



PLAYFUL LITTER BIN Thank you to LB Barnet for removing the old bins in the playground at Lyttelton and replacing them with new ones. This is the first to arrive and it looks very handsome indeed.

Car keying

In March Suburb News posted on the RA's e-mail forum, the HGS List, about a message from a resident which concerned 'car keying', a nasty habit of using a car key to scratch a car's paintwork. We asked if List subscribers had been affected by this.

The answers we got show that there have been well over 30 cases recently, centred around Litchfield Way, Meadway and Thornton Way, with an outlier on Temple Fortune Hill near Big Wood. These are just responses from residents subscribing to the RA's HGS List, and therefore

considerably understates the full problem.

The police when advised end up, understandably, closing the case for lack of evidence, and there is little that can be done without hard evidence.

Acting with impunity it seems that until the culprit is caught red-handed, this will continue. The police however would like everyone concerned to report incidents of damage, which can be done online at met.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/.

TERRY BROOKS



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Military Wives Choir to support Combat Stress

For more than ten years, Suburb residents have generously supported the Veterans' mental health charity, Combat Stress, at the annual Christmas Fair. This year, to celebrate 100 years of Combat Stress providing mental health rehabilitation for Armed Services Veterans, the HGS Combat Stress committee is proud to present the North London Military Wives Choir and the Royal Naval Volunteer Band - Northwood Headquarters in concert at the Free Church in North Square at 7.30pm on Saturday 5th October.

Long-time Combat Stress supporter and local resident

Martin Bell OBE will open the proceedings at the concert, and there will be reduced prices for anyone who buys tickets before 31 July. Discounted tickets cost £12 (£15 after 31/07), concessions (over 65 and under 16) cost £10 (£12 after 31/07). All children must be accompanied by an adult. Please email hgscombatstress@gmail.com with details of your ticket requirements and contact information.

Tickets will also be available to buy at:

- the HGS Art Fair at Fellowship House, Willifield Way, on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 May from 11am-5pm;

- the Horticultural Society's Plant Sale at Fellowship House, on Saturday 18 May from 10.30am-12 noon;
- the Horticultural Society's Flower Show at the Free Church Hall on Saturday 15 June from 3-5pm. Payment is by cash and cheques

only (cheques payable to Combat Stress).

Please do come and support Combat Stress on this special evening and help us to make this the year we reach our fundraising target of £50,000.

MARJORIE HARRIS



Let's tidy up the Suburb

The Residents Association is embarking on a new initiative to clean up the Suburb. The beauty of our local environment is often marred by the presence of litter on our streets and open spaces and, with limited Council resources to clear it up, it seems to be a constant blight.

The plan is to set up a group of volunteers, each of whom would take responsibility for an area within the Suburb that they will periodically patrol in order to clear up litter.

Suitable equipment will be provided, and our new volunteer Litter Coordinator, Michael Green, will liaise with volunteers to seek to achieve a comprehensive and consistent approach.

Anyone interested in joining to help us is invited to respond to our dedicated email address, litter@hgsra.uk, and they will be contacted in due course to discuss how to proceed. You will not be required to undergo any formal training; you just pick it up as you go along!

Fraud alert!

We are all aware of increasing levels of fraud in our lives and in Hampstead Garden Suburb, this is no exception. The Suburb is, in fact, a prime target for fraudsters, with an aged and affluent population.

I would like to share some of my experiences as a warning to residents. Although I have practised as a Chartered Surveyor in the area for 30 years, it is only recently that I have received instructions to help fraud victims.

In a recent case on the Suburb, the resident's bank refused a request to withdraw £10,000 in cash until he provided a surveyor's report and good justification for the withdrawal.

In this instance, my inspection confirmed the roof works were largely unnecessary, exorbitantly priced and in consequence, with assistance, he was able to terminate works.

It is all too easy for many people to be taken in by articulate and credible conmen. I would like to explain how fraud often begins, so that the reader is on their guard.

A TYPICAL FRAUD

Someone will knock on your door, advising that you have slipped roof tiles or brickwork to your chimney needs repair. You will be provided with a low verbal quotation and once works have commenced, the costs will be ratcheted up.

A large quantity of tiles will be stripped, making your property vulnerable to water penetration,

and you will be told that timber battens below tiles are rotten. In order to carry out the works properly scaffolding will be erected to the front and at a later date, thousands of pounds is likely to be demanded for moving it.

Invariably, the works will be carried out to an abysmal standard by inexperienced contractors using sub-standard materials, often in breach of Trust requirements. Few, if any, reputable experienced and qualified roofers have the time and inclination to seek work in this manner.

The Trust office has details of competent and approved roofers, able to carry out good quality work, in compliance with the Trust's requirements.

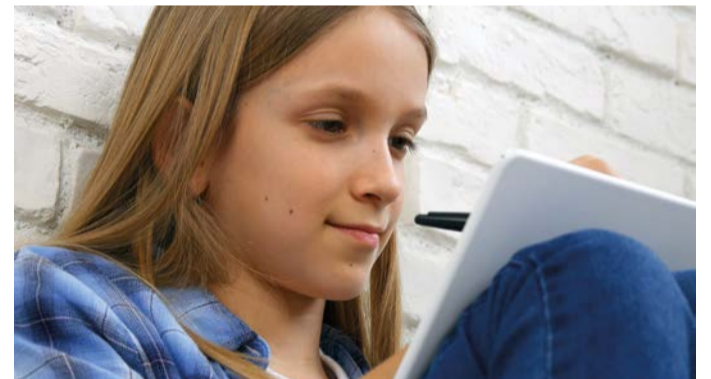
If you are told by a possible fraudster that roof work is required, then seek advice from a qualified Surveyor. This practice would happily provide brief reports on the state of standard-sized roofs for no more than £300+VAT.

Any contractor who requests a large down payment of cash is not someone to be trusted. One cannot expect high quality workmanship from cowboy contractors.

Do not be taken in by these fraudsters. Repairs to most pitched roofs should not cost tens of thousands. A new roof lasting 50 plus years to small properties in the area is likely to cost no more than £25,000 + VAT. Our advice is not to give the time of day to any contractor who knocks on your door uninvited.

IAN HYMAN

A competition for young writers



Suburb News has decided it is time to hold another writing competition for Suburb children after the one three years ago. This is by way of a challenge for younger readers to prove there is more to their lives than the usual relentless social media on a smartphone.

We are inviting three age groups to produce a piece of writing, be it either poetry or prose, of up to 500 words on a subject with some relationship to the Suburb. We decided on giving prizes of £20 book tokens

(suitably old-fashioned to be coming from a paper paper) to the winners of the groups, which are 6 to 8 year olds, 9 to 11, and 12 to 14.

So get your pencils sharpened, find a pad of paper, and get to work writing. Or perhaps that should read, "fire up your device and get typing."

And if there are any writing competition judges out there, we'd like to hear from you too. Just email me at suburbnews@hgsra.uk.

TERRY BROOKS

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We wish to purchase items of silver in any condition. As a long standing resident of the Suburb, Gideon Cohen is happy to view your silverware at home and will make an offer to purchase, free of any obligation.

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