



HeathWatch

The quarterly Neighbourhood Watch newsletter for Surrey Heath



Issue 86 | Winter 2024

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surreyheathnw.co.uk

A message from our chairman, Alan Howell

Welcome everyone to a new updated format for the Winter HeathWatch Newsletter. I do hope that you enjoy reading it.

We are currently trying to provide a wider range of information, but in a more condensed, easier to read, format. However, you will be the judges, so please

do let us know which format you prefer and any other suggestions that you may have.

Did you know that, as a movement, Neighbourhood Watch has over 2.3 million household supporters, 90,000 coordinators and 60,000 active volunteers. This makes us a very big voice within our local communities and a trusted source of information. So thank you for all that you continue to do in support of residents within your areas. This is also a good time to remind everyone that we are now actively looking

for award nominations for who you believe has gone above and beyond in the name of their community. Nominations can be for anyone from Neighbourhood Watch, Police or volunteers.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone and their families a very Merry Christmas as we approach the festive season. Please remember to stay safe, at home and online.

Warm regards,
Alan Howell - Chairman
Surrey Heath Neighbourhood Watch
alanhowell@surreyheathnw.co.uk

Keys tips for safely using Christmas lights

Ensuring the safety of Christmas fairy lights is crucial for a joyful and hazard-free festive season. Here are some key tips to keep in mind when you use them this year.

Inspect Your Lights:

Check for any damage such as frayed wires, broken bulbs, or loose connections. Damaged lights can pose a serious fire risk.

Follow Manufacturer Instructions:

Always read and adhere to the manufacturer's guidelines for safe use.

Use LED Lights:

Choose LED lights over traditional filament bulbs. LEDs operate at a lower voltage, generate less heat and are more energy-efficient, reducing the risk of fire and electric shock.

Avoid Overloading Sockets:

Do not overload electrical sockets or use multiple extension leads. This can cause overheating and increase the risk of fire.

Keep Cables Tidy:

Avoid placing cables under carpets or rugs where they can wear out unnoticed. Ensure they are not a trip hazard.

Keep Away from Flammable Materials:

Ensure lights are not in contact with flammable decorations or materials that can easily catch fire.

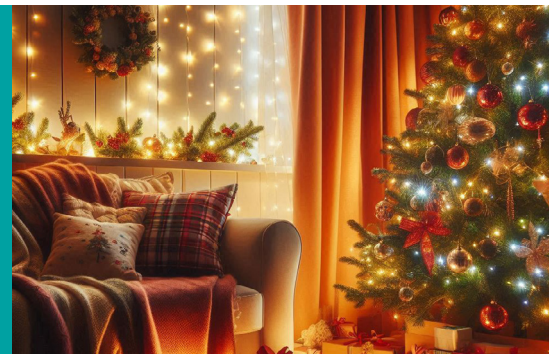
Turn Off When Unattended:

Always switch off and unplug your lights when you go to bed or leave the house.

Outdoor Lights:

Only use lights designed specifically for outdoor use. Indoor lights are not built to withstand weather conditions and can become hazardous. Ensure all outdoor connections are weatherproof and protected from moisture.

By following these safety tips, you can enjoy a beautifully lit and safe Christmas season!





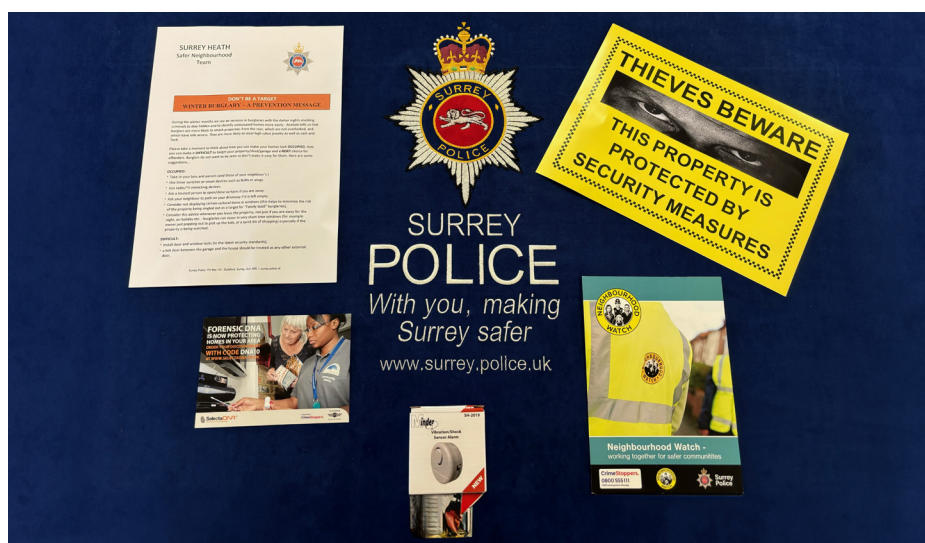
An update from Inspector Gemma Taylor

Hello again and thank you for taking the time to read my update. As the nights draw in, concern around acquisitive crime increases, as this may create more opportunity for criminals to operate.

We therefore focus our burglary prevention campaign within this period. The first campaign was held on Wednesday 16th October and saw 250 houses, in areas recently affected by burglary, visited and prevention advice given. We have a follow-up event taking place on 5th December.

Whilst we do traditionally see a slight increase in burglary through Autumn and Winter, three years' worth of data has indicated that there have been more burglary offences committed during British Summer Time than Greenwich Mean Time. This is likely to be due to most burglaries happening overnight or when the property is expected to be unoccupied e.g. the residents are away on holiday.

For more information regarding securing your property and garden, please refer to the Secured by Design website - Home



A selection of items supporting our burglary campaign

Security: <https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/crime-prevention-advice/home-security>

Covert property marking is something we suggest, to assist us in reuniting stolen items with owners. Advertising that covert marking is in use can also work as a deterrent.

A crime trend we have seen in recent months is theft of tools from vehicles. We have utilised Selecta DNA covert property marking at the two hotel car parks which are hotspots for our Borough. This has enabled us to display signage deterring future offending. With a local Councillor and Neighbourhood Watch, we have jointly purchased a number of Selecta DNA kits, which will be distributed to residents of the Borough in due course. We hope to prevent further offences and repeat victims. More information

regarding Selecta DNA can be found on the Selecta DNA website: <https://www.selectadna.co.uk/dna-asset-marking>

Further to this, we recommend registering your property on Immobilise, the national property register for phones, gadgets, bicycles and more: <https://www.immobilise.com/>

A male from Camberley has been charged with burglary after being spotted in the Town Centre by officers in plain clothes, during a shoplifting operation. The officer knew that the male was outstanding for a burglary offence occurring one month before. The male is due to appear in court in December and has been given a community protection warning, preventing him from coming into the town or causing a nuisance or disturbance to other people in any public place within Surrey Heath.

Digital switchover

What is the Digital Switchover?

It is the switching over of the 'old' analogue phone system, to a new digital system, using the internet - called Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).

Why is this happening?

It is a 'Whole Industry' change (not just BT) completing by January 2027.

Parts of the current system are over 100 years old and running out of spare parts – essentially, the old system is no longer sustainable.

What is involved?

Most people will just be able to unplug their landline from the old socket and plug it into their broadband router.

BT will give 4 weeks' notice so that you can advise them of any issues you may have.

Virgin Media

Hub 3, Hub 4 or Hub 5 will work. If you have an earlier version, they will send an engineer to visit. You will also need an adapter, which they will send.



BT and Virgin Media advise that most handsets will still work. If you have a very old handset, contact them to check.

Potential issues/solutions

Your phone will no longer work if there is a power cut or if your broadband connection goes down.

Most people will have a mobile phone that they can use as a back-up.

If you do not have broadband then BT will fit it for you at no cost.

If you do not have a mobile phone, BT offer a hybrid phone – it has a battery and uses a mobile signal, in the case of a power cut.



If you do not have a mobile phone signal in your home, BT offer a 'battery back-up' unit to keep your broadband and phone working.

Virgin Media offer an 'emergency back-up' line (which includes a battery) if you are in an area with a mobile phone signal. If not, contact them.

People with Additional Needs

This category will include (but not be limited to):

- Where people don't have a mobile phone signal
- Where people don't have a mobile phone
- Vulnerable people e.g. over 75's or those with disabilities
- Where people have a 'telecare' pendant alarm

Advise BT or Virgin Media and they will put back your switch date to allow time to sort out any issues

BT Process

You will be contacted at least 4 weeks before the proposed switch.

Let BT know if you have any additional needs or questions.

Your switch date can be put back and BT can send an engineer to help get you set up.

You will not be left without a phone connection.

Target end date is January 2027.

Virgin Media Process

Virgin Media will also contact you in advance by mail and email, but they do not give a timescale.

Virgin Media will also delay people with additional needs and send an engineer to help them, as required.

Dates for your diary

The Watch Coordinator meetings for 2025 will all be held at St. Mary's Church Centre; the dates are as follows:

Monday 31st March 2025

Monday 29th Sep 2025

Monday 30th June 2025

Monday 24th Nov 2025



Supporting your Neighbourhood Watch

Surrey Heath Lottery

- This is our main source of funding and we are so grateful to all that play and support us.
- For each £1 ticket purchased we receive 50p and this has generated over £13,500 in the last 5 years!
- The weekly jackpot is £25,000 and there are smaller prizes for matching fewer numbers. We get winners nearly every week!
- Join the fun at: <https://www.surreyheathlottery.co.uk/support/surrey-heath-neighbourhood-watch-support-group>

Friends of Surrey Heath Neighbourhood Watch

- Donations help cover our running costs and any are gratefully received!
- If you can donate £25 or more in a year then we'll recognise you as a 'Friend'.
- Donations can be made on our website (<https://www.surreyheathnw.co.uk/>), by bank transfer (Surrey Heath Neighbourhood Watch Support Group, sort code 30-91-53, A/C 00859924) or by sending us a cheque (c/o Police Office, Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15 3HD).

Easyfundraising

- For those who buy things online, you can raise money for us without any cost - the retailers will pay us!
- Sign up at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/> and say that you wish to donate to the "Surrey Heath Neighbourhood Watch Support Group" and add the "Donation Reminder" to your browser. When you shop at a participating retailer you will be asked if you would like a donation to come to us.
- So far we have raised nearly £200 from this scheme, but we could raise much more if more people signed up.

A warm welcome to the following new Watch Coordinators

David MitchellTrenton Close, Frimley
 Mohammed RamzanWeller Drive, Watchetts
 Suneeta LuthraYaverland Drive, Bagshot
 Neil FitzgeraldKensington Drive, Parkside

Neighbourhood Watch key contacts

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

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

01483 639880

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