



In the pink: Shop manager Julie with the visitors. Photo Mike Coles.

Pretty flamingos come in to roost

By Diana Cormack

There is always an impressive window display in the RSPCA charity shop at 160 High Road, especially for special events such as Easter or Hallowe'en. However, at the start of the year people were particularly attracted to it by an unusual donation.

As all charity shop aficionados will admit, you never know what you'll find in such places, but the appearance of two tall pink flamingos certainly caught the eye. What a lot of people

didn't notice was the 'not for sale' sign on one of their feet.

Manager Julie, who is responsible for the displays, couldn't tell *The Archer* where the birds had come from but she did tell us there had been many disappointed would-be purchasers. "We're hoping to hire them out for special events," she said. "If and when this is decided I will put a notice about it in the window."

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Man arrested following ten burglaries in just two weeks

By Janet Maitland

Ten homes in East Finchley were broken into in the middle of December, including three in East End Road and two in Brownswell Road. In every case, the burglars got in by smashing a glass door and then stealing jewellery, cash and luxury goods.

Residents became very concerned as news of the almost daily break-ins circulated on social media. By the end of December it was evident that the burglary rate had not suddenly increased but that the ten burglaries, the total number for the whole month, had been concentrated into just two weeks.

A man was arrested and charged with burglary on 19 December. He was remanded in custody and was due to be tried in the crown court in mid-January after this newspaper went to print.

Ten burglaries in a month is about average for East Finchley. There were 110 reported burglaries in 2019, just over nine a month. This rate is lower than the previous year when there were 150, between 12 and 13 a month.

Guard against burglaries

We asked Jan Lovell from the Safer Neighbourhood Team how to guard against burglaries. Her first tip was to consider fitting an alarm, as all the December burglaries were from unalarmed premises.

Use timer switches to give the impression that your home is occupied, but of course burglars could just knock to see if anyone answers, so think about fitting an alarm or the newer doorbell phone app monitors, such as Ring or Sky Bell.

Fit a high gate to the side of your property. Gates should have good quality locks top and bottom with trellis and Prikka Strip attached. Garden fences should be 1.8 metres high and topped with trellis or a Prikka Strip topping.

Keep wheelie bins either chained away from side gates or behind them to prevent burglars using them to climb on.

Wooden front and back doors should be solid timber with 5-lever mortice locks one

third of the way up and an automatic deadlocking rim lock one third of the way down. Wooden door frames and locks can be reinforced with metal strips along the jamb and hinge edges respectively, called London and Birmingham bars.

With UPVC doors, just closing the door and pushing the handle up is not secure. Lock

the door with a key when going out. Take keys out of all doors and store them out of sight.

Glass panels on doors should be at least 6.4mm thick and either laminated or reinforced with security film. Consider fitting internal grilles on external doors if there is a risk that window releases can be reached via a broken pane of glass.

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.

Door to door

We have received several reports of males allegedly from a Youth Opportunities Project for ex-offenders, selling cleaning items door to door. The males do have an ID tag and may even have a pedlars' licence and may be genuinely from a project or they may not.

At best they will be selling basic items for a much higher price by engaging your sympathy. At worst they are using this front to make money, and can be quite verbally abusive if refused.

Our advice is to not buy any item or service at the door. Check who is at the door via a window. Unknown callers are so much easier to deal with through a closed door or window. A quick smile and "No thank you" and away from the window will see most of them quietly on their way.

'We do not buy at the door' stickers can be bought on line or home-made. If any callers are persistent or abusive call police on 101.

Roofing company

In our January edition we reported that men claiming to have been sent by Barnet Council stole from two residents living in social housing provided by Barnet Homes, quoting Jan Lovell from the Safer Neighbourhood Team who said the men had "offered a fake business card saying G and Sons Roofing".

Following a call from the owner of this company to the Safer Neighbourhood Team, Jan Lovell has asked *The Archer* to clarify that "the company G and Son Roofing is a legitimate north London roofing company" and that "there is no inference that the burglars using a card from this company as a ploy to enter a home last November have any connection whatsoever with G and Son Roofing." We are happy to do so.

Farewell

Yama Yama

Diners will have been sad to see the closure of Japanese restaurant Yama Yama at the end of last year. Run for some years by the irrepressible Lily and Adam, the High Road eatery was closed as a result of redevelopment.

"The owner is gutting the building," explained Adam, "and he told me that if I wanted to continue the business I must pay for the re-fit of the restaurant and kitchen. It just wasn't viable."

A hole to fill

Adam has a second restaurant in Chiswick and so the couple reluctantly decided to leave East Finchley and focus all their time there. That leaves a hole in the High Road for fans of their *yaki gyoza* and *agedashi* tofu. Perhaps readers have recommendations for other Japanese diners within reach of N2?

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