



## Home-Start Barnet

**Do you like young children? And could you spare a few hours a week to visit them and their families? If so, an East Finchley-based charity would like to hear from you.**

Home-Start Barnet is a voluntary organisation offering regular support, friendship and practical help to families in the Borough of Barnet who have at least one child under the age of five, and who are experiencing difficulties.

The scheme, based at The Old Barn Community Centre in Tarling Road, trains volunteers to visit families in their own homes on a weekly basis, and offer help in a variety of ways. This can include helping to take the children to the park, going to appointments or on shopping trips, playing with the children or simply being a listening ear for the parent.

Co-ordinators Julie Phillips and Ruth Sonntag recruit and train the volunteers, who are then carefully matched with families and visit for an average of six months. The two co-ordinators provide ongoing support for both families and volunteers, and organise extra events and training programmes.

### A breathing space

The scheme, which has been running in the Borough for five years, is part of a national and international organisation and is known to help prevent family crisis and breakdown. The volunteers give the parents a breathing space, help to build up their confidence and help them to link up to the community.

The families can refer themselves or be referred by professionals such as health visitors and social workers. "They have all kinds of difficulties, including isolation and post natal depression," says Julie Phillips. "Or they may be finding it difficult to cope with twins or triplets, or have no family nearby to offer support."

In the past the scheme has



Home-Start Co-ordinators Julie Phillips and Ruth Sonntag (second and third left) and some volunteers receiving a cheque from 'Help a London Child'. The money was used to buy 'Funbags' which were filled with toys and books for the volunteers to take when they visit families.

been part-funded by Barnet local authority and the health authority, but is now desperately seeking core funding, following an unsuccessful bid to the National Lottery Charities Board. "We are looking for a generous benefactor, such as a local business, to help us," says Ruth Sonntag.

The next six-week free training course for volunteers

begins 18 September and will include the subjects mental health, basic listening and communication skills, disability, working with diversity, and child protection.

Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Ruth, Julie or Linda at Home-Start on 020 8371 0674. There is an answerphone, so calls will be returned promptly.

## House of Mystery

Following on from its previous popularity, the BBC decided to make a second edition of the murder mystery *Messiah*. Featuring DCI Red Metcalfe in a two-parter called "Vengeance in Mind," it has been the cause of some controversial comments due to the involvement of a Downs Syndrome character.

Much of this thriller *Messiah 2* was filmed earlier in the year in a house in Fordington Avenue. And, to bring it even closer to home, the house is owned by one of *THE ARCHER*'s volunteer deliverers.

## Sort Yourself Out

By Erini Rodis

**Not a lot of people know this, but what used to be the dump in Summers Lane, North Finchley, has been turned into a fairly impressive and thorough recycling facility.**

So instead of ranting about all reasons why we should recycle and look after the planet etc, here's a list of all their dedicated areas (in order of layout) for you to cut-out-and-keep:

Plastic bottles (turned into sports fleece)	Batteries general
Scrap metal	Books
General Waste	Clothing & Textiles
Wood	Yellow Pages
Clean concrete & bricks	Foil
Garden waste	Mobile Phones (fashion victims, go fill it up!)
Cardboard	Toner Cartridges
Fluorescent tubes	Sports equipment
Paper	Pots of paint
Bottle banks / Glass	Gas bottles
Cans	Old computers and monitors
Furniture	Waste electrical equipment -
Fridges	Records/ CDs / Tapes
Motor Oil & Brake Fluid	Shoes
Car Batteries	Tyres

For all the smelly kitchen waste you wouldn't want to travel with, they even do a special deal on a variety of compost bins, which can be applied for on the following number: 020 8362 0752. Pickups can be arranged by appointment for a small charge (or free for some).

The Project is a non-profit partnership run by ECT Recycling Ltd and Barnet Council. Unfortunately a lot of people still think of it as just a "dump" site, so lots of bagged-up rubbish still arrives into their General Waste container, which cannot be sorted by staff there for health and safety reasons. This means, as ever, more landfill waste - did you know that the contents of our wheelie bins are destined for Bedfordshire?

The sites there are apparently so huge that, when questioned, council officials were "unable to describe their size". No chance of rummaging for lost lottery tickets there then. Best get sorting!

## Recycling - It's Your Move, Flat-Dwellers

By Daphne Chamberlain

**As reported last month, Barnet's flat-dwellers now have (almost) equal rights to a home collection service of rubbish for recycling. ECT, the community recycling organisation working in partnership with the Council, is providing and collecting containers - but only if they are requested.**

Residents of houses have this service automatically, but those of you living in flats or on estates must pick up the phone and ask for it.

ECT say that this is hap-

pening, which *THE ARCHER* can confirm in some parts of East Finchley. The number to ring is 020 8371 3670. ECT can also be contacted by e-mail on [info@ectrecycling.co.uk](mailto:info@ectrecycling.co.uk).

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