



Visit our website at: [www.villagewatch.co.uk](http://www.villagewatch.co.uk) and join our Group on *Facebook*

## Evelyn Holden

We were very sorry to hear the sad news that Evelyn died in September of heart problems. She had been in hospital for several weeks.

Evelyn joined the Watch in 2005 as the Coordinator for her street and soon afterwards became a member of the Management Committee. She was elected as its Chairman in 2011 and served in that role until last year.

Throughout fifteen years, she was an active and committed supporter of the Watch. She took responsibility for monitoring the Watch Phone and Advice Line and was a regular helper at our monthly Advice Shop. Many visitors will remember her providing refreshments; her home-made mince pies each December are legendary.

Evelyn could always be relied upon to help with Watch activities, such as our stall at the Birstall Gala and other village events. This was usually with the quiet support of her husband John, who did much of the fetching and carrying.

When the Watch organised the Birstall Speed Watch events, she was a keen volunteer who wielded the speed gun with great enthusiasm. During the Village Environment Day she operated a litter picker with equal skill.

Evelyn is remembered fondly by many people in the Village as a teacher at Highcliffe Primary School.

We have received a lot of messages and comments from those who knew her but one sums her up perfectly: *'She was a very lovely lady who had a heart of gold, nothing was too much, she would do anything for anybody'*.

These sentiments are shared by all of us who knew her through Neighbourhood Watch. She will be greatly missed by many people.

Our Condolences go to John and their family.



Evelyn receiving an award from Baroness Byford and Assistant Chief Constable Wendy Yeadon in 2010

## Do You Have Database Skills?

The Committee Member who has managed our Coordinator and Membership database for a number of years will soon be giving up the role and we are looking for somebody to take over from him.

If you have skills in this area and can offer a few hours each month, we should be very glad to hear from you.

Please contact us, without any obligation, to find out what is involved.

The simplest way is by email to:

[watch@villagewatch.co.uk](mailto:watch@villagewatch.co.uk)

or you can leave a message on:

0756 2422 756

and we will call you back.

## Worrying Incident

We have heard from two of our Members, an elderly couple, about an experience they had in early October.

Two men knocked on their door, walked straight in without being invited and tried to sell them something on the cheap. Our Members made it clear that they were not interested and asked them to leave. They eventually gave up and left in a black car but not before commenting on the value of items in the house.

After checking that nothing had gone missing, our Members warned their neighbours and advised the Watch. They were worried that the men were really looking around to see whether there was anything in the house worth stealing and might return. The Police have since been informed and are following up with enquiries.

Scam phone calls and emails are now common methods of stealing, especially from elderly and vulnerable people, but the old tried and tested tricks have not gone away. Distraction burglaries by criminals who knock on doors with some story or the other, simply as a way of getting onto the home, still happen far too often.

Please be very careful and DO NOT let strangers into your home. Always use a safety chain when you open your door and do not admit anybody unless you are completely satisfied that they are genuine.

If you have any concerns, advise the Police by dialling 101 as soon as possible. If you fear that anybody is in danger, do not hesitate to dial 999 for assistance

## Covid Alert Levels

At the time of writing Charnwood is at Level 1 (medium) but this could change at any time. You can find full details about the restrictions at:

[www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-levels-what-you-need-to-know](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-levels-what-you-need-to-know)

# Celebrating with Fireworks

We are approaching the time of year when it is traditional to celebrate festivals and events with fireworks. The severe limits placed on public events by the Covid-19 restrictions makes it much more likely that people will be celebrating at home.

While this can be great fun for those taking part, it can also be a source of great annoyance to neighbours who are taken by surprise late at night. It is a particular problem for young children and animals, who can become very alarmed and distressed at loud explosions and other unexpected noises.

Clearly, there has to be compromise and if you are planning to let off fireworks in your garden, it is always a good idea to let your neighbours know so that they can prepare themselves and their animals. Those with young children can plan to watch with them from a window and enjoy the experience.

It is also important to be aware of the law, since the penalties can be severe.

- It is a punishable offence for anyone to set off fireworks between 11 pm and 7 am
- You cannot buy or use Category 2 and 3 (also known as Adult) fireworks if you are under eighteen.
- You must never set off or throw fireworks (including sparklers) in the street or any other public place.
- You can receive an on-the-spot fine of £90 or be prosecuted in court for using fireworks illegally.

There are just four occasions when the times are different:

- Bonfire Night** - 5th November 2020 - until midnight
- Diwali** - 14th November 2020 - until 1 am
- New Year's Eve** - 31st December 2020 - until 1 am
- Chinese New Year** - 12th February 2021 - until 1 am

## Test and Trace Support Payments

Eligible residents whose earnings are affected by staying at home and isolating for fourteen days, can apply to their local authority for a one-off Test and Trace Support Payment of £500.

As you might expect, scammers have latched on to this and have been contacting people advising them that they are due a payment and asking for bank details so that it can be paid.

The **ONLY** way for eligible Birstall and Wanlip residents to obtain the payment is by first applying to Charnwood Borough Council on its website:

[www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/test\\_and\\_trace\\_support\\_payment\\_scheme](http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/test_and_trace_support_payment_scheme)

Do NOT be misled by claims made by cold callers or emails.

## Police Beat Surgeries

The Beat Team are resuming Beat Surgeries open to the public. They will be held at the Birstall Beat Office in the Robert Dickinson Building, 10 Sibson Road (opposite the Garden Centre).

- Wednesday, 11th November - 10 am to 12 noon
- Thursday, 3rd December - 5 pm to 7 pm
- Friday, 18th December - 10 am to 12 noon

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

Please observe the social distancing rules.

*(These times are always subject to the Officer not being required elsewhere in an emergency.)*

## Old Scam, New Twist

We have written quite recently about fraudulent telephone calls that use fake numbers to make them look plausible on caller ID displays. A recent enhancement has been to make the call appear to be from a local number.

The Police have reported that a woman from Leicester received a call in October from someone purporting to be from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), claiming that she owed them unpaid tax and that a warrant had been issued for her arrest.

They said that they were calling from a Leicestershire Police station and showed their caller ID as 0116 222 2222. This was the local Police contact number used before the national 101 number was introduced nine years ago.

The woman, unfortunately, believed them and handed over several thousand pounds through bank transfers and Amazon gift vouchers.

These thieves are very clever at finding ways of fooling and panicking people. Never do anything in response to a phone call or email about something that you do not know about already. Genuine organisations will only start court action as a last resort to recover money owed to them and you would have had plenty of warning in advance.

In any case, it would be a civil matter in which the Police would not be involved.

## New Beat Sergeant

We are pleased to welcome Sergeant 4614 Rakhi Mistry to our villages.

He took over as the Sergeant for the Birstall and Wanlip Beat Team in mid-October.

## 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](http://www.villagewatch.co.uk/police)



## Contacting Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Watch

[watch@villagewatch.co.uk](mailto: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](http://www.birstallparishcouncil.org.uk)

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