



HeathWatch



The quarterly Neighbourhood Watch newsletter for Surrey Heath
Volume 2 Issue 73 | Spring 2021 | Editor Juanita West



surreyheathnw.co.uk

Message from the Chairman

I hope that you are all taking care and covid free; although we are beginning to see less cases we still need to be careful and continue to look out and care for our unfortunate vulnerable neighbours.

Whilst generally crime is lower there are still more cases of Domestic Violence being reported, a notable amount of Catalytic Converters being stolen, significant drug related cases and anti-social cases.

Our local force has been active and has made inroads to combat these crimes in many cases with the help of residents reporting concerns not only to Police but also to our Watch coordinators and Area coordinators.

We welcome the members of new watches and their Coordinators, especially those who have recently moved into Surrey Heath and appreciate the need to be "neighbourly" in their community.

Once the restrictions are removed to allow us to meet collectively we plan to embark upon a borough wide attempt to encourage more residents to join Neighbourhood Watch and set up new Watches also to resurrect dormant Watches.

As you know, we have been unable to hold Watch Coordinators' meetings at St Mary's for the

last year. We decided to resume them in June/July pending directive from the Government.

We sought to hold a local Zoom meeting for the Six villages at end of last year, but there appeared to be little interest at that time. However we decided to try again on 29th March for all Watch Coordinators which proved successful.

D.I. Alick James, our Borough Commander was introduced to explain how Police strategy was changing and how Neighbourhood Watch help to improve their intelligence to aid their investigations with solving crime along with showing the trends over the last year. Not surprisingly burglary has declined as many more people are at home.

Here's looking to late summer when we may be able to resume a more usual way of life but nevertheless will be different to the past. "Let's be careful out there" if you remember the end of the US police series in the 80's!

Martin Butcher

NB Please note that at our AGM in March, Larry Bain was elected as Chairman, and will write his introduction in the next edition. Larry is a Watch Coordinator in Heatherside and is also one of our Facebook Moderators.

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Lottery update: don't forget that you can support us by playing the Surrey Heath Lottery from £1 a week with a weekly jackpot of £25,000. Half of the ticket money is donated to us. [Click here to play!](#)



This newsletter is produced by the Surrey Heath Neighbourhood Watch Support Group with funding gratefully received from Safer Surrey Heath Partnership, Windlesham Parish Council and from Surrey Police in the promotion of Neighbourhood Watch and the distribution of HeathWatch. We gratefully acknowledge their generosity in supporting us.



Important advice from Police Design Out Crime Officer, Stephen Cake

Going on holiday is an exciting time, especially after a year of pandemic lockdown. With the vaccine rolling out across the UK, there is hope for holidays either at home or abroad. But before going away, please think about security. Follow advice from Secured by Design* to help keep your home safe while you're away:



- Ensure doors and windows are in a good state of repair and that good quality locks or bolts are fitted to all outside doors.
- Ensure the locks on all windows and doors are in good working order and are locked.
- Locks should be repaired by a Locksmith registered with the Master Locksmiths Association www.locksmiths.co.uk
- Remove the keys from all windows and doors and put them in a safe place when you leave the house.
- If you have an intruder alarm, make sure it's set. If you don't have one consider having an approved alarm system installed. Visit policesecuritysystems.com/choose-an-alarm.
- Make use of timer plugs with lamps and radios to make your house seem occupied. You can also get photosensitive bulbs, which are activated when it gets darker
- Don't leave valuable items such as laptops and jewellery in view of windows. Lock valuable items away in a ground-anchored safe or consider leaving important documents and valuable items with other family members whilst away.

"Most burglars are opportunists, with their motive in the main being to get into a property as quickly as possible, steal something of value and then leave as quickly as possible. A secure home will therefore be a deterrent to them and reduces the chance of you becoming a victim of a burglary."

Alfie Hosker, Technical Manager at Secured by Design, the official police security initiative.

And don't forget the outside of your home.

It is important that your home does not appear unoccupied, so cut lawn and hedges before you leave.

- Make sure all access points are secured such as gates and activate any external security lighting.
- Lock away gardening equipment, tools and ladders. They could aid burglars.
- Ensure sheds and outbuildings are locked and secured. Use good quality locks on garages and sheds (ensure screws on latches and hinges cannot be undone easily from the outside) and where possible ensure that they are alarmed.
- Mark your valuables such as jewellery and electronic equipment, including your gardening equipment, tools and other valuables stored in sheds and garages, using a Secured by Design approved property marking solution.
- Cancel milk and newspaper deliveries.
- Don't announce your departure to a shop full of people. Only tell people who need to know you're going away such as a trusted friend or neighbour.
- Ask a trusted neighbour or friend to collect post, open and close curtains.
- Never post status or comment on social media about going or being on holiday. If you must post status updates, ensure that your privacy settings are set so that only trusted family and friends can view them.
- Make sure that you have up-to-date contents and buildings insurance – and remember, most insurance policies only cover burglary claims on an unoccupied home if there are signs of forced entry, so double check all doors and windows are closed and locked.
- Finally, just before you actually set off it's worth allowing a quiet couple of minutes on the doorstep to check you've done all you had to do.

*Secured by Design operates an accreditation scheme on behalf of the UK Police Service for products or services that have met recognised security standards. These products or services are known as being of a 'Police Preferred Specification'. See more at securedbydesign.com



Reducing crime by good design



From our Cyberhood Watch Ambassador, Tim Tostevin

Staying Safe Online

As the lockdown eases and we all start to get out and about a bit more it's worth remembering what to look out for when using Public Wi-Fi and the things to look out for on the websites you access.



Public Wi-Fi (or Wi-Fi Hot Spots)

A Wi-Fi hotspot is a location that provides internet access through a wireless network. These can be found almost anywhere – from airports to coffee shops and even on public transport. By signing into the wireless network, you can access the internet in the same way as you would using your own personal Wi-Fi at home.

How secure is public Wi-Fi?

Wi-Fi signals can easily be intercepted and anyone with access to the network can 'sniff' all the activity taking place on the network. Wi-Fi that is installed in your own home is usually securely protected when set up, requiring a key or password to enter the network. This means that all traffic on the network is encrypted and only those with the key can access it. Anyone can access a public Wi-Fi network, meaning it is a lot less secure.

Why is public Wi-Fi targeted by criminals?

Criminals can easily spoof a Wi-Fi hotspot, giving them information about connected devices and the ability to monitor network traffic. If passwords, banking information or other private information are sent across a public Wi-Fi network insecurely, it can be intercepted and used later. Fake Wi-Fi hotspots can also direct you to bogus web pages, which encourage you to enter credentials or personal information that can be stolen.

How do websites secure my data?

Many websites use Hypertext Transfer Protocol over SSL (or https) to secure connections to them.

This means that traffic to and from the website is encrypted, so eavesdroppers will be unable to decode intercepted communications. Using these sites can protect you from criminals attempting to target users of public hotspots. Remember that anyone can create a website using 'https', so it is vital you use the correct URL when visiting a website. For example, a criminal could try and direct you to a fake secure website called 'https://www.natvvest.com' – rather than the real 'https://www.natwest.com'. To avoid these traps, use hyperlinks from your bookmarks toolbar or type them in manually rather than following a link.

VPNs – extra security

The safest way to use public Wi-Fi is to invest in a Virtual Private Network or VPN. A VPN encrypts all your network traffic independent of the network itself, meaning that eavesdroppers can't see the data you are transmitting or receiving. Many organisations use VPNs to ensure the security of their information, but this can come at a cost. VPN providers often charge for the service and the quality of connections often depends on the provider.

How can I tell if I am using https?

Sites employing https can often be identified by a green padlock or a closed padlock in the URL bar.

SSL Certificates & Security

Web browsers need a way of ensuring the integrity of websites that you might visit. Digital certificates are used to verify the identity of the website meaning you can be confident in their security. These certificates can also be used to encrypt communications to and from the website.



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Tim Tostevin

Staying Safe Online

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Most browsers allow you to see details of the certificate used to secure the website by clicking on the padlock. You may also be able to view additional information about the security of the webpage such as permissions and cookies. Remember, anyone can obtain a certificate for their website (even the criminals) so it is still important to ensure you visit the correct URL as described above.

What else can I do?



You should be cautious when using Wi-Fi connections that are public and think about your online activity. Be careful about entering personal information or undertaking financial transactions.

This is the kind of data criminals will target when accessing these networks. If you use your mobile devices, remember that apps will be constantly trying to automatically access the network and you rarely know how secure this connection is. If in doubt, use your mobile connection rather than public Wi-Fi – or wait until you get home!

We have further information about 'staying safe online' on our website surreyheathnw.co.uk. We also post warnings about scams/frauds on social media: please join our [Facebook Group](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) for regular updates.

Protect yourself

Contact your bank immediately if you think you've been targeted by a scam and report it to Action Fraud, run by the National Fraud and Cyber Reporting Centre: actionfraud.police.uk or **0300 123 2040**.



Membership Secretary's Report

New Watch scheme

Watch

Beldam Bridge Gardens Estate
West End

Coordinator

Alan Dinsdale

Neighbourhood Watch key contacts

Design Out Crime Officers (DOCO) - contact for advice on crime prevention.

Stephen Cake, 01483 633272, 07967 988734, stephen.cake1@surrey.pnn.police.uk
Mike Jones, 01483 636626, 07967987908, mike.Jones2@surrey.pnn.police.uk

Camberley, St Pauls, Old Dean, Town, St Michaels & Watchetts

Alan Hitchcock, 078300 69150, ahitchcock@surreyheathnw.co.uk

Frimley, Parkside, Heatherside, Deepcut, Frimley Green & Mytchett

Jackie Davies, 01276 506215 jdavies@surreyheathnw.co.uk

Lightwater, Bagshot, Bisley, Chobham, West End & Windlesham

Mike Potter, 07985 506624, MPotter@surreyheathnw.co.uk

Surrey Heath Police Neighbourhood Team Coordinators

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