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# THE ARCHER



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*A community newspaper for East Finchley run entirely by volunteers.*

## Victory for diggers over allotment rents

Barnet Council has backed down over its proposal for huge increases in allotment rents in the face of a legal challenge from holders. The council's cabinet decided in February to increase rents for standard plots from £59 to £170 for Barnet residents and £340 for non-residents in April 2012.

Allotment holders had protested strongly about the proposals and a group of them started a legal challenge to the rent increases. The holders had accused the council of behaving irrationally and illegally in that their decision had been based on the wrong legislation.

No evidence was available to prove that the rent increases were necessary to cover the cost of providing the allotment service, and there was no legal basis for charging non-residents twice the rent of Barnet

residents.

In addition, the notices of the rent increases which were sent in early April to allotment holders who rent plots directly from the council were delivered several days too late: the tenancy agreement requires that 12 months notice is given of any rent increase.

In the face of this challenge, the council has now said that it will not be implementing the rent increases and admitted that the notices were delivered too late and would have no effect.

### "Sensible outcome"

Richard King, honorary secretary of the Barnet Federation of Allotment and Horticultural Societies, said: "This looks like a significant climb-down for the council; it is also the right and sensible outcome."

"We have always said that the proposed rent increases were unjustified and unjustifiable. They would have priced some allotment holders off their plots. The losers would have been exactly those people who need their allotments most: young families on tight budgets and older people who need the companionship as much as the fruit and veg." The threat of court proceedings against the council has been dropped.



## Faces of the festival

Dance Revolution were one of the dynamic groups performing at the East Finchley Festival. See the centre pages for more photos.

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## Have you got a photo for *THE ARCHER* Calendar?



The donkey derby at last year's Muswell Hill festival.

*THE ARCHER* Calendar will be back in 2012 and we're looking for your photos of sports, games or fun activities in East Finchley to make it another winner.

You may have shots of epic football matches, a walk in the park, a treasure hunt in the wood, skateboarding, cycling, or maybe just a game of cards at home - we'll consider any photo taken in N2.

As always, all money raised from sales of the calendar will be donated to a local cause or charity. More details on that soon.

Meanwhile, please send photos by email to the-archer@lineone.net and mark your email Archer Calendar 2012. Our judges will pick the best 12 and the calendar will be on sale in plenty of time for Christmas, thanks to photobox.co.uk and local traders.

We're accepting images now until the end of August. Contributors whose photos are printed will receive a free copy of the calendar. Thank you.

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