

LOCAL WATCH-WORD



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

Jun 2024

CAR INSURANCE HIKES - THE PART PLAYED BY CAR THEFT


Had a quote for car insurance recently? Did the rise in price of premiums shock you? Well, motor insurance premiums were on average 25% more expensive in 2023, following a 50% increase the year before - with more increases forecast this year. Some recent renewal quotes have reportedly started at 60% increase (but haggling can often get them down).

One of the reasons given for such steep rises in insurance cost is rising car theft (other reasons quoted are the rising costs of repair and materials, claims for personal injury from serious accidents and skills gaps with the rising levels of technology on cars as well as the huge costs of replacing EV batteries after damage in an accident).

ONS data also indicate that police across England and Wales investigated just 23% of car thefts in 2022. Avon and Somerset Police had the worst record in England, with officers attending just 11% of car thefts. In Cumbria, by comparison, 76% of crime scenes were visited by police.

Stolen cars are either sold for profit or stripped for parts, and a high percentage of car thefts will be expensive cars targeted by organised crime gangs and sold overseas, often stolen to order for international buyers. In today's second-hand market, selling car parts is often more profitable than selling the car as a whole. Some cars will be used by criminals as getaway vehicles or to





Quarterly Tip

Stay Aware, Lock Doors and Windows, Trust Instincts, Report Suspicious Activities

transport drugs, often with false documents and license plates being created. Scrap metal values are also high.

ONS data found keyless entry to be the most common way for thieves to break into vehicles in England and Wales, accounting for 36% of break-ins. Thieves are keeping pace with manufacturers, employing a range of hi-tech methods to steal cars, with relay theft, key cloning and signal blocking being the main means of theft, using high tech devices bought online at little expense.

So, what can we do to reduce car insurance costs? Some things we can't affect (we need the government, police and manufacturers to step up and take action), but we can take action to better protect our vehicles.

Car security experts recommend drivers use signal blockers, steering wheel locks, external wheel locks or pedal locks to deter thieves.

Tracking devices are also recommended, as they can alert both owner and police. Check your car is locked after you've used the key fob to lock it e.g. have the mirrors folded? If your drive has a gate, make sure that is locked as well.

More information and advice can be found at the [Association of British Insurers website](#) or [Hants Police Website](#)

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A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR



Claire Wills

Your committee needs you!

As you know, Eastleigh Neighbourhood Watch Association is run by volunteers.

As is usual the 6 people who are members of the committee have busy lives, and are doing many things in addition to what they do

for Neighbourhood Watch. We therefore need some assistance on the committee, to spread the load a bit. If you are able to give some assistance, please get in touch with me. We are a friendly lot who meet 8 times a year – in the winter by Zoom and in the summer months in person.

Out and About

During the fete season we are trying to attend local fetes to publicise what we do and to meet people. We have so far attended two events in Chandler's Ford and aim to attend the Mela in Eastleigh. If you have a local event, you would like us to attend, please let me know and I will try and help out.

Banking – Hedge End

We have now checked the banking situation for Hedge End and have found that there are



Lots more information can be found on our ENWA website

www.eastleighnhw.org.uk/

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



only 2 banks in Hedge End – Lloyds and Nat West.

Due to the dearth of banks in much of our area, I am currently emailing all the banks to see what their intentions are for our area. I will keep you updated in a future Watch Word.

CORBEN'S CORNER

By John Corben

Over recent months I am aware of several large organisations who have been hacked either directly or indirectly by malicious agents. The Army's pay role account is just the latest with the company tasked by them to manage salaries being hacked with 1000's of army serving and some retired soldiers personal details stolen. Several points come to mind when I think about these happenings, the first being an individual's online footprint. Whilst serving Army personnel had no choice in their pay role details being managed (and stolen) from a third-party company we, as individuals, do have a choice to some extent, how big or small our online presence is. I know we are being forced to live our lives on a computer online more and more; the banks closing branches are a good example of this, but we can if we are careful, limit passing on our information to third parties. When I walk around the Swan Centre in Eastleigh, I see shops with loyalty cards which I can sign up to. The way I look at this is every time I pass my information over, that information is held by them

somewhere, and is potentially at risk of being stolen by hackers. The next thing that causes concern is the fact that most of the data held by most companies about individuals is in plain text. The exception to this generally are stored passwords. This means if this data is stolen, it can be read as easily as reading this article. If this data contains names, dates of birth, address etc this is all valuable to scammers and can be purchased by them on the Dark Web and used against us. Now Passwords are generally encrypted and, for example, read as a string of 32 characters in their Hashed (encrypted) format. I have said before that, unless your password is super strong and what I mean by this is three random words with special characters and numbers and lower/upper case letters, it can be easily broken by a skilled hacker with freely available software.

An example of a strong password would be **Bank!!dog&chair32** which would be virtually unbreakable, however, a weak password such as **Amesbury** could be broken in a matter of minutes. So, if a company is hacked, and individual's encrypted password is stolen any hacker will struggle, if the password is strong, to crack it. As ever stay, safe and be wary when online.



IS THE PHONE CALL FROM A LOCAL NUMBER?

By Claire Wills

I have seen an increase recently in phone calls (both to my landline and my mobile) from what seem to be a local number. On picking up the call and waiting for them to answer, I find that it is from another country!

Scammers are now able to make calls look like they are coming from any number at all, so the fact that it looks like a local number is no guarantee that it is genuine. Even worse, is the fact that the scammers can make it look as if the call is from your bank's security department number (the one on your bank card).

If you are not sure about a call, hang up and then phone your bank's number back after a couple of

minutes. You will get through to the number that supposedly called you and will be able to ask if the call was genuine.



COORDINATORS MEET WITH THE 'LOCAL BOBBIES'

A group of ten neighbourhood watch coordinators were hosted at the Eastleigh Police Offices in Hathaway Close by four of the Eastleigh team of 'Local Bobbies'. Chairing the meeting, PC Charlotte Thorpe, DNO for Chandler's Ford, introduced us to her colleagues. Firstly, explaining that DNO stood for 'Designated Neighbourhood Officer'. Joining her were from Chandlers Ford PCSO Andy Richie and from the Bishopstoke, Fair Oak & Horton Heath area, PC Scott Graham and PCSO Helen Rees.

After an explanation of the role of the new Bobbies in the community, including a description of the 'Let's Talk' initiative, a lively discussion took place. The promised Eastleigh Police Station is still awaiting suitable premises to house this front desk facility. Issues were raised regarding activity at the Peter Green Store and Chandler's Ford Station car parks.



The Officers stressed the importance of reporting of **ALL** incidents because it enables the Police to build up a bigger picture of crime in the area.

The point was made how the 101 and website reporting can sometimes discourage reporting, due to long waits on the phone and finding a category suitable for the report on the website. Interest was shown in the new initiatives to attend all domestic burglary reports and we were told that the aim is to respond in less than an hour. Mention was made of provision for victim support in the aftermath of an incident.

Anti-social behaviour was discussed and how the DNOs are coordinating with school visits, both primary and secondary, to raise awareness of the potential derogatory effects of finding yourself with a criminal record. They were also reaching out to nursery school children to make them aware that the police were helpful and friendly people who they could trust.

Eastleigh Neighbourhood Watch would like to say a big thank you to Charlotte and her colleagues for hosting the meeting and providing tea and biscuits as well as the answers to lots of questions.



EASTLEIGH DISTRICT

By Eastleigh District Commander, Chief Inspector Matt Paling.

On a daily basis, my officers and teams are dealing with a variety of incidents, looking to protect victims, bring offenders to justice, and improve the areas we police, for all those who live and work in them.

As we often say though, we can only look to tackle the issues affecting our communities, if we know what is happening in them. We rely on you, our eyes and ears on the ground, to keep us informed of incidents and any suspicious activity.

We can only do the job we do, and achieve the results we achieve, with your information and support. Please keep in touch, and help us to help you.

You can report crimes, tell us about antisocial behaviour, notify us of suspicious incidents, and share intelligence with us by calling 101, or online via the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary website. You can also contact Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111.

While on the subject of communicating with us, you may have already heard of Let's Talk – our new community survey initiative that aims to understand the needs of our local communities, and enables you to share any concerns with our officers.

We want to know what it's like to live in your area - what the issues you face are, and how can we work with others to make our communities safer and stronger.

If you see one of our police officers, including our new Dedicated Neighbourhood Officers, or PCSOs, knocking at your door, please spare a few minutes to talk to them. Our communities want and expect to see officers and staff dealing with the issues they care about, responding when they need us, dealing with those who cause harm in our communities and making our area a hostile

environment for criminals. The force identified and allocated 99 officers to be the named Local Bobbies. Each one has been assigned to a 'neighbourhood', including those in our area. The allocation of the officers has been based on crime trends. You can find your Local Bobby here; [Local Areas - Hampshire Alert](#)

Alternatively, you can have your say online by visiting <https://survey.hampshirealert.co.uk/>

This scheme ensures you know who to contact about safety and crime concerns. It will also provide ample opportunities for you to share information and intelligence easily, ultimately helping us to police more effectively.

If you have a spare five minutes, please also take a look at the below link for lots of useful crime prevention advice, to help deter potential offenders, and keep you and your property safe. Lots of crimes are covered, including vehicle theft, burglary, fraud and much more.

[Crime prevention advice | Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary](#)

