



# Burglary through the front door

By Janet Maitland  
**Burglars usually break in at the back or side of properties but at the end of last year there was a spate of burglaries through front doors, reported in our December issue. This trend has continued.**

On 30 January, burglars tried to break into a property on Leslie Road, but the owner had locked the front door with a mortice as well as a Yale lock. So even though the door frame was broken, the burglars couldn't get in.

The incidence of burglary in East Finchley is not as high as in many other postcodes. Ours ranks 145<sup>th</sup> out of 233 in Greater London, according to police data for December 2012, but it's worth reading the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) advice about doors, some of which may not have occurred to you.

### Gate and door safety

The team advises that wooden back gates should be topped with trellis if possible and should always be bolted and locked with a padlock. Wooden front and back doors should be solid timber with a five-lever mortice lock one third of the way up and an automatic deadlocking rim lock one third of the way down.

The door frames should be reinforced with metal strips, called London and Birmingham bars. Any glass panels on doors should be at least 6.4mm thick and either laminated or reinforced with security film. Another option is to fit internal grills over the glass.

The SNT also suggests that you fit a solid letterbox on your front door, making sure that no one can look through it or put their hand through. Lock UVPC doors when you go out, don't just push the handle up, and don't leave valuables like laptops or car keys near the door or in sight of windows.

# Garden break-in

On 4 January, a house on Summerlee Avenue was broken into between 9.30am and 8.15pm while the residents were out. The burglars took advantage of an unbolted back gate, then broke into the house using garden tools that had been left outside. They forced open an old wooden back door, which splintered and broke, then stole cash and jewelry.

# Bright business idea for a rainy day

Fed up with getting wet while fumbling for an umbrella only to see it turn inside out in the first gust of wind, friends Katy Isaacs and Julia Wonke came up with a fashionable alternative. They designed a range of waterproof tailored ponchos in bold animal prints that have been worn by television presenter Fearne Cotton and Biba clothes store founder Barbara Hulanicki.

### Bike poncho

Now keen cyclists Katy and Julia are moving into the market for women on the move with a garment specially made to keep out the rain and ensure cyclists stay visible. The new design has high-visibility strips woven in and handy wrist straps to keep the poncho close to the body.

The pair have been in business together as Rainwave for two years, working between Katy's home in East Finchley and Julia's in Muswell Hill. Katy was a former TV director and Julia used to work in marketing for a



Poncho designers Julia Wonke, left, and Katy Isaacs. Photo by John Lawrence

record company. They realised umbrellas were useless, especially when walking with young children or a buggy, and most cagoules were unattractive.

Julia said: "Most mums have their hands full on the school run, carrying things or holding on to their children. It seemed a great idea to have something you could just chuck over your clothes to stay dry and that was lightweight and packed away into a handbag."

### Online success

Katy and Julia designed the Rainwave poncho themselves, found manufacturers in Morocco and Taiwan and

got their first sales at music festivals. Delighted with the celebrity endorsement it's received since, they've sold thousands online through their website [www.rain-wave.com](http://www.rain-wave.com) and Amazon, with sales particularly strong in Scandinavia and Australia.

Katy said: "The bike poncho is the next step for us. Cycling is bigger than ever and I'm a cyclist myself so we wanted to make something women could wear on and off their bikes."

You can find the full range of ponchos online or buy the bike poncho at the Bicycle Maintenance Company in Fortis Green Road, Muswell Hill.



Do you fancy getting stuck in with the N2 Gardeners? Photo courtesy of Harriet Copperman.

# Go green this growing season

By Harriet Copperman

For the past few years a small group of volunteers called N2 Gardeners has worked on the steep bank of earth at the entrance to East Finchley's tube station car park. Aided by a grant from Capital Growth, they have cleared the brambles and planted it up at the more shady end as a 'forest garden' of fruit and nut trees and bushes and wildflowers, leading to a four-bed mini allotment area, with the remaining space used for perennial flowers, herbs and vegetables.

A new growing season is upon us and the group would very much welcome help from a few more people, so take yourself, a trowel and some old gloves and go along at 11am on Sunday 17 March, even if you only have a spare half an hour or so.

They'll be weeding, planting and tidying up, and if you don't want to be on such a steep slope, there's always weeding to be done at the front of the plot. Experienced hands say it's surprising how much fun it can be even when the weather isn't at its best! Check out the blog at <http://n2gardeners.blogspot.com/>

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