

LOOK-OUT

Currie East Neighbourhood Watch

www.cenw.org.uk

Message from the Chair

Iain Proudfoot

As this is my last Chairman's Corner, I have been looking over previous editions of the Lookout and reflecting over what has happened over the years. An amalgamation of 3 Watches, provision of wheelie bin stickers, window stickers, lamp-post signs, fridge magnets and key-rings. All houses provided with an information folder and pamphlets updated on a regular basis and there is an informative website. The item that was best received was the wind-up torch. Remember the power cut, albeit for a couple of hours, and the torch that came to your rescue?

The purpose of the Watch is to ensure Members have the information to take preventative measures to keep themselves and their property safe. We will never stop crime taking place, but we can, hopefully, reduce the chance of a crime taking place.

AGM

Monday 26th October 2015

Entry from 7:15pm for 7:30pm start

Gibson Craig Halls

Refreshments will be provided

Police Scotland - 101 (or 999 in an emergency)

The future of the Watch

Iain Proudfoot

Everything the Watch does works through a Committee and our band of Distributors. However, the Watch is now finding that our Distributors are dwindling and we now require replacements. There is difficulty in finding Office Bearers and Committee Members. This position now requires to be addressed and if any of our members feels that they can help, please get in touch. Alternatively speak to the Committee at the AGM on 26th October.

As was said in the T.V. programme “Through the Keyhole” it’s over to you.

Computer repair fraud

A woman in Edinburgh has been duped out of £30,000 by telephone and online fraudsters.

The victim was contacted via telephone from a person purporting to be from a well-known software company. It was stated that the computer had been running slowly and so she accepted their offer to help repair it.

She was instructed to carry out an operation on her laptop computer, which allowed the fraudsters to take control of it and install software allowing them to remotely control her computer.

The woman was then told to make payments for the repair via MoneyGram at the Post Office or Western Union. She was asked to then show the receipts for these transactions via online video conference. The unique reference number on the receipts allowed the fraudsters access to the money that she had transferred.

Stay Safe Online:

- Never give out personal details or bank details over the phone or online to people that you don’t know, even if they say they are from the bank.
- Never transfer money to people that you don’t know.
- If you need help with software or computer problems, take your computer to a reputable shop to get repaired.
- If you are suspicious of someone calling you, hang up the phone.
- If you are suspicious of an e-mail, delete it without opening it if possible.

Rental fraud

The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) has received several reports of rental fraud whereby empty premises are being targeted and the locks are being changed for the purpose of adding legitimacy to the fraud.

The suspects will find and enter an empty property for the purposes of changing the locks and then advertising it on online platforms, such as Gumtree, as a rental property. The suspects then invite potential victims to visit the property for a viewing. Those victims which are interested in renting the property are then requested to pay a deposit and/or rent upfront in cash.

In some instances the victims have moved into the property only to be evicted by the real property owner, or have found that the locks have been changed after they have received the keys. There are several instances where this fraud has left victims homeless.

Property Owners: If you or someone you know currently has an empty property, we recommend you visit the property regularly to make sure that the locks have not been changed and no damage has occurred.

If you are considering renting a property:

- Avoid communication by only email or mobile phone and ensure you know who you are dealing with. You can also check ownership of the property using the Land Registry.
- A genuine landlord will carry out their own due diligence and should request all of your details, references and proof that you will be able to afford to rent the property. Be suspicious if the landlord does not appear to have carried out these checks.
- Always view the property and the tenancy agreement before paying any upfront costs.

If you, or anyone you know, has been affected by this fraud or any other scam, report it to Action Fraud by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk.

Keep Your Home Secure

Although having your home broken into is something many people fear, it is not a common occurrence. There are however many ways that you can help secure your home from intruders. They don't all cost money – some are purely down to common sense and good housekeeping.

What basic steps can I take to protect my home?

- Many thieves are actually opportunists who do not have to break in at all because a door or window has been left open or unlocked. Keep your home securely locked at all times.
- Don't leave keys on the inside of door locks, under mats or anywhere else an intruder may easily find them.
- If carrying out home improvements: don't give keys to workers as they can make copies quickly and easily. Let your neighbours know that work is being carried out, where workers are likely to be and who they are. Scaffolding may allow an intruder access to high level areas they wouldn't normally be able to access. Remember to lock windows.

If you see signs of a break-in at your home, like a smashed window or an open door, and you suspect an intruder may still be inside then **don't** enter - call the police on 999 from your mobile or from a neighbour's phone.

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.