

# NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

## Answering telephone calls at your private home

I have recently had to train myself to change a habit of a lifetime. For many years, whenever the telephone rang, I answered it by giving my telephone number and my name because it always seemed so much more polite and positive than just saying "Yeah?"! But times have changed. Due to abuse of the telephone network by the salesman, the hoaxer and the nuisance caller, both the police and British Telecom now recommend that, when you pick up the 'phone, you answer either "Hello, who's calling please?" or just "Hello".

## The salesman and the hoaxer

Salesmen and others will ignore this and ask for you more. But do not give your name or your 'phone number until you first know precisely who is on the line. So say again "Who is calling please?". Some thieves may use the telephone to check whether a house is occupied or not, so do not confirm to them that they have dialled and been connected to your number. You must first ascertain the callers' identity.

And then, if you do not want to continue the conversation, all you have to say is "No. I'm not interested, thank you", and replace the receiver. Some really persistent salesmen may re-dial and ring you again, in which case say to them "Would you please hold on while I just get my husband/wife" - and then place the 'phone down gently and leave the persistent salesman waiting at the other end of the line - indefinitely!

Incidentally, you should not accept a person's identity just because he/she says "I'm a police officer" or "I'm carrying out market research" or "I'm from the Council". You must



always be on your guard. However, if you are in doubt but still would like to assist the caller if genuine, then you must obtain the name, place of calling, a name of company etc. and any extension number, so that you can check in the telephone directory or with their Head Office before calling back.

And, if someone asks "What number is this?" or "What number are you?", simply ask what number they are calling and then say whether they are right or wrong!

Even when you have checked the identity of the caller, you should still be cautious about the information you impart. For instance, children should be made aware of the correct way to answer the telephone as an innocent comment such as "Daddy's not at home" is unnecessarily giving the caller private information. The caller should be asked for a 'phone number so that you may call back later, if you wish. You should also consider advising children against telling an unknown caller the proposed time of your return home.

## The nuisance caller

Nuisance callers can cause considerable distress and so, as soon as you realise that you are receiving a nuisance or obscene telephone call, hang up gently,

showing no emotion. Many such callers hope for an emotional reaction and long conversations as they would like nothing better than an exchange of insults. Do not give the caller the satisfaction: simply hang up.

A silent telephone call may not necessarily be from a caller meaning to annoy. The caller may have dialled the wrong number and does not have the manners to apologise. However, some callers do remain silent just to hear what your reaction will be - it will not be much fun for this type of caller if you just hang up and let him listen to a dead line.

If nuisance calls, especially silent calls, persist despite hanging up immediately it is possible that the caller is known to you. Most random callers are put off if they do not get the desired reaction.

Lastly, a tip for dealing with obscene calls that may well not have the approval of British Telecom - keep a "Walk-easy" personal emergency alarm by your 'phone and give the obscene caller a really long blast straight into the mouth-piece of your 'phone. I am told it is literally deafening to anyone at the other end of the line holding a 'phone to his ear!

## A telephone answering machine

Finally, if none of the above works for you, a telephone answering machine could solve your problems! You will hear the speaker's message on the answering machine's loud speaker before you are committed to picking up your receiver. All you have to do is to alert your friends to the fact that your answerphone will always intercept their calls first even though you may be at home and will then pick up your 'phone and speak to them. **PL**



"The Wizard of Oz" Dorothy (Anna Martin), the Scarecrow (Simon Ramsey), the Tin Man (Dennis Elam) and the Cowardly Lion (Terry Rogers).

## WIZARD OF OZ

The stars of this show were the set designers, Jane Rogers and David Lane. Using wonderful bright colours their sets were inventive and immensely pleasing to the eye. Indeed the eye was often more ravished than the ear since the costumes, once again in the capable hands of Frances Musker and Diana Darrer, also added to the visual delights.

It is very difficult to be critical about an event that gives such obvious pleasure to all the young people who take part and perhaps one should just say that it happened and that there were some delightful personalities among the Munchkins, Jitterbugs, Skeletons, Farmhands and Citizens of Oz and that everyone put their hearts into it.

The star among the actors was undoubtedly Simon Ramsey,

whose Scarecrow was funny and loveable and always in character. You really felt that he might fall to bits any minute. Terry Rogers found some of the humour in the timid Lion as did Dennis Elam in the Tin Woodman. Anna Martin made a good attempt at Dorothy but "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" defeated her. The musicians, Jenny Bennett, Matthew Ash, Allen Hanouka and Robin Healey sounded great but were sometimes too loud for individual singers. Once again one says the obvious - that it's no mean feat to marshal all these people together and get everyone into the right place at the right time and to try and make it look good. Directors John and Sonia Woolf deserve one's admiration.

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## SUBURB STREET TREES

Last year the RA Trees & Open Spaces Committee had a useful meeting with the aptly-named Mr Andrew Branch, of Barnet Council's Recreation Department, who is the arboricultural officer for that part of the Borough which includes the Garden Suburb.

Mr Branch has asked us to emphasize two points to Suburb residents:

1. When street trees have been broken or have died, or when stumps have been left for more than a month, or if the tree support needs rectification, it would be exceedingly helpful if residents would straightaway inform the Recreation Department, by telephoning 081-446 8511 x4448 or x4490.

2. Residents should not feel inhibited from looking after nearby newly-planted street trees. Watering during dry periods is particularly valuable, as is weeding round the base of the tree, and firming in of loose stakes.

## WHY DON'T YOU BECOME A MEMBER OF THE TRUST COMPANY?

We are anxious to increase the number of company members. The sole requirement for membership is to have lived on the Suburb for more than 3 years. Also there are no restrictions on how many people can join from the same household.

In many respects the Trust is an unusual organisation and differs from most companies in the following ways:

### ○ Non-Profit Making:

The sole objective of the Trust is to conserve and maintain the character and amenities of the Suburb. The company does not produce profits or pay dividends to its members.

### ○ Unpaid Directors:

The eight directors of the company are known as Trust Council Members. Four of them are appointed by outside organisations (Law Society, Royal Institute of British Architects, Royal Town Planning Institute and Victorian Society), and four are elected by members of the Company. The Trust Council Members are unpaid and all the work they do is voluntary.

### ○ Role of Members:

The Trust does not have shareholders in the conventional sense but members. There is no financial commitment and if the company went into liquidation the liability of members is limited to £1.

There are 2 main advantages to membership:

○ Receipt of the Annual Report and Accounts of the Company, and participation in Trust Council elections.

○ The opportunity to take part in the management of the Suburb. Most residents come to live here because in terms of architecture and town planning it is a unique environment, and they support the aims of the Trust in trying to

preserve this Outstanding Conservation Area. The Trust belongs to the community and therefore all residents who believe that the job we are trying to do is worthwhile should become members.

If you would like an application form please complete and return the coupon.

To: C.M. Kellerman  
Trust Manager  
Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust  
862, Finchley Road  
London NW1 6AB

Please send me ..... application form(s) for membership of the Trust Company.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



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