



Be on your guard against street robberies

By Diana Cormack

People of all ages are being warned to be on their guard against muggers following reports of a spate of attempted robberies on teenagers and a distressing incident involving a commuter walking home at night.

Parents on social media have reported a number of muggings and attempted muggings on teenagers in the area, in some cases by youths carrying knives. Teenagers are vulnerable as they are on the streets a lot and often carry expensive phones, cash and bank cards. Parents are patrolling some areas in the evenings to safeguard children walking home and have called for a more visible police presence.

Robbery prevented

The Archer has had a first-hand account of a foiled robbery on Park Road, N2, after a reader saw a light-coloured car standing in the road with one door open and a screaming neighbour on the pavement, trying to fend off an attack by the driver who was attempting to steal his bag.

Our reader, who does not wish to be named, yelled at the assailant hoping to scare him off. Fortunately this worked and he drove away. "I was scared to get too close in case the attacker had a weapon," the reader told us. "The victim did the right thing in making a lot of noise to draw attention to what was happening."

Other residents called the police, who were quickly on the scene and established that nothing had been taken. Despite being given a nasty beating, the man had held on to his possessions. It could have been a different story if no-one had intervened or if the mugger had been armed. Our reader hopes that locals will take heed and stay safe.

Police measures

40 robberies in East Finchley were recorded by the Met Police for the year October 2018 to September 2019, just over three a month.

In the year before that, October 2017 to September 2018, there were 58, almost five a month.

Commenting on the recent increase in local robberies, Jan Lovell, of East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood Team, says: "We have increased both uniformed and plain clothed officers on patrol, on foot and in cars, on the ward. We also are working with Barnet borough CCTV to identify offenders and as observation to assist officers."

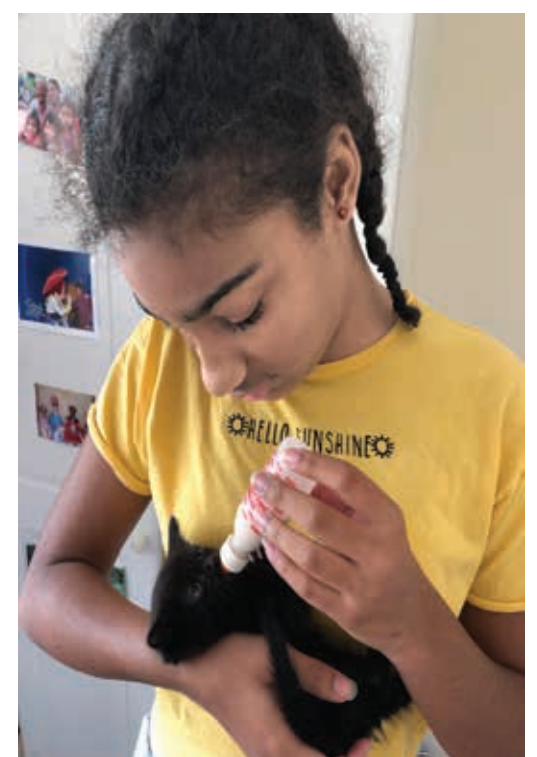
Advice on staying safe

The Archer asked Jan to suggest ways in which we can all stay safe. Jan advises people to look confident, be aware of their surroundings and not use earphones. If you feel you're being followed, move quickly to a busy well-lit area such as a shop, restaurant or transport hub and ask for help or get on a bus and ask the driver for help.

Meet friends in busy places and don't hang around on the street. Put your phone away after using it. Use your device's security features or PIN locking mechanisms to protect data and prevent it being used if stolen. Install a tracker app and act quickly if your phone is stolen.

Keep a note of your phone's unique IMEI number – but not on your phone – which can be obtained by keying in * # 06 #. Register this number on immobilise.com so the phone can't be used if stolen.

Parents should ask young family members what they would do if they felt unsafe when out so that they have a plan of action. They could also encourage them to carry a personal alarm, which can be picked up relatively cheaply online.



Caring network: Animal welfare officer Abi McEwan, left, with fostered cat Caspar, and a young carer feeds Caspar when he is just five weeks old. Photos: RSPCA Finchley.

Neglected kittens in desperate need of loving foster parents

RSPCA officers are appealing for help from anyone in East Finchley who is willing to foster neglected kittens and cats until they can be found a permanent home.

The charity is presented with a steady stream of mistreated cats but has only limited cattery places of its own in the Finchley, Golders Green and Hendon District. A network of foster volunteers would help to meet the demand.

How foster-care works

Foster parents are expected to provide food, water, a toileting area, stimulation and rest in a suitable area at home. A foster placement can be anything from a few days or a few weeks or more and is agreed in advance. All costs and expenses, including veterinary fees, are covered by the RSPCA.

Animal welfare officer Abi McEwan said fostering gives people who would normally be unable to take in a cat long-term

an opportunity to spend time with animals. The benefits to hosts of all ages can be huge.

She said: "We do not expect people to have previous experience of owning a cat, although this often is helpful, we only ask they have a passion for animals and some availability and understanding for those animals in their care."

"There is the reward of offering a helping hand and making a difference to a cat's life by ensuring its future re-home-ability and the happiness of a prospective adopter."

Potential volunteers should be aware that very young kittens will need bottle feeding every four hours round the clock. They are asked to complete an application form, supply two references and

accept a visit by an RSPCA officer to make sure their home is suitable.

"It may seem like a long and arduous process," said Abi, "but typically we are able to process within two weeks and often foster carers receive their first cat within the first two weeks of acceptance, such is the demand."

Carpenters welcome

To apply, email awo@rspcafinchley.org.uk for an application form, or contact the local animal welfare officer by telephone on 07733 395729. The RSPCA would also like to hear from any potential volunteers with carpentry skills who could help enrich the lives of the cats in foster care by making them some cat trees.

Man charged after 'stabbing'

By Janet Maitland
A man has been charged with causing grievous bodily harm with intent after a man was allegedly stabbed in Muswell Hill in the early hours of Thursday 31 October.

Police were called to Fortis Green Road, N10, at 1.40am to a report of a stabbing. The victim was rushed to hospital by the London Ambulance Service where his condition was described as stable.

Keray Granfield, 21, appeared at Highbury Corner Magistrates Court on 1 November, where he was remanded in custody to appear at Wood Green Crown Court on 5 December.

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