

CHASE POLICING DIVISION NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH NEWSLETTER



E-mail edition

June -July 2009

What's In Your Garage?

With the warmer weather, have you considered a late Spring-clean?

To help to combat incidents of car crime, why not clear out the garage and make space for your car? If your car is secure and parked in your locked garage it is protected from damage, less likely to be broken into and less likely to be stolen.

To combat the incidents where car keys are stolen from a house and then used to steal a resident's car, follow this simple crime reduction advice:

- Keep your home secure with doors locked and windows secure in any unoccupied rooms.
- Keep your car keys in a safe place out of sight and away from doors and windows
- Consider fitting a small safe which can be used to store spare keys, small valuables and personal documents
- If you buy a new car, make sure that any security device is approved by the insurance industry
- NEVER leave valuables or personal possessions unattended in your vehicle. Remove the stereo if possible
- When you leave your vehicle, always ensure that all windows, doors and sunroofs are closed and securely locked, and that any alarms and immobilisers are switched on
- Particularly if your vehicle is of high value, consider having a tracking device system fitted

Remember, an insurance company may not look favourably on any claim where it has been made easy for the criminal

Are You Making the Most of OWL?

If you don't currently receive the Neighbourhood Watch OWL messages but would like to do so, or if you have any queries or concerns about the new Neighbourhood Watch OWL messages, if you would like to change the time periods for receiving messages or the method by which messages are received, please contact the Chase Watch Team. Contact details are on page eight.

Remember: If you chose to receive OWL messages by e-mail, you have the added benefit of access to the OWL web site which has lots of useful, local information, everything from local crime statistics, property prices and information about your local police and councillors to a means of reporting such things as broken street lights and fly tipping

PRIZE QUIZ

THIS MONTH TWO WINNING ENTRIES WILL RECEIVE A DOOR MINDER ALARM

The alarm hangs on the inside of the door handle. If an intruder touches the external door handle the alarm will emit a loud siren. As soon as the door handle is released the siren will stop and the alarm will re-arm itself and activate if the door handle is touched again.

This month's question is:

**What should you keep in your garage?
a) An old three piece suite, b) The car, c) Junk
(The answer is in the newsletter)**

**Telephone 01543-464218 or 01785-234129 with your answer, or post it to:
Neighbourhood Watch, Police Station, Wolverhampton Road, Cannock, Staffs, WS11 1AU**

Entries must be received by Friday 31st July 2009

Results and correct answer will be published in the August/September newsletter

APRIL - MAY PRIZE WINNER

Crime Reduction Officer Mark Dodd drew the three winning entries out of a hat. Mrs Wilson, Penkridge, Mr Price, Rugeley and Mrs Lyne, Stafford, all correctly stated that the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter is published every two months.

Tips From Coordinators

George, Cannock

White vans are out and about again, offering goods for sale in the street. Recently a white van driver has been offering furniture for sale from the back of his van – purporting to have been working on premises in the local area and having some furniture 'left over'. Any purchase made in this way is fraught with problems: the seller is untraceable, the goods may be of poor quality, in some cases, they may even be stolen goods.

Ruth, Rugeley

Lottery prize letters are still circulating in the area. The letters try to persuade the 'winner' to part with personal details – even details of their next of kin in some cases! Beware of giving away information. It could be used to take money from your bank account or credit cards or even clone your identity. Remember: You can't be a winner if you haven't entered the quiz or bought a ticket. If something sounds too good to be true – it probably is!

Digital TV Reminder

The Central Television area is planned to switch from analogue to digital television in 2011, and there is the potential for rogue traders to take advantage of the changeover.

The changeover is being managed by Digital UK, a non-profit making organisation. No-one from Digital UK will call on a householder without first making an appointment. Carefully check the identity of any doorstep caller and ring the company to check that the caller is genuine BEFORE opening the door and letting them in. Always turn away any cold callers. About 60% of households already have digital TV, but if you only receive BBC1, BBC2, ITV, channels 4 and 5, you may need to convert by 2011 to continue to watch after the switchover. Going digital can be simple and inexpensive. For further information, Digital UK has a help line on: 08456-50-50-50 or visit their web site at: www.digitaluk.co.uk

An Internet Warning

After tossing her books into the lounge, she decided to grab a snack and get on-line. She logged in under her screen name 'byAngel1213' and checking her buddy list, saw that GoTo123 was on. She sent him an instant message;

ByAngel1213

Hi, I'm glad you're on! I thought someone was following me home from school today

GoTo123

You watch too much TV. Why would anyone follow you? You live in a safe neighbourhood.

Did you have a basketball game after school today?

ByAngel1213

Yes and we won!

GoTo123

That's great! Who did you play?

ByAngel1213

We played the Hornets

GoTo123

What's your team called?

ByAngel1213

We are the Top Cats

GoTo123

Did you score?

ByAngel1213

No, I play in defence. I got to go. My homework has to be done before my parents get home. I don't want them to be mad at me. Bye.

Meanwhile GoTo123 searched on-line for ByAngel1213's profile. When it came up, he highlighted what he knew about her so far: Her name is Shannon, Birthday 3rd January, age 13 years, Her hobbies are basketball and skating. He knew she lived in Charlestown because she told him. He knew she stayed on her own after school, he knew that on Thursday evenings she played basketball after school and that number 7 was printed on her jersey. He knew she attended St Mary's High School – she had told him all of this on-line. He had enough information to find her now.

The following Thursday Shannon saw a man staring at her during the basketball game. GoTo123 noticed the number 7 and Shannon's name on her jersey and he knew that he had found her. Quietly, he followed a safe distance behind her as Shannon walked home. Once he saw where she lived, he returned to his car and waited.

Shannon was in her room later that evening when she heard voices in the living room and her father called her. He sounded upset and when she went into the room she saw the man from the park sitting there. Her father said "This man has just told us a most interesting story about you".

The man said to Shannon "I am a police officer and your on-line friend GoTo123. I know I told you that I was 14 years old and lived in Sydney, but that wasn't true, and although you never told me your full name or address, you gave me enough information to be able to find you. I came here today to teach you how dangerous it is to talk to strangers on-line. Some bad people pretend to be kids on-line and if they find someone the way I found you, they could do them harm".

With thanks to Crime Reduction Officer Phil Russon

Advanced Fee Scam

Beware letters or e-mails originating in Nigeria purporting to want help to get money out of the country with the use of a foreign bank account, and offering a share of a large sum of money to anyone who will help. This fraud is commonly known as 'West African' or '419'. At the heart of the scam is the advance fee aspect. Just before the money is about to be transferred some unforeseen difficulty occurs and a fee from the victim is necessary to overcome the problem. 1000s of these letters are sent out daily to people world wide. If you receive such a letter, do not reply.

SPECIAL OFFER



Chase Division Strategic Crime Reduction Officer PC Gordon Scott has some Autolock 2000 Steering Locks for sale at the bargain price of £25

If you would like to buy one of the steering locks or would like further information, please contact PC Scott on 01543-464312

LOCAL NEWS

CANNOCK & RUGELEY NPUs

Car Enthusiasts Targeted

An operation aimed to reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour and traffic offences committed by car enthusiasts has taken place at Orbital Way Cannock. The operation was undertaken by officers from Cannock Neighbourhood Response Team, colleagues from the Central Motorway Police group and The Vehicle Operators Services Industry (VOSA). During the operation, 73 vehicles were stopped, 20 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued, 3 vehicles were seized for no insurance, 3 vehicles were prohibited (taken off the road) and one motorist gave a positive breath test. Sgt Karen Stevenson of the Road Policing Team said "This was a very successful operation which targeted the anti-social use of excess speed and excess noise amongst car enthusiasts as well as ensuring that their vehicles were mechanically sound".

Partnership Success

Officers from the Rugeley Neighbourhood Policing Unit (NPU) have worked with partners in an effort to reduce the opportunities for anti-social behaviour in the Brereton area. Residents along Armitage Road had raised concerns regarding behaviour in a concealed alleyway and as a result, earlier this year a 9ft wall was demolished and replaced with a lower wall and railings. This has made sure that anyone behaving anti-socially can be seen. Funding from Staffordshire County Council Highways Department has enabled a second wall and steps towards the alley to be replaced. PCSO Liz Dale said "These changes would not have been made possible without a number of partner agencies pulling together".

Rugeley Alcohol Seized

Officers from Rugeley NPU have confiscated more than 100 cans and bottles of alcohol from young people during a recent operation in the Rugeley area. Focussing on increasing public reassurance and confidence, the town's Special constables and PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers) seized alcohol from those under the age of 18 who were spotted during the initiative. Sgt Chris Rodger said "The operation was in response to community concerns that a minority of young people are buying or being given alcohol and then drinking in local areas which can lead to incidents of anti-social behaviour".

STREET WARDENS

Cannock & Rugeley Street Wardens offer support to residents, they work with young people in and outside school and work with other agencies to help resolve local problems such as nuisance and anti-social behaviour. **Contact them on 01543-437430**

STAFFORD & STONE NPUs

Would You Like To Volunteer?

Stafford & District Age Concern is looking for volunteers for new and existing projects. Car drivers, volunteers to help form Friendship groups, volunteers to help support Signpost Centres at Bradbury House and the Davy Jones Centre by helping in the café areas and other duties and volunteer gardeners are amongst the volunteering opportunities. To find out more, please contact the Volunteer Support Worker on 01785-607060 or e-mail: patrick@ageconcernstafford.org.uk

Stafford Stickers Aim to Reduce Speed

Officers from Stafford NPU have teamed up with Stafford Borough Council in a bid to cut speeding in Gravel Lane. Local Officers visited residents in May and issued them with stickers and information leaflets highlighting the 30mph speed limit on the road. Residents are now being encouraged to mount these stickers on their refuse bins – a weekly reminder for motorists to slow down on the road.

Shopping Centre Award

The Guildhall Shopping Centre in Stafford has been handed the Parmark Certificate – a national award and the police stamp of approval for car parks. The award is for having a safe, clean, crime free and user friendly place for shoppers to leave their vehicles – and the Guildhall site is the first car park in Stafford Borough to be given the award.

Parmark is an ACPO owned company and the award is initially granted for 12 months. The site is then re-inspected and if it continues to reach standards it can be awarded for 2 years at a time thereafter.

WOMBOURNE & WATLING NPUS

Watling Street Bike Training

Police Community Support Officers from Watling Street Neighbourhood Policing Unit will be visiting local schools to provide cycle training sessions in the hope of making students even safer over the summer holidays. Pricefield first school in Penkridge, St Marys & St Chad in Brewood and St Pauls first School in Coven have all signed up.

As part of the programme the youngsters will have their bikes looked at by officers to make sure that they are road worthy. Bike marking will be carried out on the bikes and the PCSOs will encourage the youngsters to cycle safely in the school grounds before going out on local roads, developing their observational skills, manoeuvrability skills as well as introducing them to the Highway Code.

Kinver Boxing Club

Youngsters in the Kinver area are being invited to sign up to a new Boxing club, a scheme being spearheaded by local PCSOs Karleen Salmon-Denson and Nicki Robins along with ABA Boxing coach Geoff Hampton and retained fire fighter Andy Johnson.

The aim is to give teens a safe place to meet, socialise and learn discipline in sport. The club comes after youngsters voiced what they want in the local community and it has been funded by PASS (Partners Assuring a Safer Staffordshire) and the Community Learning Partnership.

Section 30 Renewed

Staffordshire Police and South Staffs Council have agreed to renew the Section 30 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 in the Bilbrook and Codsall area. The order has been renewed until Thursday 23rd July 2009

Wombourne Youngsters Get to Grips with Crime

Wombourne Neighbourhood Officers PC Jo Grundy and PCSO Claire Clifton have been helping Year 7 youngsters at Bilbrook Middle School to investigate crime first hand and learn about the custody procedure.

Focussed on a Citizen Foundation project, the youngsters investigate an imaginary incident of anti-social behaviour involving two characters. They role play events after the arrest of the pair and play the parts of Custody Sergeant, arresting and interviewing officers, solicitor, appropriate adult, the two characters and supporting Police Officers. Using a script they even have to decide whether the pair of characters are guilty, and as part of the exercise, get to see inside a custody cell.

Carol Evans, Inclusion Officer at Bilbrook Middle School said " The programme helps raise the young peoples awareness of how the law works ".

Holiday Security

The holiday season is here again and many of us will be going away, leaving our homes empty for a week or so. A house that looks unoccupied is more vulnerable to the opportunist burglar, but a few simple precautions can help to reduce the opportunities for this type of crime:

Think! Don't be distracted by the excitement and rush to get away. Carefully check that you have made your home secure before you leave: Ensure that all doors and windows are closed and locked

- Consider using an automatic timer for lights and a radio
- If you have a small home safe, lock valuable documents and spare keys in it while you're away
- Lock away garden tools and ladders – they can be used to break into a house
- Arrange for someone to water your garden and cut your lawn
- Let a trusted neighbour know that you'll be away and either ask them to be your key-holder, or give them the contact details for your key-holder
- Cancel milk and papers before you go and ask a neighbour to collect your mail, or have it redirected to the post office during your holiday
- Don't leave house keys concealed outside your house. Leave them with a trusted friend or neighbour
- Consider asking a neighbour to park their second car on your drive while you're away

Another ATM Trick

Our neighbours in Shropshire have highlighted yet another cash machine crime: A female, second in the queue to use the Cashpoint stood on a £10 note and suggested to the Cashpoint user that they had dropped the note. While the user was distracted, a male took the card and it was subsequently used to withdraw money from the account.

If It sounds Too Good To Be True

A stranger approached a man in a car park in the Cannock area and offered to sell him a flat-screen television from the back of his car. The man unfortunately agreed to buy the TV and paid £140 (which sounds like a bargain). The TV was nicely packaged but when the man unwrapped it, it wasn't as described and it was damaged. It later transpired that the television was also stolen property.

Do You Contact the Chase Watch Team by e-mail?

If you contact the Chase Watch Team by e-mail, please would you include your name and address. The Team appreciates the many telephone calls and e-mails that we receive from members of Neighbourhood Watch and we endeavour to reply to every one, but it would save us time if we could immediately identify who the sender is, instead of needing to search our data base to match an e-mail address to a name and postal address.

IN BRIEF

Liverpool Men Arrested

Following a house burglary in the Rawnsley area where car keys and the resident's car were also stolen, three suspects have been arrested in the Liverpool area in possession of the stolen vehicle.

Fingerprint Success

One offender has been arrested for two house burglaries in the Hazel Slade/Rawnsley area of Rugeley. The offender was identified from fingerprints left at the scene of one of the crimes

Gnosall Juvenile Given Warning

Following damage to the windows of Gnosall Police Post, investigating officers working with the community identified and arrested a local youth. The 17 year old has been given a final warning by the officers.

Four Arrests in Stone

Around 55 vehicles were scratched and damaged in The Stone area one evening in May. With the help of information provided by the public, officers have arrested four youths on suspicion of criminal damage. The four are on bail until June when investigations will continue

Boot Sale Goods Seized

Watling Street Police Officers, Trading Standards Officials and other partners conducted a high visibility operation at Bednall car boot sale on the A34, one day in May.

The goods seized included between 40,000 and 50,000 counterfeit DVDs, CDs and computer games with an estimated high street value of £100,000

Jail for Cannock Man

A Cannock man has been jailed for four months for breaching his Anti-Social Behaviour Order. The man was given a two year ASBO in April 2008 which states that he must not beg across the county. He breached that order in November 2008 and was given a four month prison sentence, suspended for two years. Further reports that he was asking shoppers and residents in the Heath Hayes area for money led to an appearance at Cannock Magistrates Court in May where he was sentenced to the four months imprisonment

Off Road Bikes Crushed

During the past two months an operation carried out by officers in the Brereton, Prospect Village, Norton Canes, Wimblebury and Hednesford areas has seen 38 off-road riders given warnings and nine motorbikes seized for crushing.

Prior to the operation, Cannock and Rugeley Neighbourhood Policing Units had received complaints from residents regarding the nuisance caused by off-road vehicles being driven irresponsibly around the villages.

TRADING STANDARDS WARNINGS

Mobility Equipment Scam

Reports have been received regarding mobility companies operating in Staffordshire trying to persuade residents to buy large pieces of mobility equipment. The companies often follow the same pattern:

Continually telephoning residents until they agree to be visited

Arrange a time to visit but not turn up

Turn up the day after the scheduled visit unannounced

Advise customers that the company is connected to Social Services or other voluntary organisations

Pressure customers to buy large pieces of equipment such as stair lifts or beds.

Advice is to be very cautious of cold-callers and not to deal with strangers by telephone or at the door. Before committing to purchase equipment, seek professional Health and Social Care advice

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

URGENT/EMERGENCY

When a crime is occurring or about to occur, and for all highly suspicious incidents e.g. youths checking car doors.

RING '999'

NON-URGENT

Ring 0300-123-44-55

For **all** non-emergency calls. The call handler will transfer you to the person best able to help you.

STAFFORDSHIRE TRADING STANDARDS

Ring: 01785-277888

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

We provide members with support, guidance and advice.

All information received is treated with complete confidentiality.

Vicki Singleton: Ring: 01543-464218 e-mail: victoria.singleton@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

Ash Connor: Ring: 01785-23412 e-mail patrick.connor@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

Ray Jones Ring 01785-23442 e-mail raymond.jones@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

STAFFORDSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

For information and advice

Cannock & Rugeley	01785-898065
Stafford & Stone	01785-898105
South Staffs	01785-898517

LOCAL COUNCILS

Cannock Chase District Council Ring 01543-462621 **Web address:** www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk

Stafford Borough Council Ring 01785-619000 **Web address:** www.staffordbc.gov.uk

South Staffordshire District Council Ring 01902-696000 **Web address:** www.sstaffs.gov.uk

THE TRADER REGISTER

The register has been produced by Trading Standards and partners for anyone who wants to find a trader in their area to do work on their home or garden. Traders are not approved by Trading Standards, but if there is a problem, members have pledged to work with Trading Standards to find a solution.

Telephone **01785-788499** **Web address:** www.traderregister.org.uk

GOT A PROBLEM? CALL BOING

Boing UK Ltd works in partnership with Staffordshire Police in providing a free telephone service to the public, 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. If you have a personal emergency, and need non-police help, Boing have a data base of local traders and services such as plumbers, glaziers and tree surgeons, and they can provide information about local services such as late night chemists and 24 hour petrol stations.

Telephone free on **0800-587-0548** Web address: www.boinguk.com

STAFFORDSHIRE CRIMESTOPPERS TELEPHONE 0800-555-111

The CRIMESTOPPERS telephone number can be used to pass specific information about crime or criminals without fear of reprisals or direct contact with the police. The service is anonymous and rewards of up to £1,000 are available for information which leads to an arrest and charge.

PREFERENCING SERVICES

To cut down on telephone cold calling ring **0845-070-0707** the call must be made from the telephone number receiving the unwanted calls. Use the same number to cut down on unwanted text messages to your mobile phone

To reduce cold-calling FAX messages ring **0845-070-0702**

To cut down on personally addressed junk mail telephone **0207-291-3310**