



## SAFER NEIGHBOURHOODS

LOCAL POLICE, LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Jan Lovell, of the East Finchley Safer Neighbourhood policing team, updates us on the latest crime prevention news.

### Stolen property

A few residents have asked if there is a site where the police post pictures of found property. There is now a page at [www.flickr.com/photos/metropolitanpolice](http://www.flickr.com/photos/metropolitanpolice) where you will find various albums displaying different kinds of found property.

There is an album for Barnet showing a large collection of recovered power tools. Do have a look if you have had any stolen, or pass this on to anyone who has lost tools.

### Van and car security

If you have a van full of tools which are impractical to unload on a daily basis and want to give them greater protection, or would be unable to work without them, look on line for Thatcham-endorsed products such as specialised door locks, steering wheel locks and tool safes.

Property marking kits are an excellent way of protecting most items from theft, as in the unlikely event of them being stolen their owner can be traced and the items returned to them. There are two main suppliers of marking kits, Selecta DNA & Smartwater.

### Serial offender

A prolific vehicle thief was arrested in Romford by Barnet officers having been linked by forensics. Intelligence gathered showed that he was also wanted in Camden for the same type of offence. The male had avoided capture for a number of weeks, due to false addresses. He gave guilty pleas in court and was sentenced to 26 weeks in prison. This will make a real difference over the winter period for lots of Barnet residents.

### Burglary boom

After Christmas we always see an increase in burglary. Burglars know we have more cash in the home and gifts of jewellery and technology. We are all busy people and it is easy to get into habits like leaving a bathroom window open or not locking up properly.

Remember to take a moment to make sure your home is secure at all times. Leave lights and radios on if you are out and ensure people can't see in after dark. Please do contact us if we can assist with home security in anyway, or of you would like a visit to your home to discuss this. Email: [EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk](mailto:EastFinchley.snt@met.police.uk) or telephone 020 7161 9014.



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For more information please contact the Church Office  
Tel: 8883 1544 (Minister: Simon Dyke)  
[www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk](http://www.eastfinchleybc.org.uk)

**Visitors always welcome**

## Holy Trinity Church

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*The collision between a lorry and car outside Caffé Nero. Photo by John Dearing*

## Collision on the High Road

By Janet Maitland

**There was a major collision between a large Scania lorry and a black Honda car in the early afternoon of 25 November. A nearby parked vehicle was also damaged.**

The accident took place three minutes after they were called.

One person was taken to hospital. Despite the extensive damage to the vehicles, no one involved in the collision had any serious injuries. Police closed the High Road for two hours while the London Fire Brigade dealt with the damaged vehicles blocking the road.

## The day a burglar got into my mum's house

Archer reader Fiona Doyle was alarmed after her mum was targeted by fraudsters in her own home and kindly sent us this cautionary tale to put us all on our guard against unexpected doorstep callers.

**My parents live on Lankaster Gardens in East Finchley. One day at around 1.20pm my mum answered a knock at the door from a man claiming to be from the water board. He wore a navy fleece and navy trousers with a lanyard and badge around his neck. He was white, of slight build with dark hair and was well-spoken.**

### The scam

He said there had been a problem with the water in the area and asked her questions about it: had she noticed any changes, smells, etc? She said she hadn't noticed anything. He informed her that the water would be shut off in a couple of hours' time so she needed to fill up pots and pans to be prepared. He then offered to help her do this. Mum said that she could manage herself but the man pushed his way into the house and through to the kitchen. He then started to put on a pair of gloves. At this point, Mum became frightened and walked out of the house to stand in the front garden, where she could still see him but wasn't in the house alone with him. She called out that she would knock on the neighbour's door to let them know and he told her that he would do it.

She repeated that she was happy to go and speak to them, at which point he came out of the house and said again that he would go and do it himself. He then left and, instead of knocking next door, walked off to the end of the road and out of sight.

### Police response

Needless to say, the water wasn't shut off that afternoon and when mum asked a few of the neighbours, no one else had received a similar visit. We phoned Thames Valley Water to double check if they had sent an engineer; they confirmed that they definitely hadn't and advised us to call the police. We called 101 and two police officers attended within an hour to take details. This is known as an attempted 'distraction burglary' where the criminals make up some ruse to enter a property before robbing it. I was really impressed with the police who were quick to respond and let us know that it was a serious offence that they would be following up.

### The message

I was also really impressed with my mum! She had the quick-thinking to stand outside the house and out of any danger, meaning that the man couldn't

follow through with whatever he was planning to do.

East Finchley residents, please, please check and double check who you are letting into your home. This man looked and sounded completely official and it was only his behaviour which eventually gave him away. If an engineer is genuine, they will happily wait while you close the door on them and call their company to check their credentials. It can feel awkward or impolite to do this but better to keep them waiting a couple of minutes than to regret it later.

### The Archer online

**Did you know you can catch up with past issues of The Archer online? Every edition since the start of 2000 is available on our website [www.the-archer.co.uk](http://www.the-archer.co.uk).**

The site also gives information on advertising in our pages and how you can contribute to the paper.



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