



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

**At the time of going to press the Special General Meeting on 20th April had not yet taken place.  
A full report of the meeting and its outcome will be available on our website a few days afterwards.  
[www.villagewatch.co.uk](http://www.villagewatch.co.uk)**

## WhatsApp Verification Code Trick

If you receive a text message from *WhatsApp* containing a verification code that you are not expecting, be very careful.

*WhatsApp* sends you a text message containing a verification code when you log into the app for the first time, when you have been logged out or when you are trying to log into *WhatsApp* from a new device. Of course, when this happens, you will be waiting for it.

If you are not, however, it will be because fraudsters have entered your number into *WhatsApp* trying to get access to your account, thus triggering the verification code text.

They will then message you via the app appearing to be one of your genuine contacts with a plausible story asking you to send them the code. They might say, for example, that they have accidentally entered your number by mistake. Because the message appears to be from a relative or friend, you might be tricked into passing on the code.

**This will allow the fraudsters to take over your *WhatsApp* account and possibly lock you out.**

The scammers can select your closest contacts from your message history and simply ask them for money or sensitive information.

They also find personal details about you and your contacts. These can be used to access other important accounts, target you with more scams or even blackmail you.

They will have gained a new set of unlocked contacts on whom to carry out the same trick, gaining access to more and more accounts as they go on.

**NEVER share your login details or verification codes with anybody—even your closest family or trusted friends.**

Set up two-step verification to secure your account.

Report spam messages or block the sender within *WhatsApp* by pressing and holding on the message bubble, select 'Report' and then follow the instructions.

Be suspicious of any messages requesting money, even if they come from your contacts. Always give the friend a quick call to check it is them before doing anything else.

**Most importantly, if you think that you may have given sensitive details, such as payment information, to fraudsters, let your bank know what has happened immediately.**

*WhatsApp* users who have lost access to their accounts can contact: [support@whatsapp.com](mailto:support@whatsapp.com)

**Our Local Police Beat Team produces a monthly Newsletter with news of crime and other local issues.**

**You can read it in full each month on our website:  
[www.villagewatch.co.uk/police](http://www.villagewatch.co.uk/police)**

## Investment Scams

There has been an increase in cold telephone calls asking to speak to the correctly-named occupant about their share holding in a named company, about which they appear to have a lot of information. Shares in *National Grid*, *SSE* and *Centrica* are often mentioned but other names are also used.

It seems that lists of shareholders in these companies have leaked on to the dark web but, it is likely, no specific details of those holdings. The caller, however, will pretend to know more in order to trick the target into revealing more information.

They may go on to persuade their victim to 'invest in better options' or use the information to raid their share account. Either way the victim is out of pocket and their investments have vanished.

**Always be very wary of cold telephone calls, emails or social media contacts that come out of the blue. NEVER take any action or advice before checking out the caller in your own time and NEVER because you feel pressured by them.**

## Get There Safely

Driving a long distance to go on holiday can be stressful enough, especially if the traffic is heavy. Breaking down on the journey is the last thing anybody wants. Yet the various roadside assistance services all report that a large number of breakdowns can be avoided by taking a few simple steps before you set off.

- Tyres with legal tread depth and not damaged?
- Tyre pressures correct?
- Windscreen wipers in good order and screenwash topped up?
- Lights all working correctly?
- Oil, engine coolant and brake fluid levels all correct?
- No warning lights showing on the dashboard?

**Make sure that that there are drinks and snacks on hand for the passengers in case you have long delays. Air conditioning can greatly increase the comfort of passengers, so make sure that it is working efficiently.**

## Unless the Police Know...

Members sometimes tell us that they have not reported a crime or similar incident because they did so once before and "it was a waste of time".

However, if the Police are only told of a single incident, they will treat it as such and so remain unaware of any bigger problem that might be developing.

If you are aware of a crime, then make sure that the Police also know about it. They can then see when a pattern is emerging that can be addressed.

**You can report problems at any time by dialling 101 but always dial 999 if a crime is in progress or somebody is in imminent danger.**