

## The Finchley Horticultural Society

1 Princes Avenue, Finchley, London N3 2DA

For all Finchley gardeners and for ploholders at Gordon Road and Nethercourt Avenue.

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Member of  
Barnet Federation  
of Allotment and  
Horticultural Societies



**Remember you can get a 10% discount off seeds and plants at Finchley Nurseries Garden Centre if you are an FHS Member**

## Coming Attractions

### - Finchley Nurseries Garden Centre -

**10th July and 4th September**, 10.30am – 4.30pm

Burton Hole Lane, Mill Hill, London NW7 1AS.

Band, morris dancers, and cream teas (from 3pm).

### - Open Garden -

**Sunday 17 July**, 2pm – 6pm

79 Church Lane, East Finchley, London N2 0TH

NGS. Admission £2.50, children free.

### - Avenue House -

East End Road, London N3

**Bothy Garden Opening: 7th August** (free). On **4th September** there is a Garden Party with stalls and produce for sale (entrance £5).

**Tree Trail:** Avenue House has a very special collection of wonderful trees. To find out more about them go on the Tree Trail with the help of an informative Tree Trail booklet (now available from the Kiosk in the grounds price £5).

### - Long Lane Pasture -

**Butterfly Day: Saturday 23 July**, 10am – 5pm.

**Moths: After European Moth Night, Saturday 27th August**, 10am – 12 noon. Postponed if wet weather.

**Blackberry Pick: Weekends 10am – 5pm, mid July through to early September.** This is a chance to pick your own local blackberries (if you don't grow them yourself). Bring a container if possible, though some will be provided. A donation in return for your pickings is appreciated.

### - Take Part in the Big Butterfly Count -

**Saturday 16 July to Sunday 31 July**,

Contact: [www.bigbutterflycount.org](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org) for more details.

**big butterfly count**  
16th - 31st July

NGS = National Gardens Scheme  
([www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk))

# The FHS Grapevine

Newsletter of the Finchley Horticultural Society

Summer 2011

## Show Time

The Finchley Horticultural Society, under its earlier name of 'The West Finchley (Wartime) Allotments Association' held its first Show in 1940: in a war time shelter on one trestle table at Windsor Open Space. Shows were run for many years after that and were by far the most important activity for the Society – in some years both a summer and autumn show were organised. In one year there were 173 different classes to enter – vegetables, floral art, potted plants, preserves, cakes and a class for 'lady cultivars' only. Sadly support for them gradually dwindled and FHS Shows ceased in 2000. But there are still local opportunities for our members to show their produce and horticultural skills, notably at the Friern Barnet Show (a slightly younger event founded in 1942) and at our Harvest Celebration in September.

## FRIERN BARNET SUMMER SHOW

**18 and 21 August 2011**

### Horticultural Show

Classes in Vegetables, Fruit, Cut Flowers, Potted Plants, Domestic, Hobbies & Handicraft and Photography are open to all who wish to submit exhibits.

### How to Enter

Contact All Saints' Arts Centre  
on 0208 445 8388,

e-mail to [arts@allsaints.uk.com](mailto:arts@allsaints.uk.com) or visit  
the website at [www.fbsummershow.co.uk](http://www.fbsummershow.co.uk)

Free entry to exhibitors

**Friary Park, Friern Barnet Lane,  
North Finchley, London N12**

## FHS Events

### Barbecue at Gordon Road

**Sunday 24 July, 1pm. Don't miss it!**

Book now for our annual summer barbecue – super food, lovely place, excellent company! Fill in the booking form and return to June Brookes as soon as possible. Entrance is by numbered ticket: FHS members £3, guests £5.

### Summer Outing

**Chenies Manor: Wednesday 17 August**

Chenies, near Rickmansworth, is a very old Tudor House of 15/16th century, visited by Henry VIII and Elizabeth 1. The Manor is surrounded by enchanting gardens which won the Historic Houses Association & Christie's Garden of the Year 2009 Award. We will be going as a group by car, and offering lifts as available (meeting Gordon Road, 1pm). The cost is £5, plus £1.50 for a guided tour of the house. Tea and cakes are available. **Don't delay in booking:** see enclosed form. For enquiries: contact Valerie Marsh on 0208 455 4143 or by email [ppetere@aol.com](mailto:ppetere@aol.com).

### Myddelton House: Visit Postponed

This will now take place in Spring 2012.

### Barnet Allotment Competition

Now run by the Barnet Federation of Allotments, judging will take place on **Saturdays 9th and 16th July** – when all plots and site need to be looking their best. This year the Site Competition will focus more on good gardening than site management, with a separate category for Small Sites (which includes Nethercourt). The plot competition is unchanged: good luck in this to our very own Austin Kirwan and Peter Kruse.

### Trading Hut

The Hut will close for the summer on **10th July**, re-opening on **28th August**.

### Harvest Celebration

**Sunday, September 11th. Note the date. Details later.** Show and bring your produce for sale to benefit the Society.



## A Cunning Device to Deter Pigeons

This interesting feature (photo left) was inspired, designed and erected to deter pigeons by Peter Kruse on his allotment at Nethercourt Avenue. It is a model of a bird of prey, made from plastic strips for the frame and an old compost bag cut up for the body, attached to a fishing rod. The 'bird' swoops, dives and flies around Peter's plot, in a very hawk-like fashion – and since putting it up not a single pigeon has been seen anywhere on the site!

The allotment site at Nethercourt Avenue (13 plots) is also run by the Finchley Horticultural Society together with the Gordon Road site. Both are on land leased from London Borough of Barnet.

## Barnet Withdraws Rent Increase and Presses Ahead with Self-Management

Barnet Council has withdrawn its demand for all ploholders to pay huge increases in rent from April 2012. This would have nearly trebled the current rate of £6 per pole to £17 (or £34 for those living outside the Borough). A successful legal challenge to the proposals was mounted by a small group of ploholders, backed and advised by the Barnet Federation of Allotment and Horticultural Societies. The FHS supported and pledged funds to fight this campaign. There still may however be large rent increases in the pipeline. The Council will be deciding what it is going to charge from April 2013 in September.

Arrangements for allotment societies to take on self management of sites are progressing, albeit slowly. Lease conditions are being hammered out with Societies determined to obtain security of tenure and operational independence. The FHS is supportive of this initiative, but on the right terms. We like the prospect of running our sites ourselves although this will come with significant responsibilities and liabilities. The change, if terms are acceptable, will not come quickly. A special meeting will be called prior to any commitment by the FHS to discuss the new arrangements and consult FHS members.

## Plant Sale is a Great Success

The 2011 FHS Plant Sale on 15 May was a great success with proceeds of over £2,600. It was positively heaving with visitors by half past ten, and nearly all plants sold out on the day.

It was good to read in the Finchley Arrow a report that 'The Sale was a gardener's heaven with so many flowering plants, vegetables and herbs for sale at very reasonable prices.' An enormous thank-you to everyone (and there are a lot of you) who helped make it such a success: all those who grew the plants, watered the plants (Terry Burling in particular), sold the plants, and especially Claudine Fear who directed the whole complicated operation.



Claudine Fear

## A Bit about Bees

Bee hives are about to arrive at Gordon Road Allotments. A group of ploholders has been working hard clearing a designated area, (next to the public open space boundary), covering it with woodchip, planting a yew hedge and erecting a tall fence around it. They have received training over the past year in beekeeping and are now ready to put their hard earned knowledge into practice. The FHS has been very fortunate in obtaining a grant from Capital Bee (a Mayor of London's fund) providing us with a free hive, bees, training, and equipment. Plot rent to FHS will come in jars of honey!

Every precaution has been taken to reduce the risk to ploholders from the presence of bees on the site. The fence around the bee area is 6ft high so that bees fly up and away from plots and ploholders. The bee project is monitored by an outside expert to ensure proper standards and procedures are adhered to. There is a notice by the bee plot with information about who to contact if needed.

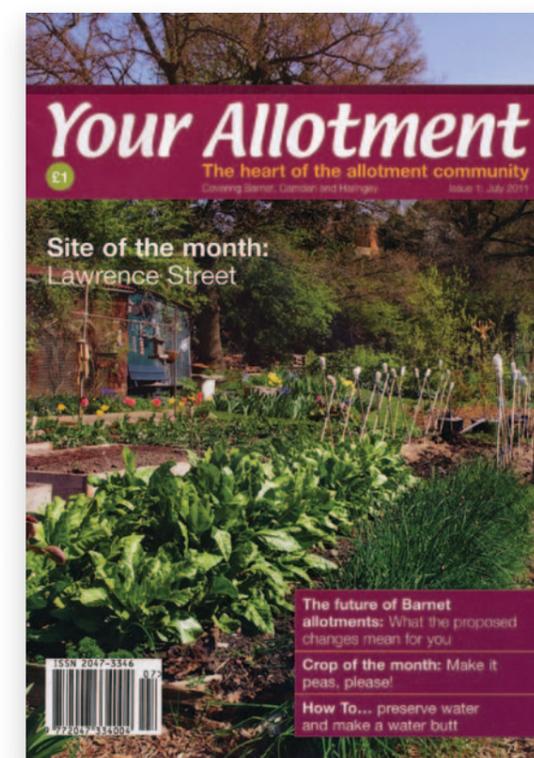
Bee numbers have suffered a severe decline in recent years - as many as one third of all British bees have gone. mirroring steep declines and empty hives witnessed in the US, mainland Europe and elsewhere. This has very serious effects on pollination of our food crops and is a great loss to our environment. London is a good place for bees because they can forage in parks, gardens and allotments where there is a supply of nectar year round (as opposed to a farming monoculture landscape).

Every ploholder can support bees by planting nectar rich flowers and minimising use of pesticides. Some vegetables (eg peas and beans, and cardoons) are particularly good. Currants, flowering and fruiting types, are both excellent. All gardeners can help by growing some beneficial bee flowers, in early spring and late autumn the availability of nectar-rich blossom is particularly important. Single flower types with easy access to pollen and nectar are best.

Some of the best bee plants are: crocus, wallflowers, aubretia, foxgloves, marigolds, single flowered dahlias, michaelmas daisies, ice plant (sedum), buddleia, lavender, heather and ivy. It's also good to be tolerant of a few native flowering 'weeds' such as dandelions, but cut the heads off before seeding.

For further information on the bee project contact: Louis Zweig (Louis.zweig@tiscali.co.uk)

## New Allotment Magazine



The first issue of an excellent new magazine *Your Allotment* has just been published for allotment holders in Barnet, Camden and Haringey. Copies are available price £1 from the Trading Hut at Gordon Road, or from June Brookes.

## A Big Welcome to New Members

Ashish Shah, Gela Pratt, Cherstyn Hurley, Sally Swan, Ken Bledin, Joyce Cobb, Marian Murray and Stefan Sperl have all joined the FHS since May 2011.