



Winter 2021 – No 43

LOOK-OUT

Currie East Neighbourhood Watch

www.cenw.org.uk

Message from the Chair

Neil Dickson

It is a pleasure to be back as Chair of CENW. My warm thanks to Andrew Munro for his stewardship in keeping the Watch activities ongoing during those Covid impacted years.

As the nights draw in and against a backdrop of rising energy prices keeping your home warm is more than just a comfort, it's about your health and wellbeing. To reduce your heating costs, it's time to put up those heavy curtains, fix that letterbox that flaps every time the wind passes and replace that chimney cowl with an anti-downdraft model so as to stop that cold draft coming into your living room.

AGM Report - Items of note

All matters published under AGM agenda in the last issue of Look-Out, Autumn 2021 – No 42, were approved, this included the recommencement of subscription collection from April 2022. There were no 'matters arising' from the minutes of the 2020 AGM. Under 'Any Other Business' the matter of how subscriptions should be collected post Covid was raised. It was agreed to discuss that matter at the next Committee meeting.

Police Scotland - 101 (or 999 in an emergency)

New Smoke Alarm Legislation

There is new legislation coming into force regarding smoke alarms in Scottish homes. If you currently have smoke alarms that are not interlinked then those alarms will be deemed obsolete under the legislation. By February 2022 every home must have:

- one smoke alarm in the living room or the room you use most
- one smoke alarm in every hallway or landing
- one heat alarm in the kitchen

All these alarms should be ceiling mounted and interlinked. Interlinking can be hard-wired, wireless or a combination, but all alarms must sound if any one of them is triggered.

There are two types of alarm that comply with the new standard:

- Tamper proof (sealed) long-life lithium battery alarms, which can be fitted by householders themselves or by a competent person on their behalf
- Mains-wired alarms, which may be cheaper but should be installed by a qualified electrician

Note that alarms with removable batteries (e.g. 9V battery powered) are **not** permitted. If you have a carbon-fuelled appliance (like a boiler, fire, heater or flue) you must also have a carbon monoxide detector in that room, but this does not need to be linked to the fire alarms.

It is the responsibility of the property owner to conform to the new standard. When renewing home insurance, you may be asked to confirm that alarms conforming to the new standard have been installed. Otherwise, a claim against your insurance may be at risk.

For more information see:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fire-and-smoke-alarms-in-scottish-homes/>

Scottish Government has awarded Care and Repair Edinburgh (CRE), part of Age Scotland, an assistance package for the installation of interlinked fire alarms for lower income older and disabled homeowners. To be eligible for support, you must live in and own your home that has a Council Tax banding of A-C, be of either state pension age and in receipt of guaranteed Pension Credit, or have a disability and be in a support group for Employment and Support Allowance. There should be no other earning adult in the household.

CRE are also offering this service to anyone over the age of 60 at a cost of £216 for a single storey property (2 smoke + 1 heat alarm) or £270 for a double storey property (3 smoke + 1 heat alarm), which would be payable in advance. Additional alarms would be charged for at unit price. CRE contactable on 0131 337 111.

Please note that other local businesses also offer to install the new alarm systems, prices may vary. You may wish to speak with neighbours for a referral or see publications such as C & B News or Konnect listings.

Scam Alert

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland

It may come as no surprise that criminals are seeking to extract money from householders in connection with the new legislation. Cold callers may tell you that you are eligible for financial support to install the new fire alarms or that they are offering special deals. A note of other recent scams reported by consumers across Scotland; Illicit puppy trade; Loft insulation cold calls; Anti-virus emails; Winter event, Instagram competition, Cryptocurrency and Bank scams.

It's more important than ever to make sure that you stay Scam Aware and share information about scams with vulnerable relatives or friends. Report all scams to [Advice Direct Scotland](#) on **0808 164 6000**. If you receive a suspicious email, forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk If you have been the victim of fraud, report it to Police Scotland on **101** or **999** in an emergency. If you receive a suspicious text message you can forward it, free-of-charge, to **7726** which would enable your provider to investigate and take action as required.

Police Report

Housebreaking to domestic properties can be a traumatic experience for the victim. Police Scotland are pro-actively targeting criminals who carry out these crimes. Although Housebreaking can occur at any time of the year, seasonal issues should be taken into consideration. During the winter months, houses can give the appearance of being empty due to lack of lights etc. Other seasonal considerations are Chinese New year, and religious festivals such as Ramadan/Eid. Homes occupied by families celebrating such festivals can be particularly vulnerable and are often targeted by criminals, who will seek to acquire gold/jewellery/foreign currency stored within.

The risk in all circumstances can be greatly reduce both the chances of your home becoming a target and the payoff to any person(s) responsible, as outlined below.

Personal Safe/Security Boxes: Avoid keeping valuables at home if possible, particularly gold/jewellery/currency, as it is known that bedrooms and lofts are routinely searched during the commission of this type of crime. If a storage facility can be provided by your bank or building society then this is the best option. There are private companies who offer similar services. If this option is unavailable an insurance rated safe should be considered and securely attached to the fabric of the building, not to a plasterboard wall, for example.

Alarm Systems: An approved monitored alarm system is recommended as an audible only alarm does not always guarantee police attendance. An audible only alarm, however, is still an effective visual deterrent.

Lighting: Good lighting around the outside your home is an important security feature, we recommend detector lighting which will draw attention to persons being illuminated that can be seen by neighbouring properties/passers-by. If you already have existing lighting make sure it is working properly and change any faulty lightbulbs.

Windows/Doors: Many people focus on securing their front doors and forget about their windows and secondary doors in their homes. Do not leave any opportunity for a thief to enter. Always remove the key from a lock, particularly where there is glazing nearby.

Internal Lighting: Proper use of timer switches for your home gives the impression that someone is at home. Consider placing timers in different rooms which activate at different times and leaving a radio on or buying a TV simulator light adds to the impression that someone is at home.

General Maintenance: Never leave tools or items lying around the garden that can be used by a thief to break a window, or gain entry through a door. Ensure shed security is to an appropriate level as thieves will often target these first.

Social Media: Carefully consider what you are putting on social media, especially if you are going on holiday or attending weddings, functions or posting pictures with jewellery on full show. Your phone and social media accounts should be set to friends only and ensure that your GPS location is switched off.

Unusual Activity: Report any unusual activity to Police, either by phone (101) in person or at a police office i.e., people offering work in the area. Criminals can use this as a method of identifying potential targets and by reporting this information to the police, it may help us identify groups or individuals who may be involved

CCTV: Can be an expensive security measure and consideration must be given to compliance with Data Protection legislation. Domestic CCTV does not need to be registered with the Information Commissioners Office.

Property Marking/Insurance: Consider property marking items with either an ultra violet pen (House number and Post Code) or other property making products. Check you have adequate insurance coverage for valuable items and every year or two ensure that you check with your insurer that cover still protects the amount of your valuables. Photograph and keep an inventory of your valuables as a record for yourself and to assist in any insurance claim. Smaller items such as jewellery should be photographed next to a ruler to give scale. This will assist police in identifying any items recovered

www.securedbydesign.com is a not for profit organisation. On the website you will find links to Police approved products and companies which will provide solutions to all the measures mentioned above. Should you wish to discuss options or seek further advice with/from a Crime Prevention trained Designing Out Crime Officer please contact 101 to arrange.

<https://www.facebook.com/currieeastneighbourhoodwatch/>
<http://www.cenw.org.uk/>

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The views expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views held by the Committee or the membership of Currie East Neighbourhood Watch.

Articles for inclusion in the Newsletter are welcomed. Please send contributions via email to either lookout@cenw.org.uk or chair@cenw.org.uk