

New weapon in war on paved gardens

THE BATTLE to prevent Redbridge from becoming a “concrete jungle” has a new weapon, in the shape of tougher regulations on front gardens.

Under new laws due to come into force yesterday (Wednesday), home owners will have to pay £150 to apply for planning permission to pave over their front gardens.

The government rules were sparked by concerns that concreted frontages cannot absorb water like gardens do, which can lead to drains filling faster, increasing the risk of flooding.

Those who opt for more eco-friendly options, such as reinforced grass or gravel, which allow water to seep through, will

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not have to apply for permission, thus avoiding the extra charge.

Tariq Mahmood, of Highbury Gardens, Seven Kings, where several front lawns have been paved over to make way for cars, believes concreting increases litter and destroys the appearance of the area.

He said: “People throw rubbish in our gardens quite a lot. I often find bottles of Scotch and sweet wrappers in mine, which isn’t nice.”

He said families with more than one car have little choice because on-street parking is limited and residents’ parking permits cost £50 per year for one car, £70 for a second and £90 for a third or more.

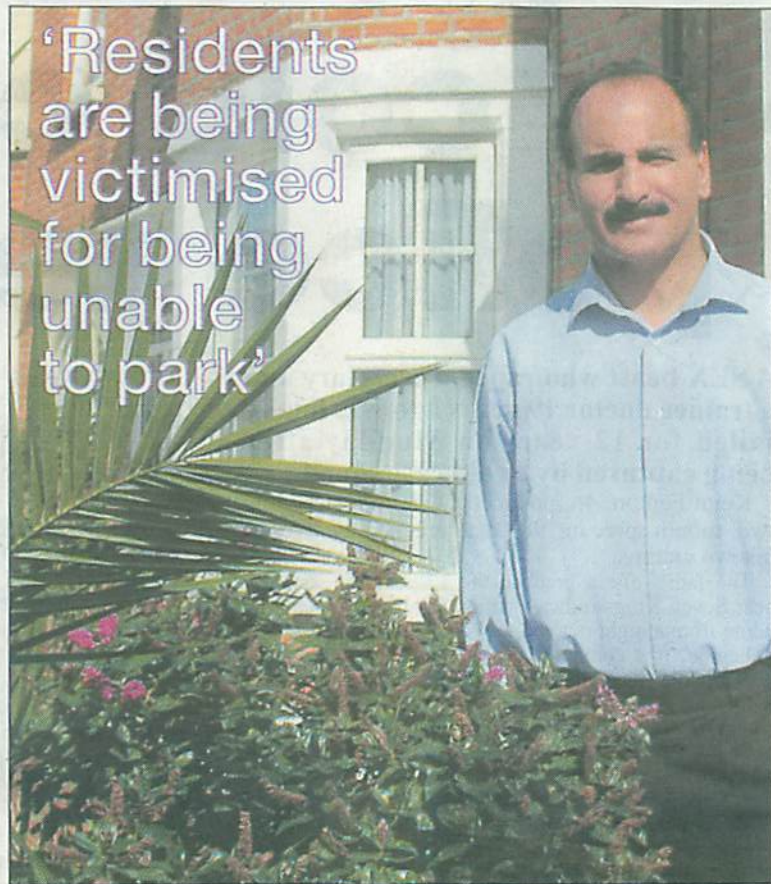
He said: “Residents are being victimised for being unable to park.”

James Smith, of Claremont Gardens, Goodmayes, welcomed the move and said his garden is easier to maintain than paving.

“I tidy it up once a year but other than that I just leave it,” he said.

A Redbridge Council spokesman said it welcomed the increased control on paving over drives as a contribution to managing and adapting to climate change.

‘Residents are being victimised for being unable to park’



● HOME FRONT: Tariq Mahmood outside his house in Highbury Gardens

Picture: Jenny Coombes

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