



Police urge vigilance on cuckooing

By Janet Maitland

Police are asking people to be on the alert for 'cuckooing', a practice whereby someone's home is taken over as a base for criminal activity, such as drug dealing or sexual exploitation.

The term comes from cuckoos laying their eggs in other birds' nests to get free parenting for their offspring. But human cuckooing has nothing to do with nurturing. It is a form of cruel exploitation, where the homeowner or tenant is controlled financially, physically or psychologically and as a result ends up at risk of modern slavery, involvement in crime, and losing their home.

Police leaders nationally recently reported that in one week at the end of last year, 853 suspected cuckooed homes were visited.

It works by the perpetrator manipulating a potential victim in order to get inside their home and take it over. The tenant or homeowner might be offered drugs or money to gain access, but this quickly becomes a form of debt bondage.

The victim might also be groomed into thinking they have made a friend or started a relationship, but once the perpetrator has easy access to the property, they take control of it through force or deception.

Elderly people, people with disabilities and people with mental health illnesses can all

be targeted, as can those who are socially isolated, living in poverty, addicted to substances, sex workers and undocumented migrants, but anyone can become a victim.

Warning signs

Warning signs include a sudden increase in visitors, more vehicles parked outside the property with their owners staying for short periods of time, and increased noise and litter from drug use; also the homeowner or tenant not being seen for a long time, having signs of assault such as bruises and/or seeming frightened or withdrawn.

"Cuckooing is not a named criminal offence but a range of offences fall under the cuckooing umbrella," said a police spokesperson. A bill creating a new bespoke crime for this offence is going through Parliament.

If you suspect a home has been taken over, contact police on 101 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on **0800 555111** or the Modern Slavery Helpline (24/7) on **08000 121 700**. If possible, make a note of parked vehicle registration numbers. Don't take any risks and in an emergency call 999.

Looking for volunteers?

Are you looking for volunteers to help in your community group or organisation?

Our 'Be Part of It' column is published on page 2 every month and gets results. Submissions are free and are

included subject to available space.

Please submit your listing up to a maximum of 80 words to news@the-archer.co.uk, marking your email 'Be Part of It'.

Primary school open day

Holy Trinity CE Primary School is holding an open day on **Wednesday 12 November** and inviting parents and families to find out more about its learning environment.

The school in Eagans Close, N2, says it offers a nurturing,

child-centric ethos with specialist PE provision, a rich variety of extra-curricular activities and outstanding SATS results.

The open day sessions start at 10am and 2pm. To find out more and book a place, email the school at office@holylrinity.barnetmail.net

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around the country.

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Torn apart: The once-majestic tree suffered a major collapse, left, and has now been heavily cut back to its main trunk. Photos Mike Coles

Huge branch tears away from landmark tree

By David Melsome

A landmark tree has been heavily reshaped after a massive branch dramatically collapsed, narrowly missing parked cars. The Norway Maple spread extensively at the corner of Woodside Avenue and Fordington Road before Saturday 6 September.

Eye-witnesses described hearing and seeing a huge branch tear away from the main trunk and ending up across the Fordington Road pavement at about 1.30pm. A resident alerted Haringey Council and a team

of tree surgeons arrived promptly to cut down other unstable branches. The cause of the collapse may have been weakness through age coupled with the after-effects of the near-drought conditions over

the summer. The stricken tree has not been removed altogether and there is hope that the remaining trunk and branches will support regrowth and a return to its previous majestic form in the future.

Many more street parties to come

By Diana Cormack

On the first Saturday of September, residents of Cherry Tree Road gathered for their annual party.



Street party: Neighbours enjoy each other's company in Cherry Tree Road

They supplied a delicious range of sweet and savoury food, with hot dogs and burgers cooked outdoors during the afternoon.

There was a Guess-the-Weight of the cake competition along with a quiz for the youngsters. One of these, 12-year-old Izzy, impressed everyone with her confident singing performance accompanied by her dad

Dave on the guitar.

A question in the quiz about who had lived longest in the street led to comments about the number of young babies present, with evidence of more to come!

So, with plenty of takers evident for future parties, thanks were effusive to the organisers of this year's enjoyable event.

Tell us the news

Have you got a news story or an interesting photo for us? Our readers are our eyes and ears, and we are always pleased to hear what is going on in East Finchley.

Tips, ideas and stories, large or small, are very welcome. Please email news@the-archer.co.uk or leave a message on our free phone line **0800 612 0748**.

Thank you

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

How to report a crime

- Call **999** in an emergency when there is a danger to life or a crime is in progress
- Call **101** for non-emergencies, if your property has been stolen or damaged, you wish to report drug dealing or a minor traffic accident, and for general police enquiries
- Report crime to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team by email: eastfinchley.snt@met.police.uk gardensuburb.snt@met.police.uk or fortisgreen.snt@met.police.uk

Find full details for the local SNTs at www.iloven2.co.uk/local-government-and-policing

- Stay anonymous and report information to Crimestoppers on **0800 555111**

Car boot sale

The next Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale takes place on Saturday 25 October from 10am to 1pm at Hornsey Parish Church Hall on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10 3AH. Buses W7, W3 and 144 stop nearby. Admission is 50p and refreshments are available. For information, phone **020 8368 8180**.