

Reporting crime, remaining anonymous

Most of us would want to report a crime to help the authorities to solve it and arrest the culprits, but some are reluctant to do so because of fears the criminals will find out who reported them and take retribution. So, for many, it is easier to bury our heads in the sand and claim we see nothing. This is wrong, and we know it.

There is a simple way to report crime, criminals, or suspicions – even if no crime has yet happened – and to receive a reward when it is on offer with your anonymity absolutely guaranteed.

The charity Crimestoppers has been in operation for 30 years, and at no time in those 30 years has the identity of anyone reporting a crime been revealed to the police, the press or the public. The police cannot force Crimestoppers to reveal any identities. To get the message out to the youth of today Crimestoppers now has an organisation called Fearless that is aimed at 11-16 year olds, but where the strict rules of anonymity remain.

If you phone Crimestoppers or Fearless, your number is scrambled. If you send in a report via their website, the IP address, email address, or any other information that could identify the source computer or smartphone is also scrambled. Your name, address or age is never asked for. Before any message is passed to the police it is checked and sanitised where necessary. For example, if your report included “my neighbour at number No. 3” this would be changed to, “the occupier of No. 3”. This strict control of reports is what Crimestoppers’ reputation is based on, and they are very proud of it.

Crimestoppers’ success rate is also impressive. Last year, it received 450,000 messages by phone or through its website. 154,934 of those messages were forwarded to the police, which resulted in 23,565 crimes being solved or prevented. Crimestoppers also offer cash rewards for information on serious crimes, with recipients collecting their reward anonymously from a bank they nominate.

So if you see something criminal or suspicious going on around you, there is no need to bury your head in the sand. You can report it to Crimestoppers in the safe knowledge that your identity will never be known, even to the police.

Representatives for Fearless will be visiting schools in Surrey to educate the youth of today that gang culture, drugs, anti-social behaviour, etc, need not be tolerated and that they can make a big contribution in getting the few key criminals to justice and improve everyone’s lives.

Many more details can be found on the websites: www.crimestoppers-uk.org and www.fearless.org. Their phone number is 0800 555 111 and is open 24/7. Of course, anything that requires Police attention quickly still needs you to ring 999. And please continue to call 101 to report any non-urgent crime directly to the Police.