



Spacious: The new homes at Wilmot Close. Photo Mike Coles

Holiday homes for life

By Daphne Chamberlain

When The Finchley Charities announced their new development adjoining Wilmot Close and Thackrah Close, N2, they described it as tranquil, spacious, light and joyful. Joyful is an unusual description of housing. So did *The Archer* find joy when The Finchley Charities Chief Executive Susan Faridi showed us round?

Listen to one of the new tenants. Mr Patel has moved into one of two adaptable properties designed for wheelchair users. In his previous home he was housebound. Now he told us: "I'm on holiday here! It was raining this morning, but I was out in my chair, zooming up the road!"

All paths are designed for wheelchair use, winding round attractive landscaping, including a 'wild' garden. Tree roots are smoothed over with permeable material, and there are seating areas and planters all around. Higher-than-usual walls block noise from the nearby North Circular.

Careful design

Susan Faridi emphasised

that the aim is to encourage a community where residents can join in social activities, enjoy a neighbourly chat, or relax in comfortable homes.

The inside of Mr Patel's new home is impressive too. Spacious and light, it has been carefully planned. The kitchen features adjustable surfaces. Worktops, sink and hob can be lowered and raised with the turn of a key, making them accessible to him in his wheelchair as well as to his wife, who needs them at standard height.

Facts and figures

The Finchley Charities set out to provide high-quality, easy-maintenance, rented homes for people over 55 years old who need sheltered

accommodation, but are able to live independently (if necessary with the support of a care package). Applicants should have limited financial means, and have lived in the Borough of Barnet for at least five years during their lives.

Already all the accommodation has been taken, and there is a waiting list. Applicants are either referred, or can refer themselves.

The development is known officially as 22-25 Thackrah Close, though there are 16 homes in total.

For further information, contact The Finchley Charities at 41A Wilmot Close, N2 8HP, tel: 020 8346 9464, or email info.thefinchleycharities.org.



Summer festival 2019 starts here

After the success of this year's East Finchley Festival in Cherry Tree Wood back in June, pictured above, everyone in the community is invited to an open meeting to help start planning next year's festival.

Organisers are urging people to come along and have their say. What did you like? Do you have any ideas for the festival? Would you like to get involved?

The open forum takes place at Martin Primary School, Plane Tree Walk, N2, on Monday 15 October at 7.30pm. Contact eastfinchleyfestival@gmail.com. Everyone is welcome.



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SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Jan Lovell, of the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team, updates us on the latest crime news. Jan and the team can be contacted by email at: EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk, or by phone on 020 7161 9014. Follow the team on Twitter @MPSEastFinchley.

Cashpoint crime

We are currently experiencing distraction thieves at the cashpoints on the High Road, N2. There are two males operating, both light skinned, mixed race.

One of them stays in a silver Honda while the male who distracts cashpoint users is 6ft 2ins, slim build, often wearing dark smart casual dress and a baseball cap.

He will employ different methods, always targeting the very elderly and frail, perhaps distracting them by speaking to them and putting a newspaper in front of their face and taking the cash as it is dispensed by the machine.

Or he tells them their car is wrongly parked and it will be cheaper to pay a fine now, leading them to a cashpoint where either the card and PIN number is swallowed by a device on the machine or by sleight of hand the card is taken and the victim tells them the PIN number.

This male is very skilled and versatile, moving from one area to another and back. If you see someone operating in this way, please call 999.

Please be aware of these scams, and stay on alert when you get cash from an internal or external machine at a bank or at the Post Office. Easiest and safest is to use your card to get cash back when doing grocery shopping or at the pharmacy.

Police seek victims of late night assaults

By Janet Maitland

Police believe that a series of sexual assaults on women in East Finchley and Fortis Green between May and August are linked and are asking women to come forward with information.

A man has been charged with sexual assault (by touching) following an incident on the High Road, N2, on Friday 24 August when a woman was followed and grabbed from behind near the junction with Creighton Avenue. Police believe that other women have been assaulted in a similar way and would like to hear from them.

"It's important that we receive all available information about what I believe was a series of offences between May

and August this year," said DC Jacki McKenzie-Bell. "Some other women have come forward and I would urge anyone who has not yet reported any incidents to please speak to the police. I also want to hear from anyone who witnessed incidents in which a man appeared to assault a woman by grabbing her in this way."

Please call Barnet CID on 020 8733 4125 if you have any information, or call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you want to remain anonymous.



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