

Bedford and District Neighbourhood Watch



Charity No 1062009

February 2017 Newsletter

**NEIGHBOURHOOD
WATCH**

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Welcome to our first Newsletter of 2017. We hope you find it helpful.

Our Members Quarterly Meeting was held on Wednesday 22nd February 2017, at Police Headquarters.

Despite the sudden change of date and the weather, we had a good turnout of our Members and guests from Central Bedfordshire Neighbourhood Watch.

Our thanks go to Thomas Warner, Prevention Support Manager from Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service who was our guest speaker for the evening. And thanks to all of you, our Members, for your continued support in helping keep our communities safe.



Bedfordshire
Fire and Rescue Service

Thomas joined Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service in June 2007. During his career he has undertaken the roles of Home Fire Safety Advisor and Community Safety Officer (Arson) prior to his current role as Prevention Support Manager.



As Prevention Support Manager Thomas manages the Home Safety team who deliver Safe & Well visits to the most vulnerable households in Bedfordshire.

Thomas delivered an excellent presentation on the trial of the new Safe & Well Scheme, a national initiative for the Fire & Rescue Services.

Safe & Well visits are targeted home visits that cover crime prevention, falls in the home, alcohol and smoking in addition to the traditional home fire safety advice.

Using fire incident data and information shared by partner agencies households that are most at risk have been identified.

Safe & Well visits are being delivered directly to these homes.

The target group for this pilot will be those over 65, but it may well be developed further if successful.

We learned that deaths caused by fire had fallen year on year since 1985, a welcome statistic. Whilst fires still occur in any age group, the most vulnerable are those young adults, often students and those over 65. However most deaths due to fire are in the latter age range.

News and updates

Burglary Alerts

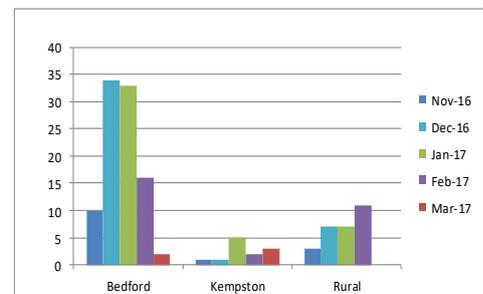
Bedford & District have been piloting a scheme which allows us to provide information on burglaries directly to the road or street involved.

Each morning we receive from the Police, a list of burglaries that have taken place over the previous 24 hours.

We then direct this information to our local Registered Members via an Alert message.

Since starting the scheme, a total of **126** have been issued, which is more than one per day.

If you haven't seen one, this means there have been no burglaries in your vicinity.



We want to stress that this is a pilot scheme and for burglaries only. It is not for any other criminal activity or anti-social behaviour.

If you receive one of these Alerts, it is an opportunity to assess your own personal security and also offer support to the victim, if you know who it is. Due to security restrictions, we are not able to give names or full addresses where a robbery has taken place, but if you are aware of who has been targeted, this is an opportunity to be a good neighbour and offer support.

We want to thank Colleen Atkins for her contribution towards these Alert messages.

What can you do to help keep your homes and property safe from burglars?

Displaying your Neighbourhood Watch Window Sticker, No Cold Calling Stickers and well positioned external sensor lights helps to deter would be burglars and unwanted visitors.

Consider installing a home security alarm and upgrading your locks on outbuildings.

Free from us - UV Marking Pens.

Mark your property with your postcode and house number. It uses an ink only seen under UV lighting. This can help Police identify and return stolen property.



Smartwater can be bought from us for £15.00.

Take photographs of your most valuable items;

e.g. jewellery, paintings, antiques, special family keepsakes. Keep these photographs in a safe place

Patlock This normally retails at £64.00 but is available through Neighbourhood Watch for £42.50.

Police Home "Health" Checks (Forms available on line)

Use **Time Switches** when your house is unoccupied to give the appearance that someone is at home.



Make use of your **Stay Safe booklet** which has lots of helpful and useful information.

Use **"Immobilise"** to register your bigger valuables on line for **free**, such as mobile phones, electrical items and bicycles etc. This is a secure website and Police can check the database against recovered property and establish the rightful owner.

Central Neighbourhood Watch

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, National Neighbourhood Watch, our overseeing body, agreed a New Constitution at its AGM in 2016.

Rather than National recognising each individual group, we were required to become a County Association, and "The Bedfordshire Neighbourhood Watch Association", was constituted. This new Association is now recognised as a "Force Level Association and we have signed a Partnership Agreement with National.

Although Bedford & District are part of the new Association, we are maintaining our individual identity. However, as an Association, changes that occur in one group may affect the other two, as we now share the responsibility for Neighbourhood Watch in Bedfordshire.

As some of you will already know, The Chair of Central Bedfordshire Neighbourhood Watch, Mr Tony Howells, is standing down at their next AGM in March. Their Secretary, Kay Ferris, is also standing down. Both have given many years of loyal service to Central Bedfordshire Neighbourhood Watch and we do appreciate all the work they have done during that time. They are actively seeking replacement candidates and we hope their replacements will be voted in at their Annual General Meeting. So we encouraged all Central Bedfordshire Members to attend their meeting if at all possible on Sunday 5th March at Hexton Church, starting at 2:00 pm.

Since mid November, several of the reported offences were distraction burglaries, Please look out for vulnerable people in your area, and make use of the Bobby Van. We can arrange visits if required.

Two short films were shown to emphasise what we can do to help ourselves and our property stay safe and secure. The first was on opportunist burglary and the second on distraction burglary. (Follow the links below)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qCCSI0BwIHk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NtHBtsp3GoA&t=129s>

Opportunities to support the team:

Do you have accounting or book keeping skills that will assist the Treasurer. We need your support to help look after our finances and possibly those of the Bedfordshire Association.

We are also keen to find someone with IT skills to support the database and website.

If you feel you can help then please get in touch through our email. We would love to hear from you. bedfordnhwatch@gmail.com

GOOD NEWS

National Neighbourhood Watch have lifted the restriction on the use of the new logo for Members only.

The download and guidelines for the new logo are available here

<http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/knowledge/logo-download/>.



Next Quarterly Members Meeting: Wednesday 31 May 2017