



The SNT is now using bicycles to patrol the area. Mo Kassar on school duty outside Holy Trinity School. Photo by Martin Addison

Bikes give officers the surprise factor

By Janet Maitland

Mo Kassar is one of the officers from our Safer Neighbourhood Team who have taken to two wheels to patrol the area. He was snapped by Martin Addison while doing school duty outside Holy Trinity School, where he also teaches road safety to primary school children.

"Bicycles increase our visibility and our responsiveness. We can get to where we need to be more quickly," said Sergeant Andy Matthews. "We can also now cover large areas such as St Pancras and Islington Cemetery, where there have been several car thefts recently. Most of the team have now been trained and issued with a special cycle uniform."

Another benefit of using bikes has been the impact on

arrests. "We've made a number of arrests where we effectively 'surprised' offenders, who were used to us patrolling on foot," said Sergeant Matthews.

The Safer Neighbourhood office is at 113 East Finchley High Road, N2 8AG. You can phone them on 020 7161 9014 or 07887 632767, email them at EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk or talk to the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) you see on patrol, on foot or on bikes.

Alert over petrol thefts

By Janet Maitland

A spate of petrol thefts has led to the Esso garage on the High Road taking extra precautions to prevent customers driving off without paying. There are now signs on the pumps warning customers that they will be delayed while car details are taken.

"Each vehicle and occupant are now scrutinised," said Sergeant Andy Matthews from the Safer Neighbourhood Team. "The registration mark and a description of the occupant are noted and a detailed CCTV image captured. Any 'drive-offs' are reported to the police and are fully investigated."

"Sometimes people don't pay because they're in a stolen car," said a garage source, who preferred not to be named. "But a lot of people are just opportunists. They see there's a queue at the cash desk, and take a chance on driving away."

A police spokesperson said that the garage was under new management and that staff were much better at recording information. He said: "The new management are hot on the case and are doing everything in their power to put a stop to the thefts. Once we're notified of a drive-off, we go to the address of the car owner. It happens sometimes that people have just forgotten and they pay up immediately, very embarrassed."

Act now to get the library you want

By Daphne Chamberlain

We have until the end of this month to tell Barnet what we want from our library service. Cuts and alterations in service throughout the borough are inevitable, and the Council have said that residents' surveys will play a key part in their decision-making. However, there were no paper survey forms for their review available in libraries until the end of October.

This was deliberate policy. When THE ARCHER asked Barnet why no forms were available for virtually the whole of last month, we were told that the delay was to avoid a clash with questionnaires on display relating to a statutory national survey into services for the young.

A council spokesperson said: "Barnet Council did not want any confusion between the two surveys, or anyone who completed the national survey to think that they had already completed the council survey into the future of our library services."

We asked why staff in more

than one library appeared not to know anything about this. One library user was told that they had been expecting the forms since the beginning of October. Barnet replied that all staff had been briefed.

The Council survey has been available online since earlier last month at www.barnet.gov.uk/index/council-democracy/consultations/libraries.

The East Finchley Library Users Group has urged everyone interested in the future of library services to participate in the survey and make their wishes known.



The Barnet Bangladeshi Community Association held a special event for Eid ul Fitr.

Reunion and inauguration for Bangladeshi community

By Alauddin Ahmed

On Saturday 2 October, 100 people gathered at the Green Man Community Centre for the Eid ul Fitr reunion and inauguration of the newly elected Barnet Bangladeshi Community Association committee.

BBCA chairperson, S M Alauddin Ahmed, on behalf of the organisation welcomed the guests with warm wishes for Eid ul Fitr and blessings of joy, peace and happiness. He talked about the need for the community to join together to think about those less fortunate than themselves. Eid reminds us to think of those who need our help.

The purpose of this event was to bring people together from across the local Bangladeshi community, and those from further afield to celebrate the end of Ramadan. Speakers included his Excellency Dr M

Sayedur Rahman Khan, High Commissioner for Bangladesh, Councillor Lisa Rutter, Deputy Mayor of Barnet, and Finchley and Golders Green MP Mike Freer. After lunch there was a performance by local Bangladeshi children.

Welcoming the growing Bangladeshi community in Barnet, the new committee is keen to reach out and work with local people to develop good relations within the area and support and develop services and facilities for local people, especially young people growing up in the area.

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