

# EVTRA Newsletter

An occasional publication of the Elm Village Tenants and Residents Association

Covering 11-111 Barker Drive, Bergholt Mews, Blakeney Close, Rossendale Way and 44 St Pancras Way

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## SECURITY COMES FIRST

The Committee have been very active recently in response to residents' concerns. For a period the number of burglaries increased. Various theories were put forward which cannot be mentioned here for legal reasons. But we can say that certain residents noted ladders left around, keys being borrowed, and a stream of unknown people claiming to be workers.

### Elm Village: Cops and Robbers chase

On one occasion prompt action by a resident and then the police resulted in a chase. The thief, being a man of some imagination but little understanding of canals, jumped into the canal and swam and waded across. He showed even less awareness of the minds of modern developers. Reaching the new block opposite, he then found there was no way into or out of the block for him,

allowing the police to make an arrest.

### If you want something doing properly . . .

Regular readers will know that persuading Places for People to action is an activity requiring a long life and much free time. Urgent action requires divine intervention. So when residents complained about burglaries, achieved or failed, including serious damage to locks, we took prompt action and arranged for the vulnerable gates to be padlocked, pending the replacement of locks.

### More surveillance and how to get it

In view of these incidents the Committee pressed for support from the various groups available, listed below. First, though, we stress that **in an emergency, you should dial 999** to get the police. Also if, sadly, you are the victim of crime, you need to contact the police on 020 7404 1212.

### *Street Wardens*

We have had patrols from the Street Wardens (the ones who wear red and yellow). Their main concern is to head off problems such as street crime, drug dealing and problems caused by alcohol and drug abuse. If you feel that their services are needed where you live, **contact the Secretary in the first instance**, as they suggest. Their numbers are limited and they are mostly deployed in the obvious troublespots. We have been lucky to get a share of their services through the efforts of Councillor Robinson. We stress again that **they are not an emergency service**, unless they are actually on the spot.

### *Community Wardens*

These are the ones in blue uniforms, who look like the police and are in fact a support service for the police. They help to increase police efficiency by permitting extra manpower to be deployed for the sorts of

matters dealt with by the police (for example, they were recently involved in heading off incidents in Somers Town, after a knifing). Again, if you feel that their services are needed where you live **contact the Secretary in the first instance**, as they too are not an emergency service.

#### *Neighbourhood Watch scheme*

It has been suggested that we should set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. To arrange this we would have an introduction to the scheme by the police. The Committee feels that this would be best done at the AGM in July rather than at a separate meeting,

In this type of scheme residents report suspicious activities or any other matter related to security to a central coordinator (the Secretary is prepared to take on this role). You can remain anonymous, and you have the option of whether to display stickers or not.

We would like to know the interest in the Neighbour Watch scheme, so if you would wish to join please send an email or note to the Secretary, who will keep you informed.

#### *StreetSafe scheme*

A further security scheme has been drawn to our attention. StreetSafe is concerned with antisocial behaviour rather than burglary. If you have any such concerns, phone them on 020 7833 7970 or email them on StreetSafe@crinet.co.uk. They are also looking for "Community Auditors": people who are prepared to send them updates about street activity. If this appeals to you, do contact them direct but also tell the Secretary, so that we can link your work to the other initiatives mentioned above.

## **ELM VILLAGE – THE TRENDIEST PLACE IN EUROPE?**

Well not yet, quite, but now that St Pancras International is open, there is going to be a lot of development in this area in the near future – you can already see some of it in St Pancras Way.

As that work shows, we need to monitor what is going on, so as to make sure that we don't lose out: residents in Rossendale Way have lost a great deal of sunlight, for example.

The Committee is keeping a watch, but we need all the information we can get. So if you have ideas or knowledge about further changes due to happen, let us know. Some things which we can already report are:

The **Jubilee Centre** seems to be standing idle. Why isn't it being used? What are the plans for it?

The **Camden Road medical practice**, with two other practices in Camden, is now to be run by a profit-making company. The out-of-hours service, Camidoc, is also threatened but hasn't yet been signed away by Camden's Primary Care Trust. Are you concerned about these matters? Would you like to sign a petition opposing privatisation of the NHS? Or join the Camden group of Keep Our NHS Public? If so, contact Maeve O'Connor (maeve.oc@blueyonder.co.uk; tel. 020 7383 3092) and follow developments through the web site.

**Allotments:** it looks likely that we shall be able to create some allotments, or at least spaces to grow food or flowers. We already have

a waiting list and will keep you informed.

### **No to Elm Village as the “tradesmen’s entrance” to the new Kings Cross!**

There will be massive development of the area around King’s Cross, which is predicted to make this area even more significant than Docklands. We are monitoring this but it would be useful to have even more people who are willing to watch this and take action when necessary.

In particular, it has been pointed out to us that the development of Camley Street could go in very different directions. One situation could be the development of much more residential property, together with shops. This would link Elm Village directly to the bright new development which is proposed for the area to the north of the railway. But the other option would be further development of the current light industrial and warehouse buildings, which would enable developers to create an area with few people and so a greater risk of crime, constant loading and unloading of trucks – forming a barren barrier zone between us and the

life and prosperity which will undoubtedly characterise the new development.

The Committee are monitoring the situation and will keep residents advised if public pressure is needed. But everyone can help to preserve and advance our area by keeping their ears and eyes open for both desirable and undesirable developments.

## **NEWS FROM THE CONSTITUTION**

No, not possible plans for electoral reform, but our local pub. Wendy Clare, the landlady, has worked wonders here. The pub is now visited by many residents and is definitely a centre for locals to meet in a warm and friendly atmosphere. There is the popular quiz night and, very important, the football team. The latter contains many of our local lads and has gained promotion for the second season running. They will be in Camden Sunday League Division 1 next season, and at the time of writing have a chance to win the Junior Cup – the final has been postponed twice because of weather. If you like football, come and support them on May 11th.

At the same time the pub is becoming known as a venue for music and arts. For details of some of the exciting jazz, folk DJ and other evenings see the posters in the Constitution’s window.

Our own local talent has also been active, presenting a very successful evening of words and music for Valentine’s Day and an evening of “dinner” jazz for people to socialise to in the Cellar Bar. The next evening of this type will be on May 6th. Try it – it’s free!

## **SOCIAL NEWS**

A date for your diaries. This is the 25th anniversary of the building of Elm Village, and so, following the popularity of the celebrations for the 10<sup>th</sup> and 20th anniversaries, EVTRA will be putting on a special evening on **Thursday June 12th**. There will be a **barbecue (free) with some free drinks, and a free show presenting a lighthearted history of Elm Village and Camden Town**, by the words and music group Sounds Like. We also expect to put on dinner jazz in the Cellar, and possibly some trad jazz in the beer garden.

We are not sure about the latter though, because some people who have moved into the Star Wharf block opposite (one of the new blocks that is taking away light from many of our residents) have complained that people are standing outside, drinking, smoking and talking. Now that does surprise us! If you want rural stillness, you are best advised not to buy a flat next to a pub. In fact the events complained of did not happen at unreasonable times. On the one occasion when a band was noisy and there were complaints, Wendy Clare took immediate action. EVTRA have agreed to speak on her behalf if there are further complaints, because for many residents the pub is an important part of their community life.

So, please, please, **if you are bothered by noise from the pub, don't just rush off to complain to Camden Council.** Let us know and we will press for action. But above all, phone Wendy (7387 4805) or go and talk to her. Explain that you have young children or sleep lightly or whatever the problem is – you will find she is very easy to deal with and will take your

complaint seriously and try to help.

### USEFUL CONTACTS

**Police:** urgent calls: 999  
*Drug dealing etc.:* 020 8733 6262

*Reporting needles:*

Drug Action Response Team (DART): 0800 032 3278 (do not move the needle yourself)

*Reporting dealing etc.:*

Safer Neighbours Programme: 8721 2810

*Camden/Kentish Town police:* 020 7404 1212

*Camden Town street wardens:* 020 7974 5195

*Street Services Team (help for people on the street):* 020 7833 7970

*Community safety team:* 020 7974 2915

*Borough Control Room (for reporting less urgent crime):* 020 7404 1212

*Crimestoppers (for anonymous information):* freephone 0800 555 111; [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

### Places for People

0800 432 0002 or 0800 432 0003;

*Neighbourhood Officer:*

Mehz Omar 020 7520 7419; [mehz.omar@placesforpeople.co.uk](mailto:mehz.omar@placesforpeople.co.uk)

### Camden Council

*Recycling:* 020 7974 6914 (for free collection of garden waste); [recycling@camden.gov.uk](mailto:recycling@camden.gov.uk)

[camden.gov.uk](http://camden.gov.uk);  
[www.camden.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.camden.gov.uk/recycling)  
*Guide for older people (Getting on in Camden):* 020 7974 4523;  
[www.camden.gov.uk](http://www.camden.gov.uk)  
*Healthy living activities and events:* 0800 068 2949, or [www.wellandwise.org.uk](http://www.wellandwise.org.uk)  
*Disability information directory :* 020 7974 2230  
*Community Safety Team:* 020 7974 2915  
*Litterline (rubbish collection, graffiti, dirty streets, abandoned cars):* 020 7974 6914 or 6915; [street.environment@camden.gov.uk](mailto:street.environment@camden.gov.uk)  
*Blocked kerbside gullies and drains:* 020 7974 2005  
*Dog fouling:* 020 7974 6914  
*Hole in road/uneven pavement:* 020 7974 2015  
*Street lighting:* 7974 2006  
*Street sweeping:* 7974 6915  
*Parking permits:* 7974 4646  
*Noise (9.0 a.m. to 4 p.m.):* 7974 2090; [env.health@camden.gov.uk](mailto:env.health@camden.gov.uk)  
*Weekend noise service (Friday and Saturday, 10 p.m. to 4 a.m.):* 7278 4444  
*General enquiries (Town Hall):* 020 7278 4444

*Councillor:*

Roger Robinson,  
[roger.robinson@camden.gov.uk](mailto:roger.robinson@camden.gov.uk)