

LOOK-OUT

Currie East Neighbourhood Watch

www.cenw.org.uk

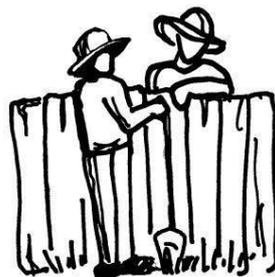
Message from the Chair

Neil Dickson

Being a *Considerate Neighbour* – What Contribution Can You Make?

With the bi-annual task of changing the clocks completed, we welcome spring 2016 and hope for a long warm summer ahead. With light stretching by the day bringing conflicting demands on our spare time, give some thought to close neighbours who are no longer able to manage the upkeep of their home and so would benefit from a little help. Even the simple but important safety task of offering to replace the batteries in a hard to reach smoke or carbon monoxide alarm could be a well-received offer of help from a *Considerate Neighbour*.

According to crime reports, Currie has a low crime rate in comparison to other parts of the country. However, for anyone who has been a victim of crime, e.g. housebreaking or fraud, the impact can be life changing and so it is important that you continue to safeguard your possessions and also to *Look-Out* for the safety of neighbours. Further guidance on such matters is contained within the following articles.



Police Scotland - 101 (or 999 in an emergency)

Subscriptions

It is that time again when your subscription is due to be paid. This is still £1.00 and hopefully you feel that this is worthwhile and you obtain value for this modest amount. Your subscription will be collected by your Distributor.

You may have expected a ‘freebie’ this time, but this is being reviewed by the Committee to see what may be provided in the future to the benefit of the Watch members. Any suggestions you may wish to make can be sent to the contact details contained in this Look-Out. Alternatively, please advise your Distributor who can then forward the suggestion to the committee.

Taxi to the airport?

When going away on holiday many of us may take a taxi to the airport. The taxi driver will often make conversation, asking where we are going on holiday and for how long. Whilst the majority of taxi drivers are honest and this is simply friendly chit-chat, there have been a few cases where the residents have been burgled whilst on holiday and suspected the taxi driver may have passed on details of their holiday plans to an interested party.

As an alternative to taking a taxi, you may wish to consider asking for a lift from a trusted neighbour or nearby relative, and offering to reciprocate when they go on holiday. This would avoid the risk of giving too much information away to strangers, as well as saving you both some money.

If you do choose to take a taxi to the airport then always use a reputable taxi firm and be wary of giving too much information away. Unfortunately this doesn't solve the problem as your suitcases will generally give them all the information they need anyway. Some residents have suggested taking note of the taxi's licence number so that if you are burgled you can pass this on to the police. If the same taxi driver is repeatedly implicated in holiday burglaries then perhaps this might help the police catch them.

Similarly, avoid broadcasting your holiday plans on social media and in general conversation or phone calls whilst in public places.

Telephone scams

The police are actively targeting fraudsters and organised criminal gangs but you need to be mindful of unsolicited calls. Here is some advice to help protect you from this type of crime.

Protecting your bank, credit card and personal details is vital.

- Be wary of all unsolicited calls
- Never reveal personal or financial information, including your PIN or bank card details to anyone
- Don't be pressured into making important financial decisions, if an offer sounds too good to be true it probably is
- In order to clear your line from the fraudster after hanging up, wait at least five minutes before making any calls
- Your bank will never ask you to check the number showing on your telephone display matches their registered telephone number. This display cannot be trusted, as the number showing can be altered by the caller
- Remember, the police and banks will never ring you and ask you to verify your PIN or online banking passwords, withdraw cash, transfer money to another "safe" account or purchase high value goods
- If you believe you have had one of these calls or know someone who has, get in contact with your bank straight away or, if you feel in immediate danger, call 999

Be firm, say no, and hang up on fraud

It is distressing to find out that you have been a victim of this type of crime. If this has happened to you, then please report it to Action Fraud in the first instance. Action Fraud is the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and internet crime where you should report fraud if you have been scammed, defrauded or experienced cyber-crime.

You can call Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or report via their website reporting template at **www.actionfraud.police.uk**

Further information and advice about this type of fraud and others can also be found at:

- www.financialfraudaction.org.uk
- www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

Beat doorstep crime

With the lighter evenings comes increased doorstep selling activity, which we all need to be wary of. The key message is “if in doubt keep them out” with Police offering the following advice:

- Be on guard if someone turns up unexpectedly
- If you have a door chain, always put in on before opening the door and keep it on whilst talking to callers. If you don't have a door chain, check from the nearest window
- Don't feel embarrassed - genuine callers expect you to be careful
- If you're not sure, simply don't answer the door
- Keep front and back doors locked, even when you are in the house
- Only let callers in if they have an appointment and you have confirmed they are genuine
- Always ask for ID, but aware that these can easily be faked
- Don't keep large sums of cash at home
- Report any suspicious activity immediately
- If you feel scared or threatened then call 999 and ask for the police

Please pass on this information to friends and family that you think may be at risk. Please also remind them that if they feel threatened, unsafe or suspicious of a caller to call 999. If they want to contact the police anonymously they can contact the independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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.