

Bexley Borough Neighbourhood Watch Association



NEWSLETTER

SPRING/SUMMER 2020

Patron: James Brokenshire (MP for Old Bexley & Sidcup)
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Neighbourhood Watch Chairman to step down

After 5 years as Chairman and over 8 years at the helm our Chairman, Dana Wiffen, is stepping down this year at the AGM. He has made major contributions to Bexley Neighbourhood Watch including writing publicity literature and contributing to the Neighbourhood Watch section in the Bexley Magazine.

He also works in the Neighbourhood Watch office helping manage the watch members and doing the accounts. He is an important source of the information for this newsletter, as well as writing crime warnings and other articles for the weekly reports that go to our members by email each week.

He also attends many of the events, gives talks and meets with the Local Authority (BCSP), Bexley Police and our Patron James Brokenshire MP regularly. He is stepping down so he will have more free time for his family and his hobbies. It is hoped his successor will be as pro-active and hands on as he has been over the years.

Do you want our weekly member's crime report?

If you are a Coordinator and you have changed your phone number or changed your email address in the last couple of years please send us the details via email to bexwatch-office@btconnect.com. This will allow us to remain in touch with you. If you are a Coordinator and are not receiving our weekly report issued on Thursdays by email please let us know and send us your current details so we can check and update if incorrect.

Meeting with our patron

From Dana Wiffen-Chairman, Neighbourhood Watch Office

I met with our patron, James Brokenshire MP, in early February and one of the things we discussed was the continuing high crime figures in Bexley because of the reduction in the numbers of police officers, it is hoped in the future that we can acquire 17 new officers as fixed ward members, one for each of wards bringing the teams to 3 officers. Please keep your information coming in as this really helps our police teams.

Over to our new editor

After 5 years of being our Newsletter Editor, Pam Bartle is stepping down, we thank her for her superb work in continuing to put together our ever improving newsletter over that time. Luckily a Neighbourhood Watch-Office volunteer Steven James has stepped into the fold and this is his first one so we hope you enjoy it!

AGM save the date - Friday 5th June

The date for the Bexley Neighbourhood Watch AGM has been set for Friday 5th June at the United Reform Church Geddes Pl, Bexleyheath DA6 7DJ starting at 7:30 pm.

Guest speakers include Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, the New Safer Neighbourhoods Inspector Dodds, and Borough Commander for Bexley (Fire), London Fire Brigade Peter Curtin.

All are welcome

Latest Membership Statistics

Homes covered	48,932
Streets covered	904
Coordinators	1,270
Live Watches	846
Hound Watch	530
Shop Watch	514
Plot Watch	59
Faith Watch	58
Horse Watch	16

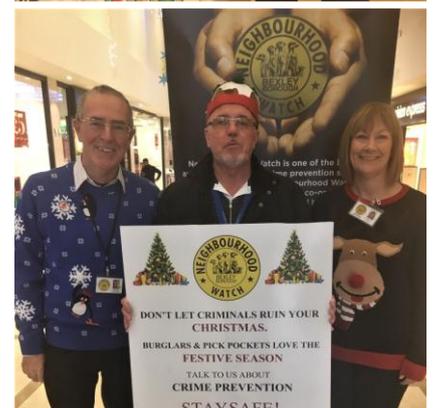
Christmas in Bexleyheath

The Neighbourhood Watch Office set up a stall in the Bexleyheath Shopping Centre manned by the volunteers.

We handed out literature, booklets and lots of purse bells. We even recruited a few new coordinators.



Sandra Eke



Dave Potter, Dana Wiffen and Lulie Morrison

Recent and emerging Scams

Scammers are innovative – they are always thinking up new ways of deceiving people and parting them from their hard-earned money.

Amazon Prime:

Between 1 October 2019 and 16 January 2020, the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) identified 571 reports of Amazon Prime-related Computer Software Service Fraud. The scam has seen fraudsters steal over £1M from victims. One victim, a man from Glasgow in his 60s, lost over £65,000.

Victims receive an automated call, informing them that they have been charged for an Amazon Prime subscription. They are subsequently instructed to 'press 1' to cancel the transaction.

When they do this, they are directed to a fraudster posing as an Amazon customer service representative. The fraudster advises the victim that their subscription was purchased fraudulently and that remote access to their computer is required in order to fix a security flaw that will prevent it from reoccurring.

The victim is asked to download a remote access application, often the 'Team Viewer' app, which grants the fraudster access to their computer. The Team Viewer software is then mis-used by the criminal to monitor the victim logging onto their online bank account, which allows the fraudster to see the victim's personal and financial details.

Barclays Bank

A number of people have received a letter purporting to be from Barclays, and informs people they are at risk of being burnt "terribly" unless they return the cards - along with their personal details including the card's PIN - to an address in India.

Preventing and identifying scams

- The caller or email doesn't give address you by name, and tries to stop you speaking to family members, or fiends.
- Do not give any personal information such as your name, address, bank details, email or phone number to any organisation which has called you out of the blue. Always question unsolicited calls, texts or emails requesting your personal or financial information. Instead, contact the company directly using a known email or phone number.
- Many frauds start with a phishing email. Remember that banks and financial institutions will not send you an email asking you to click on a link and confirm your bank details. Do not trust such emails, even if they look genuine. You can always call your bank using the phone number on a genuine piece of correspondence, website (typed directly into the address bar) or the phone book to check if you're not sure.
- Never automatically click on a link in an unexpected email or text.
- Remember, email addresses and phone numbers can be spoofed, so don't use those as a means to verify that a message or call is authentic.
- The best way to get in touch with a company is to use a known email or phone number, such as the one on the back of your bank card.

Useful contacts

takefive-stopfraud.org.uk - a national campaign by Financial Fraud Action.

scamsmart.fca.org.uk - the Financial Conducts Authority's scam smart website.

getsafeonline.org - free online safety advice.

friendsagainstscams.org.uk - encouraging communities to take action against scams.

cyberaware.gov.uk - a Home Office campaign to help protect against cyber crime.

actionfraud.police.uk - UK's national fraud and cyber crime reporting centre.

contact.met.police.uk/Site/fraudalert - the Metropolitan Police website

fca.org.uk/consumers/scams - Financial Conduct Authority's consumer scam advice

How to spot a scam before it's too late

In a bid to raise awareness, Richard Branson has released an animated guide to explain the ways that criminals use his name and likeness to steal personal and financial information. He also recommends reporting anything you think is a scam, to Action Fraud.

In the video, a cartoon version of Branson points out: "Scammers are contacting people who post on our social feeds. Even if it's a verified account, know that I never direct message anyone, nor does my team.

"I never endorse any get-rich-quick schemes—this is a sure-fire way to lose your investment."

Watch the video at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHteF0Bksok&feature=youtu.be>

Action Fraud

National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre

0300 123 2040

Have you been a victim of fraud, or do you know someone else who has?

Find out more about reporting to Action Fraud, including how to report, what we do with your information and why it's so important to report fraud and cybercrime.

Check Action Fraud's Guide to Reporting at

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/guide-to-reporting>

and

How to report frauds and cyber crime at <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/how-to-report-fraud>



Smartwater Offer

Neighbourhood Watch members can obtain a Smartwater pack for a discounted price of £19.95

Visit

<https://shop.smartwater.com/redeem>

quoting code **L3RY 25NW**

Smart Water

SmartWater was started in the early 1990s by Phil Cleary, a retired British police detective, and his brother Mike Cleary, a Chartered Chemist and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry. In 1996, the Clearys won the Prince of Wales Award for and in 2000, SmartWater was awarded Millennium Product status.

SmartWater consists of a liquid containing a code, whose presence can be seen under ultraviolet light. The term "traceable liquid" has come to be used to describe SmartWater and similar forensic coding substances. It is intended to be applied to valuable items, so that if they are stolen and later recovered by police, their original owner can be determined after laboratory testing of a sample. Another application is a sprinkler system that sprays a burglar with the invisible fluid, which cannot be washed off and lasts for months, to generate evidence that connects a suspect to a specific location.

During the first six months of the pilot scheme in 2009, involving 100 households in a part of Kent, police recorded a 94% reduction in burglary. Fitting cash machines with a SmartWater spray to mark thieves and their clothing when breaking into or tampering with the machine was found in a 2016 pilot scheme to reduce theft by 90%.

Signage update

From Dana Wiffen-Chairman, Neighbourhood Watch Office

New signs have gone up in Harcourt Road, Lenor Close, Chiddingstone Avenue, Timothy Close, Canberra Road, Marlborough Park Avenue, North Close and The Pantiles-Bexleyheath. Also Dartford Road, Maiden Erleigh Avenue (adjusted signs), Nutmeg Close, and St. Mary's Road-Bexley, Bexley Lane-Sidcup, Holly Hill Road, and Tower Road-Belvedere plus checking sign in Lincoln Road-Slade Green. There are still signs to put up, or remove in Bexley, Blackfen, Crayford, Welling, Bexleyheath, Sidcup, Northumberland Heath, and Erith. These will be sorted weather permitting in the future.



New senior office for Bexley

from Borough Police

Inspector Kevin Hebdon has bid farewell to the borough with a move to Lewisham borough. We would like to welcome his replacement, Inspector Paula Dodds who is taking over as the Bexley Safer Neighbourhood Inspector who joins us from Lewisham Borough

Victim Support - Bobby van project

Have you had a burglary at home, or feel at risk of a break-in? Perhaps you feel vulnerable at home because of domestic violence? Our home security survey and upgrade service can help.

We are working with the London Borough of Bexley to improve home security for vulnerable residents. To be eligible for this service you must live in Bexley and either be a victim of burglary, a victim of domestic abuse, a vulnerable adult such as aged over 65 or have a disability.

For more information call **020 8776 7071**, email bobby.van@victimsuppoort.org.uk, or visit www.victimsuppoort.org.uk.

What is Keyless Car Theft?

Keyless entry cars allow the driver to unlock and start the car with the key fob still in their pocket. If you have to push a button on your car key to enter your car, you are not at risk of being hacked.

Keyless car theft, also known as Relay Theft, is where the signal from a key for a Keyless Entry car is captured by a device located outside the owner's house. The device relays the signal to another device close to the victim's car. This fools the car into registering the key as nearby, allowing the doors to open and ignition started. The distance between the first device and the owner's key can be a few metres. The thieves can have the car unlocked and driven away in less than 30 seconds

Prevention

A simple and cheap method is to use a Faraday Bag or Signal Blocking Pouch. This isolates the key fob from incoming signals and therefore responding and sending the code. A Faraday bag costs around £5.

You can also turn off the wireless function. Refer to your car manual for how to do this.

A visual deterrent for all types of car entry system is a steering wheel lock. You should ensure the lock meets the BS3621

Crayford Xmas Festival

Neighbourhood Watch was represent at the fesival held on 5th December. We were visited by the Mayor of Bexley, Geraldene Lucia-Hennis and her husband consort Peter Lucia-Hennis



Let's fight fraud

Neighbourhood Watch coordinators attended an initiative by the Yorkshire Building Society on Wednesday 26th February in Bexleyheath - **Protect yourself and your money**. They handed out leaflets, purse bells, and advice and encouraged visitors to join the organisation.



How secure is your home?

Around the borough we are still experiencing a number of burglaries that have occurred when doors are left home, not being locked or not locked securely. You can reduce the risk of being a victim of burglary by simply taking the time to ensure you understand how the locks on your doors work.

Have you locked your door?

It may sound obvious, but do you understand how your doors lock? There are many types of doors and many types of lock. Modern doors may be fitted with a multi-point locking system that as the name suggests has several locking points and are more secure than the older traditional night latch (Yale lock) and mortice lock that only act at one point.

When choosing a door or lock you should check the certification. PAS 24:2016 is the British Standard minimum standard for external doors and together with BS6375 parts 1,2 and 3.

There are two types of multi-point locks

Split Spindle - a split spindle door handle operation means that the outside handle is only used to engage the hook bolts and is separate from the latching bolt. If you walk out of the door and simply pull it closed behind you, you'll need the key to get back in.

Solid Spindle - around half of multi-point lock doors have a solid spindle operation on the outside handle. This means that the outside handle operates the latching bolt and therefore when the door is closed and the hook bolts have not been engaged and locked with the key the door can be opened by pushing the handle down. If you walk out of this sort of door and simply pull it closed behind you will not need the key to get back in. Doors with solid spindles are often found in blocks of flats so that those in the flat don't accidentally lock themselves out, which is a particular problem if you live above the ground floor.

The Back door - many burglaries occur when the occupants of the house are in the lounge watching TV and the burglar enters through an unsecured rear door; the burglar then has access to the rest of the house, taking valuables, car keys and the car from the drive.

Patio doors - patio doors can be particularly vulnerable as they usually comprise two doors. If they are sliding doors then you should check they cannot be lifted off their tracks. You can stop this from happening by opening the sliding door and fitting a timber batten into the top frame to further limit the distance by which the door can be lifted.

In addition to the locks fitted to the doors other devices can improve security; door chains or door restrictors which can prevent access even if the lock is forced. For patio doors the Nightlock Lockdown or Patlock devices will prevent the doors being forced open.

Windows - windows are just small doors and the same measures should be applied to them. If you have to have a window open you should ensure a limiter is fitted to prevent access by restricting the size of the gap.

PIR lights fitted close to the front and back doors can deter thieves, as can CCTV cameras.

Visit the Metropolitan Police web site at

<https://www.met.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/residential-burglary/control-access-doors/> for more details on securing your home.

There are a range of booklets and leaflets available at the Neighbourhood Watch Office; contact us at bexwatch-office@btconnect.com and we will send you the literature.

Beware of Rouge Traders

by the London Borough of Bexley Trading Standards

If anyone approaches you uninvited and offers to carry out repairs to your property

Turn Them Away

then call Trading Standards on 07716 116452

Think before you buy

Always ask yourself: would I have had these repairs done if a trader had not called. If the answer is *no*, think very carefully.

Do I want it?	Do I need it done?
Can I afford it?	Is it good value?
Can I trust the trader?	Can they give references?
Have they give a written quote?	Do I have the right to cancel?

If you buy goods costing over £42 then you generally have 14 days to cancel the contract. The trader must give you a written notice of this, failure to do so is a criminal offence. If the salesman uses misleading or aggressive practices this could be a criminal offence.

Call Consumer Direct on 03454 04 05 06 for advice

If a trader refuses to leave when asked, call the police.

Action Fraud

National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre

0300 123 2040

Reporting fraud and cyber crime by phone

You can report fraud by speaking directly to our specialist fraud advisers by phoning **0300 123 2040**.

They will also be able to give you help and advice about fraud.

We're able to take your call from:

Monday - Friday 8am to 8pm

Textphone users can dial **0300 123 2050**

If you wish to make a report but want to remain anonymous then you will need to call the Action Fraud contact centre on **0300 123 2040**. Note that we cannot offer anonymity if you use the online fraud reporting tool [http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud].

You can only call **0300 123 2040** from within the UK. If you wish to report a fraud about the UK from abroad, please use the online fraud reporting tool or call **+44 (0)161 234 9230**.

Online advisor – live chat

This service is available Monday to Friday between 9am to 6pm. When using [web chat](#) you are speaking live to one of our advisors in the contact centre.

Calling from overseas

If you are calling from abroad please call **+44 161 234 9230**

Complaints

You can make a complaint by letter or email. Please direct your complaint to:

City of London Police 21 New Street, London, EC2M 4TP

Email:

contact@actionfraud.police.uk

For press enquiries:

If you are a journalist please contact us on **020 7601 2220**. Please **DO NOT** report fraud to this phone number. The information will not be recorded.

Important: When you send an e-mail you are doing so over the open internet, which we cannot guarantee the security of. Therefore, please do not send personal information, such as your address or bank account details, when emailing us.

Other languages

If you don't speak English, or if English is not your first language, we run a service for you to make your fraud report in your language.