



Could you be a Compassionate Neighbour?

Two men cycling together along the Parkland Walk to Ally Pally – quite an ordinary sight. What you wouldn't know by looking at them is that one has dementia and the other meets him once a week to help him learn new local cycling routes. It helps with his memory and they both enjoy the exercise.

When the weather isn't good you'll find them having coffee and playing cards in Coffee Bank in East Finchley. You might also walk past other Compassionate Neighbours on the High Road making their way to the Phoenix Cinema or doing a bit of shopping.

Ordinary people

These are just a few examples of activities that the North London Hospice's Compassionate Neighbour volunteers undertake to help local people in their communities. It's simply ordinary people doing ordinary things with people who need a bit of extra support because of poor health and social isolation.

Volunteer Grace says: "It feels good to be of service without any conditions attached, and to make connections with people in my community I might not otherwise meet." Across Barnet, Enfield and Haringey the hospice's 133 trained volunteers are meeting up with and supporting people

who are lonely, isolated and living with chronic illness, by exploring their interests and finding out what's going on around them.

Free training

The Compassionate Neighbours project is provided to the community free of charge by the North London Hospice and they are looking to recruit more volunteers in Barnet in order to increase the number of people they can support.

If you are interested in volunteering as a Compassionate Neighbour come along to one of the hospice's free training sessions in the Barnet area. How you get involved after that is up to you. There are many options, from visiting someone regularly to helping develop the hospice's local connections.

For more information look at the volunteering section of the hospice's website at www.northlondonhospice.org. Alternatively, you can telephone 020 8343 6805 or email cn@northlondonhospice.co.uk.



Healthy servings: Alvaro Jose Castano and his father Juan set up shop with their new juice bar in the MighteeFit studio on the High Road. Photo Mike Coles.

Juice bar squeezes into fitness studio

By Kerstin Fenelon

Father and son Juan and Alvaro Jose Castano are letting their passion for fitness and nutrition spill over into a new venture. They have opened a juice bar where shoppers can buy smoothies, juices, speciality coffee, snacks and organic tea.

The pair set up shop in the front window of MighteeFit Health Studio, in the High Road, N2, where Alvaro is a personal trainer. They opened just before the virus crisis struck and will reopen as soon as it has passed. Everyone will be welcome to pop in to buy tasty drinks and snacks.

Alvaro said the concept for the MixFit Juice Bar came about "due to the lack of healthy options available" which he emphasises is important to him with his nutrition background.

All the products they sell offer immunity defences, all the juices are freshly squeezed, eco-friendly and are sourced locally from Tony's Continental. The coffee is Colombian and supplied locally in Barnet, the tea is organic and supplied from Tea Palace which produces the finest tea leaves in the world and is usually only found in Harrods department store.

After only a few weeks trading there were already a few pre-

and post-workout favourites on the menu such as Golden Milk, consisting of turmeric powder and coconut milk, favoured for its immunity boost and anti-inflammatory benefits, and Ginger Infusion, made with fresh ginger, mint and a slice of lemon.

Be sure to visit Juan, Alvaro and the MighteeFit team as soon as they reopen. Give a review on Google and you could be in with a chance of winning a free smoothie.

Keyless car theft on the increase

By Janet Maitland

Did you know that car thieves don't need to steal your key in order to steal your car? Gone are the days of smashing a window and hot wiring your car or even breaking into your home in order to steal your car key.

Jan Lovell, from the Safer Neighbourhood Team, told us that keyless car theft is on the increase in East Finchley and across the borough.

Thieves can now use wireless transmitters to relay signals from your key fob inside your house to fool the car into unlocking.

Alternatively there are devices that transmit on the same radio frequency as your key fob to jam the signal that locks your car, so you think

you've locked it when you haven't.

Once thieves are inside your car, they can plug a device into your diagnostic port which can program a blank key fob to start the engine in less than 30 seconds.

Jan's advice

We asked Jan for tips to deter car thieves. Key fob signals cannot be picked up through metal so a simple tip is to keep your fob in a metal box or a signal-blocker wallet that can

be bought for a few pounds.

"Generally, vehicles should be parked in a well-lit area, a garage, a staffed car park or an area covered by CCTV if possible," said Jan. "Check that your car is actually locked when you leave it and consider using an approved car alarm, steering wheel lock or gearstick lock, in addition to your vehicles' own security."

"You can also have an On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) lock professionally fitted to the OBD port. If you install a tracking device your vehicle can be traced if it is stolen."

For advice on recommended security devices go to thatcham.org/what-we-do/security or visit soldsecure.com

Child/Adolescent counsellor Hannah Grossmith-Dwek BACP

I am an experienced, accredited counsellor offering support for young people and their families. Based in East Finchley

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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.

Robberies

At the close of 2019 the ward was suffering from many robberies, mainly on foot by older youths on teenagers. This has dropped dramatically, but not gone completely.

At the end of February there were several moped-enabled robberies and attempted robberies late evening and overnight. So far we've been unable to gather any evidence to identify the mopeds or riders, but we have gained some intelligence on their methods and routes. Property has been found and returned to grateful victims.

Please be aware of your surroundings when on the street, especially after dark. There are undercover officers and units doing extra patrols across the borough and East Finchley is part of this operation.

Air ambulance canvassers

We have received concerns about door-to-door canvassers from the London Air Ambulance (LAA) as to whether they were scammers. I checked with the LAA who confirmed that the N2 canvassers were working on their behalf. They are wearing red fleeces and an ID lanyard.

We would generally recommend not buying anything from cold callers at the door, including charity covenants, and to donate to charities by other means. Over time, this has reduced enormously the amount of legitimate and scam callers at your door.

Team changes

PC Nikita Pittam left at the end of March to join a new specialised policing team at Wembley Park. Nikita has been a real asset to the East Finchley team and we were very sad to see her go. She will be replaced by a new officer.