



For the latest news on crime in the area visit our website: www.villagewatch.co.uk – or join our group on Facebook



Telephone Scams are becoming More Common

We are regularly contacted by Members about unwanted and mysterious telephone calls. Some of these are just an irritating nuisance but more often they are attempts to commit fraud.

Most Members are aware of the risks inherent in such calls but still like to seek assurance that they have done the right thing by ignoring them or hanging-up and not responding.

This is always the safest way to respond to any call that you are unsure about.

Wangiri Scam

Wan-gi-ri = One and cut (Japanese)

This scam may have started in Japan but is now a global problem. Criminals call from an overseas number but disconnect after one or two rings. They hope that you will be tempted to ring back, especially if you see that your phone has a number of missed calls from the same (or similar) numbers. If you do, you are connected to an international premium-rate service that charges you a fortune for every minute that you are on the line.

They use computerised systems that can dial up to three-thousand numbers a minute, so if only a fraction of people respond, that can still be quite a lot! Look for patterns in the numbers calling you. Often, they will be very similar and that suggests it is machines making random calls. Be particularly careful of numbers that begin with 00 or other prefixes that you do not recognise.

Avoid calls from international numbers made at unusual times. They might not have taken time differences into account or they might be trying to catch you off guard by waking you up in the middle of the night.

You might have a package that includes cheap or free calls to EU and some other countries but premium-rate numbers are never included, so you will still incur a hefty bill if you are caught in this way.

Genuine callers will usually leave a message if you miss an important call. If you receive one that you are unsure about, it is worth checking whether scams from that number have been reported on the internet.

Recorded Messages

We have had reports from Members about calls apparently from a local 0116 number that consists simply of a recorded message. The content of the message varies but it always threatens some dire consequences if you do not press '1' immediately for further information.

Most Members very sensibly just ring off but this does not stop the call being repeated a number of times. If you do respond, you are either connected to a premium-rate number that racks up your bill, or to somebody who will try to extort money or financial details from you. They do this by making threats intended to panic you into taking some action that you will come to regret only when it is too late.

Protect Yourself

It may sound obvious, but the best way to protect yourself when you receive an unexpected call from an unknown number is simply not to reply or call back. Blocking numbers on landlines and mobile phones is useful but not everyone has the time or patience to keep them up to date; especially when the offenders regularly change their fake numbers.

Nuisance calls and scams are also becoming more of an issue on mobile phones but there are apps available that can help. *TPS Protect* is an app available on *Android* and *iOS* phones that is designed to assist in identifying, blocking and reporting incoming calls that may be untrustworthy.

It allows users to register with the *Telephone Protection Service (TPS)*, and join the growing community of people who complain about nuisance calls and scams so that regulators can take action. *TPS Protect* also provides protection to users by identifying known scam and nuisance calls as they arrive.

If this service is to work well, it is important that people not only register with it but also report every nuisance and potential scam call they receive. The more people who do so, the greater the number of offenders who can be identified.

Complaints are passed on to relevant bodies, like *Action Fraud* and the *Information Commissioner's Office*. These organisations have the power to investigate and fine companies or even prosecute those that are breaking the law but they can only do so if they are told about specific problems in the first place.

Telephone Preference Service

One of the more cynical ruses employed by telephone criminals is to try to turn your sensible caution against you.

Cold callers claim to be from the *Telephone Preference Service* advising that your membership is due for renewal and that it will lapse unless the annual fee is paid immediately.

People who have sensibly signed-up to the service are tricked into paying, giving away not only their money but their card or bank account details.

The TPS is a FREE SERVICE and your registration does not have an expiry date.

Get more information about the service at:

www.tpsonline.org.uk

Saturday Advice Shop

20th July 2019

10 a.m. to 12 noon

Parish Council Building

10 Sibson Road

Our Advice Shop runs together with the local Police Beat Surgery.

We have security devices for sale to members at near to cost price and various free items that can help you to keep safe.

There is also the opportunity to speak in confidence to a local Police Officer about any of your concerns.

Call in for a chat, friendly advice and even a cup of tea.

Beat News

The most recent *Beat News* is published in full on the *Police News* pages of our website – www.villagewatch.co.uk

The reports are also printed each month in the *Birstall Post*.

Here is a summary of the May *Beat News* from PC Dave Jaeckels:

- There were fifty-nine crimes reported in May, a rise from forty-one in April.
- There were eleven offences of theft from cars; an unfortunate rise from four in the previous month.
- The number of house burglaries reported was five, with no entry gained in two of them. There were two non-dwelling house burglaries.
- There was an attempted break-in at the Nationwide Building Society and two people have been arrested.
- The number of reported assaults has risen from eleven to fourteen. Six of these resulted from two domestic incidents.
- There were three reports of vehicle damage, four of other damage, five of public order offences and five of fuel theft.

Further information can be found at:
www.police.uk/leicestershire/NL60

Crime Prevention Advice

The holiday season is once again upon us and criminals will be looking to take advantage of empty houses whilst people are away. Simple things can make a big difference and can prevent your holiday being ruined by finding your house has been burgled when you return:

1. Ask a relative, neighbour or friend to visit your house every couple of days whilst you are away to clear post, open and close curtains and switch lights on and off to make it look as if someone is in.
2. Fit timer switches to lights and consider buying a TV simulator to make it appear as if your home is occupied.
3. Do not leave spare keys lying about or hanging in door locks as these make it much easier for burglars to get in and out. Changing all your locks is also expensive!
4. If possible, ask a friend or relative to take you to the airport and think about what pictures you post on social media when you are away, as you are letting people know your house is empty!

Neighbourhood update

This month a male has been charged with arson and drugs offences and has appeared in court in relation to a house fire on Queensgate Drive that happened in April. As a result, he has received a five-year custodial sentence. This was a serious incident that luckily did not result in any serious injuries and our thanks go out to all the people that were involved in dealing with it, including the Fire Brigade who arrived quickly and extinguished the fire and Dc Mundy from Loughborough Police who investigated the incident.

The beat team have also been out this month delivering vehicle crime leaflets in relation to the vehicle thefts mentioned above and we have also visited the Hallam Fields Primary School to give a 'People who help us' talk to the children. We attended the Annual Parish Council meeting where we delivered a report on crime rates for the last year and gave an update about all the things we have done over the last twelve months.

Police Beat Surgery

You can meet one of our local Police Officers to discuss, in confidence, any issues that concern you on:

Saturday, 20th July in the NHW Advice Shop at 10 Sibson Road between 10 a.m. and 12 noon

(Times are always subject to Officers not being required elsewhere in an emergency.)

NEW STOCK

We have some new items for sale at our Advice Shop

Signal Blocker Car Key Wallets

Signal Blocker Phone Cases

Cable Cycle Locks with an extra extension cable to fit lawnmowers etc.

As well as the old favourites including:

Personal Alarms

Timer Switches

TV Simulators

Shed Alarms

Safe Cans

Immobilise Kits

Fence Spikes

and some

Number Plate Screws

Free Items

NEVER GIVE YOUR MONEY OR DETAILS TO STRANGERS WHO CONTACT YOU OUT OF THE BLUE NO MATTER WHAT THEY TELL YOU

Contacting Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Watch

Email: watch@villagewatch.co.uk

Phone: 0756 2422 756

*Calls go to our answering service but we always do our best to reply within 24 hours
Please remember to leave your number*

Write: c/o Birstall Parish Council
Council Office, Birstall Road,
Birstall, Leicester, LE4 4DH

We also have a post box on the counter in the Council Office

Neighbourhood Watch Remit

Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Watch is a strictly non-political organisation focussed on keeping our Members informed about the risk of crime and ways in which they can protect themselves from that risk.

This is done primarily through this Newsletter, our website and email alerts, our Facebook group and articles in the Birstall Post. It is our policy to publish only information from sources we know to be reliable or that we are otherwise satisfied can be trusted. Anonymous information is never circulated, although we usually pass it on to the Police for their consideration.

We do not provide a public notice board for the dissemination of unsubstantiated suspicion or allegations. We sometimes get requests (even demands!) to *name-and-shame* individuals suspected of criminal activity and have, at times, been publicly criticised when we refuse.

Thank you to Birstall Parish Council for continuing to support the Watch – www.birstallparishcouncil.org.uk