



MARCH 2021 EDITION

OUR NEWS

> THE E-NEWSLETTER FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SUPPORTERS

CELEBRATING NEIGHBOURS ACROSS ENGLAND AND WALES

Dear supporters,

There is always something reassuring about new years and new starts, and with a route out of the Covid-19 restrictions and the weather looking brighter, it is beginning to feel like we may get both. The campaign we have been running with Co-op Insurance around The Croods 2 film has received great feedback from families and younger people, and we are in the process of judging the winner of the treehouse design competition. We are planning more exciting campaigns this year to help prevent crime, connect communities and reach new supporters. Our car crime campaign will be launching on social media at the end of March.

We're also looking at ideas, support and good practice for us to improve diversity and inclusion across the charity, and be attractive to people who are underrepresented in Neighbourhood Watch, including those in areas of high crime. To this end, we're launching our new People, Culture and Ethics Committee this month. The committee will explore new ways of working and utilise the great examples that already exist in Neighbourhood Watch.

We are looking forward to working with you on the projects we have planned. As always, please continue to share with us the great work that you are doing, by emailing enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

John Hayward-Cripps, CEO - Neighbourhood Watch Network



Community Grants Programme pilot ending soon

We are delighted to say that we have been able to distribute £4,212 to Neighbourhood Watch groups through our pilot Community Grant Programme.

Groups have applied for funding to rejuvenate and grow their membership; create Coordinator packs; develop a 'thank you' voucher scheme for neighbourliness; run intergenerational support projects; and one group project has even appeared in the Burnley Express for their work that the grant is funding. You can [read the article here](#).

The pilot is running to the **end of March 2021**, at which point we will evaluate the learnings, process and success of outcomes to determine if the Community Grant Programme will be established on a long-term basis.

With the pilot ending on 31st March we strongly encourage groups, Associations and Coordinators to take this opportunity to apply as soon as possible.

All details on eligibility, funding priorities and the application form can be found at ourwatch.org.uk/communitygrants.

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Staying safe from email scams

Fraudsters are constantly coming up with new ways of trying to defraud people in relation to all manner of products and services, including loans, dating, holidays, business opportunities, clairvoyants, pharmaceuticals, lottery prizes, fake COVID vaccines, even recovery of money lost to fraud and a whole lot more.

Here we look into some of the different types of email frauds that are currently quite common and what to look out for to indicate that an email may not be genuine.

COMMON TYPES OF EMAIL SCAMS

- **419 Emails:** You are offered a share in a large sum of money in return for helping to transfer it out of the country. Once you have given the criminals your bank account details, they empty your accounts.
- **Phishing:** An email that purports to be from companies such as banks designed to trick you into revealing your personal information and passwords. REMEMBER: your bank will NEVER contact you out of the blue to ask for your PIN, full password or to move money to another account.
- **Pharming:** Pharming is a term used when you are directed from a link in an email to a website that spoofs a legitimate website in order to access your personal details.
- **Impersonation of UK official websites:** For example HMRC, with an email message claiming you are due a refund and requesting your bank account details or directing you to a website link.
- **Impersonation of UK officials:** Criminals impersonate a UK official to obtain personal information and steal money, often claiming that you are due a refund or must make an urgent payment. Examples of this scam include TV License, the HMRC Tax Rebate and the Council Tax Scam.
- **Investment scams and pension scams:** Emailed offers of worthless, overpriced or non-existent shares, or a time-limited opportunity to convert some or all of your pension pot into cash. [Click here](#) to find out more about these.

HOW TO SPOT A SCAM EMAIL

- The sender's email address looks suspicious. Roll your mouse pointer over the sender's name to check it. If it **doesn't match** the website address of the organisation it says it's from it could be a sign of a scam.
- The email **doesn't use your name** – it says something like 'Dear customer' instead.
- There's a **sense of urgency**, asking you to act immediately.
- There's a prominent website link that may look at first glance like the proper address but has **one letter missing or is spelt wrong**.
- There's a **request for personal information**.
- **Poor grammar and spelling mistakes**.
- The **entire text of the email is contained within an image** rather than the usual text format, and the image contains an embedded hyperlink to a bogus site. Again, roll your mouse pointer over the link to reveal its true destination. **But don't click it!**



Staying safe from email scams

It is almost impossible to keep up with the variety of fraudulent emails that are increasingly appearing on our computer screens and smartphones. However, by taking your time and following the simple steps below you can better protect yourself from falling victim to attempted email fraud.

TOP TIPS

REMEMBER: IF SOMETHING SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, IT USUALLY IS!

1. Create a **separate password** for your email accounts

2. Make sure you have **strong passwords with 3 random words** and change these regularly. Find out more about **strong passwords** [here](#).

3. Install **two-factor authentication (2FA)** for your email accounts. This is an additional process to secure your account.

Further actions you can take to keep safe

Look after your **mobile devices**. Don't leave them unattended in public places, and protect them with a PIN or passcode.

Ensure you always have **internet security software** loaded on computers and update to new versions immediately.

Don't assume that **Wi-Fi hotspots** in places like cafes and hotels are secure. Never use them when you're doing anything confidential online, like banking. Use 3G or 4G.

Never reveal too much personal or financial information (such as in emails, on social networking and dating sites). You never know who might see it or use it.

Always consider that online or on the phone, people **aren't always who they claim to be**. Fake emails and phone calls are a favourite way for fraudsters to approach their victims.

Don't click on links or open attachments **if the source isn't 100% known and trustworthy**, or it seems strange that you'd be receiving them.

Always access internet banking sites **by typing the bank's address** into your web browser.

Never pay for anything by direct bank transfer unless it's to someone **you know personally and is reputable**.

Never respond to emails, texts, letters or social media **that look suspicious**, including messages with **bad spelling or grammar**.

Be cautious when going to a website from a link in an email and then enter personal details – **the email could be fraudulent**.

If someone you've never met in person asks you for money, that should be a **red flag**. Tell them you're not interested and stop all contact.

When shopping online always sign up to American Express SafeKey, Verified by Visa and MasterCard SecureCode so look for the padlock or unbroken key symbol when you first visit a site. Where possible **make your purchase with a credit card** or via a credible online payment system (such as PayPal) which protects you in the event of fraud.

If you are at all suspicious, heed your instincts!

You are most probably right to be concerned.

Report all emails that you believe to be fraudulent to report@phishing.gov.uk.

Census 2021 is coming on Sunday 21st March

All households across the UK will be asked on March 21st to take part in Census 2021 which will provide a snapshot of modern society.



How do I take part in the census?

it's about us
census 2021

The census is a **once-in-a-decade survey** that gives the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales.

By taking part, you can help inform decisions about services that shape your community, such as healthcare, education and transport.

The Census will include questions about sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Without the information you share, it'd be more difficult to understand our community's needs and plan and fund public services. Not only do councils and the NHS use this data but also charities when they need evidence and data for funding applications.

Census Day is on Sunday 21 March. In early March the Office for National Statistics (ONS) will send you a letter in the post with an access code and instructions. You can do your census online as soon as you get yours. If your household circumstances change on Census Day, you can let the ONS know.

The ONS aim to make things as easy as possible for everyone, but if you need help taking part in the census, there's a wide

range of support services available. You can request support for yourself, or someone else, including guidance and help in many languages and formats, a paper version of the questionnaire, if you prefer, and also accessible census guidance, for example, in braille.

Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years - kept safe for future generations.

There is a help area on the census website www.census.gov.uk covering everything from who to include on the questionnaire to how to answer each question. There are also a range of local jobs with Census 2021 on offer and you can find out more at www.censusjobs.co.uk.

Interestingly, the census has a strong record of being carried out as it has taken place every decade since 1801 - with the exception of 1941, during World War Two. In fact, it even took place following the last pandemic involving the Spanish Flu in 1921.

Keep updated on census news on the website www.census.gov.uk.

If you need any further details please contact Aisha Rehman - Census Engagement Manager on 07452 945942 or alternatively via email aisha.rehman96@field.census.gov.uk.

New Volunteer Development Manager starts

February brought the arrival of a new team member, Esther Ardagh-Ptolomey, who has taken on the role of Volunteer Development Manager.

Following overwhelming support from members, Esther is tasked with creating a volunteering framework. She will be looking at how Neighbourhood Watch can improve support to volunteers as well as increasing the number and diversity of our volunteering base.

With 20 years' experience in the charity sector, the last 13 of which have been spent working with volunteers in animal welfare, she is particularly keen to look at the recruitment process, training and role descriptions.

As part of her work, a key aim is to create an online 'hub' of easily accessible information and guidance for new and existing volunteers alike and to help identify and share best practice.

“As with many charities, the voluntary roles within Neighbourhood Watch have evolved over time.

I'm keen to shore up the foundations of our work and provide greater clarity over the volunteering roles without restricting the potential of the very varied projects we're involved in.” Esther



Esther's work is being funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.



JOIN A VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Esther is creating 'working groups' to focus on key areas, and is looking for volunteers that are willing to join these groups and offer insight into these specific areas:

- **Volunteer role descriptions** – what we already have, and at what we need.
- **Induction processes** – what our induction process currently looks like, and what could we improve.
- **Guidance documents and toolkits** – looking at the sorts of situations that arise as a volunteer that you need guidance for.

If you're interested in helping, please email Esther on esther.ardagh-ptolomey@ourwatch.org.uk.

If interest is high, volunteers will be selected based on relevance to the specific areas and to reflect a wide range of roles and background.

COMMUNITY BANK ACCOUNTS

Some applicants to the Community Grants Programme, as well as Neighbourhood Watch groups applying for funding elsewhere, have told us of the confusion and challenge around setting up a community bank account.

Here is a brilliant, up-to-date resource to guide you through the steps and provide some suggestions for banks that have community group accounts:

www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/bank-accounts-for-community-and-voluntary-organisations/.



RISLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH, DERBYSHIRE

This month we hear from Peter McKeown, Risley Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, on the success of establishing a valuable scheme in the Derbyshire village of Risley.

In April 2019 one of my gates was badly vandalised. With the help of my neighbours, I was able to identify the culprits and to bring them to justice.

Having been a member of a scheme previously I had the positive experience of knowing how Neighbourhood Watch helps to create a strong, friendly and active community resulting in less crime and anti-social behaviour.

This was my motivation for setting up Risley Neighbourhood Watch in June 2019. Risley Village has 325 households and my target was to sign up 25 members per month and to have 100 members by the end of September to be able to have a launch event in October.

I visited every household so that I could explain the benefits of joining the scheme. This was time consuming but very successful and at times entertaining as some residents eagerly shared life stories and gossip with me.

By September I had visited every house at least once, some up to three times, and had signed up 150 members. Everybody bought-in to our mission statement and gave me positive feedback. However, one very enthusiastic elderly lady was a little disappointed that she wouldn't have to do street patrols nor would be getting a uniform or a gun!

By then, I had also managed to recruit 3 excellent Deputy Coordinators to help manage the scheme.

The official launch event was held informally in November at the village school. 100 members dropped in to meet the team and collect their welcome packs. Those who couldn't make it had their packs hand delivered. The event was also attended by the police, the fire service and our local MP and County Councillor.

Our scheme celebrated its 1st anniversary in November 2019. Membership has since grown rapidly and currently there are 230 households registered, which represents **71% of the village.**

In April 2020 we established a Covid-19 Support Group. Our 30 volunteers continue to provide a range of support to residents in need. All requests are responded to within the hour. We also established a fortnightly fresh meat and vegetable delivery service into the village.

Bi-monthly newsletters covering a wide range of topics such as local crime activity, home security tips, scam warnings, our Community Speed Watch activity, our Covid-19 Support initiative, general news, plus the occasional brainteaser, are issued to the whole village (including non-members). 200 newsletters are emailed out and the remaining 125 are hand-delivered by volunteers. We also communicate through the Parish Council quarterly newsletter and website.

“We are very proud of the effort and commitment shown by Peter in building the Risley Neighbourhood Watch to the level where the majority of the village residents are now members of the scheme.”

Derbyshire NW Association

I coordinate the Community Speed Watch initiative and through the success of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme I have built up the volunteer group from 3 to 16.

Our '[RisleyNeighbourhoodWatch](#)' Facebook page is popular and used to circulate any relevant local news flashes.

In January 2021 we had our first monthly article published in Inside72 magazine and have also launched our own local Good Neighbour of The Year award.

We have recently been awarded two grants from the Derbyshire Neighbourhood Watch Innovation Fund. The first to provide dustbin stickers to residents to promote crime prevention in the village and the second to hold “Home Security Hints & Tips” events in the Spring/Summer.

To find out more get in touch with me, Peter McKeown, on risley.nhw@gmail.com.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH WEEK 5th -11th June 2021

LOCKDOWN...



OR NOT...



#LetsStayConnected
SAVE THE DATE



WWW.OURWATCH.ORG.UK/NWEEK

Neighbourhood Watch Network is a charity registered in England & Wales. CIO No. 1173349

Have you heard about the **Community Safety Podcast?**

The Community Safety Podcast is the brainchild of Jim Nixon - who has a passion for partnership working to enable communities to be safer.

Jim has an extensive background in policing, Housing and Local Authority for over 25 years, and is currently the lead on Anti-Social Behaviour at Stoke City Council. Jim has an innovative approach to tackling issues.

The podcast features guests from a wide spectrum of the community safety arena, to discuss the issues facing communities in 21st century Britain.

With more to come and Neighbourhood Watch featuring in a couple months time, the current podcasts discuss policing in the 21st century, with John Sutherland, anti-social behaviour with Tracy Jones, Britain's former most wanted criminal Paul Walmsley, and tackling county lines with Grace Robinson.

Find out more at www.thecommunitysafetypodcast.co.uk.



Don't get caught out by a COVID-19 vaccination scam



You may have read that fraudsters are taking advantage of the NHS COVID-19 vaccination programme. Typically, people are receiving emails, text messages or phone calls with offers to 'jump the queue' in return for payment or confidential details.

There is no charge for the COVID-19 vaccination, and the NHS is adhering rigidly to the government's order or priority list, so any such messages you receive are fraudulent.

For full information on protecting yourself against COVID-19 vaccination scams, visit www.getsafeonline.org/vaccinationscams And please, pass on our advice to anyone you think may be caught out.

#vaccinationscams



Sextortion scams surge during pandemic

In January this year, Avast threat researchers blocked over 500,000 attack attempts from cybercriminals claiming to have recorded videos of unsuspecting victims during private moments online. These attacks, known as sextortion scams, attempt to blackmail victims by threatening to make these apparent recordings public unless a payment is made to the scammer. Avast threat labs researchers advise people to **stay calm and ignore sextortion emails** instead of reacting to them, as they **usually are fake claims**.

Cybercriminals have been using the increase in video conferencing services during the Covid-19 pandemic to validate their false claims and provoke a reaction from the victim. The fraudsters allege to have taken advantage of critical vulnerabilities in the Zoom application, allowing them to access a user's device and camera. It is important to note that Avast has **not found any actual vulnerabilities in the Zoom application**.

“Sextortion scams are dangerous and unsettling, and can even have tragic consequences resulting in the suicide of affected users. During the Covid-19 pandemic,

cybercriminals likely see a strong opportunity for success as people spend more time using video conference applications and in front of their computer overall,” said Marek Beno, malware analyst at Avast.

“As scary as such emails may sound, we urge people to stay calm if they receive such a message in their inbox and ignore it, as it is just a dirty trick that cybercriminals use to try to get your money.”

Another common sextortion campaign identified by Avast is an email in which the attackers claim a Trojan was installed on the recipient's machine, which has recorded their actions with a microphone and webcam, and extracted all data from their devices including chats, social media and contacts. A ransom is demanded and often includes a note about a fake “timer” that started when the email was received in order to set a ransom deadline. This campaign is also fake and uses social engineering to coerce people into paying.

[Read the full article](#) to find out how to recognise and protect yourself from sextortion emails.



To order a Patlock at the Neighbourhood Watch discounted rate of £42.50 go to patlock.co.uk/neighbourhood-watch

