



Don't make your phone a mobile target

By Jan Lovell, Safer Neighbourhood Team

The Safer Neighbourhood Team's biggest concern recently has been the number of mobile phone thefts by men on mopeds, mainly around East Finchley tube station and the bus stops on both sides of the road by the railway bridge (first reported in *THE ARCHER* in April).

There have also been a couple of reported thefts along the High Road between Fortis Green and Creighton Avenue. This is not just a local problem but one that police are seeing in other areas of London too.

The crime and the response

These moped-riding robbers come up very quickly behind their target, sometimes even mounting the pavement, snatching the phone while it's in use. Most offences happen near transport hubs because that's when we get our phones out.

These mopeds are usually stolen and can be coming across from other boroughs. Police are approaching this problem in multiple ways: CCTV, number plate reading and investigations into the patterns and connections of these offenders.

PC John Kenny and I have been at the station at different times to heighten awareness

for commuters, and the station has been assisting with advice on their dot matrix signs. British Transport Police for the Northern line are also working alongside us on this.

Protect yourself against phone theft

Don't get your phone out as soon as you leave a station; leave it for a while until you are in a safer spot. Don't walk and text at the same time.

Keep calls in public places as brief as possible and always stay aware of what's happening around you, especially in stations and crowded places. Never leave your phone on restaurant or pub tables.

The police have produced a leaflet giving advice about phone theft and what to do if your phone is stolen. If you'd like a copy or to receive my regular newsletter, please get in touch at EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk or call 020 7161 9014.

Beware roofing scam

On Thursday 14 July an East Finchley resident was called on by two white men with Irish accents who said they would check his roof and give him an estimate for any repairs needed. They did not supply the promised paperwork but, the next day, sent three workmen to carry out the work they claimed to be necessary.

On the Saturday the two men returned to ask for money for materials and to pay the workmen, for which they wanted cash. The resident, who does not want to be identified, told *THE ARCHER* that, despite his gut feeling and the shoddiness of the work, he handed over £10,000.

Since then he has not seen the men, nor has he had any

response from phone calls made to the number on a card which they originally put through his door. The pair, he says, were in a van with an Irish registration number.

He cannot believe how unwise he has been and wants to warn others to be on their guard. "I could have bought a new roof with that money," he lamented.

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Never too many cooks: Chris Honor with the Spread a Smile team

Recipe for a smile

Muswell Hill chef Chris Honor gave guests a cookery demonstration for children's charity Spread a Smile in a private home in Hampstead Garden Suburb. Chris, who runs the Chriskitch café in Tetherdown, N10, showed guests how to cook a number of his own recipes. The money raised will go towards entertaining seriously ill children and teenagers in hospital.

Chris Honor said: "To be involved with something this special is amazing. It's a lovely thing to spread smiles and to help the charity make such a positive impact on these children."

Tree line to be trimmed in park

A project has been agreed to trim the tree line in Cherry Tree Wood to improve visibility and security in the densely wooded area of the park.

Following consultation between local police and Barnet Council, the plan is to raise the lower canopy of the trees that stretch between the tennis courts and the path alongside the tube line.

At the same time, buckthorn will be cleared at ground level. Ecologically important grassland will be preserved. No start date has yet been confirmed.

Jan Lovell, of the Safer Neighbourhood policing team, said: "There is currently very little visibility into the wood. The idea is to open it up so that parents by the playground or out on the field will be able to see further into the trees. This should make it safer for their children and for anyone else who wants to walk through the wood."

In memory of Sippy

Our obituary of Archer friend and charity fundraiser Sippy Azizollah will appear in our September issue.



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