



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

The 2021 Census

CENSUS: There is missing information from your application. Failure to update your details may result in a £1000 penalty. Visit: <https://census.myinfo-new.com>

Census: We haven't received your form for Census 2021. You must complete this or you could be fined £1000. Complete this via: <https://ukcensus21-form.com/tkn>

If you did not complete your Census return as required by law last March, you can be fined for not doing so. Properly authorised officials are still following up these cases and, if you are on their list, you will have been contacted by them directly.

Not surprisingly, fraudsters have used the Census as a means of getting unsuspecting people to reveal their personal details. Text messages are still being received by our Members who have properly completed their return, saying that it has not been received and that they are subject to a £1000 fine.

These are a scam and replying to the message leads to requests for sensitive personal information that can then be used in identity and bank fraud.

The authorities are not using text messages containing a link to contact people about the Census. If you receive one, do not put yourself at risk by replying.

Gift Cards are not Money

Criminal scams come in all shapes and sizes and it is difficult to keep up with the new versions as they appear. There are, however, some common features that mark them out for what they are.

High on the list is the request for payment to be made using Amazon or other gift vouchers.

These vouchers are designed to be what their name implies, a way of giving gifts to people we care about. They are not money and can only be used to buy items from the company that issues them.

Other genuine organisations have no use for them. Royal Mail, for example, wants its bills paid in cash that it can spend on delivering its services. It does not want to buy items from Amazon. What would it do with them?

Only use gift cards for their intended purpose. They are an excellent way of giving presents to relatives and friends but they should not be used for anything else.

If you are asked to buy gift vouchers to pay a bill, it is 100% certain that it is a scam that should be ignored.

IN THE WARM WEATHER MAKE SURE THAT YOU LOCK ALL DOORS AND WINDOWS BEFORE YOU LEAVE YOUR HOME EMPTY

The Birstall and Wanlip Neighbourhood Beat Team produces a monthly Newsletter written by our Beat Officer, Dave Jaekels. 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

Nextdoor Birstall

Several of our Members have received letters inviting them to join something called *Nextdoor Birstall* and have asked us if this is yet another scam.

The *Nextdoor* organisation originated in the United States and started in this country in 2016. At the time, an official statement said that: "Every neighbour, in every neighbourhood, would benefit from a platform that makes it easier to connect and communicate with the people who live right next door".

It is safe to say that the organisation is genuine and not part of a scam. Its website explains how it operates:

www.nextdoor.co.uk

There are a lot of online reviews and they appear to be mixed. Many people like the idea and find the interaction with their neighbours useful, while others complain of being bombarded with unwanted information. See some reviews on Trustpilot:

[trustpilot.com](https://www.trustpilot.com)

If you decide that this is something for you, then there is no reason not to join. However, before you supply any personal information, please follow our standard advice and do your own checks. Be sure that you know where and how safely it will be kept, who will have access to it and, most importantly, how it might be used.

As so many people know to their cost, fraudsters pretend to be representatives of all kinds of reputable and trusted organisations, including Government departments and Banks. Before giving away any personal details, always check carefully that the recipients really are who they claim to be.

Stay in Control

If you phone or message somebody, it is something that YOU have decided to do and YOU are in control.

If you receive a call or message, it is something SOMEONE ELSE has decided to do and THEY are in control.

This is a very important difference that you should always consider carefully, before giving away any personal details or following any instructions from the person at the other end.

The Fatal Four



The Police conduct regular roadside checks for the four driving offences that lead to the majority of road accidents.

Speeding • Phones • Seatbelts • Drink and Drugs

While the majority of drivers appreciate the dangers inherent in these offences, there remains a minority who clearly do not. Many of these are newly qualified drivers who are also unaware of how easy it is for them to lose their coveted, newly-acquired driving licence. They will have to retake the full driving test to regain it and subsequent insurance premiums can be unaffordable.

However, these are just minor inconveniences when compared with the consequences of a road accident on themselves, their passengers and members of the public.