

# LOCAL WATCH-WORD



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

March 2025

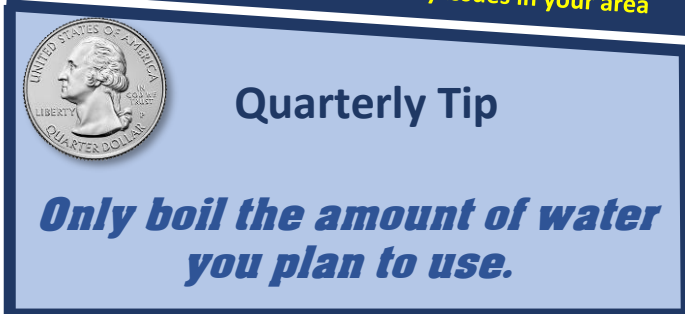
## RINGING IN THE CHANGES

The telephone network that we have all grown up with is wearing out and rapidly approaching the end of its life. Whilst its physical infrastructure has virtually remained unchanged from when it was installed, our communication needs have changed immensely. To this end the old copper network that we use currently, is being phased out by 2027, and being replaced by a digital connection, (digital voice) using a broadband connection. Depending on where you live, the transition to digital voice is commencing now in Hampshire, and some people may have already been switched. A consumer's landline provider will contact the user prior to this switch over, giving notice period of a switching date.

To the vast majority of consumers, this switch over will be seamless, with the only action being required of them being to unplug their existing phone from the wall socket, and plug back into the phone socket on the back of their broadband hub. This will take place when their phone no longer is able to make a call i.e. there is no ringing tone. Most current phones are digital compatible, and will work immediately, once plugged into the back of the broadband hub. However, if the customer's phone does not work, there is a slim chance the phone is not digital compatible, and will need to be replaced. Occasionally, if a customer has an old broadband hub, this may also need to be replaced by their internet provider.

A problem occurs when the customer does not use broadband. As their phone is switched, they will lose their connection altogether. In this circumstance, the customer must contact their phone provider and tell them they are concerned, as they do not use broadband, and request to be provided with a special dedicated broadband connection, which should not incur any additional cost.

Additionally, most careline telecare provider's equipment is not currently compatible with digital voice, and will potentially cease to work upon switch over. Again, if this is the case, the customer must contact their phone provider requesting that they defer the switch to



**Quarterly Tip**

*Only boil the amount of water you plan to use.*



digital voice, allowing the customer time to confirm, or otherwise, that the device will continue to work.

Finally, in the event of a power cut, digital voice will cease to work. Whilst most people have a mobile phone, the temporary loss of digital voice will not be of much concern. BT will, however, supply vulnerable customers with a battery backup, providing up to 1hrs worth of power.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: [www.which.co.uk/reviews/broadband/article/digital-voice-and-the-landline-phone-switch-off-what-it-means-for-you-aPSOH8k1i6Vv](http://www.which.co.uk/reviews/broadband/article/digital-voice-and-the-landline-phone-switch-off-what-it-means-for-you-aPSOH8k1i6Vv)

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## A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR



Claire Wills

So, the New Year is now well and truly started. Do you have any New Year Resolutions? Have you managed to keep them? I avoided them, as I know from experience that I am not very good at sticking to them! As I used to say, as a teacher, I will try to do things, I will not promise to do them.

Having said that, I am moving on with using the grants from the parish

councils – see separate article for information on this.

We are seeing more and more information from Action Fraud, and from Hampshire Fraud Protect Officers, on frauds, both local and national. The fraudsters are still adapting and trying new approaches. One particular concern is over fraudsters impersonating police and bank employees to get people to take money out of their bank to 'try and catch the criminal'. The fraudsters then get you to handover the money in some way, to use 'as evidence'. The police and banks will NEVER do this. If you have been caught out – don't be embarrassed, contact the police, if they don't know about it, they cannot stop the fraudsters. If you are worried about such home calls, use call screening and only answer calls from people you know or are expecting.

I am pleased to say that we have gained some new schemes in our area. Welcome to the new coordinators. We have over 200 schemes, of which three quarters are on Alert. Unfortunately, not all schemes are on Alert, which has led to new residents trying to create a scheme. I am working with Area Coordinators to get all onto Alert so that people moving into the area are able to see that there is a scheme in their area.

## CORBEN'S CORNER

By John Corben

As I sit here on a cold and overcast February morning, listening to Radio 4, I am trying to think of something positive to write in the newsletter about computer and other fraud. I was thinking about some of the computer housekeeping that I have been carrying out recently, when I heard the following on the radio. BBC journalist and Radio 4 presenter Nick Robinson announced he has been hacked and about 1 million people had been contacted with material promoting cryptocurrency. Further, he explained that his 'X' account had been hacked, and he is still locked out of his account. Obviously, this cryptocurrency promoting is nothing to do with him, but sadly, the potential is there for some unsuspecting recipients of this material to be tricked into acting, with the possibility of being defrauded out of money. I have previously said that with this type of fraud, hackers rely on 'the numbers game' and if only 1% of the 1 million recipients act on the information, then the hackers stand to potentially make a lot of money. Especially in this upcoming age of AI, any type of

'celebrity' endorsement for any service or product must be rigorously tested before any action taken to ensure it is genuine.

Back to the housekeeping, I have known for quite a while some of my passwords were on the 'weak' side and it was time I updated them to make them stronger. By that I mean more than 14 characters long containing numbers, capitals and special characters. Yes, I know it is a pain, and yes I do write down my passwords in a safe place, as I can't remember them but it is a key way to remain safe online. If my encrypted password is leaked, for example, by a company data breach, then I am totally confident the hackers will not be able to decrypt my password and use it against me. All my passwords are now secure. My mobile phone also serves as my camera and I have accumulated dozens of photos over several years which I would like to keep, some of which are precious and irreplaceable. Fortunately, the



process of downloading them onto my computer was as simple as connecting my phone to my computer by the charge lead and follow the instructions. Now if my phone is lost or stolen my photos are safe. However, what if my computer crashes? I have today ordered a couple of data sticks (USB sticks) from Ebay, and when they arrive, I will further download from my computer all my important documents and photos onto them. Now if the unimaginable happens all my important documents and photos are safe on the data sticks and not lost.

Not a bad morning's work and time now for a coffee. Roll on spring and warmer weather and a chance to get back in the garden.



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



## DNA MARKING DETERENT

One of our members reported some advice given during a visit by the Blue Lamp Trust to their property. It involved the suggestion to employ a little-known method of safety marking of valuable items. We are probably all aware of the more well-known marking systems used to discourage theft or if the worst occurs, increasing the likelihood that the victim may be reunited with their stolen items.

You can mark any portable and high value items with your postcode followed by your house or flat number. Property can be marked with an UV marking pen, or if appropriate, consider permanently etching with a special etching or electric engraving tool.

Keep a list of the serial numbers of your belongings and considering registering your property and serial numbers on [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com). Consider taking photographs of

valuables that you can't or don't want to mark, such as jewellery and ornaments.

All these methods can be seen by a determined criminal, and could be removed or masked to enable the goods to be passed on for financial gain.

There is now a new system, which is much more difficult to detect or to remove, which is to mark your valuables with a DNA forensic marking solution. There may be other companies offering a similar product, but I was able to establish that SelectaDNA in association with the Police sell a suitable product. A home kit which will mark up to 50 items, retails for around £50. This includes the unique DNA liquid and registration on a Secure Asset Register along with tamperproof warning stickers and window labels.

Criminals know that DNA is the Police's most powerful weapon in convicting criminal, meaning the DNA fear-factor acts as a huge deterrent. Criminals view items marked with DNA as too high risk, and are further put off from stealing them, as they have little or no resale value.

Further house security advice is available from the Blue Lamp Trust either by booking a home visit or by visiting the FAQ section of their website: [https://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/bobbyfaqs/What can I do to secure my home?](https://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/bobbyfaqs/What%20can%20I%20do%20to%20secure%20my%20home?)



## Meetings for Boyatt Wood and Allbrook Areas

The following meetings are being held for residents in the above areas to encourage Neighbourhood Watch membership. Please feel free to come along, and share this with your members and neighbours.

**1st April** for properties to the **west of Woodside Avenue**

**22nd April** for properties in the **east of Boyatt Wood Parish Council area to a line just to the West of Ruskin Avenue**

**29th April** for properties in **between Ruskin Avenue and Woodside Avenue**

All the above will be at St Peter Church Rooms, Shakespeare Road at 7:30pm



**13th May** for properties in **Allbrook Parish Council area at Otterbourne Scout Hut, Boyatt Lane, Otterbourne at 7:30pm**

Refreshments will be available and our local bobbies will be in attendance.



# BEWARE OF SNEAKY SHOULDER SURFERS

When using your phone in public, beware of 'shoulder surfing'. By loitering close to you, a thief is able to see when you have enabled your phone, using a PIN, fingerprint or facial recognition. An unlocked phone is much more valuable to them, as they can access and change passwords to many applications on your phone once they have grabbed it from you and, for example, access and empty your bank account.

With phone theft on the rise, it is worth taking precautions to protect your data. It is also worth knowing what to do in the event of theft.



## Tracking Apps

By using Apple's 'Find my phone' or Androids 'Find my device' on another device, such as a computer or a friend's phone you can track where your phone is, and remotely wipe all the data from your phone. Just remember to back up your photos and videos regularly. Android phones will allow you to remotely lock them with this app too.

## Use biometrics to unlock your phone and to access you banking apps.

Most smartphones now support facial or fingerprint recognition. This is not only safer for security, but also saves you having to remember or enter PINs or passwords.

## Access your IMEI number.

Dial **\*#06# (star, hash, zero, six, hash)** from your device.

You'll see several different numbers displayed on your screen. The one you're looking for follows 'IMEI' or 'IMEI1'.

Screen shot the page and forward it to another device, so you can quote it to the Police, in the event of losing your phone.

## Turn Off 'Preview Notification'

It's common for banks and other organisations to send notifications or security codes to your phone, and these will often show on your screen, even when your phone is locked. This means thieves could be able to view personal info or security codes, without having to unlock your phone.

## If your phone is stolen

- Login to your phone tracking app and remotely lock your phone.
- Report the theft to the Police on 101
- Quote the IMEI number
- Report it to your bank and any building societies whose accounts can be accessed by your phone.
- Change your passwords
- Contact your insurance company
- Be extra vigilant for scams after the theft.

# LOOK OUT FOR LOCAL BIKE MARKING SESSIONS



These sessions allow you to bring your pushbike along with you to have it marked with a Bike Register QR code. The team will also register your information onto the Bike Register website for you.

The idea of Bike Register is to increase the chances of your bike being returned to you should it be lost or stolen. Note: The Police will not store any information provided at the Bike Marking session, the information will be shared with Bike Register only.

**IMPORTANT** – Bikes belonging to children can only be registered, if the child has a parent or guardian with them.

Bike Register Website - [The National Cycle Database | BikeRegister](http://www.BikeRegister.com)

Officers from your local Neighbourhood Policing Team are holding Bike Marking Sessions throughout our region.