

LOOK-OUT

Currie East Neighbourhood Watch

www.cenw.org.uk

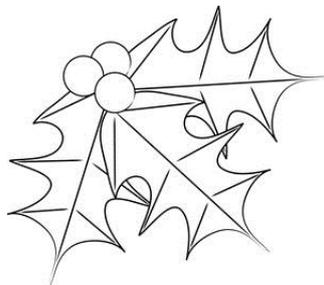
Message from the Chair

Iain Proudfoot

As the end of the year approaches, thoughts of Christmas may be on your minds, or even looking further forward to next year's holiday. This time of year also provides an opportunity to reflect on the past year. The Watch is there for all its members and does provide ideas, information and initiatives. The Committee does welcome suggestions and feedback from the members and several have taken the time to do this. It would be great if more members contacted the Committee so that the work being undertaken is what the members wish to be done.

Currie has not been crime-free in the Watch area and information provided in Lookout has, hopefully, ensured that any crimes have been kept to a minimum.

May I take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you good health, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



AGM 2014

Our AGM in October was attended by significantly more members than in previous years. The Constitution was updated to extend the area covered by CENW to include the houses in Lanark Road West between Muir Wood Road and the Juniper Green boundary. All Office Bearers were re-elected and all Committee members indicated that they will continue.

The guest speaker was Laura Jamieson from COSLA/Trading Standards. Those who attended the AGM were attentive and enthralled by the content of the presentation on various types of scams. Laura was an excellent speaker and we were fortunate to have her talk to the Watch.

Telephone Preference Service

Many of our members have said that they are receiving more Cold Calls and for your information below is an item from Neighbourhood Watch Scotland:

The Trading Standards Team advises that residents have received cold calls asking if they are registered with the Telephone Preference Service. If they confirm, the caller then states that they have paid for this service to be activated, which they shouldn't have done. The caller then offers to refund the money if bank details are provided.

Please be aware:

- Registering with the Telephone Preference Service is FREE. You can do this by calling 0845 070 0707 or by visiting the TPS website: www.tpsonline.org.uk
- NEVER give your bank details to anyone who cold calls.
- Similar schemes have been operating lately which have been highlighted by our partners in Police Scotland relating to fake calls purporting to be from the bank.
- Your Bank or the Police will NEVER ask you to transfer money to other accounts.

You can also contact City of Edinburgh Trading Standards using trading.standards@edinburgh.gov.uk or 0131 529 3030.

Please share this information with neighbours, friends and family.

Views on doorstep crime

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland recently ran a survey on the subject of doorstep crime, and in particular if people thought cold calling was a good way for charities to raise funds. Here are some of the key findings from this survey:

Most seem to be in favour of some sort of reform with 78% saying they minded charities calling at the door asking for donations. Similar numbers (77%) thought charities should not continue to ask for doorstep donations.

A significant amount of money seems to be handed over in these encounters with 58% of people reporting that they have at some point felt pressurised into giving money in this way. However, many of those otherwise opposed to cold calls from charities were inclined to make an exception when the call involved either local causes or local fundraisers that they knew.

A great deal of the unwanted interactions seem to have been with potentially bogus callers either posing as charities or offering various services such as building repairs or gardening work.

Some respondents suggested more or better IDs for callers, to help residents separate the genuine from the spurious. However, as others commented it is very easy to produce fake IDs and official looking paperwork. Similarly don't be fooled by appearances – anyone can wear a high-visibility jacket and a hard hat and carry a clipboard.

While bogus callers may be the main problem there is no getting away from the fact that a significant number of the unwanted and unpleasant interactions involved apparently bona fide charity fundraisers. In many cases the problem was exacerbated by the fundraiser arriving after dark (sometimes after 9pm) which many people found inappropriate and added to the sense of being under pressure.

What are your views on this topic? We would welcome feedback from our members on these issues. See our contact details on the last page.

10 ways to protect your home against burglars

The Metropolitan Police have provided the following 10 tips to reduce your risk of a burglary:

- Close and lock all doors and windows. If you have multi-locking door handles, lift the handle, lock it with the key and remove it. Put the key in a safe place out of sight, but accessible in case of fire.
- Install a visible intruder alarm system – burglars don't want to be seen or heard
- Don't leave keys or ID documents within easy reach of doors, letterboxes or windows.
- Use timer switches linked to lights and a radio so it appears that someone is at home
- Invest in a safe for valuables and sentimental items, and securely fix it to a solid surface.
- Photograph and mark valuables and sentimental items with your postcode and house number/name.
- Lock garages and sheds so garden tools and ladders can't be used to break into your home.
- Keep side gates locked and wheelie bins stored behind them.
- Install low level 'dusk to dawn' lighting to increase visibility and deter burglars
- Keep side and rear boundaries high to restrict access and front boundaries low to remove hiding places

Look-Out is produced by a group of volunteers from the CENW Committee.

Articles for inclusion in the Newsletter are welcomed. Please send contributions via email to ***lookout@cenw.org.uk*** or contact the Chair (details below).

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