



Visit our website at: www.villagewatch.co.uk and join our Group on *Facebook*

New Year Resolutions

Every year we ask Members to include protecting themselves from the activities of criminals in their list of New Year Resolutions.

The most likely risk most of us will face is some form of theft, either physical such as burglary or online. The second method is growing fast and the total amount stolen now runs into tens of millions of pounds in the UK alone.

The current Covid-19 pandemic has led to a surge in

online shopping and related activities that the fraudsters have been quick to exploit.

Please make it your resolution to stay alert to the risk of crime. Always keep your property secure and do not make it easy for thieves. Keep your home and vehicles locked whenever they are unattended.

Treat any unexpected messages, however you receive them, as potential scams and do nothing until you are absolutely sure that they are genuine.

Never act in haste, always take time to consider and do not be panicked into doing something silly.

Thanks to Our Beat Team

PC Dave Jaeckels, PCSO Mark Butler and PCSO Cody Taylor are the members of the Birstall and Wanlip Beat Team who are dedicated to keeping our villages safe.

Theirs is never an easy job but last year turned out to be especially challenging. Apart from the routine crime they normally deal with, they have been faced with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Nevertheless, they and their colleagues in Charnwood have carried on working conscientiously with limited resources, doing their best to keep us all safe. When necessary this has included enforcing lockdown rules and that has led to some of them being abused and even attacked for their efforts.

The Neighbourhood Watch, on behalf of all our Members, would like to applaud and thank them for always being there when we need them.

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 we can to protect them from thieves.

There are means of marking items that can thwart criminals and help in their recovery. If they are found the Police can identify you as the owner and, importantly, prove to a court that they are stolen. A plausible story can be hard to disprove if the Police cannot show that the property is actually stolen, allowing the thief to keep it and avoid prosecution.

Almost any item, including photographs of jewellery, can be registered with *Immobilise*, the Police-supported national database. When the Police recover property that they suspect is stolen, they can check whether it is registered on the database and contact the owner.

Just go to the website: www.immobilise.com

The Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Beat Team produces a monthly Newsletter written by our Beat Officer, Dave Jaeckels. It contains news about recent crime in our villages, crime prevention advice and other information about the Team's activities.

You can read it in full each month on our website:
www.villagewatch.co.uk/police

Domestic Violence

As if the pandemic is not bad enough, the extended periods of lockdown and other restrictions have placed additional strains on most of us. In some cases, they have resulted in the breakdown of relationships and an increase in the number of domestic abuse incidents reported to the Police.

Our Beat Team had sixteen reports of assault in November, the majority occurring in domestic settings. The concern nationally is that many of these offences go unreported. In many cases such violence can be psychological rather than physical, with no visible injuries.

Commonly, incidents involve women abused by male partners but the problem goes much wider and people at risk include children, women and men of all ages in varied domestic situations. Often, on the face of it, they do not appear to be vulnerable and many find it difficult to admit that they are.

Most of us are, understandably, reluctant to intrude into other peoples' private affairs. Nevertheless, if you are concerned about somebody you think may be in a difficult situation, please do not ignore it. Be careful not to put them or yourself at any immediate risk but sometimes a sympathetic and quiet enquiry can help enormously.

There are well-publicised cases where tragedies could have been prevented if the victims had received the right support when they needed it.

If you are seriously concerned for someone's immediate physical safety, do not hesitate to call the Police on 999 for assistance.

Visit our website for more information about where you can get advice on what you could do to help.

www.villagewatch.co.uk/information

Nuisance Phone Calls

We continue to get regular reports about nuisance phone calls. Telephone providers are doing their best to block them but many still get through. Most are from criminals seeking to steal our money or personal details.

The stories vary widely but if you get an unexpected recorded message asking you press a key for more information you can be certain it is a trick. If there is a pause before a real person comes on the line, that is a very strong indication that the call is dodgy.

Once you decide that it is a scam, just ring off straight away.