



Village Watch NEWS

Your monthly Newsletter from
Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Watch
JANUARY 2019

For the latest news on crime in the area visit our website: www.villagewatch.co.uk – or join our group on Facebook



Please remember our new Telephone Number – 0756 2422 756

New Year Resolution

There is one Resolution that you should make and be sure to keep during 2019 and all subsequent years. It is very simple: Do not treat your vehicle as if it is a strongbox but be sure to remove everything of value when you leave it unattended, especially overnight.

Thieves have access to electronic devices that can unlock a vehicle by activating its remote key control if it is in range. The safest thing is to routinely store remote key controls in a metal container as far away from the vehicles as possible.

Glad We Could Help

In 2013 we published a Police appeal on our website about an elderly woman who had gone missing from her home. A man who was researching his family tree found the page on the internet in November and wrote us. He recognised her as his aunt with whom his mother had lost contact many years ago. They were anxious to find out the result of the search.

The Police could not disclose confidential information but agreed to forward his letter to the woman's family so that they could make their own decision whether or not to reply.

The family contacted him with the sad news that she had taken her own life. However, the positive outcome is that, despite these tragic circumstances, the family link has been re-established.

Not a typical task for Neighbourhood Watch but we are glad that we were able to help.

Immobilise your Presents

Many of us will have received expensive presents for Christmas and it is a very good idea to do as much as you can to protect them from thieves.

There are means of marking items that can deter criminals from stealing them. If they are recovered the Police can identify you as the owner and, importantly, prove to a court that they are stolen items. A plausible story from a thief can be hard to disprove, allowing them to keep your property and avoid prosecution.

Most items, including photographs of jewellery, can be registered with *Immobilise*, the Police-supported national database. When they recover property that they suspect is stolen, the Police are able to check whether it is registered on the database.

It is very easy to use and a pack containing numbered security labels, warning stickers and full instructions on how to register your property is available to members from our Advice Shop for £1 per pack.

Or just go the website:

www.immobilise.com

Stay Alert and Safe

Moped crime has been in the news recently and, while not common in our villages, this type of theft is a problem in crowded city areas. Thieves on bicycles can easily snatch phones and other items, such as jewellery, and be out of sight before the victim realises what has happened.

The best advice is to stay alert and as aware as possible of your surroundings. Using phones to make calls and check social media or headphones to listen to music and podcasts, reduce spatial awareness and make you much more likely to be caught off guard. It is as if you are in a private bubble, isolated from what is going on around you.

If you have to take a call or check something on your phone, it is a good idea to pop into a shop or stand still with your back to a wall while you do so.

Many people use their journey home from work as a time to relax but it is really the time you should be most vigilant. You are most at risk of being robbed when you are out in public, especially when it is dark.

ATM Fraud

A member had their card cloned and their PIN stolen when they used a cash machine that had been tampered with by criminals. Fortunately, their bank detected and blocked several subsequent fraudulent transactions. Other people have not been so lucky.

Be very careful when you use an ATM and make a brief examination before you insert your card. If you spot anything unusual or suspicious, do not use it and alert the Police on 101.

Whenever you enter your PIN into any card reader or machine, make sure that you cover the key pad with your free hand so that nobody else can see what keys you press. Never write down your PIN and carry it with you.

If your card gets jammed in the machine or disappears and is not returned, do not leave (unless you feel unsafe) but call 101 for advice. If you do have to leave your card behind, notify your bank IMMEDIATELY. It is a good idea to make a note of their emergency number to keep with your card for when you might need it.

Saturday Advice Shop

19th January 2019

10 a.m. to 12 noon

Parish Council Building

10 Sibson Road

Bring your bicycle to be engraved with your postcode and house number so that it can be identified if it is stolen and later recovered by the Police

Please come to the Advice Shop no later than 11.30 a.m.

This service is free.

Beat News

The most recent *Beat News* is published in full on the *Police News* pages of our website – www.villagewatch.co.uk

The reports are also printed each month in the *Birstall Post*.

Here is a summary of the November *Beat News* from PC Dave Jaeckels:

- There were fifty-one crimes reported in November, the same as in October.
- There were eleven house burglaries reported after none had occurred in October. In most cases, entry was gained by breaking patio doors or windows being forced at the rear.
- Nine cases of theft from vehicles were reported, including four of number plates.
- There were eight cases of theft, mainly from shops, and three of fuel from the petrol station.
- There were reports of six incidents of assault.

Further information can be found at:
www.police.uk/leicestershire/NL60

Crime Prevention Advice

We have had eleven burglaries this month and in most cases the intruders gained entry via the rear of the house. It is important to try and stop people from getting to the back of your property in the first place. These simple ideas can help:

1. Ensure your back gate is closed and locked/bolted and do not fit the bolt at the top of the gate as thieves can easily reach over to unbolt it!
2. Make sure all the fences surrounding your garden are in good order and that there are no gaps in any hedges etc. If there are, consider using chicken wire or something similar to fill them.
3. Consider fitting fence spikes to the tops of any gates/fences that are visible from the front of your house as these make it more difficult for people to climb over them.
4. If possible, store your wheelie bins in your rear garden as they are often used by burglars to climb on to help them get over garden gates and fences.

Neighbourhood update

The Beat Team has been out doing some more speed checks. In just over an hour we recorded 160 vehicles through the site, ten of which were issued with verbal warnings for travelling above the speed limit.

We have also been out delivering leaflets in relation to the burglaries that have been reported (see above) and PCSO Mark Butler has also given a crime prevention and safety talk to a local community group.

Fraudulent Phone Calls

Despite regular warnings, people are still losing thousands of pounds to criminals who telephone them out of the blue and persuade them to transfer money from their bank accounts to “protect it from being stolen”!

Fraudsters may contact you pretending to be from your Bank, the Police or another company that you trust. A technique they may use is to change your account name to something like *Frozen*, *Suspended* or *Blocked* and then ask you to transfer your money into a ‘safe’ account.

- A bank will **NEVER** change your account name or ask you to move money to another account.
- You should never share your Digital Banking and Mobile App activation codes or your login details with anybody **even if they claim to be from the bank.**
- If you get a call asking you for these security details or to move money from your account, ring off immediately and call a number you can trust from the bank’s website, your bank statement, debit or credit card.
- If it is at all possible make the call from a different number from the one on which you received the suspicious call.

Have You had your Flu Jab?

You are entitled to **FREE** vaccination if you

- ✓ are 65 years old or over
- ✓ are pregnant
- ✓ have certain medical conditions
- ✓ receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill

They are available free from your GP or Local Pharmacies

Police Beat Surgeries

You can meet one of our local Police Officers to discuss, in confidence, any issues that concern you on:

- Saturday, 19th January in the NHW Advice Shop at 10 Sibson Road between 10 a.m. and 12 noon
- There are likely to be other dates and locations in January but they were not available at the time we went to press. Please check the Police website for the latest information.

www.police.uk/leicestershire/NL60/news-and-events/

(These times are always subject to Officers not being required elsewhere in an emergency.)

THINK VERY CAREFULLY BEFORE ACTING ON THE ADVICE OF STRANGERS NO MATTER HOW NICE THEY MIGHT SEEM

Contacting Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Watch

Email: watch@villagewatch.co.uk

Phone: 0756 2422 756

*Calls go to our answering service but we always try to reply within 24 hours
Please remember to leave your number*

Write: c/o Birstall Parish Council
Council Office, Birstall Road,
Birstall, Leicester, LE4 4DH

We also have a locked post box on the counter in the Council Office

Thank you to Birstall Parish Council for continuing to support the Watch – www.birstallparishcouncil.org.uk