

# LOCAL WATCH-WORD



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

Mar 2022

## WATCH OUT FOR YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Being a member of Neighbourhood watch is not all about crime although it could be argued that the latest increase in energy utility bills is criminal, but now, more than ever, is a time to think about support for your vulnerable neighbours. These increases will affect people whose finances have only just been coping up till now and this massive escalation could push them over the edge, having to decide whether to heat or eat.

Hopefully neighbourhood watch coordinators may be aware of vulnerable members of their scheme, but remember many people won't be comfortable admitting problems or asking for help. There is some advice that may reduce the impact although not all would be available to all residents.



- Opt for paperless energy bills and manage your account online (as some firms charge extra for paper bills).
- Pay by direct debit. (You can be charged more, even if you're protected by the price cap, for paying once you receive a bill.)
- Get a smart meter installed or send regular meter readings to make sure your bills are accurate. With a smart meter you can see which energy hungry equipment you are using.
- Replace light bulbs with energy-saving alternatives, as they're much cheaper to run and usually last longer.
- Reducing your thermostat by one degree can make a significant difference.
- Turn off radiators in unused rooms.

*rise in April. High energy costs mean fewer deals are available right now.'*  
So, be a good neighbour and keep an eye and an ear out for people who may be struggling. If you are having trouble yourself, then don't be slow to reach out to your neighbours as a problem shared is a problem halved and they may have ideas and support that could make a difference. Neighbourhood Watch is about watching out for people.

### Quarterly Tip



- S**top – take no immediate action
- C**onsider – is this a potential scam
- A**sk – speak to someone you can trust
- M**ake safe – update your security

- Find out if you qualify to get free insulation.
- Check if you're eligible for the Warm Home Discount, worth £140 a year.
- Talk to your energy supplier, if you can't afford to pay your bills. They have to treat customers fairly and agree a payment plan with you that you can manage.

In more normal times the advice would have been to shop around to find the best energy deal, maybe using a price comparison site, but Uswitch for example are saying 'Now might not be the best time to switch. Energy prices are set to

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# A Note From Our Chairman

Mike Anthony



Welcome to our first edition of 2022. I have a couple items I'd like to make sure you are aware of...

## Volunteer Recognition Awards

This year Neighbourhood Watch celebrates its 40th year and no doubt you will have seen (eg in the Feb Our News) that, as part of the celebrations, National would like to recognise NW volunteers who have dedicated more than 5 years working in their communities. So to nominate yourself or someone else who has

volunteered with Neighbourhood Watch for 5 years or more, simply visit [ourwatch.org.uk/volunteerawards](http://ourwatch.org.uk/volunteerawards) and submit a form by 13th March 2022.

## Diversity and Neighbourhood Watch

During Race Equality Week this year (7th-13th Feb) National Neighbourhood Watch published its Diversity, Equality and Inclusion statement. The full statement can be read at [ourwatch.org.uk/diversity](http://ourwatch.org.uk/diversity). The statement emphasises what I am sure we all feel, which is that we want and expect everyone to be treated fairly, taking account of their individual needs, free from any discrimination because of race, religion, beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, age or any other characteristic. I recall my father saying that life would be very dull if we all came from the same mould.

The statement emphasises that we want to reach supporters from a broader section of the community, engage with and represent diverse individuals and groups, and attract volunteers of all ages and backgrounds. So let's celebrate our differences and actively engage with all individuals and communities to make our make lives fuller and Neighbourhood Watch stronger and more representative.



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



## Corben's Corner

By John Corben

### You are the Weakest Link!

Is it just me that thinks as we all grow older, computer and mobile phone technology seems to be leaving us further and further behind and increasing our risk of being scammed. To compound this problem more and more companies have moved to servicing and interacting with their customers via the internet. The alternative to using a computer, is to be kept waiting for hours and hours on the phone attempting to talk to a 'real' person. If this wasn't enough to cope with, professional hackers 'break into' company computer systems all over the world and after stealing our stored details publish them on the Dark Web for all to access and used to attempt to scam us again.

We always read that 'the elderly and vulnerable' are at the greatest risk of being scammed. Now is this true? Well it seems not, a recent survey I believe carried out by 'Which Magazine' concluded that people of all ages, young and old, are equally at risk of falling prey to a scammer. Indeed I know of cases of professional people, Judges, Teachers and Company Directors having been scammed sometimes out of tens of thousands of pounds.



This is where we all have become 'the weakest link' with regard to computer and mobile phone technology. We are too quick to trust what we read in an email or SMS message or what we hear on the phone. We are too quick to press the link button which will download a nasty virus onto the computer or mobile phone. We are too quick to phone the number provided to be told of some impending doom if we don't follow their instructions. We all need to break this link and further empower our families and friends to do so as well.

So as 'The Weakest Link' how can we deal with all these threats? The answer is simple in theory but often hard in practice. Firstly learn to not trust your computer, mobile phone or what you are being told. Would a real company put pressure on you like this or threaten you in this way? The answer to this in the absolute majority of cases is no most definitely not. Once you have checked yourself, and not responded as the scammer had hoped, you might then need seek independent help. This could involve a drive to your bank, a chat with a family

member or seek help at [hampshirecyberwatch.org](http://hampshirecyberwatch.org) Secondly use strong passwords, three random four letter words with punctuation marks between them will be virtually unbreakable, something like **Tree%Sofa&Roof**. Problem here is we need a different password for each company site we visit. The solution is to buy a password manager or do as I do buy a small notebook and write each one down. A strong password will stop a hacker in their tracks should your details be discovered on the dark web, as your password information is encrypted and a scammer will not be able to decrypt it.

Finally back up your precious data either onto the cloud or a datastick. If you do lose access to your computer by it crashing, for whatever reason, you will not have lost important information or precious photographs.

Please stay safe online by following this simple advice and please also keep an eye on family members and friends in case they are the potential victim of a scam.

## BEWARE OF SCAMMERS EXPLOITING WAR IN UKRAINE

Many of us feel sympathy with the people of Ukraine at this awful time. These times of crisis bring out the best in us - we want to help or show support. Unfortunately, it also brings out the worst in scammers too.

As with the Covid pandemic, now with the war in Ukraine, scammers are active thinking of new (and old) ways to steal money from us that should go to charities helping those affected.

Many fake websites inviting donations under the guise of charitable purposes are appearing online. They tend to make emotional appeals for solidarity with the people of Ukraine or urge help to fund the country's defence efforts. Sometimes they suggest you buy a 'war token'. All are vague about how the 'aid' will be used and none of them are legit.

Stay alert for emails or texts or social media posts from unknown people making emotional pleas for help too - eg family killed or injured, nothing to eat. These are all fake.

If you're looking to support humanitarian work in Ukraine



through making a donation, please make sure your money goes to the right cause and not into the pocket of someone unscrupulous. Here are a few tips on how to do it safely:

- Stick to well known charitable organisations that are working in the field
- Donate via the organisation's website (make sure it is the correct one and not a fake) or approach the charity for guidance.
- Be wary of social media posts that promote a charity unless you verify the charity is legit. Remember that a friend's recommendation or number of likes on social media is no guarantee either, unfortunately.
- Always avoid clicking on links or downloading attachments in unsolicited communications

## HIGHWAY CODE CHANGES

We should all, by now, be aware that significant changes were incorporated in the revised Highway Code on Jan 29th this year to improve road safety. All of us (pedestrians, cyclists and drivers) are affected by these changes that will influence court cases. A summary of 8 changes you should know can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-highway-code-8-changes-you-need-to-know-from-29-january-2022>.

For mature drivers there are some free webinars being provided by the Older Drivers Forum. Register asap at <https://olderdriversforum.com/webinars/> or watch out for a recording of the webinar to be posted on our website at a later date.



## HEART ATTACK - COULD YOU SAVE A LIFE?

Picture the scene, a person near you collapses clutching their chest, sweating and with lips turning blue. Would you know what to do? Dial 999 is the first obvious reaction. Even if you have not had resuscitation training, the operator on the phone will talk you through the basic first response to a cardiac arrest.



Most importantly, if there are two people at the incident they will be able to tell you where the nearest registered defibrillator is located. Whilst one of you keeps up heart compressions, the other will be given the combination code to access the defibrillation equipment which may be in an external locked box. Your action in those first few minutes are critical to the survival of the patient.

The UK is behind the curve in learning lifesaving skills - in Scandinavia, for example, lifesaving skills are widely taught, both to adults and in schools. Only 1 in 10 people in the UK survive an out of hospital cardiac arrest. In Norway this is 7 in 10.

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) wants to us to become a

nation of life savers. We all need to know how to do CPR and how to use defibrillators. It's easier than you think.

The BHF has videos on its website to guide you through the (Covid-safe) techniques. To see the videos go to <https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/how-to-save-a-life/how-to-do-cpr/cpr-training-videos>.

Is there a defibrillator near you?

Public access defibrillators (PADs) are normally located in workplaces and public spaces like airports, shopping centres, sports and community centres, and train stations. Look out for them - you'll be surprised how many are around. If you think your local community needs one, speak to your Parish Council - most are working hard to increase the number of PADs available.

By knowing how to perform CPR and use a defibrillator, you could save a life.

# EASTLEIGH UPDATE

By PS 1781 Shane Hebburn



I am Police Sergeant Shane Hebburn (centre – left) and I joined the Eastleigh district back in November 2020. I just wanted to take the opportunity to update you on some of the work that your local Neighbourhood Policing team have been dealing with in 2021. The release of the COVID rules saw a return to some kind of normality within Eastleigh town centre. With the public returning to shop we saw an increase in homeless people gathering around town. This raised concerns from the local community in

terms of the social aspect, the perception of crime, actual ASB and street begging that comes with it. Working with partners in Eastleigh Borough Council we took a focussed approach in engagement to re-home, diversion from street drinking and drug misuse and enforcement where crime occurs. Regular meetings between partners, joint patrols and information sharing meant that we managed to reduce the known homeless from 11 to 1 by the end of the summer. However, we know that this work continues and my town centre team continue to work with partners and engage with the homeless to prevent crime and encourage engagement to be re-homed. We are aware of some concerns around a disused garage being used by some of the homeless take shelter. We are reviewing evidence of ASB and drug misuse to consider our powers to deal with this location, in collaboration with EBC.

The end of 2021 and the beginning of 2022 saw a rise in youth related ASB and crime within Eastleigh town centre, culminating in an incident on a Saturday afternoon where large numbers of youths caused some issues outside of the Tesco store in the Swan centre. This resulted in a dispersal order being granted for a 48 hour period which allowed us to disperse gathering crowds of youths involved in the ASB. There are several names that have continued to commit crimes of theft damage and assault. We have gone through a process of evidence gathering and formal action has been taken against a number of individuals. Currently, the reported ASB has reduced but we are realistic enough to know it is not 'job done' and we continue to work with our partners to identify key ASB location, using legislation to enforce action where necessary.

As ever, I encourage you to report crimes where they occur and contact us if you have information on crime, disorder, antisocial behaviour or concerns around drug activity in your area.



## TO PROTECT IT REGISTER IT

Register your property **FREE** and improve your chances of getting it back if it is lost or stolen

### Benefits of Registration

- Immobilise helps Police identify the owners of recovered property thousands of times, every day.
- Property updates you make are immediately available to the Police nationally.
- Combat the sale of stolen gadgets & valuables; alert the second-hand trade & publicly checkable stolen goods database CheckMEND if an item goes missing.
- Simplify insurance claims and Police reports with certificates of ownership.
- Great member offers from Immobilise's numerous supporters, often helping support the FREE provision of Immobilise.
- If you need to obtain a Loss Report Number for insurance purposes please visit Report My Loss.
- <https://www.immobilise.com/>

## BE AWARE, THERE ARE CAT BURGLARS OUT THERE

Catalytic converters are devices fitted to (most) vehicle exhausts to reduce the amount of dangerous gases emitted. They are targeted by thieves as they contain valuable metals and can be removed fairly quickly (but possibly noisily).

Hybrid vehicles are most commonly targeted, as they have two power sources so the catalytic converters tend to be used less and are in better condition, so are more valuable, but any vehicle can be at risk of catalytic converter theft. High riding vehicles are also more vulnerable.

A recent 'Alert' sent out by the police (28th Jan) warned that theft of converters are increasing in the Eastleigh and Hedge End areas and gave useful

advice on how to protect your vehicle from this kind of theft.

If your vehicle is a likely target, one recommended approach is to get your cat etched or forensically marked by your dealer or garage.

The National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) reports (<https://news.npcc.police.uk/releases/catalytic-converter-thefts-drop-as-people-take-action-to-protect-their-vehicles>) that thefts drop significantly as people opt to forensically mark their vehicles.

Catalytic Converters can be marked by a specially formulated and heat-resistant solution created by SmartWater (go to <https://www.smartwater.com/uncategorised/toyota-tackling-catalytic-converter-thefts/>) and registered on a database that will allow the cat to be traced. Eastleigh police are liaising with Toyota garages in particular in Eastleigh to encourage them to use forensic markers when requested by clients.



If you are concerned, ask your dealer or garage what options are available to you. Having marked your cat, it would be wise to add a sticker to your car to say that this has been done - suitable stickers are available online eg from Amazon.

For more ideas and information please go to the Hants Pol website.

**PROTECT YOUR CATALYTIC CONVERTER.**

Thieves are targeting valuable metals under your car.



