



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

Visit our Stall at the Birstall Gala on Saturday 18th June

We shall have a range of Crime Prevention items, some for sale and others free of charge at the Gala on School Lane Playing Fields.

Unexpected Delivery?

A Member has reported receiving several text messages, allegedly from a genuine courier company, advising them that they were unable to deliver a parcel and to click on a website link to re-arrange it. They were not expecting a delivery and suspected that it was a scam. They made their own enquiries that confirmed their suspicions.

When you have placed a genuine order, you may well receive a text or email message giving you information about the delivery that can be very helpful. The problem arises when you receive a message of this kind out of the blue when you are not expecting a delivery and it gives no clue to what the order might be.

Clicking on the link can be dangerous. Often it will ask for a small payment to cover administration costs or something similar. You are asked to give your bank card details and the subsequent amount eventually taken could be considerably larger than you thought.

This and variations on the theme are a scam that is common at the moment. If you get a similar message, be wise like our Member and make your own enquiries.

Remember that the courier has already been paid by the sender to deliver the item. They cannot charge you extra to do so. The main exception is a Royal Mail letter sent without sufficient postage. However, they will leave a card in your letter box and will NEVER use text or email messages.

Don't Pay to DIY

If you search online for a government service such as renewing a driving licence or passport, you may well be offered links to private companies that will make the application on your behalf and charge you for the privilege.

You will have to fill in a form from which they simply copy and paste your details into the official form. Their fee for doing this will be in addition to the actual cost of the service that could even be completely free.

Be very wary which link you use or you could be paying someone to do something you can easily do yourself. Watch out particularly for links that have 'Ad' (for advert) alongside them. Safe links to most Government agencies and websites can be found at:

www.gov.uk

Our Apologies

A number of people who responded to our Survey asked to be included in our email alerts. Unfortunately, a glitch in the system did not ask for their email address.

If you are one of those respondents, please accept our apologies. You, and anyone else who would like to do so, can still sign-up by going to our website at:

www.villagewatch.co.uk/signup

Ukraine: Another Scam Opportunity

Scammers have no conscience and take every opportunity to steal our money. One ploy is to appeal to our generosity. During the pandemic there were many attempts to trick us into donating to fake charities that claimed they were assisting the NHS. Now the same unscrupulous people have moved on to exploit the plight of Ukrainian refugees.

Many of us want to help those less fortunate than ourselves but we have to be on our guard to ensure that our donations go where we intend and not into the pockets of crooks.

Be very careful not to have your heartstrings tugged by unsolicited appeals from organisations you have never heard of before. If you want to focus a donation very specifically, do your own research to find a genuine charity that supports your particular interest.

If you just want to donate safely, knowing that your money will definitely go to help others, look at the Disasters Emergency Committee. The DEC is an umbrella group of fifteen major UK charities launched in 1963. It coordinates collective appeals to raise funds for emergency aid and rapid relief to people caught up in disasters and humanitarian crises as they occur.

www.dec.org.uk

Nuisance Parking

We are regularly contacted by Members about poor parking in Birstall. The problem is not confined to any one area and appears to affect most of the village in one way or another. Concerns range from inconsiderate parking, such as blocking driveways, to dangerous parking, such as on zigzag lines outside schools. The issues are, however, not the easiest to address.

The majority of the streets in the village are not subject to yellow line or other restrictions and anyone is allowed to use a parking space on a first-come-first-served basis, even if it is directly outside your house. This can be frustrating, especially if spaces are scarce, and can sometimes lead to heated disputes.

Members' experience suggests that where a vehicle is parked inconsiderately rather than dangerously, we cannot expect an immediate emergency response from the authorities. It is not always clear which authority is responsible.

Parking enforcement was once the sole concern of the Police but the responsibility has been transferred; in our case to Leicestershire County Council. If you have an issue you should first refer it there. However, the Police still have powers to deal with dangerous parking.

There is more information and advice about parking issues on these websites:

www.leicestershire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/cars-and-parking

www.leics.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/asb/asb/antisocial-behaviour/nuisance-parking