

We'll help you find out why and where your home is cold

HGS REACH, the Residents Association's climate action group, has launched an infra-red camera loan scheme to help our members assess where heat is escaping from their homes.

Infra-red cameras can quickly identify problems such as badly sealed windows and doors, heat loss from bathroom fans, thermal bridges, faulty radiators, and more. The RA has funded the purchase of two IR cameras that clip onto smartphones (Android and iPhone) which we are loaning for short periods to RA members only so they can identify and hopefully resolve these problems.

Please go to hgsla.uk/REACH to register your interest to borrow a camera (including completing a brief initial survey) and find out more about the scheme. It needs to be used whilst it is still cold outside, so we only have a short window to make effective use of the camera before late 2023.

Residents who are not currently members of the RA can join via the website and participate in the loan scheme: cost is a mere £15 pa.

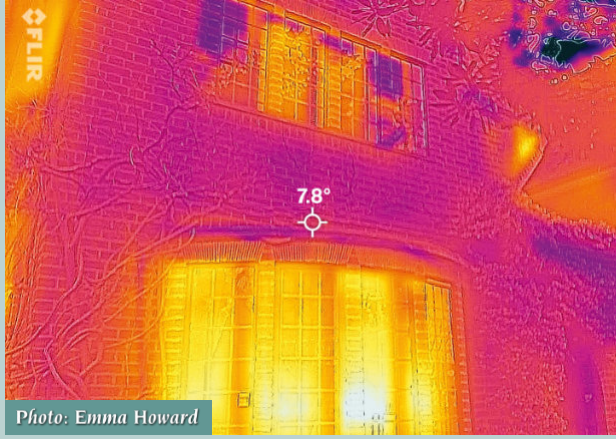


Photo: Emma Howard

Maria Schlatter, Committee member of HGSRA REACH (ircamera@hgsla.uk)



Paving v tree roots

LYNDA COOKE

North End Road starts at the junction of Wellgarth Road and leads down to Golders Green Station and is lined on both sides with London Plane trees. These trees are heavily pollarded annually, the rationale behind this reduction of the canopies being that, if the branches grow in a natural way, they will interfere with the buses travelling along this road. In 2022, for the first time in many years, the pollarding of the upper branches was not carried out and the trees began to look alive again.

During this time of intense climate change and global warming, the tree canopy that could be offered by these trees would be beneficial to the health of birds and invertebrates, people and, most importantly, the shade would reduce the intense heat that is now becoming the norm during our summertime.

In the second week of January, Barnet Council commenced work to replace the paving stones on North End Road. During the work, a magnificent chestnut tree located on the corner of North End Road and West Heath Drive was treated in a particularly harmful manner; the paving stones around the base of the trunk were removed and the large deep roots and the surface roots of the tree were completely exposed. Instead of protecting these roots by covering them with sand or earth, the workmen left their heavy tools and machinery around this tree for several days and nights* (see photo).

When Barnet replaces paving that is cracked and dangerous to pedestrians, it should ensure the trees are protected too. Peter Falk from the RA's Trees & Open Spaces Committee has written to Andy Tipping, Trees and Woodland Manager for Barnet Council, and it appears now that some intervention has been put into place. The trees are now surrounded by fencing and, instead of heavy paving stones weighing down the roots, layers of sandy earth have been heaped around three of the trees on the lower part of the road where the new paving stones have been placed.

Trees in woodland and forests are able to communicate with each other, as has been written about by Peter Wohlleben, author of *The Hidden Life of Trees*, and Merlin Sheldrake, author of *Entangled Life*. Woodland and forest trees share information and alert each other via their roots with regard to insects and other organisms which are harmful to them. By contrast, street trees, planted by humans in accordance with human designs and desires, are not able to communicate in this way and so we need to exercise extra caution and care to enable their survival.

If anyone is interested in learning more about street trees and how to care for them, please contact peter.d.falk@gmail.com.

**I am pleased to report that since writing this article the tree roots have been covered with tar, which is preferable to paving stones.*

The Suburb celebrates New Year's Eve

TONY BRAND

Midnight approaches on the last night of December 2022! With five minutes to go, people stream out of St Jude's, where they have enjoyed wine and snacks. The large crowd waits quietly around Central Square until the church bell rings out to signal the start of 2023, followed by a magnificent firework display lighting up the whole area. An opportunity for people to hope for a better and happier 2023.

Thank you to the volunteers who make this annual event possible, and to St Jude's parishioners for allowing us the use of the church.

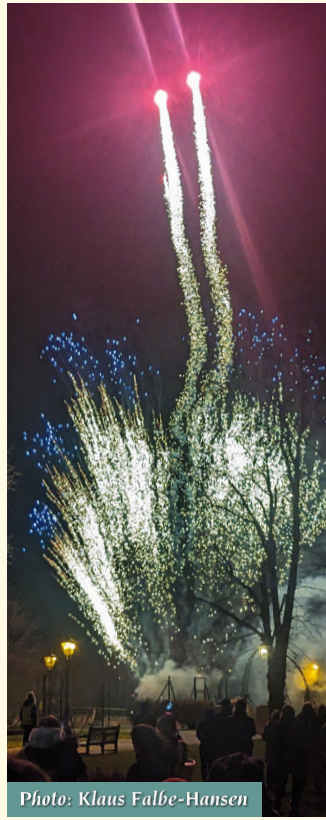


Photo: Klaus Falbe-Hansen



Photo: Tony Brand



Photo: Hella Schrader



Photo: Michael Eleftheriades

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