



Rescuer: James was with his young daughter when he intervened in the attempted robbery

Good Samaritan rescues man, 80, from robbery

By Janet Maitland and Josef Grostern

An 80-year-old taxi driver was saved from a robbery by a courageous passer-by outside East Finchley station. Two young men dragged the elderly man from his cab claiming to be plain clothes policemen, then led him to the cash machine in front of the station and demanded £500.

James, 46, a local resident who was playing with his two-year-old daughter on the steps outside the McDonald's building, saw it happening and managed to distract the youths away from the taxi driver while calling the police.

He told *The Archer*: "It was bizarre because these incidents happen at night in secluded areas, but it was 11.30 in the morning and hundreds of people were around." Another taxi driver wanted to help but couldn't stop his cab in the traffic. He later corroborated James's statement to the police.

James initially called his wife and tried to stare down the youths in the hope it would scare them off, but one of them left the taxi driver to intimidate him, shouting and pushing him even though he was clutching

his daughter to his chest.

"I screamed 'Somebody call the police!' but nobody helped. Then the second guy leaves the elderly man and they both circle me but I get my phone and call the police and as soon as they know the police are coming they run away."

Police call for witnesses

Police responded to reports of a robbery in progress at 11.41am on Thursday 1 April. There were no arrests and enquiries continue. Witnesses are asked to call police on 101 and quote CAD 2996/01 April. It is not yet known if the station CCTV captured images.

The robbers are described as well built, about 5ft 10ins tall, with facial hair and wearing black track suits with a white detail. One was between 20 and 24, the other between 19 and 21.

Calls to make alleyway to station safer

By Janet Maitland

Residents are calling for Barnet Council to install CCTV on the alleyway behind the tube to make it safer.

Last October a girl was subjected to a serious sexual assault while walking home from school along The Causeway. Five months later in March, police responded to reports of a man allegedly exposing himself to another girl in exactly the same spot.

During the arrest the officers suffered non-life-threatening injuries and the man was charged with assaulting an emergency worker, causing actual bodily harm and an act of outraging public decency.

"Surely it's time the council takes responsibility for ensuring the safety of its residents as this is a well-known danger spot so it's hard to understand why no action has been taken yet," local resident David Blakeney told us. "My daughter is 16 and her natural walk home from the tube is the back entrance of the tube, so of course this is a major concern for my family."

A Causeway resident said: "This is really worrying, not just for those of us living here, but also for the many people who use this path throughout the day." Another added: "Gangs of youths congregate on the footpath as they know they can't be seen." East Finchley councillor Arjun Mittra said: "The last time there was an incident here, the council refused to install CCTV or look at the lighting and merely trimmed back some foliage, but I hope this time they listen. It's disappointing that things have to happen before Barnet ever take action."

Petition

Residents have started a petition for CCTV and better lighting, which you can find at: <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/p/thecauseway>

Council response

A Barnet Council spokesperson told us that its Community Safety Team was working with East Finchley Neighbour-



The scene of recent incidents in The Causeway. Photo Mike Coles

hood Police Team to assess crime prevention options for The Causeway, adding: "The

possibility of CCTV deployments will be considered as part of this assessment."

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.

Reporting crime

Social media is an excellent way of sharing news and often folk want to share unpleasant experiences to make others aware and be safe. Sadly these posts can occasionally snowball, gathering all kinds of rumours and things that have happened in a much broader time frame or a different area.

So I'd like to remind everyone to please report any crimes, anti-social behaviour or worrying suspicious behaviour directly to the police at the time of the incident before posting on social media and, when you post, adding that police are aware. This will help ensure we have the correct facts and can give you our best service.

Contact police online at www.met.police.uk and follow the links or phone 101 or 999 in an emergency. The Safer

Neighbourhood Team is here to support in East Finchley and we are happy to respond, but we are not a 24/7 team, so please report crime centrally as above.

Securing your home

To all our relief we are coming out of lockdown. It's been a year like no other and that's true for crime too, so burglaries have been much lower than the average over the last six months. Burglaries may increase as we leave our homes more, so here are some top tips:

After fitting good locks on doors and windows, alarms are a good investment, and make sure you always turn them on, and double lock your doors and windows, even for a short outing.

When you're out or away, make your home look occupied by time switches on lights and radios. Ask someone to keep an eye on your home, moving bins back onto your property, clearing mail etc. Fit a high side gate with sturdy locks and fit a trellis on top lined with Prikka Strip, the same as fences. Keep bins away from side gates.

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Holy Trinity Parish Church

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We are a community who welcomes everyone seeking comfort and strength in love, faith, and hope. We meet both in church and online. Please do 'come and see'.

Holy Communion: Sunday @ 9.30 am - In Church
Bible Readings & Prayers: Sunday at 11.00 am - Online
Morning Prayer: Monday to Friday, at 9.00 am - Online

For more information please contact us:

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