



Residents pay for illegally parked vehicle

By Kate Barnett

Given all the ongoing publicity regarding residents' parking, it is extraordinary that there was an apparently abandoned vehicle in a residents' parking bay in Baronsmere Road from August 2012 until the end of the year.



The vehicle had a valid road tax disc but no parking permit. Penalty notices were put on it in August and, in September, a notice stating that the vehicle was being investigated. A resident who raised the issue with Barnet Council's parking department was referred to the civil enforcement department, whose job it is to inspect the vehicle and decide whether it is abandoned. The parking department also advise that if a vehicle is not considered abandoned then it will be left in situ, regardless of the fact that it has no valid parking permit.

When chasing up the situation in November, the civil enforcement department advised that they were still awaiting details of ownership of the vehicle from the DVLA. However, on pushing this question because of the time it was taking, it transpired that they do not have the facilities to obtain details from the DVLA and advised that it was up to the parking department to set up these facilities. So, at the time of asking, there had apparently been no request made to the DVLA to establish ownership of the vehicle.

According to the council's representatives, it is not possible for an illegally parked car to be removed until such time as ownership of the vehicle is established. As they did not have the facilities at this time to check the ownership of illegally parked vehicles, it was the residents who pay – and pay heavily now – to be able to park near their homes who had a badly needed parking space taken up indefinitely by an illegally parked vehicle. Doesn't seem right, does it?

Coffers swell for Great Ormond St.

By Sheila Armstrong
Local fund raiser and quiz-master Brian Hooper was at it again over Christmas at The Old White Lion pub and this time all monies went to Great Ormond Street Hospital.

The massive amount of £4,500 was raised at the pub in November and December thanks to the generosity of its patrons, local businesses and to all Brian's hard work.

He started the project in November, not long after Halloween, when he contacted over 200 local businesses and shops in the area and was given over 250 raffle prizes. Tickets were sold in the pub and at the East Finchley Christmas Festival in the High Street before Christmas.

In early January Brian visited Great Ormond Street Hospital to give the cheque to their senior fundraising executive Hayley Richardson.

Help wanted

Brian is interested in getting help with the fundraising, particularly with setting up a system so that money can be donated online or by text. He is also thinking about extending the area in which he fundraises to beyond the N2 borders. Anyone who would be interested in advising him on this and helping out with future charity fund raising please contact him on briansquiz@aol.com

Baby massage

By Cathy Young

"I looked around the room at the babies being massaged, making eye contact and clearly enjoying the special one to one time with their parents and thought – I'm so lucky that I get to do this. I love this job!" Ruth Kay, an experienced occupational therapist who retrained as a baby massage instructor, is passionate about the beneficial effects of massage on the development and well-being of young babies.

Ruth studied with the International Association for Infant Massage (IAIM) to add to her 11 years' experience at Hackney's Homerton hospital and London Borough of Camden, mainly in Paediatrics and Neurology. When several relatives and friends had babies last year she felt ready to put her skills to good use. Word soon spread both by word of mouth and through websites such as Facebook and she set up her regular Baby&U courses for young babies and their parents.

"The IAIM program was developed by Vimala McClure. In the Indian orphanage where she volunteered, the babies were slathered in oils and given daily massages. She became convinced that the development and happiness of those abandoned children were a direct result of this care," Ruth explained. "Here, when the babies first come in," she added, "the parents and babies are quiet but by the end of the sessions there is increasing eye contact and conversation between them and by the end of the course it can become quite noisy due to all the lovely baby chatter!"

Baby benefits

Studies have shown that there is a direct correlation between the use of regular massage and a baby's weight gain, which is generally a marker for better health and a strong immune system, and that infant massage accelerates brain development.

"Also as a parent, you literally have the tools at your



Circle of life: Parents and babies can benefit from massage sessions.

fingertips to alleviate many of your baby's minor ailments that cause them discomfort such as teething, colic, trapped wind and constipation, as well as promoting sleep! This one to one bonding time can be uplifting and remind you that it is not all about the daily chores and sleep deprivation," Ruth, a mother of two young sons herself, added.

Ruth's courses are held locally in the relaxed setting of her own home. There are eight places on each course which runs for 5 weeks at a cost of £60, including a detailed booklet, a bottle of non allergenic baby oil, snacks, drinks and a "Graduation Certificate". Parents are encouraged to come early to change and feed their babies if necessary and to settle them. There is always time after the massage for questions and general chat. The next course

starts on 27th February.

Contact babymassage-withruth@gmail.com or www.facebook.com/babyandubabymassage or 07951741736.

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