



## Chairman's Report

It has been another eventful year for the Watch. Evelyn Holden, our Chairman and Arjan Giga, our Treasurer both decided to stand down while remaining members of the Committee. At the May Committee Meeting I was elected as Chairman, Tony Abbey as Treasurer and a new volunteer, Sue Howell, was co-opted on to the Committee and elected as Secretary.

I would like to thank Evelyn and Arjan for all their hard work in these posts over the past eight and five years respectively.

Administering the Watch is time-consuming and often defaults to just a few active members. Passing time takes its toll and previously very active members now contribute less, increasing the burden on others. I am afraid that sometimes it means that the service we provide is not up to the standard we would wish.

We are very fortunate that a number of people, who choose not to be Committee members, are invaluable in keeping the Watch functioning from behind the scenes.

There are also the hundred-and-seventy or so Coordinators and Distributors who deliver the Newsletter and collect the annual subscriptions. They are the backbone of this Neighbourhood Watch and play a major part in keeping our three thousand member-households informed and alert to the risk of crime.

I would like to thank all of you who make a contribution to our Neighbourhood Watch, whether it be large or small. It is greatly appreciated.

We also have two important partners in keeping our villages safer places in which to live.

Birstall Parish Council has supported the Watch since its inception twenty years or so ago and provides us with not only financial assistance but also our official postal address and a base for our Committee meetings, Advice Shop and somewhere to store our stock. I would like to thank the Council and its very helpful staff for their support and assistance.

Last but far from least, there is our local Police Beat Team with whom we liaise closely. I would like to thank them for their continued interest in and support for the Watch. We like to think that our efforts go some way to making their job a little easier and our villages a little safer.

*Ed Chambers, Chairman*

## Your Vehicle is not a Strongbox

Cars and vans are vulnerable to determined thieves who have a number of clever ways to unlock them; as several of our members have found out to their cost.

Yet, despite this, many people still leave tools and other valuable items stored in them and are, naturally, very upset when they are stolen.

Get into the regular routine of always removing all loose items from unattended vehicles, especially overnight.

## Annual Accounts

The Audited Accounts for 2018 were presented to the Annual General Meeting on 2nd May and approved unanimously by those present. A summary of the Watch's financial situation at 31st December is given below. Copies of the full, detailed accounts are available on request.

Account	31 Dec 18	31 Dec 17	Movement
Reserve	£3,353.12	£3,350.63	£2.49
Current	£1,597.05	£2,149.18	-£552.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,950.17</b>	<b>£5,499.81</b>	<b>-£549.64</b>

  

	2018	2017	Incr./Decr.
Receipts	£4,523.28	£4,980.51	-9.18%
Payments	£5,072.92	£4,729.92	7.25%

## Committee and Officers

Following the Annual General Meeting, the elected Members of the Committee are: Arjan Giga, Colin Barradale, Ed Chambers, Evelyn Holden, Karen Moon, Phil Johnson, Ramesh Kotecha, Renuka Limbachiya and Tony Abbey.

Simon Oates is the Birstall Parish Council representative and Derek Reynolds the Wanlip Parish Meeting representative.

At the subsequent Committee Meeting on 21st May, Sue Howell was co-opted on to the Committee. The Meeting then elected Ed Chambers as Chairman, Sue Howell as Secretary and Tony Abbey as Treasurer for the coming twelve months.

## Birstall Gala Help Needed

The Watch hopes to have its usual stall at the Birstall Gala on Saturday, 22nd June.

We need some help in setting it up between 9-10 a.m. and clearing away between 4-5 p.m.

In addition, we like to have two people covering the stall at any one time and need some volunteers prepared to keep an experienced Committee Member company for an hour or two throughout what is a fairly long day for just two or three people to cover.

Could you spare a little time to help, please?

Please email us at: [watch@villagewatch.co.uk](mailto:watch@villagewatch.co.uk)

or leave us a message on: 0756 2422 756

## Saturday Advice Shop

15th June 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](http://www.villagewatch.co.uk)

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

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

- There were forty-one crimes reported in April, around the same as forty-three in March.
- There were four offences of theft from cars; a considerable drop from eleven in the previous month.
- The number of house burglaries reported was seven, one was of a garage with no entry gained to the actual house and another was an empty property.
- There was an attempted break-in at the Post Office but no entry was gained and the offenders left when disturbed by a passing vehicle.
- The number of reported assaults has risen from four to eleven. Most of these occurred in domestic settings rather than in public.
- There were five reports of vehicle damage, three of other damage, four of public order offences and one of fuel theft.

Further information can be found at:  
[www.police.uk/leicestershire/NL60](http://www.police.uk/leicestershire/NL60)

## Crime Prevention Advice

The number of burglaries in Birstall and Wanlip is relatively low compared to other parts of the County but we need to ensure that this remains the case. In the warmer months burglars look for open windows and insecure doors. Follow these simple rules to prevent you from becoming a victim:

- Keep doors and windows locked when you are out or they are unattended.
- Protect the rear of your property by locking gates and making it difficult to climb over fences or garden walls.
- Fit a decent alarm system, burglars will not stay long if it starts sounding.
- Fit CCTV with the cameras at head height so that they capture more than the tops of heads. Burglars are less likely to break in if they see CCTV.

## Neighbourhood update

We conducted Speed checks on Birstall Road in April and in just under an hour checked 138 vehicles. Seven drivers were given verbal warnings and one was reported for prosecution. Further operations are planned.

We have also been out delivering crime prevention leaflets in the areas where burglaries have been reported.

## New Inspector for Birstall

Inspector Mark Botte took over command of the Charnwood Neighbourhood Policing Area at the beginning of May, replacing Inspector Dwight Barker who has moved to the Local Policing Directorate in a support role.

Mark joined the force twenty-one years ago and has worked in uniformed posts across Leicestershire. He said of his new appointment:

*"We have strong links with our partnership organisations and I aim to ensure this continues so that we can tackle any issues jointly."*

We would like to thank Dwight Barker and wish him every success in his new post.

## Old News is Bad News

Looking back through previous editions of this Newsletter, it is sobering to see how often we have published similar warnings about crimes and scams that differ only in their details. Criminals know that the well-tried methods that trick people out of their hard-earned money will usually succeed with somebody. They regard it as a job and if only one or two victims are duped it can still bring in a good return.

The key is to get the target's cooperation with a story that is pretending to be helpful or simply threatening. So they may offer to get a much better return on an investment, give you a large prize from a lottery you did not know you had entered, tell you your bank account has been hacked or threaten legal consequences if a debt you did not know you owed is not paid immediately. There is always a sense of urgency implied to panic you into making bad decisions.

So we have to continue publishing this 'old news' in the hope that, each time we do, it will make a few more people aware of the risks and, therefore, more cautious when thieves try it on with them.



HMRC

Has determined you are eligible to receive a tax refund of **£265.59**  
Click here to begin  
<https://govuk-claim.co.uk/refund>

A Watch Member received this message but was sensible enough not to click on the link. Instead they sent it to HMRC who confirmed that it was not genuine.

The web address looks official but it is not. Nearly all official UK Government websites end in **.gov.uk** not **.co.uk**. The **govuk-claim** at the beginning is not the same thing at all.

Government departments and other reputable organisations, such as banks, never contact people out of the blue like this. If you receive a similar message, be extremely careful before taking any action you may live to regret.

## Police Beat Surgery

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

**Saturday, 15th June 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.)*

## Contacting Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Watch

Email: [watch@villagewatch.co.uk](mailto: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*

Thank you to Birstall Parish Council for continuing to support the Watch – [www.birstallparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.birstallparishcouncil.org.uk)