom: East End Road/Briar Close, Viceroy Close, East End Road bridge and Dan & DeCarlo's wall. Photos: Jon Hindmarsh, Mike Hughes and Alison Roberts

Gritty as a picture

Over the period of lockdown, a number of small cameo paintings popped up in some very odd spots around East Finchley. About the size of a table mat and positioned unobtrusively they were hard to spot but we found four.

They deliberately steered away from the picturesque. Each was a painting of the unlovely location where they were sited, sometimes nothing grander than a brick wall, a road sign or a drainpipe. In recent weeks, some have disappeared but we wondered who had created them and why. Please get in touch if you know by emailing news@the-archer.co.uk.

Busy life of a beekeeper

By Ruth Anders

When beekeeper Lucie Chaumeton opens one of her hives and breathes in the spicy scent of the propolis resin her bees produce, she says: "My heart lifts and all my cares evaporate."

Lucie started her hobby five years ago after a memory from school in France was triggered on hearing a radio broadcast by another dedicated beekeeper. She joined the Barnet & District Beekeepers' Association and has never looked back.

An Inspector calls

Her three hives sit at the end of the large family garden in Beech Drive, N2, and her passion for beekeeping is palpable. She told me about her complex pastime for two hours, and could barely disguise her excitement that my arrival was coinciding with an imminent visit from the Seasonal Bee Inspector.

Hives suffering from European foulbrood, a prevalent disease this year, had been found in the area and, as a precaution, all local beekeepers were subject to inspection.

Full time job

While we waited for him, Lucie showed me her hives and the variety of clothing and equipment she needs to fulfil the necessary husbandry. Bee management is a huge subject and a good deal of work and vigilance is required to maintain healthy and thriving hives. The liveliest period for beekeepers is spring and summer, when she cannot be away from the hives for more than a week.

Lucie also showed me the items she produces from her bees including boot and furniture polish, soap, wax food wraps, lip balm and of course honey.

Healthy hives

When she and the Inspector, both appropriately suited and booted, opened the hives, a vast number of bees emerged clinging to each frame. Happily the hives were pronounced disease-free.

Our conversation covered details such as how to use a



Waxing lyrical: Lucie with her hive products

"smoker" to calm the bees, a bee's three-mile flying circle, how to make the wax frames for the hives and the beekeeping certificates she's achieved through her training. Lucie also told me about robber bees and wasps, and the 'waggle dance' bees use to communicate. The life of a hive is packed with drama.

You can see more about Lucie on her Instagram account: @miandelucie and contact her via: miandelucie@gmail.com

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