

Welcome to the summer issue of Looking Out...

...which you may notice has had a redesign to include news from our local resident based Neighbourhood Action Groups.

West Oxfordshire has also recently welcomed a new Area Commander, Chief Inspector Colin Paine who arrived just as figures released show that crime fell across the district last year.

You can find out more about his plans for policing in the area in this newsletter and on his Twitter feed!

Danielle Hilton

Community Safety Partnership

An even safer place to live...

The new area commander for West Oxfordshire has welcomed the news that there were 625 fewer victims of crime in the area last year.

The latest crime figures also show that anti social behaviour has shown a marked decline over the past 12 months, thanks to increased intervention work by the Anti Social Behaviour unit and neighbourhood police teams.

The district also boasts a reduction in serious acquisitive crime like robbery and vehicle crime. Burglary has risen though.



Area Commander Chief Inspector Colin Paine, pictured left, said: "I am absolutely delighted to have taken over as the local police area commander for West Oxfordshire. I have been fortunate to take over at a

time when the crime level is extremely low which is largely due to the excellent partnership within West Oxfordshire.

"I am very keen to ensure that it continues to remain one of the safest places to live, work and visit. I live in the area so I have an added incentive to ensure that crime remains low!

"I am passionate about fighting crime in a traditional no-nonsense way. In particular I am aware that the area has suffered with burglaries from offenders travelling across borders from other areas. I would really encourage people to feel confident to pick up the phone and call us on 999 if they see any suspicious activity; I never want people to feel that they shouldn't bother us – we are always keen to know and it may well stop a burglary from taking place.

"I am really keen to enhance communication links and I would encourage everyone to sign up for our community messaging service that provides very local information and updates about crime and police activity in your area. I am also using Twitter on a daily basis to keep the community updated with my activity and let them know about crime issues."

You can sign up for free community messaging from the police at: www.tvpcommunitymessaging.org

Is your property a quick steal?



Lighter nights and warmer days can bring more opportunities for thieves looking for a quick steal.

Here are 10 tips for a safer summer:

1. Burglars are less likely to smash a locked window as it attracts attention but an open window or door makes their job easy. They can be in and out in seconds.
2. An unlocked front door or window can invalidate some home insurance as the premises have been left insecure.
3. Use a sturdy padlock to secure side gates.
4. Put wheelie bins out of the way so they can't be used to jump over your fence.
5. Remove keys from locks and store out of reach of letterboxes. This includes vehicle keys. Make sure everyone in the house knows where they are for emergency exits.
6. Lock up bikes when not in use, even when stored in a garage or shed.
7. Put away garden equipment and furniture. As well as being valuable to a thief, they can use it to break into your home.
8. Remove all items from your vehicle, especially when parking at remote beauty spots. Leave the glovebox open to show it's empty.
9. When parked up, make sure car doors are locked, windows and sunroof are shut.
10. If you go on holiday ask a trusted neighbour or friend to keep an eye on your property.

West Oxfordshire is a low crime area so help us to keep it that way - make sure you remember your summer for all the right reasons!

It's not all about urban crime

Thames Valley Crimestoppers has embarked on a campaign to raise its awareness in rural areas.

Under the banner 'Criminals don't just operate in towns and cities' a new leaflet reminds people that Crimestoppers:

- Enables callers to give information anonymously and safely.
- Is a registered charity helping to solve crime.
- Works in partnership with the police and councils.

Since 1998, when Crimestoppers came to Thames Valley, the charity has achieved the following results over 12 years:

- Over 2,100 people arrested and charged in the region as a direct result of calls to Crimestoppers.
- Around 20,500 actionable calls received.
- Nearly 40 arrests following calls to identify and locate some of the region's Most Wanted criminals.
- Over £3 million of stolen property recovered.
- Over £7 million worth of drugs seized.

Help Crimestoppers build on that success by calling 0800 555 111 or go online at www.crimestoppers-uk.org if you have any information about crime and you want to remain anonymous.

STAMP OUT RURAL CRIME

Rural neighbourhoods can be a target for criminals because they perceive isolation as a weakness but this doesn't need to be the case!

Anyone living or working in one of West Oxfordshire's rural communities is invited to an event on Thursday 28 July.

The Community Safety Partnership has organised the day to raise awareness of simple steps that can be taken to improve your security and reduce your chances of becoming a victim.

Area Commander Chief Inspector Colin Paine said: "West Oxfordshire has many rural communities and unfortunately we suffer from travelling criminals who pass through our district. Luckily there is a lot we can do to support rural residents and businesses to deter thieves and I urge as many people as possible to attend this important event."

Thames Valley Police and other relevant organisations will be handing out crime reduction advice specifically catered to those in rural areas. Free tack marking will also be on offer. There will also be short presentations at the start of the evening session.

The event will be held in two drop-in sessions - from 2 - 4.30pm and 6 - 8pm at Elderbank Hall, Station Road, Brize Norton. Entry is free.



Vigilance is key in tackling rural crime

NEWS IN BRIEF

Click on, tune in

'A Day in the Life Of...' video blogs are now running on the Safer West Oxon website to give viewers a flavour of the various work that public agencies do.

saferwestoxon.co.uk regularly attracts 35,000 hits each month and is popular with local residents to find out what is happening in their neighbourhood.



Garden thief arrested

A 29-year-old man was arrested and bailed for several thefts of garden items from properties in Chipping Norton. Heavy items such as saddle stones, bird baths, lawn mowers, patio sets and large plant pots were taken from front gardens. The man was arrested following information from the local community.

Officer assault charge

An 18-year-old woman has been charged with assault after hitting a Witney neighbourhood police officer while she was being arrested for a public order incident.

Report suspicious sightings

Local residents have reported seeing people acting suspiciously around properties and land, sometimes enquiring about scrap metal or copper which has later been stolen. If you notice anything unusual in your area please telephone the police immediately with as much description as possible.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Shaz Chudry

Neighbourhood Housing Manager



“Resident engagement is one of the top priorities at Cottsway Housing and we achieve this through a variety of ways.

“Apart from the usual postal surveys we also carry out telephone calls, appointment satisfaction cards and scheme meetings. There are a number of working groups within Cottsway with tenant representation to help deliver new services and improve existing ones. We also have a number of Residents Associations in the district.

“As part of our ‘reaching out’ programme two years ago we hired a mobile office to travel round the district reaching communities who cannot readily come to us. It proved so successful that we purchased the mobile office last year. We have now extended the service and this summer we have some evening surgeries planned.

“We also use this service to link up with other organisations. We are connected to the ‘Well Being’ initiative from the local Primary Care Trust and are a member of

the Community Safety Partnership who offer a wide range of crime reduction advice.

“The housing neighbourhood team has three officers who help and advise residents regarding their tenancy and the wider community.

“They help to resolve neighbour disputes by setting up initiatives such as Good Neighbour Agreements (GNAs). These are informal contracts where tenants abide by agreed conditions. This makes it self-policing and the ownership is firmly with the residents themselves.”

For more information on Cottsway Housing or to view their mobile office timetable please visit their website: www.cottsway.co.uk

Your community, your call

The annual crime reduction road show is back for its fourth year in July.

Residents will be able to pop along to ask advice and take away packs.

Neighbourhood officers will be offering free bike marking too. The events are supported by partner agencies who bring along their own information.

Monday 11 July:
Witney marketplace
9.30am - 12pm

Thursday 14 July:
Carterton marketplace
9.30am - 12pm

Saturday 16 July:
Woodstock marketplace
10am - 12pm



 **0845 8 505 505**

www.thamesvalley.police.uk

In an emergency dial 999. It is an emergency if a crime is being committed, is about to be committed or if there is a risk of serious injury.

Neighbourhood Watch Office	01993 861640
Crime Reduction Adviser	01993 861638
Crimestoppers	0800 555111
Oxfordshire Trading Standards	0845 051 0845
West Oxfordshire District Council	01993 861000
Join doorstep password schemes to keep bogus callers out:	
Thames Water	08459 200 800
Southern Electric	0800 622 838
British Gas	0845 955 5404
NPower	0845 602 6363

Neighbourhood action groups -

Problem solving in Witney

The Witney NAG is a problem-solving group made up of local residents, businesses, council representatives, the neighbourhood policing team and various groups including Age UK, the Rotary Club, Magistrates Service and community churches.



**Neighbourhood
Action
Group**

Calling all communities

Input from residents is essential in tackling issues in any community and that's why Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs) play a key role.

NAGs were introduced with the rollout of neighbourhood policing so that local residents could work with public agencies and key stakeholders to improve local quality of life.

Their work focuses around the main issues identified by residents. Anti-social behaviour, speeding, vandalism, litter and lack of youth facilities often appear.

NAG members, who are all volunteers, generally meet every 6-8 weeks and each member takes on responsibility for achieving certain tasks on behalf of the group but with the support of the official agencies present.

If you are interested in finding out more about joining your local NAG then please contact your neighbourhood police team through the non-emergency number:

0845 8 505 505.

As well as covering this wide range of key service areas, we want to ensure each parish is represented too.

Our NAG currently covers Witney, Leaffield, Ramsden, Crawley, Minster Lovell, Hailey, Curbridge, Lew and Ducklington.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to make a difference. Indeed, we particularly want to recruit members from the Leaffield, Ramsden, Crawley and Minster Lovell areas and from other community groups. We would also greatly value youth membership from someone aged between 16 and 18.

Our meetings are a two way communication process where we look at problem solving a number of local priorities.

Recently these have included anti social behaviour, speeding, litter and graffiti. More recently we have been investigating opportunities for helping young people to organise and hold an event in Witney.

Our NAG members have also benefitted from training in problem solving techniques, interesting talks from the Community First Responders group, the Community Payback scheme and even role plays organised by the Magistrates Service.

NAG membership is very rewarding and it doesn't need to take up much of your time - our monthly meetings typically last a couple of hours and are held in the evenings.

**Litter is one of
Witney's top issues**

If you're interested in joining Witney NAG then please email Andy Smith, the Witney NAG chair, at: witneynag@live.co.uk

for the community by the community



Speeding drivers often turn out to be local residents

Getting our priorities right

Eynsham Neighbourhood Action Group

It's been quite a busy year for the Eynsham Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) since our last newsletter in June 2010. The public engagement process at that time identified our priorities for the year; anti social behaviour, speeding and drugs, which is a new concern.

Although we still keep an overview of parking problems in the area, this is now part of the civil enforcement programme operated by West Oxfordshire District Council.

Our anti social behaviour problems have fortunately decreased during the year and this is in great part due to the efforts of our local policing team who have worked in close liaison with us and our other partners.

Speeding has been more of a problem as our speed detection devices have all been away for repair but are now fixed and recent checks have shown that there is no real increase in speeding vehicles over the last year. The majority of issues are more to do with perception of speed. Checks will continue and enforcement will be utilised where appropriate.

Our new priority is drugs. This is not a huge issue locally but unquestionably some problems do exist. A programme of checks on likely venues for drug sales and taking of drugs has resulted in a decrease in apparent drug usage and we continue to offer help to users by looking at ways of providing call in centres and counselling.

West Oxfordshire is one of the safest places to live in the UK, and our public surveys still support that idea. The NAG and our partners continue to work to maintain this position but please let us know of any problems you have and we will try to help. You can contact us by calling in to the police office in Eynsham village hall or by calling 0845 8 505 505.

AGED 16 - 18?

Want a real voice in the local community?

Then joining your NAG is ideal!

All the NAGs in West Oxfordshire have benefitted in the past from having younger members who can bring a different perspective to issues. Unfortunately these members move on as they get older so some vacancies are now available.

As a NAG member you can:

- Have a real input on local issues
- Help to find solutions to improve your neighbourhood
- Gain experience in working with different partner agencies

This all adds something valuable to your CV!

For more information please visit:
www.thamesvalley.police.uk/journh