

Report, report, report!

Many of us see crimes, or potential crimes, and do nothing. This could be because of the false belief that “the police won’t do anything”, or “the council won’t bother to fix it”.

Wrong, on both counts.

While the police and Woking Borough Council need to prioritise their responses to any report, they are duty-bound to consider the report and act accordingly. All police reports are recorded, and the more residents report certain incidents, the more the authorities will take note.

With the slow return to normalcy, we are all starting to get out more and – hopefully – warmer weather may allow us to enjoy the outdoors more often. Whilst out and about we can all be the eyes and ears of the police and the council.

The more we residents report a particular incident, the more the authorities will take note. One call to the police about a potential drug deal you saw by the garage block will probably not get prioritised, but 10 calls about the same incident will. Never assume someone else has reported it. And never be embarrassed to contact the police.

Using 101 is a great way of making non-emergency reports to the police. Use this number for anything other than an emergency, or where time is of the essence (always ring 999 in those cases). You can call 101 on the phone; you can use the facility online at www.surrey.police.uk; you can send the police details using instant messaging from your smartphone; and you can have a live chat via the Surrey Police website. Everything gets sent to the same team at Surrey Police HQ in Guildford, and everything has the same priority.

Similarly, you should report to the council those annoyances that blight our lives such as potholes, flashing streetlights, abandoned cars in the road, dog mess in public areas, and persistently annoying neighbours. After all, wellbeing is not just about keeping crime under control, but also about getting those things fixed that inconvenience everyone.

One new development that should help is Canal Watch, an initiative launched by Surrey Police and the Basingstoke Canal Authority. As part of this, volunteers are now patrolling 13 miles of canal across the Borough of Woking to ensure public safety, report suspicious activity, pick up litter, mark dog poo and report any other maintenance issues.

In layman’s terms, we pay our taxes and we expect something in return. But being annoyed, or even angry, is not acceptable if you have chosen not to play your part in reporting whatever-it-is. The police, our local councils and other authorities can only be expected to resolve our problems if they are told about them.

To contact the Police for anything: <https://www.surrey.police.uk/>

If specifically regarding crime: <https://www.surrey.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/> (Live Chat option during the day)

For Woking BC, Surrey CC and Basingstoke Canal

<https://www.woking.gov.uk/report-it>

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/do-it-online/report-it-online>

<https://basingstoke-canal.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/lengthsmen/lengthsmen-scheme/>