

CHASE POLICING DIVISION NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER



E-mail edition

December 2008 – January 2009

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE CHASE WATCH TEAM

We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy and crime free New Year. Thank you for your help and commitment to Neighbourhood Watch during the past year.

Vicki, Ash and Ray

Christmas Crime Prevention Advice

Out shopping:

Stay alert in the crowds in shops and on public transport. Keep your purse or wallet secure and close to your body. NEVER leave a handbag in your shopping trolley – always carry it fastened and on your person. If you travel by car park in a busy, well lit area, lock all doors and windows and don't leave any property unattended in your vehicle.

At home:

Make sure your home contents insurance covers any expensive presents that you have bought. Make a note of any serial numbers. Don't advertise the goods that you have bought by leaving empty boxes outside your door or by putting presents under a tree in the window where they can be viewed by someone passing by.

When you go out:

Make your home look occupied – At night close curtains, leave lights and the radio on. Make sure that doors and windows are secure.

On holiday:

If you go away for the holiday period, cancel papers and milk. Ask a trusted neighbour to keep an eye on your home and to take in any mail. Set your house burglar alarm and nominate a key-holder. Use an automatic timer to turn on lights and a radio.

Doorstep callers:

As at any other time of the year, be wary of doorstep callers and don't open the door to strangers. Delivery personnel should never need to come into your home and other callers should make pre-arranged appointments and carry identification

Neighbourhood Watch County Conference 2008

The 12th Annual Neighbourhood Watch County Conference, held on Saturday October 11th attracted a packed attendance, with 150 delegates. The theme of the conference was 'The Emergency Services in the Modern Era'.

The day began with the Keynote Speaker, Chief Constable Chris Sims, who talked about the crucial role that Neighbourhood Watch volunteers play in their local communities. Presentations were given on the police communications systems, the Fire & Rescue Service, West Midlands Ambulance Service and First Responder volunteers and Staffordshire Police Hostage Negotiators. One of the highlights of the day was a demonstration by PC Bob Smith from the Staffordshire Police Dog Support Unit with Springer Spaniel Jack; his specially trained explosives search dog.

The fully booked conference was a great success and has prompted positive feedback from delegates.

PRIZE QUIZ

ONCE AGAIN, THIS MONTH TWO WINNING ENTRIES WILL RECEIVE A VIBRATION ALARM FOR USE ON DOORS OR WINDOWS.

The battery operated alarm is attached by the adhesive on the rear of the unit. If the unit is disturbed by vibration, it will sound for approximately 20 seconds and then re-arm.

This month's question is:

How many Annual Staffordshire Police County Neighbourhood Watch conferences have there been?

(the answer is in the newsletter)

**Telephone 01543-464218 or 01785-234129 with your answer, or post it to:
Neighbourhood Watch, Police Station, Wolverhampton Road, Cannock, Staffs, WS11 1AU**

Entries must be received by Friday 16th January 2009

Results and correct answer will be published in the February-March newsletter

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER PRIZE WINNER

New Chase Policing Division Crime Reduction Officer Phil Russon drew the winning entries out of a hat. Pam Williams, Yarnfield and Ted Walwyn, Blythe Bridge, correctly stated that the new non-emergency telephone number for Staffordshire Police is 0300-123-44-55

Did You Know?

Neighbourhood Watch was introduced into Staffordshire in 1982.

Staffordshire Police and partner agencies currently fund nine members of staff who coordinate over 4,000 Neighbourhood Watch schemes within the county, representing over 185,000 member households.

In the Chase policing area, we have around 850 Neighbourhood Watch schemes, with almost 46,500 member households. Rural Watch in the Chase policing area has over 1,500 members and the various Business Watches have over 1,350 members.

Using Bank Cards

Treat your debit and credit cards as if they are cash and keep them safe and secure at all times. If a criminal obtains your card, or a copy of your card, and your PIN (personal identification number), they can quickly empty your account and run up debts in your name.

Never write down your PIN and NEVER keep your PIN with your cards. It is a quick and easy job to change the PIN on any of your debit or credit cards to a memorable number to save the need to write it down. Never give your PIN to anyone else and always shield your PIN when you use it at a bank or out shopping

Always shred bank statements and other letters and documents that contain card or account numbers

ATMs (cash machines) are a magnet for criminals. Always try to use a machine inside a bank, where it is more secure and more likely to be covered by CCTV. If a machine behaves oddly or looks tampered with, don't use it and report it to the bank immediately. Criminal activity may involve tampering with the ATM machine so that it will copy your card details, or tampering with the card slot so that it retains your card and then the criminal watches as you keep trying to key in your PIN. When you walk away to get help, the criminal retrieves the card and emptied your account.

A new Telephone Number

Age Concern have a new telephone number for general enquiries and the Trader Register:
01785-788499

Trust Your Instincts

You and your neighbours know the area that you live in better than anyone else. If you think that something is suspicious then please let the police know. It may be an unfamiliar vehicle cruising along the road, a stranger approaching the rear of your neighbour's property or an aggressive doorstep salesperson. The immediate reporting of such incidents has in the past been a great help to the police and reaped results.

Ring '999' in an emergency, for example when a crime is occurring or about to occur and for all highly suspicious incidents such as youths checking car doors

In less urgent circumstances, ring Staffordshire Police non-emergency telephone number
0300-123-44-55

Special Constables

Between April – September 2008, 87 Special Constables have achieved more than 10,000 hours of service across the Chase policing area. These unpaid, volunteer officers have completed duties including foot and mobile patrols, car boot raids and policing football matches. They have also patrolled events at the County Showground, Weston Park and concerts on Cannock Chase.

Across the division, the Special Constables have attended 525 incidents of anti-social behaviour, carried out 677 stop and account and stop searches and confiscated 1,624 bottles and cans of drink from members of the public. They have also seized 19 packages of drugs and carried out or assisted with 64 arrests.

A Special Constable has all the powers, privileges and protections of a regular constable in the police area for which he or she has been appointed, including the power to make arrests. Chase Division is currently recruiting Special Constables. Anyone who would like to know more can ring 0300-123-44-55 and ask to be put through to the recruiting department, or log on to www.staffordshire.police.uk

LOCAL NEWS

CANNOCK & RUGELEY NPUs

Burglars Beware

In support of the No Cold Calling Zones being set up in the Cannock and Rugeley area, and in support of residents identified as potentially at risk of doorstep crime as well as those who want to help secure their property, Police Community Support Officers and Street Wardens are visiting homes and marking valuables with Smartwater. Smartwater is a unique, invisible compound used to identify property. The clear liquid lasts for 120 years on property – including clothing, and remains indefinitely on contact with the skin. When a suspect is in custody they will be scanned under an UV light and any contact with the liquid will glow a dark fluorescent green colour. A sample from the offender is then analysed and will link the offender to property at a specific site.

Rugeley Web Site

rugeleyonline.co.uk is a website guide to anything and everything about Rugeley. Recent WatchOUT broadcasts to the Rugeley area are headlines on the home page and there is a whole section on local policing, first responders and Neighbourhood Watch.

If your Neighbourhood Watch scheme is in the Rugeley area, why not have look and add your street name to the list of local Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

Rugeley Vehicle Operation

Following concerns raised by local residents, Rugeley local policing team have carried out a successful motoring offence operation targeting off-road motorcycles in Rawnsley, Hazel Slade, Prospect Village and Cannock Wood. Following the operation, one motorcycle was seized for having no insurance and two other riders were cautioned for riding on private land without permission.

Operation Angel

Car parks on Cannock Chase continue to be targeted by Operation Angel, an anti-car crime campaign. Officers from Rugeley Neighbourhood Policing Unit are performing bicycle patrols around Birches Valley and Marquis Drive, replacing crime prevention signs, and Police Community Support Officers are handing out leaflets to cyclists advising them not to leave their bikes unattended. To reduce the opportunities for vehicle crime, the police need the support of the public in ensuring that their vehicles are left secure and that no property is left unattended in their vehicles. It is also vital that members of the public report any suspicious activity to the police immediately on 0300-123-44-55 or in an emergency, by telephoning '999'.

Cannock & Rugeley Street Wardens

Street Wardens work with other agencies to help to resolve problems such as nuisance, anti-social behaviour, litter, graffiti, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles, they work with young people both in and out of school and offer support to elderly, vulnerable people or victims of crime. The Street Wardens can be contacted by telephoning 01543-437430

STAFFORD & STONE NPUs

Operation Carol

Stafford policing area's seasonal crime reduction campaign, Operation Carol, will run until January 4th 2009. The initiative focuses on a high visibility police presence within the town, providing public reassurance through targeting individuals who steal from town centre stores. Local residents and visitors to Stafford town are urged to make it harder for criminals to steal from them by ensuring that handbags, wallets and mobile phones are

kept secure and out of sight and that cars are left secure in well lit areas, with no property left unattended in the vehicles.

Safer Stafford Shop

The Safer Stafford shop is located by the entrance to the indoor market next to the lottery kiosk in the Guildhall. The shop is open between 10am-4pm Monday-Saturday and is home to representatives from agencies including the army, Fire & Rescue, Stafford Council, Police, Streetscene, Adsis (Alcohol and Dependency Specialists), Crime stoppers, Trading Standards and Stafford County Council Road Safety Team. A dedicated police officer will be available at the shop Monday to Friday between 10am-11am and 3pm-4pm as well as all day on Saturday. When an officer isn't available, representatives from other agencies will be on hand to take details and pass on any police related concerns.

WOMBOURNE & WATLING NPUs

Great Wyrley Police Surgeries

PCSO 4280 Sean Hinsley and PCSO 8854 Gareth Lloyd are inviting residents in Great Wyrley, including young people in the area, to come along to drop-in sessions in an informal setting at Great Wyrley Community Centre during the next few weeks. The monthly surgeries are an opportunity for residents to speak to their local officers and pick up information on crime reduction.

Forthcoming dates are:

Friday 19th December 3.30pm-5.30pm

Thursday 15th January 11am-1pm

Friday 27th February 3.30pm-5.30pm

Thursday 19th March 7opm-9pm

Thursday 30th April 4pm-6pm

Wombourne Anti-Social Behaviour Act

Between 23rd October 2008 and 23rd April 2009, Bilbrook and Codsall Parish Council areas have been designated under Section 30 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. Under the legislation, officers have additional powers to take action against anyone acting or likely to act in an anti-social manner by directing them out of the designated area. Those who fail to do so can be arrested with offences under the Act and in addition persons under the age of 16 years who are within the designated area between 9pm and 6am without a responsible adult can be taken home or to another place of safety. Although the legislation gives police officers the powers to remove young people, it will not be appropriate in every case. The police will not be removing people just because they are standing on a street corner at night unless they are behaving in an anti-social manner as defined by the Act.

Cllr Brian Edwards, leader of South Staffordshire Council said "Making local residents feel safe is a big priority for the police and our Community Safety Team. This order will help the police to cut down on anti-social behaviour in Bilbrook and Codsall and I hope it will make members of the local community feel much safer and more secure in the village, especially at night".

South Staffs Website

Read the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter and all the latest Watling Street and Wombourne NPUs Neighbourhood Watch news on:

<http://beehive.thisisstaffordshire.co.uk>

Click 'Local Issues' then click 'South Staffordshire Neighbourhood Watch'

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Postal Scam Warning

Residents continue to receive e-mail warnings regarding the Postal Deliver Service (PDS) scam where a card is posted through a resident's door suggesting that the company have been unable to deliver a parcel and asking the resident to telephone a (premium rate) number to arrange delivery.

The Postal Delivery Service was closed down in December 2005 and subsequently the company was fined £10,000. This scam is no longer running.

However, it would appear that similar scams are currently operating. Please be on your guard and be wary of any unsolicited mail, special offers or prize wins.

Newsletter Offer

Would you like copies of a short version of this newsletter to distribute to every member of your Neighbourhood Watch scheme? If so, please contact the Chase Watch Team (contact details are on page 8)

No Cold Calling Zones

There are now eight active 'No Cold Calling Zones' in the Cannock, Rugeley and Stafford policing areas. A No Cold Calling Zone is intended to deter cold callers who want to offer services around the house or garden, or want to sell something. Regular callers such as Milk, Avon and Bettaware are not affected. The zones work because residents within the zone refuse to deal with doorstep cold callers. Although some callers will be genuine, some may be criminals – and it's hard to distinguish one from the other. The only way to stop doorstep crime is to refuse to deal with any cold callers.

Incidents on the doorstep can range from the sale of overpriced or poor quality goods such as art work or dusters, to rogue traders who overcharge for poor quality work, or trick residents into paying for unnecessary work. Some criminals call at the door in order to distract the resident while an accomplice sneaks in to steal property, and worst of all, the Bogus Caller, for example the criminal who purports to be from the 'Waterboard' and distracts the resident in order to steal cash and valuables.

The good news is, if we don't open the door to any stranger unless they have a pre-arranged appointment, and if we refuse to deal with cold callers, none of these crimes can occur. Before setting up a No Cold Calling Zone, the residents agree that they want to be part of the zone, and each household in a No Cold Calling Zone receives a free pack of information and useful telephone numbers. Each No Cold Calling Zone will have two free signs to erect on lamp posts. Residents are encouraged not to deal with strangers, and encouraged to inform the police of any suspicious callers in the area.

If you would like to know more about No Cold Calling Zones or how to set one up in your area, please contact the Chase Watch Team (contact details are on page 8).

Prize Scam Advice

Anyone who is contacted about an alleged prize draw or lottery win and suspects that it may be a scam should contact Consumer direct for advice by telephoning 08454-04-05-06 or visit their web site: www.consumerdirect.gov.uk. Remember: If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!

Tips From Coordinators

Dusty, Shropshire Border

Beware prize scams; one resident recently received notification that they had won £5,000 and a BMW Jeep. The company asked the resident to supply personal details. Another scam involves informing a resident that they have won a considerable amount of money but need to pay 'refundable' taxes and insurance fees in order to claim their winnings.

Betty, Hixon; Andy, Rugeley

Despite the Postal Delivery Service (PDS) scam being closed down, similar scams are still around. Several residents have received telephone calls including a 5am telephone call informing a resident that a company had a parcel for delivery and giving a telephone number for the resident to call. Fortunately the resident had not ordered any goods and did not make the call, however a similar call to another resident resulted in that resident making the phone call and being charged £5 only to discover that there was no parcel waiting for delivery.

Cyril, Stone

The UK Neighbourhood Watch Trust has a web site that provides information on a range of topics that may be of interest to Neighbourhood Watch groups in the UK. Their web site address is:

www.neighbourhoodwatch.net

IN BRIEF

Arrests for Fraud

Eagle eyed police officers who were attending a business address in the Cannock area regarding a separate enquiry, spotted stolen property at the address. Subsequently, £750,000 worth of goods have been seized and three men have been arrested in relation to fraud charges.

Drug Dealer Arrested

Following enquiries, a local man has been arrested in Stafford town centre for possession of drugs with intent to supply. The 250 tablets recovered are believed to be Ecstasy and are subject to forensic examination.

Teenager Sentenced

A 16 year old Wombourne teenager has been sentenced to four months in prison followed by a supervision order for a further four months. The teenager had pleaded guilty to five burglary offences and the theft of a pedal cycle. All of the offences had been committed in the Wombourne village area over recent months.

Resident Alerts Police

A resident made a quick call to the police when two males were spotted carrying copper piping along a street in the Hednesford area. Officers attended immediately and located the males who admitted stealing the piping from a nearby location. Both males were promptly arrested.

Rugeley Road Check

Rugeley Neighbourhood Policing Unit have recently carried out a motoring operation targeting cars, vans and heavy goods vehicles on the A460 Hednesford Road in Rugeley. Along with Staffordshire Police Road Crime Team and other partners, 4,671 vehicles were monitored as they drove through the check-point. As a result, 13 vehicles were issued with prohibition notices for offences including faulty brakes, defective exhausts and tyre offences. Three fixed penalty notices were issued for using a mobile phone while driving (three points and a £60 fine), two fixed penalty notices for no insurance (six points and £200 fine), two fixed penalty notices for no tax (£60 fine and back tax claim), two fixed penalty notices for tyre offences (three points and £60 fine), one fixed penalty notice for not wearing a seat belt (£30 fine) one vehicle seized for having no insurance and one report for summons for no drivers licence or insurance.

Man Sentenced

One man has been sentenced to 12 years imprisonment for robbery charges relating to an incident at shop premises in Cannock

Good Neighbour

A good neighbour called the police when a stranger was seen to enter a nearby house that was empty and up for sale. The police attended immediately and officers found one male inside the property. The male was promptly arrested.

TRADING STANDARDS WARNINGS

Computer Security Warning

Beware hard-sell phone calls from callers claiming to work for on-line computer support. Callers target residents at random and have used scare tactics and misleading information to try to persuade residents to sign up to technical support. Effective on-line security is crucial but it need not be expensive. Read up on online security via www.getsafeonline.org

Bogus E-mails

Beware of e-mails purporting to originate from Hotmail that warn recipients that their account will be closed down unless they confirm their details. There is a link to a spoof Hotmail website designed to harvest sensitive information such as user names, passwords and date of birth

Counterfeit Jewellery

Assorted items of counterfeit jewellery have recently been seized after being found on sale in a local shop. The items were being sold on behalf of a third party. The pieces were being sold as original Tiffany and Co jewellery in distinctive Tiffany packaging and although stamped with the Tiffany logo, on closer inspection all were found to be counterfeit. Tiffany and Co jewellery is only sold through approved retailers and Trading Standards are asking Staffordshire residents to report any concerns if they become aware of this type of jewellery being sold for example through small shops, markets or car boot sales. Residents are warned to be vigilant on the run up to Christmas. Only buy from approved retailers or jewellers. Any concerns can be reported directly to Nicola Wilson at Trading Standards, telephone 01785-277818

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

URGENT/EMERGENCY

When a crime is occurring or about to occur, and for all highly suspicious incidents e.g. youths checking car doors.

RING '999'

NON-URGENT

Ring 0300-123-44-55

For **all** non-emergency calls. The call handler will transfer you to the person best able to help you.

STAFFORDSHIRE TRADING STANDARDS

Ring: 01785-277888

LOCAL COUNCILS

Cannock Chase District Council Ring 01543-462621 Web address: www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk

Stafford Borough Council Ring 01785-619000 Web address: www.staffordbc.gov.uk

South Staffordshire District Council Ring 01902-696000 Web address: www.sstaffs.gov.uk

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

We provide members with support, guidance and advice.

All information received is treated with complete confidentiality.

Vicki Singleton: Ring: 01543-464218 e-mail: victoria.singleton@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

Ash Connor: Ring: 01785-23412 e-mail patrick.connor@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

Ray Jones Ring 01785-23442 e-mail raymond.jones@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

STAFFORDSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

For information and advice

Cannock & Rugeley	01785-898065
Stafford & Stone	01785-898105
South Staffs	01785-898517

THE TRADER REGISTER

The register has been produced by Trading Standards and partners for anyone who wants to find a trader in their area to do work on their home or garden. Traders are not approved by Trading Standards, but if there is a problem, members have pledged to work with Trading Standards to find a solution.

Telephone **01785-600610** Web address: www.traderregister.org.uk

GOT A PROBLEM? CALL BOING

Boing UK Ltd works in partnership with Staffordshire Police in providing a free telephone service to the public, 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. If you have a personal emergency, and need non-police help, Boing have a data base of local traders and services such as plumbers, glaziers and tree surgeons, and they can provide information about local services such as late night chemists and 24 hour petrol stations.

Telephone free on **0800-587-0548** Web address: www.boinguk.com

STAFFORDSHIRE CRIMESTOPPERS FREEPHONE 0800-555-111

The CRIMESTOPPERS telephone number can be used to pass specific information about crime or criminals without fear of reprisals or direct contact with the police. Calls are **FREE** from land lines and most mobile phones. The service is anonymous and rewards of up to £1,000 are available for information which leads to an arrest and charge.

PREFERENCING SERVICES

To cut down on telephone cold calling ring **0845-070-0707** the call must be made from the telephone number receiving the unwanted calls. Use the same number to cut down on unwanted text messages to your mobile phone

To reduce cold-calling FAX messages ring **0845-070-0702**

To cut down on personally addressed junk mail telephone **0207-291-3310**