



Spat of burglaries claims another victim

By Janet Maitland

A local grocery store has been burgled in the latest of a spate of callous attacks over the last two years, just when small businesses have struggled to keep going.

Thieves broke into East Finchley Supermarket on the High Road at about 3.30am on Friday 12 August. They forced the shutters open, shattered the glass door and stole stacks of cigarettes, leaving the shop sprayed with shards of broken glass.



Burgled: East Finchley Supermarket. Photo: Mike Coles

Undaunted, the intrepid owner repaired the damage and had the shop up and running again before noon.

Police enquiries are ongoing. Anyone with information is asked to contact the police on 101 or Tweet@MetCC quoting CAD1110/13 AUG. Alternatively, you can contact the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or visit crimestoppers-uk.org

Plucky owners

Eight shops in East Finchley have been targeted by thieves since July 2020. The now-closed New Local Cafe was

Grow your own veg

By Janet Maitland

Do you want to grow vegetables but don't have anywhere to plant them? If so, a gardening club that's just started at Tarling Road Community Centre in East Finchley might be right up your street.

It's free, open to everyone of any age, and is looking for more members. No experience is necessary, you just have to wear comfortable clothes and shoes and want to grow things to eat.

"We have some raised beds that we're trying to clear out so we can plant vegetables which members can take home when they're ready to harvest," said Sonile Zimba, the new centre manager, who started the club.

The club meets every Tuesday between 11am and 1pm. Tea, coffee and water is provided and members can bring along a snack or picnic to eat afterwards if they want to. To let the centre know you'd like to join, call 020 7018 6560 or email Sonile.Zimba@ymcal-can.org

also burgled twice in 24 hours by different thieves and there have been two other attempted burglaries on shop premises. In every case, the owners have defiantly picked up the pieces and carried on.

The burgled shops were the East Finchley station shop; the Ella Food Centre; the King Street Food and Wine shop; the N2 Food Centre; CW Andrew Pharmacy, robbed twice in less than a year; Sainsbury's and now the East Finchley Supermarket.

A Barnet Council review of CCTV street cameras to "ensure they're in the right places to monitor and deter crime" is due to report in early November. "I look forward to the publication of the review and the opportunity to discuss how we can keep our community safe," said East Finchley Councillor Arjun Mitra.

You can find current police security advice for businesses by going to www.met.police.uk and searching 'Keep burglars out of your business'.

Whodunit and Robin Hood are highlights of new theatre season

A whodunit comedy-mystery and a specially written family show about Robin Hood are part of an ambitious new season announced by Garden Suburb Theatre.

Fresh from their summer success with *James and the Giant Peach* in the Little Wood theatre in the Garden Suburb, the company has five shows planned to take it into 2023.

The season starts with *The Game's Afoot*, a whodunit mystery with equal measures of high hilarity by Ken Ludwig from 6-9 October, followed by *Calendar Girls* (the play not the musical) by Tim Firth from 24-27 November, both of which will be performed at the Upstairs at The Gatehouse theatre in Highgate.

Then in February 2023 comes the specially commissioned family show *Robin Hood and the Brotherhood of Justice*, followed in April by a modern verse production of Moliere's *The Misanthrope*. Finally, next June's production in the outdoor arena at Little Wood will be Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

Proud tradition of community theatre

Garden Suburb Theatre (GST) chairman Miriam Clark, who lives in East Finchley, said: "We are the latest incarnation in a series of community-based



Forest fantasy: The Garden Suburb Theatre cast of *James and the Giant Peach* in the Little Wood theatre.

theatre groups which began in 1908.

"We're a registered charity and our programme of pieces is chosen as much for their dramatic interest as box office draw. We also pride ourselves on our range with something for everyone."

Tickets for their Gatehouse productions can be purchased via upstairsatthegatehouse.com. Alternatively, becoming a Friend of GST at £35 per year includes a ticket to see all their shows. Find out more about membership at www.garden-suburbtheatre.org.uk.

Plastics group wraps up... but the fight goes on

The No2PlasticsN2 group, which fought hard to eradicate single-use plastics, is winding up its operations. Founding member Ann Inglis is moving on to dedicate her time to campaigning against the proliferation of plastics in general.

Ann set up the group to highlight the problems of food wrappers and other plastic films and to ask shops and shoppers in East Finchley to substantially reduce their use. She and fellow campaigners persuaded local shops to come on board and tirelessly lobbied MPs and influential groups to stop industry producing the plastics in the first place.

Group member Margaret Singer said that even though No2PlasticsN2 is closing in its original form, everyone in East Finchley can carry on choosing to buy products that use no wrapping or that avoid plastics. "Dealing with single-use plastics is an ongoing battle and we ask all the East Finchley community and beyond to run



with Ann's endeavours by doing their bit and by encouraging others to also reduce, or better still eliminate these plastics," she said.

"With sustainability issues in the forefront at present, particularly with the East Finchley Town Team's High Road Sustainability event on Saturday 17 September, we feel sure that the community would like to join us in sincerely thanking Ann for her staunch commitment and success in the reduction of single-use plastics."



Sitting pretty: James Masters, Iayn Clark and Janine Keech take it easy in Tarling Road. Photo John Lawrence

Convivial corner created out of creeper jungle

By John Lawrence

An overgrown corner of land once covered by brambles and creepers is now a valued spot for socialising or simply taking a moment to sit down and rest. The two benches and sheltered pergola erected on a paved area and surrounded by grass are the work of ploholders at the Vale Farm Allotments, off Tarling Road, N2, and neighbours living in nearby roads.

They successfully applied for one of the community grants offered by the Grange Big Local regeneration project before the pandemic and spent £6,000 to clear the site and buy materials, as well as the benches made of recycled plastic.

Resident Iayn Clark said: "It was a rubbish tip before and totally overgrown." Janine Keech, from Vale Farm Allotments, said: "Now it's very well used. People walking to and

from North Finchley might take a break here, and others just use it as a good spot to meet up." James Masters, chair of Grange Big Local, said: "This is a great example of an idea from people wanting to improve their community and who were willing to put in the work to make it happen. We were happy to be able to support them with a grant." He added that Grange Big Local hopes to be able to offer a new series of community grants in due course.



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