



Dangerous energy scam

By Janet Maitland

If you receive a phone call from someone who tries to sell you a plug-in device costing £99 that will save 40 per cent off your energy bills, don't be taken in. Not only do these devices not save energy, they're also dangerous.

"Consumers are warned not to use the product as they pose a risk of fire and electrocution," said Ron Gainsford, chief executive of The Trading Standards Institute, which has received hundreds of complaints about this scam. "Unscrupulous criminals are using rising energy prices as an opportunity to lure in cash strapped consumers; elderly people seem to have been deliberately targeted."

The cold callers appear to be credible, already knowing the consumer's details, their energy supplier and sometimes some or all of the digits of their credit/debit card. They

claim to be the energy supplier, or to be working in partnership with them.

If you have responded to one of the calls, you should report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or Consumer Direct on 0845 4040506. You should also contact your bank to stop your credit/debit card. If you've received a device, don't use it and dispose of it carefully.

Advice from police is to never give out any personal or financial information over the phone unless you have independently verified the caller's identity and are certain that what they are selling is what they claim it to be.



Barnet Police sign up to Mencap campaign

By Janet Maitland.

Barnet Police have signed up to a Mencap campaign called Stand By Me that aims to tackle crime where the victim is targeted for no other reason than their learning disability. There were 1,200 disability hate crimes last year, including violent attacks.

"Seventy three percent of people with a learning disability have been bullied in a public place, 32% don't feel safe in their own home, their local area or using public transport and 23% report being physically assaulted," said a spokesperson from Mencap, the charity that supports the 1.5 million people in the UK who have a learning disability.

Barnet police have commit-

ted themselves to the Mencap Police Pledge, which asks police to record disability hate crime as a crime and deal with it as a crime, rather than as anti-social behaviour. They've also promised to allow more time for interviews with people with learning disabilities.

Find out about Mencap services by calling Mencap Direct on 0300 333 111 or going to www.mencap.org.uk

Sport-hating Hannah runs in memory of her dad

An East Finchley woman who dislikes sport took up running to raise money for charity in memory of her father. Hannah Thompson, an English teacher, from Aylmer Parade, ran 5km on 4 December.

Her father Christopher died suddenly last Christmas from the heart muscle disease cardiomyopathy, and all Hannah's efforts were in aid of the charity that supports affected families, the Cardiomyopathy Association.

Hannah, who teaches at the Compton School in North Finchley, said: "I raised over £900 in two weeks. I think it is because people know I hate sport and want to watch me suffer. They know I much prefer to watch reality TV and eat cake."

Christopher died suddenly aged 60 from undiagnosed dilated cardiomyopathy. The condition, which causes the heart to enlarge and pump less efficiently, affects people of all ages, including babies. It is the main cause of sudden death in people aged under 35, but when found can usually be



Hannah Thompson ran in memory of her beloved dad Christopher.

treated successfully.

Because cardiomyopathy runs in families, Hannah and her brother Johnathan, who is 16, will have regular heart checks to ensure they stay well.

You can still sponsor Hannah at www.justgiving.com/HannahThompsonSantaRun. For more information on

the disease, visit www.cardiomyopathy.org or call the free helpline on 0800 0181 024.

Tuition centre now open

The newly opened Cherry Tree Tuition Centre at Park House, opposite East Finchley tube station, is now enrolling pupils who require extra tuition in English, maths and science. The centre offers personalised, private tuition services for all children aged between 5-18 years. The aim of the centre is to help children gain confidence and reach their potential at school and in examinations.

For the primary age group the programme includes tutor groups that prepare children for grammar and independent schools entrance examinations, help with literacy, numeracy and SATs preparation and Saturday maths clubs. For secondary pupils, GCSE English, maths and science tuition is focused on the National Curriculum and exam preparation.

Cherry Tree Tuition Centre also provides an ideal environment for children of high ability who require further stretching to be taught to a level above the national curriculum targets. Tuition is offered in one to one and small group settings (max 4-5)

Tuition times are Monday to Friday 3pm-8pm and Saturdays 9am-1pm. For more details or to book a place, contact Marion Ryan, 020 7998 5797 or mryan@cherrytreetuitioncentre.co.uk.

Check out the website at www.cherrytreetuitioncentre.co.uk

Bake to the future

By Diana Cormack

Some readers may well remember Rances, the bread shop that occupied 125 High Road at its junction with Kitchener Road. It closed in the 1980s, but things have now gone full circle with the opening of the Village Bakery in the same premises.

The new business is run by familiar local trader Pepe Dustezadeh who, until last year, owned the Casa Pepe eatery.

The range of bread he sells has had customers commenting favourably. Pepe told *THE ARCHER* it is all cooked on site, as are the other baked products on offer. East Finchley Village Bakery can also provide decorated cakes for special occasions.

Food can be taken away or eaten at one of the tables inside. The café area is growing in popularity and there are plenty of drinks and a variety of sandwiches, soups, pastries and cakes to choose from. Happily, there is a ramp for wheelchair or pushchair access. The bakery is open from 6am - 8pm on weekdays and 8am - 6pm on Sundays.



Pepe and assistant Chynna Dee. Photo by Diana Cormack

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Children's Sunday Club ♦ Meet over coffee after church
Michael Stanway is happy to answer any enquiries:

Tel: 020 8346 8591
www.holytrinityeastfinchley.org.uk

East Finchley Baptist Church

Just off the High Road in Creighton Avenue N2

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For more information
please contact the Church Office
Tel: 8883 1544 (Minister: Simon Dyke)

Visitors always welcome

Community Focus brings professional artists to your local area

Our new evening courses starting in January range from ceramics, studio photography and life drawing. Come along to our free taster session on 10th January 7pm-9pm and have a go at all 3.

For more information or to book a place call us on 0208 369 5484 or email Caitriona.Dunnett@communityfocus.co.uk