



Big wins for the best gardens in London



Trophy winners: Leopold Road Community Garden volunteers with Councillors Arjun Mittra, third from left, and Alison Moore, right. Photo Mike Coles



First place: Caroline and David Broome

By Gail Norcliffe

East Finchley gardens came out on top in the 2025 All London Championships Awards of the London Gardens Society. Judging took place over the summer, and winners were announced at a dazzling awards evening at the Guildhall in October.

The Leopold Road Community Garden was the outstanding winner of the London Community Gardens Award, beating gardens in North Kensington, Sidcup and Sutton thanks to its visual impact, cultivation and maintenance, sustainability and biodiversity. Judges praised its accessibility and year-round attractiveness, and special features like its bug hotel, book swap library and painted mural.

Residents Kathy Batten and Edwina Roberts initiated the project in 2022 and now, with

their supporting team of diggers, work throughout the year to maintain and tidy the area. Neighbours have embraced the quiet space in nature the garden offers and it has become a local focal point. One budding local poet summed it up as: "Tranquil place for thoughts or a call / Our community garden has it all."

Kathy and Edwina stress the crucial support they received from Barnet Council and councillors Alison Moore and Arjun Mittra, in getting the project off the ground and maintaining its success. Both councillors

joined the local gardeners at the awards ceremony and all were thrilled when Leopold Road came in first place.

Church Lane residents Caroline and David Broome also flew the flag for East Finchley as first-place winners in three categories. For the fifth time they won the Best Small Back Garden title, with their biodiversity features, from a toad house to natural wood pile, being especially welcome. Their other first places were for Window Boxes, Containers & Hanging Basket Displays and

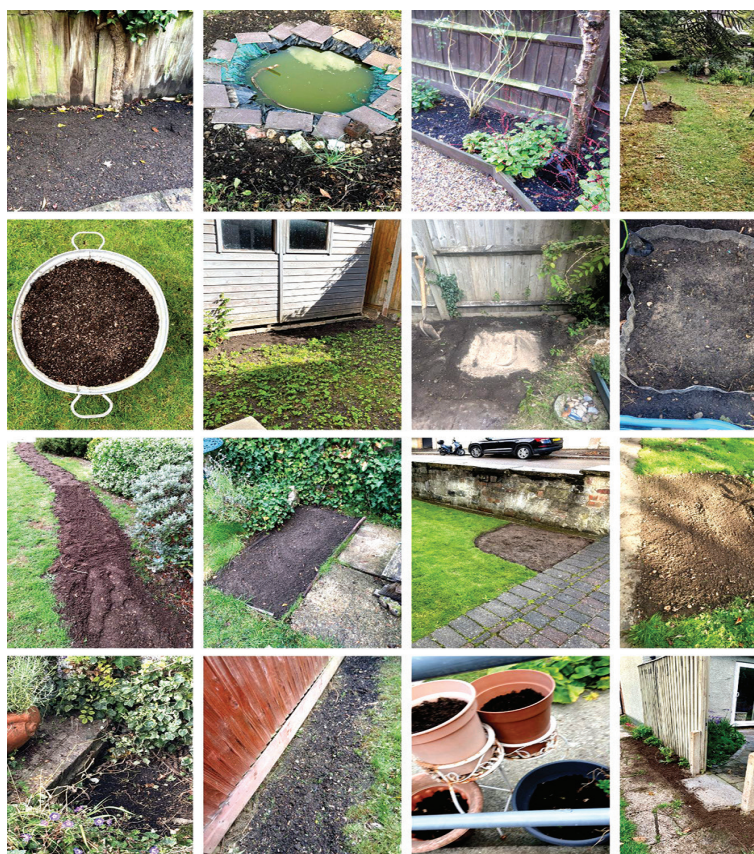
Patio Roof & Balcony Displays. Caroline and David's front garden won third in the Small Front Garden category.

Further N2 winners were third places for Janet Metcalfe for Large Back Garden and Stephen Kersley for Large Front Garden. Neighbouring Hampstead Garden Suburb's Kids' Gardening Club was third in Garden Display in a Public Place, and Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society won the Affiliated Societies Award.



Award: Janet Metcalfe

Grassroots challenge to create mini-meadows



Seed beds: Some of the dozens of sites around East Finchley sown to be pollinator-friendly.

By Matteo Lanzini
Over the last couple of months residents from East Finchley have taken part in the '60 Mini-Meadows in 60 Days' community project, by getting their hands dirty and sowing pockets of wildflowers in their gardens, balconies, allotments and shared green spaces.

This grassroots initiative has proved popular and a total of 70 mini-meadows were planted across the area. These will help restore local biodiversity, support bees, butterflies and insects, as well as boosting overall wellbeing in the process.

Finchley Pollinator Project, the group of volunteers behind this initiative, provided free wildflower seeds, friendly guidance, and encouragement, making it easy for everyone to take part. Lucky draws were used to keep the momentum and excitement levels going.

With the mini-meadows

now planted, the wait is on for their blooming next spring to please the eyes and feed the pollinators. Shiri Atsmon, of the group co-founders, shared her delight: "Together, we're showing that even small garden patches and pots can help rebuild nature locally, one mini-meadow at a time. Collective action is powerful and matters."

Young gardeners

Students at Christ's College Finchley in East End Road, N2, won a Young Gardeners Award for their hard work on keeping the school's grounds blooming. The prize was awarded as part of a competition open to all Barnet schools, sponsored by the Hendon Horticultural Society and Finchley Nurseries.

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- Call **999** in an emergency when there is a danger to life or a crime is in progress
- Call **101** for non-emergencies, if your property has been stolen or damaged, you wish to report drug dealing or a minor traffic accident, and for general police enquiries
- Report crime to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team by email: eastfinchley.snt@met.police.uk, gardensuburb.snt@met.police.uk or fortisgreen.snt@met.police.uk

Find full details for the local SNTs at www.iloven2.co.uk/local-government-and-policing

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