

LOOK-OUT

Currie East Neighbourhood Watch

CENW Website

For those members with access to the internet, Currie East Neighbourhood Watch now has a website:

<http://www.cenw.org.uk/>

It contains useful information relating to home security as well as links and contact details for various relevant resources. Also on the website are all recent issues of "Look-out" and the Lothian & Borders Police newsletters, and members can choose to subscribe (free) to receive email notification when newsletters are added to the site.

Note that the website is supplementing (not replacing) Look-out which will continue to be delivered to all Watch members.

Look-out

At its December meeting, your Committee decided that Look-out will be produced three times a year. It will be prepared for printing at the end of the months of January, May and September. Items for inclusion should be submitted to the Editor - lookout@cenw.org.uk - by the middle of each of these months.

In future, Look-out will publish, from the Police report, only crimes which refer to our Neighbourhood Watch area. The full text of the Police report may be seen on the CENW website or in the Currie and Balerno News.

POLICE TELEPHONE NUMBER

Balerno Police Station: 449-5991

Theft:

- 05/09 Muir Wood Road - Thomas the Tank Engine scooter stolen.
 09/10 Muir Wood Road - Motor cycle cover stolen from parked bike.
 12/10 Lanark Road West - Car made off from garage without paying.
 01/11 Riccarton Mains Road – Charity tin stolen from premises.
 23/11 Lanark Road West - Car made off from garage without paying.
 01/12 Corslet Place – Confectionery stolen from shop.
 11/12 Lanark Road West - Car made off from garage without paying.
 28/12 Corslet Place – Known 28 year old male seen to steal from shop.

Vandalism:

- 09/09 Riccarton Mains Road - Car damaged.
 16/09 Muir Wood Road - Window smashed.
 06/10 Lanark Road West - Window smashed.
 13/10 Riccarton Grove - Fence damaged.
 13/10 Corslet Place – Damage to shuttering.
 04/11 Lanark Road West – Plant pots smashed.
 04/11 Bryce Crescent – Trampoline damaged.
 13/11 Bryce Crescent – Fence damaged.
 19/11 Riccarton Drive – Garage windows smashed.
 30/11 Riccarton Avenue – Property damaged.
 01/12 Riccarton Drive – Garage damaged.
 16/12 Riccarton Drive – Vehicle damaged.
 18/12 Curriehill Road – Window smashed.
 27/12 Curriehill Road – Vehicle damaged.

House Breaking:

- 01/11 Corslet Road – 3 bikes stolen from shed – 1 recovered nearby.
 01/11 Nether Currie Crescent – 2 sheds broken into.
 28/12 Lanark Road West – Failed attempt to enter business premises.

Miscellaneous:

- ? /11 Corslet Place – 20 year old male charged with breach of the peace.

Parking - Particularly outside Schools***Lothian & Borders Police***

The Police wish to emphasise that the yellow zig-zag lines outside schools are for the safety of children and NOT for parents to park when setting down children. Offenders could receive 3 penalty points on their driving licences and a £60 fine.

Parking on yellow and double yellow lines may also incur a financial penalty. Parking on the footpaths and verges is not allowed as it creates an obstruction to pedestrians and may result in a fine of £30. Please take notice.

Be sure at your door

You may have heard reports about a few instances in Edinburgh where bogus callers have claimed to be Police officers carrying out security surveys on houses. The Police do not routinely cold call on houses, offering a security survey and advice. These are arranged by appointment when a householder phones the Police to ask for security advice.

Bogus callers come in many guises; meter readers, workmen offering to do building or gardening work, charity collectors or even people asking for help. Whatever their guise, if you follow some simple steps you can prevent yourself from becoming a victim:

- If you do not know or expect a caller, do not let them into your home.
- Check the identity of anyone who calls at your door unexpectedly before you open the door. Ask the caller to pass their identity card through the letter box or show it at the window. Scrutinise identity cards carefully; they are not too difficult to fake. Note the details. Use the phone book (not a number offered by the caller) to confirm with the company. A genuine caller won't mind waiting.
- Use your door chain, spy hole or window to see who is at your door without having to open it.
- Fit and use a light outside your front door so that you can see callers.
- If you do not believe they are genuine, **DON'T LET THEM IN!**
- If you are in any doubt, keep everything locked, dial 999 and ask for the Police.
- Before opening your front door make sure that your back door is locked. Distraction burglary (where one person keeps you at the front door while another enters by the back door to steal) is not unusual. One ploy in use is for two men "from the Water Board" to call to check your taps. They go with you into the kitchen, then one goes upstairs to check the bathroom taps. You find later that you have been robbed.
- Arrange building, gardening work etc. through firms with the proper trade accreditation or who are recommended by relatives/friends.
- If you see anyone suspicious in the area contact the Police.

Severn Trent Water have devised a scheme for vulnerable people in their area. The customer asks for a Doorstep Protection Password. Any caller claiming to be from them is told by the Customer that they are password protected. The caller then contacts his office which, if he is genuine, tells him the password. At present, there is no word of any such scheme being planned for our area.

Use of Mobile Phones While Driving***Lothian & Borders Police***

At the end of November there was a joint initiative run by the Police and the City of Edinburgh Council CCTV unit. The purpose of this was to use the cameras to detect people using mobile phones while driving. Enquiries were made to trace 5 drivers suspected of this crime.

Please do not use your mobile phone or any other hand-held device when driving. You don't know who is watching you!

Riccarton Mains Road

For some considerable time, your Committee has been pressing for the speed limit on the stretch of road between the electricity sub-station and Heriot Watt to be reduced to 40mph. It is gratifying that our efforts have met with success at last due mainly to the perseverance of David Eatock.

School Watch

In an effort to address the problem of continued vandalism and break-ins to schools within Edinburgh, a strategy for tackling crime in our City schools is being developed by the 'A' Division Safer Communities Department. When school equipment is damaged it takes time to be replaced. Owing to high insurance excesses, schools often have to replace equipment themselves.

School Watch is similar to Neighbourhood Watch. It is a multi agency initiative and encourages individuals and families to join together to protect their local schools from criminal behaviour.

The scheme aims to:

- Reduce the opportunity for crime.
- Build on the community spirit in local areas.
- Save money for education instead of repairs to school property.

On 12th December the first scheme in Edinburgh was rolled out in Currie Primary School. Two members of CENW were present and were subsequently invited back to the school on 15th January to tell the older pupils something about Neighbourhood Watch.

Public Praise for Police Work***Lothian & Borders Police***

Every day across Lothian and Borders, Police officers and support staff have contact with the public thousands of times. Sometimes the circumstances are tragic; sometimes they are routine or even comical. Judging by the public response, the efforts of our staff are much appreciated. Here we invite you to send your own comments on good conduct by our staff to: Deputy Chief Constable, L & B P Headquarters, 1 Fettes Avenue, Edinburgh, EH4 1RB.

*SIGN of the times for CENW**Tim Shepherd*

Whilst walking on a sidewalk in a Canadian suburb this summer I was interested to find I was in a neighbourhood watch area. I was so interested that I took a picture of the sign –



much to the disgust of my family who disowned me while I took the photograph. This demonstrates that a Neighbourhood watch is only good if we tell people and potential criminals that they are in a watch area and to do this we have to rely on signs.

Currently CENW has three types of sign:

The first are the small round stickers that are intended to be displayed on front windows and doors. They are useful in informing visitors to the house that they are in a Watch area. These were distributed free with the last Lookout

The second are street signs which are appended to lamp posts at strategic points throughout the CENW area. The Committee has noted that, owing to lamppost replacement and weathering, some of these signs need replacing and during 2008 will be undertaking a review of street signs to ensure a uniform coverage and replace those that have been ‘lost’ or are badly weathered.

The third aspect of signage, which has been employed to good effect in the old Muir Wood NW was Wheelie bin stickers. These are large weatherproof self adhesive stickers that are attached prominently to wheelie bins. This ensures that, at least on a Friday, any visitor to the area knows that they are in a Neighbourhood Watch area! The committee is in the process of procuring 500 wheelie bin stickers and these will be distributed in the spring to selected households.

All these types of signs cost money and this is one area that your annual subscription to CENW is used.

Visa/MasterCard Credit Card Scam - Be aware and don't be conned

There is a credit card scam currently in use which is pretty slick since they provide YOU with all the information, except the one piece THEY want. The callers do not ask for your card number; they already have it. Please read this and be prepared to protect yourself.

A telephone caller says, 'This is (name), and I'm calling from the Security and Fraud Department at VISA. My badge number is 12460. Your card has been flagged for an unusual purchase pattern, and I'm calling to verify. This would be on your VISA card which was issued by (name of bank). Did you purchase an item for £497.99 from a company based in London?' When you say 'No', the caller continues: 'Then we will be issuing a credit to your account. We have been watching this company. Charges of £497 are just under the £500 purchase pattern that flags most cards. Before your next statement, the credit will be sent to (gives you your address), is that correct?' You say 'Yes'. Caller continues – 'I will be starting a fraud investigation. If you have any questions, you should call the 0800 number shown on the back of your card and ask for Security. You will need to refer to this Control Number – (xxxxxx). Do you need me to read it again?'

Here's the IMPORTANT part of how the scam works. The caller then says, 'I need to verify that you are still in possession of your card'. He'll ask you to 'turn your card over and look for some numbers'. The last 3 are the security numbers which you use to make distance purchases to prove you have the card. The caller will ask you to read the 3 numbers to him, after which he'll say, 'That is correct. I just needed to verify that the card has not been lost or stolen, and that you still have it. Do you have any questions?' After you say, 'No', the caller thanks you and states, 'Don't hesitate to call back if you do'.

You actually say very little, and they never ask for or tell you the Card number. All they want is the 3-digit number on the back of the card. Don't give it to them. Instead, tell them you'll call VISA direct for verification of their conversation. The real VISA say that they will never ask for anything on the card. If you give the scammers your 3 digit number, you think you'll receive a credit but when you get your statement you'll see charges for purchases you didn't make, and by then it's almost too late and/or more difficult to file a fraud report.

Where VISA is used above, read also MasterCard.

Summary of the Minutes of the A G M on Monday, 29th October, 2007

Attendance: David Eatock in the Chair. 34 members attended. (9 apologies.)

Police Report: Mike Smith unable to come. Written report did not turn up.

Presentation: Raymond Hicks due to speak on “The role of the Community Safety Officers and Environmental Wardens”. He did not arrive.

Chairman’s Report: (The full report may be seen on the website.)

The Committee met on 4 occasions with an average attendance of 14. New volunteers welcome. As David had been Chair for 8 years he wished to step down. New Office Bearers had been found.

Relatively quiet year for crime in our area but vandalism still a problem. Currie High School had printed Look-out for 16 years but an increase in printing prices raised cost to £325 per issue. Dave Oxenham had arranged for printing to be done by St. Cuthbert’s Episcopal Church, Colinton at a very competitive price. A distribution sub-committee had been formed.

A Street Co-ordinators’ meeting would be held in the new year.

Various planning issues were reviewed.

Andrew Craigie is in the course of building a CENW website. (*See page 1*)

Treasurer’s Report: Bank balance = £1542. £147 of subs. remain unpaid.

Constitution: The proposed new Constitution for CENW was approved.

Committee: 21 members were appointed to the Committee. This leaves 3 vacancies and volunteers will be welcomed.

Office Bearers: Chairman – Tim Shepherd, Vice Chair – Bob Kerr, Secretary – Iain Proudfoot, Treasurer – Brian Latto.

Presentations were made to David Eatock, Duncan Law and Dave Oxenham in recognition of their long service as Chairmen of the 3 “old” Watches.

Summary of the Minutes of the Committee Meeting on 3rd December, 2007

Attendance: Bob Kerr in the Chair. 13 members. 6 apologies.

Treasurer’s Report: Bank balance = £1400.

Committee Meetings: Dates for 2008 to be: Mon. 04/02, Tues. 06/05, Mon. 01/09 and Mon. 01/12. AGM on Monday, 27th October, 2008.

Look-out: 3 issues p.a. to be ready at end of January, May and September. Look-out to be still the primary contact medium with the new website as an addition for those who have access. Website will allow Look-out to be reduced in size with a financial saving to the Watch.

Website: Draft received favourably. Andrew will welcome suggestions.

Wheellie-bin stickers: Possible funding to be investigated.

DONM: Tuesday, 6th May at 7.30 in Currie Kirk Meeting House.

SmartWater

What is “SmartWater”? SmartWater is a colourless liquid solution that can be dabbed into the nooks and crannies of your personal possessions such as jewellery, ornaments and electrical items as well as your motor vehicles. Each bottle carries a unique chemical ‘code’ which is registered to your address. It cannot be easily seen by the naked eye and is almost impossible to remove. The liquid glows under ultra violet light, allowing the Police to identify the true owner of the property and whether or not it has been stolen. More robust than DNA, it can conclusively prove ownership of an item and, as a result, SmartWater maintains a 100% conviction rate when used in evidence in court.

As the Police routinely scan criminals and recovered property for SmartWater and use it in undercover operations, criminals know about it and fear its power to link them forensically with the scene of a crime. So, by coding your valuables and displaying SmartWater deterrent signs in your windows, you are sending out a powerful warning to any burglars or thieves operating in your area.

After a successful pilot scheme in one area, Doncaster is committed to deliver SmartWater to over 20,000 homes by March, 2008.

Look-out

Articles for inclusion in the Newsletter are welcomed. Copy for the next issue should be sent, as soon as possible, to the Editor at 31 Nether Currie Road, EH14 5HX, (Tel 449-5566) or by e-mail to:

lookout@cenw.org.uk

Look-out is published three times per annum by Currie East Neighbourhood Watch.

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The views expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views held by the Editor or the Currie East Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.



Your Collector is: