

# LOCAL WATCH-WORD

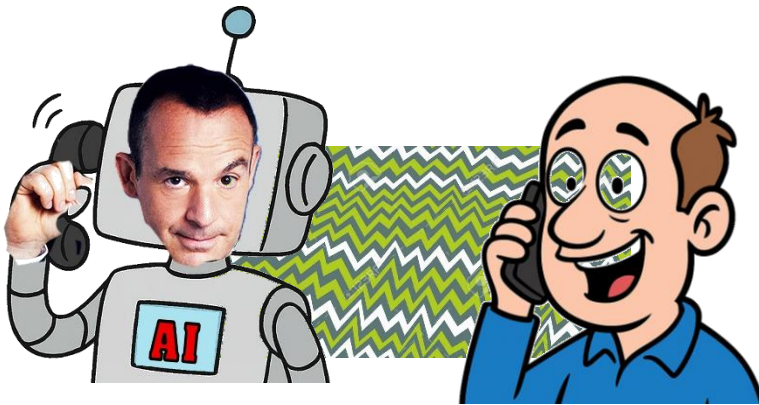


The Newsletter of the Eastleigh Neighbourhood Watch Association keeping you up to date with crime and safety issues in your area

Dec 2025

## HOW AI IS CHANGING FRAUD

AI can now create convincing fake content—emails, voice recordings, and videos—that can be hard to spot. Here are some ways it's being used:



- **Voice cloning:** AI can mimic someone's voice from a short clip. Scammers use this to impersonate friends or family in distress, asking for urgent money transfers. This is often called the "WhatsApp scam."
- **Deepfake videos:** AI-generated videos of celebrities or others may appear on social media or in ads. Some criminals even use deepfakes during live video calls.
- **Fake emails and texts:** AI can craft messages that look like they're from your bank, service provider, or someone you know—complete with logos and personal details.

### Why Over-50s Are at Greater Risk

Anyone can fall victim to fraud, but people over 50 may be targeted more often because:

- **They have savings:** Many have built up pensions, investments, or other funds.
- **They trust familiar brands:** Scammers exploit this by mimicking trusted companies.
- **They may be less tech-savvy:** Not everyone is aware of AI tools, deepfakes, or phishing scams.



### Quarterly Tip

***Secure belongings, deter opportunistic theft***

Losing money can be devastating, especially close to retirement. And even tech-savvy people can be tricked—AI makes scams harder to detect.

### What to Watch Out For

If something feels off, it probably is. Here are five red flags:

1. **Unexpected calls or messages** asking for money or personal details—don't respond, and consider blocking the number.
2. **Urgent pressure to act**—scammers often push limited-time offers or threats.
3. **Unusual payment requests**—banks or police will never ask you to move money to a "safe account" or share sensitive info.
4. **Suspicious links or attachments**—avoid clicking or downloading anything you weren't expecting.
5. **Odd behaviour from people you know**—if a message seems strange, verify it through another channel.

### CONTENTS

- 1 AI Fraud
- 1 **Quarterly Tip**
- 2 Chair's Note
- 2 **Corben's Corner**
- 3 Local Area Managers
- 3 **Night Visitors**
- 4 Warm Spaces
- 4 **Doubtful Ds**
- 4 Which Bin
- 5 **CyberSecurity**

## A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR



*Claire Wills*

Yet again Christmas has sneaked up on me! I am nearly at the same stage as last year- cake baked and cards bought, but no presents bought yet! However, my excuse is that the family are even more behind than me!

We have had 3 meetings utilising the grants from Eastleigh Town

Council and will be looking to do something similar in the spring as we still have some grant left.

The stall at Eastleigh Pride was a great success – thanks to Ben, Lisa and Charles for their help (along with that of assorted partners and friends).

We are currently considering where we should have stalls next year and the committee is looking into getting a Gazebo to use (currently we use mine which is not good in windy conditions!). Any suggestions are welcome.

Hopefully, many of you will have signed up to the Eastleigh Police's Facebook page – they are posting what is happening regularly and their Neighbourhood Enforcement Team is have some noted successes.

Have a look at Corben's Corner and read the Alerts sent out by Hampshire Fraud Prevention Team and Action Fraud – they



Lots more information can be found on our ENWA website

[www.eastleighnhw.org.uk/](http://www.eastleighnhw.org.uk/)

and also take a look at our [Facebook](#) page



have been posting the current scams to be aware of.

Wishing everyone a safe, joyful and peaceful celebration, filled with relaxation and happiness.

*Claire*

## CORBEN'S CORNER

*By John Corben*

My partner receives several scam phone calls every week to her mobile and landline, which is not unlike many of us. Understandably, she is quite frustrated and a bit worried about these calls. While she does not respond to any of them, she notes down the numbers. Two questions she asks me are: 'Why me? How have they got my number?' In my opinion, there are two key answers to these questions, which I will cover as follows.

The first answer lies in a piece of software, widely available, used by scammers to generate phone numbers. This software is integrated into a scam call centre's phone system. Staffed, let's say, by ten or twenty scammers, once the call generator is operated, all scammers need to do is sit and wait for calls to be answered, and their scamming can begin. These numbers, as far as I understand, can be dialled sequentially. It is not a matter of personally targeting an individual victim; rather, their number simply falls within the sequence of numbers the scammers have programmed into the software. Often, more calls are answered than there are scammers available, which explains why, when a potential victim answers the phone,

there is sometimes nobody at the other end and the call is disconnected.

The second answer, which could be more serious, involves a data breach where scammers have infiltrated a company's computer system and stolen customers' personal data. Usually, this stolen information is unencrypted, in plain text, because companies typically only encrypt customer passwords. As a result, a customer's name and phone number can end up on the dark web and subsequently in scammers' hands. Calls to potential victims can then be targeted and more convincing,



as scammers use the victim's name and company details to make the call seem authentic.

Personally, my answerphone intercepts calls on my landline and mobile, unless I recognize the caller-on-caller display. My view is that if the call was important, they would leave a message, giving me time to think before responding. I also consider whether I was expecting the call or if it is completely out of the blue. The vast majority of scammers hang up when the answerphone intercepts their call. Sometimes, if I answer the call, especially on my mobile, I treat anything said or asked with a high degree of scepticism, preferring to take details and call back later if appropriate. Any attempt to pressure me into revealing personal details or making an instant decision is refused.

Finally, the numbers my partner notes are entered into a search engine, which often confirms the number as a scam caller and provides information about the location and country of origin. I tend not to block numbers, as scammers can easily change their calling numbers, rendering blocking less effective.

[Click this link](#) to check numbers on the who called me website.



## MEET TWO OF OUR NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We have recently had a few new additions to our ENWA committee, for which we are very grateful. Here, two of the new members tell us a little about themselves and how they see their roles within Neighbourhood Watch.

*My name is Heidi Bailey, single mother of 3 teenagers. I'm a carer, and have lived in Eastleigh for 7 years now. I am a military child so have moved around the best part for my childhood; my only family I have in my life are my children and my aunt. I enjoy dog walks with my two male dogs, body building and moaning about the rain. I am a coordinator in The Arthur Road and Quadrangle scheme in Eastleigh.*



I'm Lisa Thomas, originally from South Africa. Lived in Chandler's Ford since 2018 with my husband and 2 sons.

I'm a Risk and Compliance assistant for a small mutual society located in Southampton.

I really enjoy what the Ford has to offer in terms of family life and conveniences. Love the walks, parks and friendliness over the few years living here.

Having seen how crime can slowly infiltrate areas and pose risks to residents, I'm keen to do what I can to help the Ford remain the safe and lovely area it is.

## BE CAUTIOUS OF STRANGERS AT THE DOOR

By John Corben

I was recently made aware of a rather nasty incident that happened one evening to a resident in Chandler's Ford. The resident in question is elderly and in my opinion was targeted because of their age. It was later in the evening I believe 20.00hrs to 21.00 hrs when the resident heard a knock on their door. Upon opening the door, they were presented with a lady described as being in her 50's, who explained that her car had broken down and please could she wait in the resident's house until help arrived, as she was scared to remain outside in the dark in her car. Nothing that the resident saw or heard gave the resident any cause for concern, so they readily agreed and let the lady enter her house. A short time after, the stranger asked if she could use the toilet and was shown where the toilet was. Upon return to the living room and a short while later the stranger had one more request of the resident: a cup of water. The resident disappeared to the kitchen and a glass of water was poured. Upon return to the living room the resident found the stranger had left the property and after a short time discovered some of her property had been taken. My understanding was this included jewellery. The strange lady was not seen again. The Police were called and were prompt in attending, both that night and the following

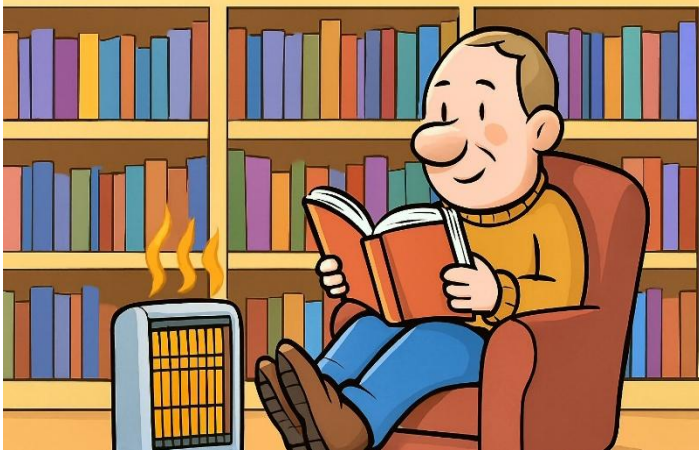


morning, to carry out their investigations and provide support.

This incident is particularly disturbing in as much as, in my opinion, this was possibly a targeted distraction burglary. It could be argued that the door should not be opened at that time of night, but even having said that, were the resident to have asked through the door for the stranger to identify themselves then, the very plausible response of an older lady seeking help having broken down on their doorstep would most likely elicit the same action, the door would have been opened.

In my scheme, I have several elderly residents who live alone. I have spoken to each of them to make them aware of this incident and to be cautious when opening the door, especially at night. I would ask you all to do the same, if you can, to any potentially vulnerable neighbour, just to make them aware. If you think you may have been the target of such a crime, please contact the Police.

## STAYING WARM THIS WINTER



A further increase in fuel bills and the onset of the winter season will be making life difficult for people already struggling to keep up with inflation. In the Eastleigh area there are designated 'Warm Spaces'. These venues are welcoming places for residents, that are free to enter, where you can meet up with friends and neighbours, take part in activities and just relax. In winter, they also provide warm spaces that people can enjoy, without switching on the heating at home.

Everyone is welcome to these safe spaces - and all visitors are treated with dignity and respect. You don't have to pre-book and no record will be taken of your visit - just pop in!

Some venues provide activities, reading materials and refreshments, including hot drinks at no charge.

To find your nearest one go to [eastleigh.gov.uk/our-community/warm-welcomes](http://eastleigh.gov.uk/our-community/warm-welcomes) where there is a list and a map.

## Doubtful D's

### Dubious Email:

**Don't click links**  
**Do forward to:**  
[report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)  
**Double Delete from Deleted items box**



### Devious Caller:

**Disconnect call**  
**Delay Dialing (landlines)**  
**Do forward mobile number to 7726 (SPAM)**  
**Double check number independently**



### Dodgy Text:

**Don't click links or reply**  
**Direct to 7726 (SPAM)**

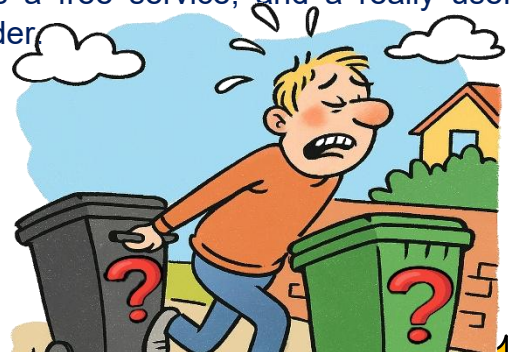


## I'VE BIN TRYING TO DECIDE

Do you rely on checking which bin your neighbours are putting out before doing yours and wonder how they know which ones are applicable that week? Or would you like to be the smug neighbour that the rest of the street follows? Following a Bank Holiday, it's often difficult to predict how bin collection days will be modified, as the binmen try to get back into sync.

However, it's easy to keep up to date with which bins are collected when, by going to the Eastleigh Borough Council website, and finding the printable PDF calendar, that will be personalised for your road by entering your postcode at [Bins, rubbish and recycling | Eastleigh Borough Council](#) then select your house number. Click on the 'Printable calendar for this property' link.

There is an even better service you can sign up to by registering with 'My Eastleigh'. Each week, the day before you need to put the bin out, you will receive an email detailing which bins need to be out ready for the next day. This is a free service, and a really useful reminder.





# POLICE CYBERCHECK: STRENGTHEN YOUR CYBERSECURITY TODAY

## Why It Matters

Fraud and cybercrime are now the most common crimes in the UK. Criminals often hack email and social media accounts to take over your online life. Once inside, they can:

- Reset passwords for banking, shopping, and payment apps.
- Steal money or make purchases in your name.
- Use your social media to target friends and family.

## The Solution

Police CyberCheck is a free, mobile-friendly tool created by the South East Cyber Crime Unit. It gives you step-by-step actions to improve your cybersecurity in priority order.



## What You'll Get

- Clear guidance split into three levels: Foundation, Improver, Enhanced.
- Action cards with links for popular platforms and apps.
- No signup required – optional progress saving via email (we never store your address).

## Why Use Police CyberCheck?

- 4 Free and official Police resource
- 4 Mobile-friendly and easy to follow
- 4 No installation or technical jargon

**Start Now: Visit <https://cybercheck.southeastcyber.police.uk/ref/7>**