



Lights off and on in Norfolk Close

By Claire Biek

Several weeks ago, a resident of Norfolk Close, N2, told the East Finchley Facebook group that seven of the street lamps in his area were still broken despite him reporting them to Barnet Council a few years ago.

Gary said there had been consistent problems with the lamps and that some of them have never really worked. A site visit from an engineer back in January 2021 did not produce any results.

Gary also disclosed that fixing the lamps had been previously delayed by a long-running dispute between Barnet Homes and the council over who was responsible for the work.

As a result, the area where



over the years as a result.

Last March, while Gary was abroad, his own van was stolen and abandoned in North Finchley. Luckily, the vehicle was found and reported

by a local company with Gary's possessions still inside. However, he suspects that drugs were used inside his van.

Now comes the good news: the street lamps were fixed last month. Gary's social media post alerted local

councillors and the relevant authorities who decided to revisit the issue and swiftly fix them. Gary is pleased, declaring that they "make the area look bright".



Before and after: Norfolk Close was in semi-darkness (above) until its car park lights were fixed

he and his neighbours park their cars was often in darkness. Gary claimed this had led to an increase in criminal activity in the area, notably drug dealing. Vans have also been broken into



Mobility aids: Volunteers load unwanted wheelchairs onto a lorry bound for hospitals and health centres in Ukraine

Urgent need in Ukraine for unwanted mobility aids

By Lynn Winton

Whilst Michael Byrne, founder of East Finchley based Driving Aid to Ukraine was planning his 16th humanitarian aid transport, he received an urgent message. Known as an organisation that responds to appeals with alacrity, this was a new and alarming one.

Ukraine has had to build a secretly located hospital for military amputees, and rehabilitation was hampered due to a shortage of mobility aid equipment. There was

simply not enough to go round. Michael was able to respond with a huge amount of items, thanks to his supporters in East Finchley and further afield. Now on his 18th aid transport, a third delivery to the hospital is included, and Michael wants to urge anybody who has unwanted mobility aids to add them to the ever-growing list of what they already deliver.

Clothes and medication

This includes wheelchairs, crutches, commodes and shower chairs. The NHS rarely, if ever, want these items back. The 60-bed hospital in Ukraine also needs men's new casual clothes,

toiletries and basic medication, especially for pain relief. C.W Andrew's Pharmacy on the High Road has joined the band of East Finchley shops helping Michael, with boxes of pain relief medication, dressings and bandages and a selection of all the requested toiletries. Additionally, with winter approaching and the Ukrainian energy infrastructure under constant attack, Michael is taking candles, electric heaters and generators.

15,000 amputees

To give an idea of the numbers of amputees, there were 15,000 Ukrainians who lost a limb in the first half of this year alone, according to the Department of Health in Kyiv. That's more amputees than the UK had in the full six years of the Second World War, when 12,000 servicemen and women lost limbs. Michael and his collection team, led by Springcroft Avenue resident Nicola Cousins, will collect or accept delivery of any of the items listed. If you were thinking of having a clear out, now would be a very good time. The full list of items can be found on their website drivingaidtoulkraine.org. Michael can be contacted on 07791 912389 and Nicola by email at nicolacousins0812@gmail.com

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Christmas fair

The Christmas Fair at St Mary's Catholic Church, 279 High Road, N2, takes place this year on Sunday 26 November from 11am to 2pm.

Go along to soak up the festive atmosphere with carol singing, hot food, tombola, craft stalls and Santa's Grotto. Entry to the fair is free with a £2.50 charge to visit the grotto and receive a gift.