

WATCH OVER WOKING

The news-sheet of the Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches (WAN)



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WAN Chairman's Christmas message

As we approach the end of 2017 we are all aware of the scale of challenges facing us in today's society. Just when the Police tell us that we must become part of the fight against those "behind the door" crimes of Domestic Abuse, Child Exploitation and Modern-day Slavery, we see real growth once again in burglary. All the more reason for us to grow our network across Woking and re-invigorate our membership.

Please make 2018 the year in which you become an active part in what we are trying to do to make our communities safer and more cohesive.

I am glad to say that we are working well with the new Inspector Mark Offord and his team at Woking Neighbourhood Police to develop a successful partnership, and on both sides we want to get back to a productive relationship in the future.

Our aim for 2018 is to expand the use of social media networking that has been so successfully achieved by Byfleet this year. Please read Fiona Syrett's article and get in touch with me if you have a group that can be tied in to Neighbourhood Watch or if you'd like practical help to set one up.

*We will once again hold a Spring open meeting so please hold the evening of **8 March** free in your calendars.*

I and the committee wish you and your families a very happy, and safe, Christmas and New Year.

Tony Kremer
WAN chairman

Advantages of using Facebook for Neighbourhood Watch

Fiona Syrett writes:

Love it or hate it, social media is here to stay and it can be a really powerful tool in our quest to get as many people as possible engaged with Neighbourhood Watch. So, what are the advantages of using social media, and in particular, a Facebook group, in your community?

Well, firstly it's free! As long as you've already got internet access, of course! No ink or paper needed and no legwork – no need to put notes through people's doors. It can all be done from your armchair!

If there are already active Facebook groups being used in your community, use these to promote your group and word will travel fast. New members will come to you – our group initially grew from 3 to 400 members in just 48 hours!

It gets people talking and creates more community spirit (yes, really!).

Information can be shared instantly with all your members e.g. Alerts, reports of missing persons, a burglary in the area etc. and all members can contribute and add to that information.

It's easy to source additional information to share with your members. The Police, Action Fraud, local authorities etc. all have their own Facebook pages. Updates from other NHW and local community Facebook groups can also be quickly shared. Using Facebook Insights, you can even time important updates to go out when members are most likely to be interacting with the group.

And don't worry about troublemakers or inappropriate comments - group Administrators have complete control and these can easily be removed.

If you'd like to start a Facebook group for your community but are not sure where to start, why not come along to one of the half day workshops we'll be running in the New Year? Co-ordinators will be informed when dates are available.

Bike Security - Sensible advice to help fight the current crime wave

- 1) A bike lock is a deterrent. The stronger the lock, the better the deterrent, and so the thieves are more likely to try and steal another bike nearby. See below for more advice on locks.
- 2) If you just use the bike to commute to and from the station, buy a cheap bike and a less expensive lock as a result. The Council tip at Martyrs Lane has a shop and there are always cheap bikes for sale there. BUT MAKE SURE IT IS ROAD WORTHY.
- 3) Get your bike registered. www.bikeregister.com or www.immobilise.com/help/registerbike. It's free but make sure you buy one of their tags to put on the bike to show the thieves that it is registered – another deterrent that makes the thieves carry on down the row and find another bike worth stealing.
- 4) Photograph your bike, including close-ups of numbers, tags etc. Keep on your PC or print and keep safe.
- 5) Insure it. For some less valuable bikes through your house insurance will suffice but read the small print. One example of specialist cycle insurance is 'Evans Cycles' where the accessories are also covered: www.evanscyclesinsurance.com (This is not a recommendation, just an example, other companies are available).
- 6) Do not assume that locking the bike up in clear view of town centre cameras is a deterrent to thieves – it isn't. The bike theft hot spot in Woking is the large bike rack outside the library and under the noses of the cameras.
- 7) If you have quick-release wheels try and thread the lock through the wheels as well as the frame. A chain lock will be better for that.
- 8) A bike stolen from railway property is not the responsibility of Woking Police to register – it is the responsibility of the British Transport Police.
- 9) While you are thinking about your bike, always wear a helmet and why not get some new lights or reflective clothing, or buy them for someone for Christmas.
- 10) Check out <https://www.drivesmartsurrey.org.uk/media-and-publicity-campaigns/cycling/> for cycle safety advice.

- Locks

In the UK there are 3 levels of security that all locks have to be marked with: Gold Silver and Bronze and are priced accordingly. See <http://www.soldsecure.com>.

Evans Cycles go to a lower level and sell theirs under 4 levels: Maximum, High, Medium, and Deterrent. Halfords have the equivalent in Ultimate, High, Medium and Basic. Most manufacturers also score their own lock on a scale of 1 to 10 (say). The higher the number the harder it is to cut or break – and the more expensive it is. Note that all high security locks will be heavy and you have to carry that weight around. If you feel they are too heavy for you, buy a cheap bike and a cheaper lock. The higher security D-Locks also lock the D-bar at both ends. This means that even if the thieves cut through the D-bar they cannot separate the 2 halves to get it off the bike – a very useful deterrent. The locks are not always cut through with a bolt cutter; some thieves use nitrogen spray to freeze the lock and hit it with a mallet to shatter it. Better locks require more spray and a heavier mallet. Try to secure you cycle in such a way that the lock cannot be moved to the ground, where it is much easier to hit and remove.

The very highest security locks will cost you from £75 upwards, but a slightly less secure one may be £50 – and be a little lighter. You pays your money, you takes your choice.

Make your bike visibly difficult to steal (and easy to identify if recovered) – the thieves are likely to move on and find a less secure bike.

It is worth noting that sometimes you can buy items from Evans and Halfords (and others) over the internet at a lower price than in the shop, and you collect the item from the shop, sometimes within the hour if it is in stock.

- **Cycle store**

For even more security at home consider a purpose built cycle store. Here is an example from the Secured by Design 'police preferred products' website:

<http://www.securedbydesign.com/members/trimetals-limited/?prod=7160>

For more information see:

<https://surrey.police.uk/advice/protect-your-home-and-belongings/bicycle-theft/>

or Contact your local Crime Reduction Advisors Mike Jones and Stephen Cake on 01483 39508.

Have a car with a keyless entry system?

Worried about the signal being scanned from outside your house whilst you sleep and have thieves open and start your car?

Worried about the signal being cloned in the supermarket car park as you walk away?

Well, there are some things you can try.

- 1) Disable the keyless option, if you can. Have a look at the manual and see if this is possible. This does mean you will now need to press the little button on the fob/key to unlock and lock the door (stressful, I know, but you'll soon get over it), and the fob/key may need to be located in the dash/console before you press the start button (or you flip the key out of the fob to put in the ignition). If your dash or console does not have a specific slot for the fob, then you may find you cannot disable the keyless option. Disabling the signal from the fob also considerably reduces the chances of accidentally leaving it in the (unlocked) car – maybe in your jacket on the back seat - and walking away.
- 2) Put your car away in the garage or park it in a well-lit place.
- 3) Keep the fob in the fridge or microwave (or other large metal container) when at home. The metal case of the fridge/microwave usually blocks the signal.
- 4) Never leave the fob in the house near the front door or car.
- 5) Buy an RFID pouch that blocks the signal (works the same as the credit card RFID wallets). It means taking the fob out to unlock the doors, start the car, and lock the doors when you exit. Here is one from Halfords: <http://www.halfords.com/technology/mobile-phone-accessories/phone-tablet-accessories/halfords-anti-rfid-theft-wallet>. This may be most useful for storing the fob when at home. If a pouch is not an option for you, an aluminium lidded box may work. Simulate it first with an aluminium foil food container (the sort of thing your curry gets delivered in). Put fob in, and enclose foil all round the fob. Walk up to the car and see if doors unlock. May block the signal, may not.

Apart from advice on disabling the keyless facility, the other options are suggestions from trawling the web, and are no guarantees that the signal cannot be intercepted and amplified by thieves. But they are certainly worth a try.

NhW does not endorse any specific product and merely describes some solutions that car users may find useful.

Our website

Please see many articles and downloads from our website, www.wanw.org.uk

Useful articles include:

New advice on using social media: http://www.wanw.org.uk/wp/using_social_media/

Understanding drugs and cuckooing: <http://www.wanw.org.uk/wp/crime-prevention/>

News from the neighbourhood Police teams

Please go to the Woking Police web page for news regarding your local area.

Byfleet, West Byfleet, Pyrford:	http://www.surrey.police.uk/woking/byfleet-west-byfleet-pyrford/
Horsell & Goldsworth Park	http://www.surrey.police.uk/woking/goldsworth-park-horsell/
Town Centre	http://www.surrey.police.uk/woking/woking-town/
Old Woking, Barnsbury, Kingfield, Westfield, Mayford, & Sutton Green	http://www.surrey.police.uk/woking/old-woking/
Sheerwater	http://www.surrey.police.uk/woking/sheerwater/
Maybury	http://www.surrey.police.uk/woking/maybury/
Mount Hermon, St Johns, Hook Heath, Mayford & Sutton Green	http://www.surrey.police.uk/woking/mount-hermon-st-johns-hook-heath-mayford-sutton-green/
Knaphill, Brookwood	http://www.surrey.police.uk/woking/knaphill-brookwood/

Call 101 for all non-emergency policing matters or **report online** at www.surrey.police.uk.

Call 999 if you have a genuine emergency requiring the attendance of the police (e.g. a crime is in progress or someone is in immediate danger)

Call the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 if you have information about a crime and don't want to leave your name.