



ECO-FRIENDLY EAST FINCHLEY

Neighbours transform plot of unloved land

By Diana Cormack

Since early last year, a group of residents in Chapel Court, N2, have been transforming the outlook behind their block of flats, which was once overgrown with bushes, brambles, weeds and covered in rubbish.

With a lot of hard work, they have established several flower beds and cultivated other patches with a variety of vegetables and fruit. These are grown in the ground as well as in containers and raised beds. There is also a lawn which is left partly unmown to encourage wildflowers and to fit in, like the rest of the site, with the East Finchley Pollinator Project.



Before and after: One of the overgrown plots at Chapel Court transformed into a tended garden.

The individual and community garden patches grew from an idea of flat dweller Michelle, who told *The Archer* she had wanted to improve the view she looked out on. Michelle and her neighbour Nik put in the original ground work and found the necessary finance.

Gradually more neighbours joined in and they now have a pleasanter place to sit in as well as to care for and continue to develop. Michelle and Nik paid tribute to all the participants and to local councillors Claire Farrier and Arjun Mitra for their interest and support.

Can you help?

At the time of writing they are waiting for approval and hopefully some help from Barnet Homes Garden Club and are also on the lookout for more funding. So what else do they need? Eco friendly, they make their own fertiliser and have been given a hot bin composter by a group member's mother but could do with some more water butts, a stone bird bath and planks of wood to make raised beds. Also any garden tools such as edgers, pruners, etc. would be welcomed.

If you can supply any of these or have something else they might find useful please email chapelcourtgarden@gmail.com



Bargains for sale

The regular Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale takes place this month on Saturday 27 August from 10am to 1pm at the usual venue of Hornsey Parish Church Hall, on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10 3AH. Admission is 50p and there are refreshments available.



Stick insect: A Forest School member shows off the butterfly-shaped she created from willow sculpture.

Forest crafts give residents a new outlook on life

By Janet Maitland

A group of local residents who have just completed a 12-week forest school course found it so life changing they want to continue meeting up in the woodland indefinitely.

You didn't know East Finchley has a forest? You'll find Barnwood N2 on Tarling Road, next to the community centre. This tiny but magical place was locked away and overgrown for more than 20 years until volunteers stepped forward to create a tranquil wildlife haven.

Barnwood N2 is now a flourishing sanctuary for not only wildlife but local people, a group of whom have spent their summer going to Silver Birches, a 12-week course for the over 55s run by Urban Forest Collective, who teamed up with Barnwood N2 Chairman Leo Smith to design a range of nature-based arts, crafts and bush craft activities.

Connecting

"Everyone has suffered in one way or another over the last couple of years," said Leo. "With a grant from Barnet Innovations Fund, this project

was designed to give Barnet residents a reason to 'surface' again and regain their lost confidence through sharing their feelings and working together."

Participants spent every Tuesday nestled among the trees and surrounded by birdsong, doing things they'd never done before, like fire lighting, weaving willow, making bird boxes, practising Qi Gong, wood splitting, balm making and foraging.

"We hope that in our work with over 55s we can support people to feel more connected to themselves, to others and to nature," said Linda Royles,

from Urban Forest Collective. "We hope to reduce loneliness and isolation and build confidence and comfort in the outdoors."

There are hopes that the group can become self-managing, sharing skills of their own, making food and helping out with planting. "We're exploring ways to make this happen," said Leo.

To contact Barnwood N2, call 020 8371 9643. For information about Urban Forest Collective, call 07971 881229 and ask for Linda, email info@urbanforestcollective.org or go to urbanforestcollective.org

Recycling sign to appear at all local donation points

By Emma Frampton

The big news from the Bin There Donate That recycling project this month is the launch of our logo. Our aim is to provide this to all shops with donation points so with luck this will become a common recognisable sign around East Finchley.

The logo was designed by Ellen K Stone at www.ellenkstone.co.uk and we are all very grateful. If you made it to the East Finchley Festival, you will have seen the logo adorning our stall and my t-shirt.

Sitting on a festival stall was a first experience for all of us. It was lovely meeting and engaging with lots of local people and seeing the genuine interest in recycling and reusing our unwanted household items.

If you'd like more information about what we're doing please email us at bintheredonatethat@gmail.com.

Here's our running list of donation points where you can drop off your unwanted items for recycling. We'd like to give a special mention to David Hillel Opticians in the High

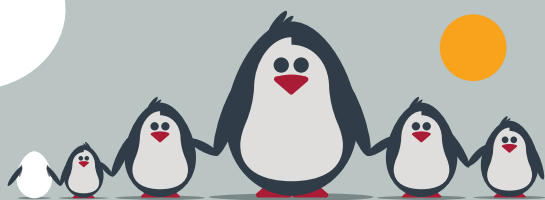
Road, N2, who have put a box by their entrance for unwanted spectacles to be recycled by The National Spectacle Recycling Scheme.

What and where to donate

- Lightbulbs to Amy's or EF Electrical
- Broken electrical items to EF Electrical
- Electrical wires to Everything Electrical
- Ink cartridges to UOE
- Blister packs to Oakdale Pharmacy
- Unwanted spectacles to Stewart Duncan Opticians and David Hillel Opticians
- Crisp packets to Cherry Tree Café, Cherry Tree Wood
- Paper, cork, ribbon, foil, wood off-cuts, buttons, stationery, sequins, carpet samples to Amy's.

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