



FLEET & DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

fleetnhw.co.uk

NEWSLETTER
Volume 27 Number 1
Winter 2020-2021

A quick guide to reporting crime

Police emergency - call 999 if:

There is danger to life
A crime is happening now or has just happened
You have immediate concerns for safety
There is a dangerous incident on the road/motorway
You see something suspicious that needs attention

Not an emergency – call 101

Crimes that are not in progress
Non urgent information
Criminal damage/theft/theft from vehicle (can be reported at www.hampshire.police.uk)
General information & advice www.hampshire.police.uk

Calls to 101 are now free

Crimestoppers

If you don't want to talk to police you can call 0800 555 111 anonymously. This is NOT an emergency service. <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Reporting Fraud and Scams

Call Police on 101 quoting:

'Operation Signature'

Keep up to date at Action Fraud <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>
Tel - 0300 123 2040
Citizens Advice Consumer Service
Tel - 0808 223 1133
www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Postal and competition scams
www.thinkjessica.com

Doorstep Callers/Rogue Traders

Never employ passing tradesmen
Know your rights e.g. 14 day cooling off period
Contact Citizens Advice Consumer Service www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Tel - 0808 223 1133
Tell Trading Standards if you have been called on by doorstep callers with as much information as you can
If you feel intimidated or threatened call 999

****Happy New Year****
Please sign up for your
E-newsletter

Chairman's Report

Another year gone, and to many minds probably one that they would rather forget. Lockdowns and severe restrictions on our way of life have led to considerable day-to-day difficulties and, in some cases, sadly the loss of loved ones.

Your Neighbourhood Watch has continued to operate, albeit with some inevitable changes. Although we have produced a quarterly newsletter, you will be aware that it has only been distributed electronically to avoid unnecessary contact during deliveries. This will have to continue until circumstances change. We have also postponed our AGM into 2021, a date to be confirmed. Your committee does not wish to expose any of our members to unreasonable risk, especially as many are of mature years.

The NHW committee continues with regular meetings using the Zoom system, and we have seen a small increase in membership despite the restrictions. However, until we beat the Coronavirus, more difficult times will still lie ahead, and we must ensure that we continue to look out for each other, be very aware of scams, lock up everything to help keep the criminals at bay, and report faulty signs. Let's all look forward to a much improved 2021.

Happy New Year

David Bunclark - Chairman

E-newsletters - please do not delay, sign up now

Because of the ongoing challenges associated with the Coronavirus pandemic and to help safeguard our members, we have decided that, as with the editions during 2020, this Winter 2020-2021 newsletter will only be distributed by email.

How do I receive E-newsletters?

It is easy: you can sign up as a subscriber free of charge on the NHW website (fleetnhw.co.uk) or send your email address to me, my contact details are on page 4. You will then receive regular quarterly emails with the NHW E-newsletter attached.

Editor - Alan MacGregor

FLEET & DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

2020 Annual General Meeting

Because of the restrictions associated with the Coronavirus pandemic, the 2020 AGM has been postponed until a date to be decided and circumstances permit in 2021.

Police & Crime Report

May I wish you all a Happy New Year and welcome to 2021. I hope that you managed to have an enjoyable, although probably somewhat different, Christmas and a quiet New Year.

Last year was a tough year for all of us, having to live our lives in a different way, whether we were still going out to work, working from home or retired. We have all had to continually adapt to the changing Government guidance and legislation around Covid-19 and we are in the midst of what are strict restrictions. It is important that we continue to follow these instructions and we at the Hart South Neighbourhood Policing Team have been patrolling the local area, using our four 'E's' approach when speaking with anyone thought to be breaching the regulations by following Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforcing them where necessary.

Normal day-to-day policing continues as well, and I wish to reassure you that we are here to support you as we did before the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic. I have returned to the district, back to the role of Hart South Beat Sergeant, having spent seven months working in Winchester where I learned a lot.

Now on to the crime report for the previous three months from 1st October to 31st December 2020.

Dwelling Burglaries

There have been 11 house burglaries reported over the period with most occurring over two distinct periods of time across Fleet and Church Crookham. The most common points of entry have been via the rear door, patio door and windows. Smashing of glass or forcing entry using an implement has been the way entry has been gained in the majority of cases. Jewellery has been the most common item targeted, some of which has been of sentimental value. Money has also been taken and on one occasion a car was taken from the driveway after keys were stolen from inside the property. Please ensure rear access to your property is as secure as possible by adding bolts and locks to side gates and that the perimeter of your rear garden is difficult to access. Please consider planting a spikey hedge around it as most would-be burglars will look for an easier target. Remember if you are out, try to make it appear that you are at home by leaving lights on or by using timer lights and think about installing CCTV and a camera door bell. Keep jewellery hidden from view, preferably in a safe fixed to the fabric of the building and take photographs of your jewellery so that it is identifiable. Also, record serial numbers of any high value items.

Burglaries to Garages and Commercial Premises

There have been seven burglaries to sheds, garages and commercial premises over the period. Five of the burglaries have been to garages where two motor cycles were stolen and pedal cycles were taken. In the other
(Police & Crime Report continued on Page 3)

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We currently have advertising space available in this newsletter which is published and distributed to about 6000 households in the local area four times a year.

If you are interested in advertising with us either in the Fleet & District NHW newsletter, on the NHW website or both, please contact our editor whose details are shown on page 4.

(Police & Crime Report continued from Page 2)

three incidents nothing was reported stolen. This was a reduction from the last reporting period which is good news and is probably due to more people being at home during the lockdown period and thus deterring would be thieves. There have been two commercial burglaries to a café and office where cash was targeted.

Theft from Motor Vehicles

There have been 19 reports of thefts from motor vehicles over the reporting period. As has been mentioned in previous reports, we have seen an increase in thefts of catalytic convertors. These account for seven of the 19 offences, with Toyotas and Hondas being the most targeted vehicles. This is a national problem which is due to the value of the precious metals contained within the catalytic convertors. If you have a driveway, it may be useful to reverse park your car so that it is against the garage door or a wall. Also, if you see people 'working' on a neighbour's vehicle under suspicious circumstances or perhaps looking furtive, please contact us as we would rather attend a legitimate event rather than miss an opportunity to apprehend criminals in the act. Five of the thefts have occurred in works vans where tools have been targeted, four of these have occurred in hotel car parks. Other items stolen include number plates, money and a mobile phone. Please consider taking tools and electronic items out of vehicles overnight, and park vehicles on driveways where possible and monitor them with CCTV.

Theft of Motor Vehicles

There have been two reports of thefts of motor vehicles over this period. Both have been taken from outside the owners' homes without keys. Neither vehicle has been recovered to date.

Theft from Person and Robbery

There have been two reported incidents where the victims have had money stolen from them by deception or distraction while shopping in Fleet town centre. Please make sure that you are fully aware of your personal possessions. Do not let others distract you, or lead you away from your trolley, bag, etc. People may approach you to ask for directions or want you to donate to a charity. The person you are speaking to may be legitimate, but please be wary of others nearby who may be aiming to take advantage of your divided attention. You may have seen a number of press releases recently regarding robberies which have occurred in the area. There have been four incidents of robbery involving more than one suspect and victims where items which included mobile phones, cash and an electric scooter have been stolen. This is a concern for me and my team and it is an unusual occurrence in the Fleet area. However, I am pleased to say that a number of suspects have been arrested for these offences and they are currently under investigation. I hope to be able to update you further in the next newsletter.

Anti-Social Behaviour

There has been an increase in reports relating to ASB which is partly due to the ongoing restrictions outlined by the Government in relation to social gatherings and breaches of the Covid-19 regulations. ASB in general is on the decline due to the poorer weather; however, we continue to patrol the areas of concern you report to us. You may not always see us, especially after dark, but I can assure you we are out there. Please continue to tell us about the issues you are experiencing and I will do my best to focus our patrols in the right locations. If you witness any ASB please report it by telephoning 101 or by using our online crime reporting portal at:

<https://www.hampshire.police.uk/ro/report/asb/asb/report-antisocial-behaviour/>

Our roads are quieter places at the moment which is a good for those who still need to use them, but that does not mean the speed limits have increased. Please continue to observe the rules of the road. Officers have been out again and found a number of motorists breaking the speed limits and the offenders have received fixed penalty notices.

Please remember that Hart is a low crime area, not a no-crime area. Continue to stay safe, remain vigilant and follow us on Twitter - @FleetPolice and on Facebook @Hart South Police.

Kind Regards - PS 2063 Rob Wallis



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Notice Board

A Cautionary Tale Recently a volunteer with the Church Crookham Covid Support Team reported that one of their older residents had employed a person who was touting as a gardener to do some work. A large sum of money was paid but alarmingly the work was not completed. However, unfortunately the resident was too afraid to complain to the authorities, so no action could be taken to prevent this person from taking advantage of other vulnerable people in the area. Pleas be warned - never employ casual door-step callers who cannot show proof of their trade or qualifications, and only arrange payment when the work is completed and a clear invoice has been provided.

Citizens Advice If you have had a problem similar to the one above and you need help or advice or you want to make a complaint, please visit the Citizens Advice website at:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/if-you-need-more-help-about-a-consumer-issue/>
Or call the Citizens Advice consumer helpline: 0808 223 1133. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Lines are closed on bank holidays. An adviser will answer your call as soon as possible, usually within a few minutes. Once you are speaking to an adviser your call should take an average of 8 to 10 minutes. Calls from mobiles and landlines are free. You can also talk about your consumer issue with a trained adviser online. They will try to help you solve your problem or make good progress towards it. The chat facility is normally available 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Alternatively, you can contact the Citizens Advice consumer service using their online form at: <https://ssl.datamotion.com/form.aspx?co=3438&frm=general&to=flare.fromforms>
Please note that due to Covid-19 the advisers are working from home, so please do not send letters as their offices are closed.

Be Aware of Doorstep Criminals The Police use 'doorstep crime' to describe distraction burglary and rogue trading. Offenders knock on the door pretending to be someone else. They may then:

- ◆ Distract you to get in and steal items, sometimes with an accomplice.
- ◆ Pretend to have lost a pet.
- ◆ Claim they need to use your home telephone.
- ◆ Claim that they are from the council, a utility supplier (water or gas for example) or even the police.

Advice: If it is an emergency, call 999 now. If you are not sure, do not open your door and always:

- ◆ Lock all doors, even when at home and use a chain or spy hole.
 - ◆ Do not let unknown people enter and tell the police about unwanted or suspicious callers by calling 101.
- You can also provide information anonymously to the independent Crimestoppers charity on: 0800 555 111.

The Fleet & District Neighbourhood Watch does not accept liability for any of the statements, actions or default on the part of any of the articles or advertisers in this or other editions of the Newsletter

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Fleet & District Neighbourhood Watch website: www.fleetnhw.co.uk

Police (Fleet) website: <https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/hampshire-constabulary/fleet/>
Police Twitter: @FleetPolice **Police Facebook:** @HartSouthPolice and @HartNorthPolice

Please send inputs to the Editor. Deadline for the next edition: **31 March 2021**

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