

Neighbourhood Watch Community News

For the 2,500 members in the South Ferndown and West Parley Neighbourhood Watch

SPRING

ISSUE

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March 2023

to

May 2023

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South Ferndown and
West Parley Watch

Chairman's Report, March 2023

I start this newsletter by inviting you to our AGM at 7.30pm on Tuesday 25 April 2023 at St Mark's Church, New Road, West Parley. This is your opportunity to engage with the committee, to ask questions and to provide us with feedback. The Ferndown Neighbourhood Policing Team has been invited to attend and have been asked to give advice regarding the problems that young people experience with bullying and abuse via social media.

We are fortunate to have a thriving, effective and generally well-supported Neighbourhood Watch. Our volunteers and residents value its many benefits. What does your Neighbourhood Watch do for you? It maintains close contact with Dorset Police, provides regular newsletters to members giving advice on police, personal security and community issues; runs a Community Shop in the Precinct in Ferndown where you can buy security products and get friendly advice; it supports our Community Speedwatch Team, making our roads safer; it works with organisations and councils to raise awareness of community issues; it helps to promote community well-being; and it raises awareness of local community facilities.

We need to keep our running costs down and the committee has agreed that as the original purpose of the NHW membership cards is no longer valid, the Watch can save on the costs of printing. However, if you still want a card, there is one on Page 7 that you can cut out and retain.

Recently the national news has highlighted incidents involving police officers committing serious sexual offences. The PCC has issued a formal 'Challenge Letter' to the Chief Constable to require action in Dorset to eliminate police-perpetrated abuse and to maintain the highest possible professional standards.

The Watch enjoys the support of many volunteers and I want to thank Linda and Geoff Voisey who, for around 20 years, have been the coordinators in the Casterbridge area. They are both standing down from their roles and I invite new volunteers in the Casterbridge area to come forward to continue the excellent work completed by Linda and Geoff. Please give me a call.

Take care and stay safe.

David Ayres at dayres.nhw@btinternet.com; phone 07796 546 904

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Police Updates

Our neighbourhood policing team remains at full strength to tackle current priorities.

Our local Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) is showing the benefits of continuity, with a full team unchanged in the last three months: PS Steve Payne, PCs Kate Davies and Phil Robbins, PCSOs Adam Fitzwalter and James Marsh.

The Team's operational priorities remain the tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB), burglary, rogue traders and distraction crimes. We may expect more incidents of the latter with the advance of Spring.

Anti-social Behaviour

PS Payne explained that most local ASB is perpetrated by young people riding e-scooters, skateboards, bikes and causing a 'general nuisance' around premises and at car parks – Sainsburys, Lidl, McDonalds, Turbary, etc. The NPT maintains more patrols in these places to engage with persistent offenders; often words of caution are all that is necessary.

For those who do not respond to advice, the NPT initiates the Community Consequence Scheme involving parents, who often are unaware of their children's behaviour, and other relevant agencies. There are three stages:

1. A letter sent from Dorset Police to parents. This is generally all that's needed.
2. A visit by an NPT officer to the family home.
3. Invoking sanctions such as ASB Dispersal Orders (where the police have powers to break up groups causing a nuisance, harassment or distress).

PS Payne remarked that the scheme has a very high compliance rate and rarely requires Stage 3.

The Police have further powers should it be necessary, including legal injunctions, Community Protection Notices (CPN), and in Dorset the 'Community Trigger' through which victims of ASB can request a review of their case and bring agencies together to take a joined up, problem-solving approach to find a solution.

The quarterly crime stats for our NPT, below, include all of BH22 so are only a rough indication of cases in

Crime Statistics – FERNDOWN

2022/2023	NOV	DEC	JAN
Crime occurrences	55	63	61
ASB occurrences	6	2	5
Total occurrences	61	65	66
Details:			
Burglary non-dwelling	3	1	3
Burglary dwelling (inc attempted)	8	3	1
Criminal damage	8	2	6
Drugs	0	0	2
Fraud	1	7	3
Other notifiable crime	1	3	7
Sexual Offences	6	6	2
Theft	12	6	10
Vehicle Crime	5	2	6
Violence – More Serious	1	2	0
Violence Less Serious	10	31	21

Ferndown and West Parley. Also, the figures on less serious violence are predominantly cases of minor harassment.

Distraction Crimes

PS Payne asked the Newsletter to remind residents, particularly the elderly, to be wary of attempts at distraction crime. Uninvited trades people? Offers to buy 'gold and jewellery'? Unexpected disturbance while a stranger is at your door?

All of these are common concerns when someone turns up unannounced with the intention of tricking their way into your home. They may pose as officials or ask your help with something.

Some work alone, but often in groups of two or more, usually with one person knocking at your door with a convincing excuse. They keep you occupied whilst often sneak in and search your house to steal cash and valuables.

- There are some steps you can take to keep yourself safe:
- If you are not sure who is at your door – do not open it.

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- Check the ID of the caller by calling the company they say they work for, i.e. gas electricity, water or police.
- If the caller appears to be a police officer, check their name and shoulder number ID with 101 or 999.
- Don't accept phone numbers supplied by the caller; they won't be genuine.
- Reputable companies will not insist to be paid in cash.
- If you have any concerns after a possible bogus caller has visited you, call the police on 101.

A genuine caller will happily wait outside while you check on them by calling their organisation.

NPT Engaging with Residents

It has long been the practice for one or two members of the NPT to be available to meet members of the public at monthly engagements at popular spots in the Ferndown and West Parley area.



Two such dates have been agreed for March, where residents can discuss policing issues:

- 6 March at The Centre, Barnes Road, Heatherlands, BH22 8XH, 11.00am–1.30pm.
- 28 March at Ferndown Manor Care Home, 110 Golf Links Road, BH22 8DA, 2.00–4.30pm.

In addition, the NPT will continue to stage a Community Contact Point two or three times each month at popular locations such as Penny's Walk, supermarkets, the Beacon cafe, etc. Times and places will be advertised on Facebook, www.facebook.com/EastDorsetPolice/

Community Speedwatch

Raising awareness of local speed limits; encouraging speeding drivers to slow down.

Our Community Speedwatch (CSW) volunteers aim to raise awareness of local speed limits and encourage speeding motorists to slow down.

There are 86 active speedwatch groups across Dorset,



including local groups at Stapehill, West Moors, St Leonards & St Ives and Corfe Mullen.

Last year CSW groups across Dorset conducted 1,422 roadside sessions, 40 more than the previous year. Sadly the number of speeding motorists also increased and 12,125 cases were reported to Dorset Police.

Of these, Ferndown CSW group reported 1,451 speeding cases, a 30% increase on the previous year and the second consecutive year that Ferndown had more speeding motorists than any other CSW area.

Ron Cross, our CSW organiser said, "The number of speeding motorists we recorded last year has been recognised by Dorset Police as unacceptable and they would like our CSW volunteers to join their Speed Enforcement Officers on the roadside, helping to camouflage their officers.

"But, unlike all other CSW groups, we do not believe it is our role to help Dorset Police issue penalty notices and so we have declined their request.

"We know many residents are tired of speeding motorists and may prefer that we join forces with the police, but we are not police officers. We simply want to slow speeding motorists and make our town and neighbourhoods safer and environmentally more pleasant."

Ron added "We would like thank all motorists and motorcyclists who observe our local speed limits, or those who slow down when they see us on the roadside.

"We hope too that the 'Check your Speed' information signs we deploy on the roadside help motorists and motorcyclists."

In an article published in the Bournemouth Daily Echo last December the PCC, David Sidwick, stated that "Dorset Police camera teams operate with CSW groups which results in fixed penalty notices being issued." Ron feels it is important to clarify that this joint arrangement has not been adopted by the Ferndown group.

The Speedwatch group still regularly receives many requests asking for more patrols on more roads. We rely solely on the help of volunteers and have no ability to take on new tasks without more volunteers. They are a lovely enthusiastic group who need just a little more help from local residents. **Would you like to help... can you spare two hours a month? Then please phone Ron Cross on 07592 790199.**



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My Guide to Con Men

*A personal account of a being scammed**

Have you been scammed? I have. It knocked the stuffing out of me, mentally and physically. I've never experienced such a living nightmare before. Don't think I am exaggerating. And please don't think, 'This will never happen to me.'

It is happening all over, all the time, as much a pandemic as Covid. It has been cold comfort to discover how many other victims there are out there, sensible, professional, responsible people who have been conned as I was, losing, with their self-respect, considerable sums of money.

I reckon I've seen the last of some £30,000.

"If, like me, you are old, single and living alone, you are fair game"

When the truth emerges, the first reaction is to hide one's shame. When my counsellor and friend asked if I had anyone I could talk to, I said I really didn't feel like exposing my folly.

"Wrong!" she replied. "You must tell everyone, that's the only way of thwarting the fraudsters."

It started for me with a sympathetic woman phoning to ask if I had charged a number of expensive items to my card.

"No," I replied, and she said she would cancel them. Then a man phoned who said he was from the Fraud Office and was conducting a vital inquiry into counterfeit in a number of banks. When I asked how I could know if he was genuine, he gave me a number to ring, where his position was confirmed.

"Why me?" I asked.

He said, "Because it is your money that is at stake."

At the time it all seemed perfectly reasonable, and I felt privileged to help.

Next I was sent to buy certain extremely expensive items, with the journeys meticulously planned for me as 'proof' was needed for the investigation. These I handed over to couriers with passwords who came to my address,

always assured that the money I'd spent was being returned to my account.

So, with money piled up from investments in my current account (which the fraudsters conned me into handing over), I lost both those expensive items and cash.

I tried desperately to get out of this, but the voice, constantly on the phone, completely mesmerised me. It was always 'Just this once.'

I genuinely believed I was helping the Fraud Office in a detailed investigation into fraudulent practice inside my two banks. The whole ordeal lasted for nearly a month, when the voice suddenly said, "You won't be hearing from us again."



At last I sought help.

To save you from this kind of deception, here are a few tips:

Don't trust the telephone. It can be used in unimaginable ways to entrap you. Don't answer calls from unknown 'private' numbers.

Don't be flattered into 'helping' with anything to do with finance.

Don't believe callers 'from [such-and-such] bank': banks don't work by phone. Don't bother to check callers' identity'; the contacts they give will only confirm the scam.

Don't believe it will be enough to say 'No'. The 'persuasion' can be interminable and deadly.

Don't 'confirm' information about yourself: you are

handing over facts that will be used against you.

Don't let them undermine your faith in people you have had reason to trust. For me, this was the unkindest cut of all.

Sounds simple? Of course, once you are aware. But I wasn't. Before this happened to me, I was entirely ignorant of such frauds.

These criminals are diabolically clever: the word most used about their methods is 'hypnotic'. They know all the tricks and use them ruthlessly.

If, like me, you come into the category of 'old, single and living alone', you are fair game, particularly now that the stresses of the many past months have left us vulnerable.

Our defences are down and our generation was programmed to stand up for what we see as our civic duty. We expect to help when asked.

It must have been, for them, like taking sweets from a baby. I break out in a cold sweat when I think how gullible I was. Now people are saying, 'How could she have been caught?'

**“These criminals are diabolically clever,
the word most used about
their methods is ‘hypnotic’”**

So what can you do?

Do put the phone down as soon as a stranger mentions money.

Do ignore their repeated ban on mentioning the call to anyone else. Do train yourself to ignore the constant calls that batter down your resistance. Do call the police: they have been a huge support to me. A three-hour session with a note-taking detective has lifted a burden from my shoulders. They are now in control, and if the smallest detail of my evidence can help them, something good will have emerged.

Do trust yourself: call for help as soon as anything rings false.

Do listen to your bank: I was so brainwashed that I rejected an approach from the bank which could have saved money and possibly identified the criminals.

The support of friends has helped me through the 'slough of despond' into which I descended when the scam was revealed. Looking back, I hardly recognise myself. Should I accept responsibility for unwittingly aiding and abetting criminal activity? I feel too raw to decide.

One last 'don't' – don't let it happen to you.

**Acknowledgements to Ruth Webster at 'The Oldie' 2022.*

It it happens to you, please report it!

ActionFraud
National Fraud & Cyber Crime Reporting Centre
actionfraud.police.uk

Volunteering to Make a Difference

Be inspired – Join our Team!

One of the centrepieces of the nation's Coronation celebrations will be the launch of the Big Help Out Day on Saturday 8th May. Led by Bear Grylls and a coalition of charities, the event includes opportunities to take part in taster sessions to give volunteering a go.

The organisers hope for an unprecedented community mobilisation to mark this event of national significance and to inspire a new generation of volunteers. Opportunities will be revealed in the local media and on the Big Help Out web site www.thebighelpout.org.uk over the coming weeks.



Many of our organisations in Ferndown and West Parley already rely on an army of volunteers to undertake essential community work and there are already plenty of opportunities for us to offer our experience and life skills to give something back to our community.

We see the work done by volunteers in Citizens Advice, Age UK, Samaritans and all the other support groups and community organisations. Even our local hospitals need extra help in their valuable work.

Our Neighbourhood Watch relies on many residents to help as Contacts and Coordinators or helping to run the organisation. They are often inspired as a great way to get to know your neighbours.

Volunteers feel they want to give their time and to see some results for their efforts. It's a great way to make new friends and it fosters a sense of well-being. Please think about how you could make a contribution to your community and keep an eye open for how you can help.

The Watch always needs helpers as do West Parley Neighbourcar (contact Clive Butcher 07592 860104) and the West Parley Multiple Sclerosis Centre (contact Kay 01202 570300).

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Council Tax & Police Precept

Taxes keep rising, 5% on Council Tax and on the Police Precept. Guess what? You voted for it!

Our taxes need to be justified. Dorset's Police & Crime Commissioner, David Sidwick, explained the need for the increase as follows.



“The county’s Police and Crime Panel have unanimously approved plans to increase the amount of money Dorset residents pay for their policing service.

“This means when you get your council tax bill for April, you’ll be paying an extra £15 a year, or £1.25 a month, if you live in a Band D property.

“The agreement from the Panel to increase the precept this year comes after an on-line survey was held with the public. Of the 1553 respondents, 74% agreed that Dorset Police requires additional funding and 60% supported the proposal to raise the precept: a £15 a year increase for the average Band D home, compared to the £10 increase it had in the current financial year.

“The Precept survey ran for six weeks, from 19 December 2022 to 31 January 2023. The survey was available online throughout this period, promoted via local media, Dorset Alert, the OPCC website, social media, face-to-face events and via a Facebook Live online engagement event.”

So, of a voting population of about 600,000 in Dorset, only a quarter of one percent responded to the poll. David Sidwick thanked “each of the 1553 people who responded to share their thoughts on police funding and precept.” So, *we voted for this tax increase; don't complain now!*

Mr Sidwick went on, “Last year, I gave you my assurance that the precept funding would be spent for the ‘Make Every Penny Count’ priority of my Police and Crime Plan and that is exactly what has happened.

“Over the last year, I have overseen an increase in investment into strengthening neighbourhood policing, I have seen Dorset Police overachieve on its recruitment targets and introduce new ground-breaking policing operations to tackle county lines and drug crime.

“I have ensured investments have been made in tackling anti-social behaviour and I have made available more vital resources for tackling rural crime across our county.

“Dorset Police is one of the lowest funded forces in the country and I will continue to lobby government to make changes to the funding formula because I want a ‘fair share’ for Dorset. Nothing would make me happier than not to have to rely on funding via precept contributions but until we get a fair share of the funding, I am reliant on the support of the residents and homeowners in Dorset.

“I give you my assurance that this year’s precept funding will be spent wisely and well and to the advantage of the residents and communities of Dorset, and in the pursuit of making our county the safest in England and Wales.”

Sexual Violence and Abuse

Despite the good news of improving police effectiveness in our urban and rural towns and villages, the support of the public has been severely shaken by recent revelations of disgraceful conduct of police officers, notably in the Metropolitan Police.

We in Dorset need reassurance that the PCC and Chief Constable are taking immediate action to root out actual or potential offenders.

The PCC, David Sidwick, wrote on this in recent days: “Following the launch of the Government’s Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy last year, and in light of the revelation regarding David Carrick, I have issued a formal challenge to the Chief Constable. In Dorset we have had two very different recent cases: firstly,



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the misconduct hearing of a supervisor who had abused his position of trust within the organisation to pursue inappropriate relationships with those who reported directly to him. Had he not resigned he would have been dismissed.

“Secondly, the recent charging of eight sexual offences by a serving officer. This is a live case, so I will refrain from commenting on it. Nonetheless, both give rise to concerns that the public will, rightly, want reassurance.

“I have therefore issued the Chief Constable with a formal challenge letter, designed to clearly set out Dorset Police’s current position and to outline the work underway to eliminate police-perpetrated abuse and maintain the highest possible professional standards.

“I firmly believe that our residents and communities should have confidence in their police service and the scrutiny provided not only by the [the Inspectorate], but by Commissioners and the independent scrutiny panels they administer across the country. This is vital if public trust and confidence is to develop and grow.

“I can assure you that unprofessional or unethical behaviour will be dealt with robustly and when standards fall below expectations, the Force will take swift action.

“Here in Dorset, we talk about the ‘relentless pursuit of criminals.’ That priority doesn’t just apply to the outside world; it directly applies to all officers and all staff. Let me be crystal clear – those who commit crime will be pursued, will be caught, will be charged, and will be taken to court and justice will be served.

There is absolutely no place in Dorset or any other police service for such people.

The Silver Line

We have been asked to repeat the article published in our Winter edition so that more residents can be aware of this excellent service... Sometimes everyone needs someone to talk to and connect with.

The Silver Line, working with AgeUK and other partners, provides a free, 24-hour telephone service for anyone aged 55 or over, offering friendship, support and a listening ear.

It gives people the chance to pick up the phone and enjoy a chat, get some support and feel all the wonderful

benefits that come from talking to a friend.

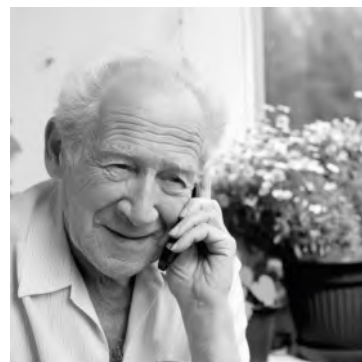
Loneliness can strike at any time of the day or night. But when those feelings of isolation, worry or loneliness strike, there is always someone you can call at the Silver Line. It provides two telephone friendship services:

Regular telephone friendship service. Run by AgeUK, the over-60s are matched with a friendly volunteer for regular weekly chats. The service has helped create hundreds of new friendships and many people say their calls are the highlight of their week. To get started, you “just tell the Silver Line a bit about yourself and they will do the rest”.

A 24-hour helpline service. Run by the Silver Line, it is a free 24-hour helpline that people can call for a chat, day or night, for whatever reason.

The Telephone Friendship service supports around 9,000 people each year. The Helpline answers around 300,000 calls from older people every year.

These services are for people in later life who’d like to talk to someone. You don’t need to be feeling lonely (although if you do, they’d like to help), and you don’t need to live on your own. Sometimes it’s just nice to talk.



To sign up for the regular telephone friendship service, where a volunteer calls each week, you need to:

- Be over 60, have your own landline or mobile phone.
- Be able to hear and be understood over the phone.
- Commit to a regular call at the same time each week.

Points to consider

The services may not be as helpful for people with memory loss, dementia or mental health issues.

You will want to make sure that everything is safe and secure. So before you receive a call from your new telephone friend the service will have screened them. To find out more and to register, go to www.ageuk.org.uk or simply Google for ‘The Silver Line UK’.

AgeUK Advice Line: 0800 678 1602, 8am to 7pm, 365 days.

The Silver Line: 0800 470 80 90.

Your new Membership Card

Our Neighbourhood Watch Committee recently reviewed the cost and utility of producing 2,500 annual membership cards. The original purpose of the card, to secure promised discounts at local stores and businesses no longer applies; the card serves a purpose only as a receipt for members’ donations (still £1, although larger donations are much appreciated). If you receive the Newsletter, you are deemed to be a member, no card is needed. However, if you would like a card, please cut out the card opposite and complete the details on the reverse.

FERNDOWN SOUTH & WEST PARLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



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Get Informed

What's On in our Parish?

The West Parley Parish Council (WPPC) website is one of the best in the country. It covers not just parish news but also much useful local information on the parish and local area..

It is particularly good on the coverage of the history and heritage of the village and has a comprehensive list of local facilities and local organisations. Find the WPPC website at (www.westparley-pc.gov.uk).

The parish council also has an excellent Facebook page at www.facebook.com/people/West-Parley-Parish-Council. Regularly updated, visitors will find all the current news and information. Recent posts include the fire at the Memorial Hall, updates on the huge development of land at Parley Cross, reports of crimes in the parish (e.g. a break-in of a car on a driveway on Chine Walk on 25 January – ‘did you see anything?’), even finds of an iPhone and prescription spectacles – ‘are they yours?’

Part of the NHW Queen’s Legacy project, covered in previous Newsletter issues, is to develop the sense of

‘localness’ so that we all feel part of a safe community.

The WPPC website already has details of a five mile Heritage Walk around the village with full details about points of interest and significance. There are also maps and directions for nine other excellent walks of varying lengths around Ferndown and West Parley.

As part of the Queen’s Legacy project, historical and local information in the style of the Heritage Walk will be added to the nine walks in the Spring so that we can all have a better understanding of the community.

Dates for your Diary

It's all about Community!

Please do your best to attend these events, informative, friendly, welcoming, useful and always worth a couple of hours of your time:

1. **Your Ferndown South & West Parley NHW Annual General Meeting** will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday April 25 at 7.30pm in St Mark’s Church, 250 New Road, West Parley BH22 8EW. It will last no longer than an hour. There will be a guest speaker and we will offer refreshments as in previous years.
2. **West Parley Annual Parish Meeting** on 26th April. 7-9pm at Parley First School An informal and social meeting to discuss any matters relating to West Parley. Various community groups will have stands to provide information on local activities and volunteering opportunities. A member of the Dorset Council Highways Team will be there.
3. **Ferndown U3A** take bookings for their courses and activities in July. There is always a huge demand for places. See www.ferndownu3a.co.uk.

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