

Traffic Penalties

GARY SHAW

In recent years Barnet Council has accrued to itself the power to use CCTV cameras for what are known as moving traffic contraventions. These include banned left, right or U-turns, no entry restrictions and box junction infractions. More than once residents have asked me for help fighting box junction tickets which they correctly believed were issued without justification and I am concerned that some of Barnet's enforcement staff appear not to understand the nature of the box junction restriction.

It is not always recognised that there is no blanket prohibition on stopping inside a box junction: it is in fact perfectly legal to do so

voluntarily. In addition, no contravention will have occurred if a vehicle stops because traffic lights have changed, pedestrians have stepped out or because a moving vehicle has cut across in front. The box junction restriction applies only if a vehicle is forced to come to a halt because the required exit is blocked by stationary traffic. Furthermore, right turning traffic may remain stationary in the junction for as long as it takes for opposite direction moving traffic to clear the right turn path. This applies not only to the first car in the right turn queue but also to any following vehicle. In other words, if you are turning right, it is legal to stop in a box junction behind a stationary vehicle if that vehicle is

also turning right and is waiting for oncoming traffic to pass through the junction.

Unfortunately there have been cases where Barnet Council has issued tickets where drivers have simply elected not to leave the box junction when their exit has been clear. Such tickets are invalid and where challenged the Council has had to cancel them. If Barnet are in the habit of issuing tickets whenever a vehicle is voluntarily stopped in a box junction it seems highly likely that a great many invalid tickets will have been issued and paid by residents who assumed they had broken the rules when that would not have been the case.

With the help of our Suburb councillors we are putting pressure on the Council to ensure that their enforcement staff fully understand yellow box rules, but in the meantime residents might take the opportunity to better acquaint themselves with what is a widely misunderstood regulation. Local box junctions monitored by CCTV include those at Bridge Lane/ Finchley Road in Temple Fortune, at the Golders Green War Memorial and outside the Holiday Inn on Regents Park Road going south towards Henly's Corner.

As always, if anyone needs help with a parking or traffic ticket I will be happy to assist – my email is penalties@hgsra.uk.



Photo: Tania Naiden

Further plans for playground

COLIN GREGORY

It is now six months since the playground on the Heath Extension was refurbished by the City of London with financial support from the RA and the generous HGS Community.

With days getting longer and warmer, Olivia White, who spearheaded the initiative, was asked how she and her friends have enjoyed using it. Olivia says, "It has been fantastic seeing the playground being used by so many children since it was finished in November, despite the wintery weather, and it will only get better as spring arrives! My favourite piece of new equipment would have to be the basket swing because it can be enjoyed by people of all ages, and it goes so high that you feel like you are being shot up into space!" Her friend Hila added, "I think the playground is well-designed and relevant for all ages. People want to use it more and it has a fun atmosphere. I love the

new equipment!" Another friend, Sloane, said "Olivia put the best of herself into the playground refurbishment and it has really paid off. It's amazing what one girl can do! We love it!"

Because prices went up while the work was being planned, some of the equipment intended to be included had to be left out. The RA is now launching a campaign to raise a further £12,000 to fund the installation of a toddler slide with wooden platform and a four-person wooden seesaw.

Olivia says, "Although we were unable to buy all the equipment originally planned, we'd like to raise further funds to complete the project. It already looks absolutely amazing and is giving local children lots of fun, so thanks to everyone who has supported the project so far – but let's finish what we started!"

If you would like to contribute towards this further fundraiser, please contact Colin Gregory, the RA's Heath representative, on colingregory@talk21.com.



Play your part in keeping our Suburb special

The Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association was formed over 110 years ago. With nearly 1,900 members, it has become a strong, enthusiastic community in the Suburb. It:

- organises social events including the Summer Fair and Hallowe'en/New Year's Eve festivities •
 - maintains and enhances the greenery in the Suburb by funding the planting of street trees and setting up of a community orchard •
 - supports residents to prepare for environmental challenges •
- works with LB Barnet to keep the Suburb clean and supports local litter picking volunteers •
- supports local community groups and donates to local charities, including Proms at St Jude's •
 - produces the quarterly Suburb News and annual Suburb Directory delivered by volunteers to all households in the Suburb •
 - produces the monthly Suburb eNews with local information and events circulated by email to members only •
- provides access to the Master Tradespeople List with recommendations from fellow Suburb members and the HGS List email group: both available to RA members only •



Photo: Daniella Levene

Keeping the Suburb green should be as important to all of us as it was to Dame Henrietta and you can play your part by getting involved with our Trees and Open Spaces Committee.

As well as trying to protect the Suburb's amazing trees (including, currently, one amazing ancient oak that is being threatened), we would also like to initiate a Suburb Community Harvesting scheme to pick up on the scheme initiated by Barnet Community Harvesters.

The aim of community harvesting is to collect surplus fruit – mainly apples and pears – from people's gardens, allotments and public spaces – fruit that would otherwise go to waste – and get that fruit to food banks and other community causes.

So, if you want to help run this new scheme...or help with picking (it's so much fun!) or with transport...or have fruit to donate (we can come and pick it for you)...or want to join the Trees & Open Spaces Committee and help to keep the Suburb green, please contact: harvesting@hgsra.org.

Steven Rowe T&OS Committee member

Join the Hampstead Garden Suburb Residents Association online at hgsra.uk/join or call 020 3488 9131