



Visit our website at: www.villagewatch.co.uk and join our Group on *Facebook*

Getting Support and Advice

In our August edition we reported that Lockdown has placed many strains on individuals and family relationships. Concern about jobs and money, added to the reduced opportunities to take time out from stressful situations, have left many people feeling alone, unsupported and even desperate. Helplines that can, quite literally, be life-savers for people who can find nowhere else to turn have seen a dramatic surge in calls since March.

We have a list of telephone numbers on our website but thought that it would be useful to publish some of them here.

There are many other support services available that can be found on the website:

www.supportline.org.uk/problems

Age UK Advice Line	0800 678 1602	A free and confidential national phone service for older people, their families, friends, carers and professionals.
Al-Anon Family Groups	0800 008 6811	For anyone affected by somebody else's drinking.
Alcoholics Anonymous	0800 917 7650	If you need help because of a drinking problem.
Childline	0800 1111	Free, confidential advice and support for those under 18, whenever help is needed and whatever the worry.
Citizens Advice	0345 404 0506	Local charities that offer free and confidential advice.
Cruse Bereavement Care	0808 808 1677	Emotional support and practical advice related to bereavement, including dealing with an estate, debt and arranging a funeral.
First Step	0116 254 8535	A Leicestershire organisation for male survivors of sexual abuse and rape.
Frank (National Drugs Helpline)	0300 123 6600	Advice and information for drug misusers, their families, friends and carers.).
Galop	0800 999 5428	The National LGBT+ domestic abuse helpline.
Leicester Rape Crisis	0116 255 8852	Accepts self-referrals from individuals who have been sexually abused or raped.
Leicestershire Relate	0116 254 3011	Help for people of all ages, backgrounds, sexual orientations and gender identities to strengthen their relationships.
Men's Advice Line	0808 801 0327	For male domestic abuse survivors.
Mencap	0808 808 1111	Information and advice for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
National Debtline	0808 808 4000	Talk through your options and get clear advice on how to take back control of your money.
National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 200 0247	Advice and help for victims of domestic abuse.
National Rape Crisis Helpline	0808 802 9999	For women survivors of rape and sexual abuse in England and Wales.
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	If you are worried about a child, contact professional counsellors for help, advice and support.
Samaritans	116 123	Call any time whatever you are going through. Free from any phone.
Scope	0808 800 3333	Free, independent and impartial advice and support on issues that matter to disabled people and their families.
StepChange Debt Charity	0800 138 1111	Free, confidential advice and practical solutions to help you deal with your debts.
The Mix	0808 808 4994	Support for the under 25s; mental health, money, homelessness, finding a job, break-ups, drugs etc.
Victim Support	0808 168 9111	Free service for anyone affected by crime, regardless of whether it has been reported or how long ago it happened.

If You Dial 999 but are too Frightened to Speak

It is always best to speak to the operator if you can, even by whispering. You may be asked to cough or tap the keys on your phone in response to questions.

Because calls from mobile phones can be made from anywhere, emergency services have to know where it is before they can send assistance.

Silent Solution is a police system designed to help people who are unable to speak but genuinely need police assistance. If they do not say anything when the operator answers, they will hear an automated police message that begins with 'You are through to the police...'

It will ask them to press 55 to be put through to a police call handler. If they do not, the call will be automatically disconnected.

The police call handler will attempt to communicate with them by asking simple 'yes' or 'no' questions. If they are not able to speak, they should listen carefully to the questions and instructions so that the call handler can assess the call and

arrange the necessary help.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT SIMPLY PRESSING 55 DOES NOT TELL THE POLICE WHERE THE CALLER IS.

Because landlines go to a fixed address the system is different. When a 999 call is made from a landline, information about where it is from is available automatically to the call handlers.

If, when an emergency call on a landline is received, there is no request for emergency assistance, the caller does not answer questions and the operator cannot decide whether an emergency response is needed, it will be connected to a police call handler. The process will then be similar to that used for calls from a mobile phone.

If the handset is replaced during the call, the line should remain connected for another forty-five seconds in case it is picked it up again. If it is and the operator is still concerned about the caller's safety, the call will be connected to the police.

A Message for our Coordinators

When we wrote to you a few weeks ago, we asked if you were willing to let us have an email address at which we could contact you. Many of you have now done so but there are still quite a few who have not.

It is quite easy to put things off and then never get around to them so, if that is the case, could you please respond to this reminder.

Just send a message from that email address with the subject 'Email Address' and your name and the first line of your postal address as the message to:

watch@villagewatch.co.uk

Of course, if you prefer not to do so, that is fine.

Back to School Safely

With all the disruption to school life caused by Covid-19, young people will have many uncertainties to face as they return to the classroom. Parents may be worried that their children could be exposed to drugs or other risky behaviour. Most of them will be unsure about how to deal with these issues or any information they may pick up.

The **Fearless** scheme introduces young people to the services offered by **Crimestoppers** in a way that they can understand. It has its own website specially designed for them and contains a wealth of information about crime and similar problems that can affect them. It gives guidance about how they can pass on information that may be worrying them **anonymously**.

Just go to the website for more information:

www.fearless.org

Nuisance Phone Calls

Registering with the **Telephone Preference Service (TPS)** prevents businesses based in the UK from cold calling you without your permission. They can be fined if they do so. Take care to use only the free **TPS** and beware of scam and copycat websites.

www.tpsonline.org.uk

Unfortunately, its powers do not extend to calls made from abroad. Telephone service providers have introduced measures to prevent many of them getting through but the scammers are doing their best to get round them.

Caller identification is a very useful feature of modern phones and enables us to block specific numbers.

Computers make thousands of calls a minute to numbers stolen from many sources, including ex-directory numbers. They generate fake numbers as the caller identification, so blocking one has little effect because the next call will appear to come from a different number. Increasingly, they are making the fake number look similar to the one being called, so that it appears to be a local call.

A message, designed to frighten and panic the recipient, urges them to press a key for more information. If they do so, they are connected to a call centre where the operator, paid by results, launches into their current scam. To add insult to injury, by pressing the key, it is the victim who starts paying for the call. It is charged at international premium rates, so the fraudsters still make money whether their main scam is successful or not.

There is very little risk if you simply answer one of these calls but you should **NEVER** respond to the message, just ring off immediately.

Local Police News

The Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Team produces a monthly Newsletter written by our Beat Officer, Dave Jaeckels. It contains news about recent crime in our villages, crime prevention advice and other information about the Team's activities.

You can read it in full each month on our website:

www.villagewatch.co.uk/police



Contacting Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Watch

watch@villagewatch.co.uk

0756 2422 756

Calls go to our answering service but we always try to reply within 24 hours. Please remember to leave your number.

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

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