



Napton on the Hill :: Neighbourhood Watch

Newsletter - Christmas 2017



Welcome to the Christmas Newsletter - as always at this time of year with the darker evenings, it is more important than ever to ensure that our properties and outbuildings are fully secured at all times. Fortunately crime levels in the area have remained low during recent months, although rural crime from outbuildings across Warwickshire continues at a steady level; quad bikes, chainsaws, and other useful tools always remain key targets for the determined criminals. Sadly as this is going to press we have to report that during the nights of 20 / 21 November there were three crimes in Napton. A house was burgled in Coxs Lane and a car stolen, and two cars suffered break-ins in Poplar Road. Similar offences took place in Long Itchington on 19 / 20 November. Police have two operations in progress and ask for the support of local communities to report to 101 on anything suspicious or odd or out of place, suspicious persons or vehicles. If you would like to read more news about Napton NHW, please visit our web page:

<http://www.naptonparishcouncil.org.uk/neighbourhood-watch/>



Don't defrost with key in car - Harsh frosty mornings present a prime opportunity for criminals, as drivers often leave running cars unattended for a few minutes whilst the windows de-ice. It only takes a few seconds for the unscrupulous to take advantage. Many car insurance policies have an exclusion clause voiding theft and malicious damage when keys have been left inside an unattended vehicle. Follow this advice to minimise the risk of your car being stolen during the Winter months:

- Never leave the keys in the car/ignition, even if only stopping for a few moments
- Never leave your car running unattended when de-icing. Always lock/secure your vehicle
- Don't leave belongings on show; lock them in the boot or take them with you
- Never leave documents or spare keys inside the vehicle

Blocking unsolicited mobile calls - mobile phone users can block unsolicited sales and marketing calls via a text provided free by the Telephone Preference Service. Users can add their number to an existing UK "do not call" database by simply texting "TPS" and their e-mail address to 78070.

"Smishing" is when criminals pretend a message is from your bank or another organisation you trust. They will usually tell you there has been fraud on your account, and will ask you to deal with it by calling a number or visiting a fake website to update your personal details. Please take a moment to stop and think, and realise that this is a fraud. Here are three signs that a text message might not be genuine:

- It asks you to provide sensitive personal or financial information, passwords, or to make transactions by following a link in the message
- It asks you to call a certain number but that number is unknown. In this case, call your bank on a number that you trust to check the number and message is authentic, e.g. such as the number on the back of your card
- The sender uses an urgent tone, urging you to 'act now'

Your bank or the police will never:

- Phone and ask you for your PIN or full banking password.
- Ask you to withdraw money to hand over to them for safe-keeping

- Ask you to transfer money to a new/other account for fraud reasons
- Send someone to your home to collect cash, PIN, cards or cheque books
- Ask you to purchase goods using your card and then hand them over for safe-keeping

Tackling tobacco crime across the Midlands - over 5.5 million illegal cigarettes and 645 kg of hand rolling tobacco were seized across Central England. The cigarettes and tobacco were seized in the last financial year with a loss to the tax payer of over £2 million. The total retail value of the illegal goods is estimated to be worth in excess of £2.5 million. The cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco were often well hidden, in sophisticated concealments using electronic magnets controlled by a switch, in cavity walls and even disguised as BBQ sets. Such hiding places are difficult to detect without the aid of specialist tobacco sniffer dogs. All offending businesses are subject to a criminal investigation, with some traders already being successfully prosecuted. Some have received financial penalties, and others given suspended prison sentences and community orders.

Protecting purchasers of second hand cars - The second hand motor trade is Warwickshire Trading Standards most complained about trade sector. A car dealer, a mechanic and an MOT tester have been successfully prosecuted recently by WTS after they sought to defraud their customers. Free information available on the internet now makes it much easier to check the history of a second hand vehicle before you buy. There are two Government websites that provide free information about vehicles: the MOT history website, and the DVLA's vehicle enquiry website. The MOT history website provides detailed information of a car's MOT history; this includes previous test dates, what the mileage was at the time, whether the vehicle passed or failed, and reasons for any failure points. Use this website to check mileage accuracy and to get an idea of vehicle condition before buying:

www.check-mot.service.gov.uk .

The other DVLA website has information on the tax/SORN status of the vehicle, year of manufacture, date first registered, engine size and colour: www.vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk .

There are also commercial websites that will tell you, without charge, if the vehicle has been stolen or imported. For a few pounds you can get further information, including whether there is any outstanding finance on the car or if the vehicle has ever been written off or scrapped.

"Take five"

1. Never disclose security details, such as your PIN or full banking password
2. Don't assume an email, text or phone call is authentic (see article below)
3. Don't be rushed – a genuine organisation will wait
4. Listen to your instincts – you'll know if something doesn't feel right
5. Stay in control – don't panic and make a decision you'll regret

Not all emails or phone calls are authentic - just because someone knows your basic details (such as your name and address, or even your mother's maiden name), it doesn't mean they are genuine. Be mindful of who you trust – criminals may try and trick you into their confidence by telling you that you've been a victim of fraud. Criminals often use this to draw you into the conversation, to scare you into acting and revealing security details. Remember, criminals can also make any telephone number appear on your phone handset, so even if you recognise it or it seems authentic, do not use it as verification that they are genuine. Local residents have been caught out, don't let it be you

Wishing all residents a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year

Compiled, produced and published by Napton Neighbourhood Watch