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Your Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is:



Residents of LOWER MORDEN help to reduce crime



From 2004 to 2006 Lower Morden was a Neighbourhood Watch free zone, Neighbourhood Watch now covers all of Lower Morden ward and every home in every road is a member of NHW.

This is the first of the twenty wards within Merton Borough to achieve this thanks to the hard work and determination of Lower Morden Safer Neighbourhoods Team.

The team proactively promoted the scheme by visiting residents and discussing the benefits of being a member. The ward now has 85 co-ordinators who share information including crime alerts with their members.

Neighbourhood Watch is one of the biggest and most successful crime prevention initiatives ever. Behind it lies a simple idea, and a central value shared by millions of people around the country:

Getting together with your neighbours to take action can cut local crime and issues.

Lee Roberts, Neighbourhood Watch Manager for Merton said, "Everyone knows that the police are there to fight crime, but they need your help to do an effective job. Neighbourhood Watch is all about an active partnership with the police". PCSO Clare Hammond, Lower Morden SN Team said, "NHW is proving an extremely worthwhile tool in Lower Morden.

We couldn't have achieved the coverage of the ward without the enthusiasm of our residents and the ongoing encouragement of Lee Roberts.

Bogus Caller Alert!

A suspected bogus caller, who claimed to be from Neighbourhood Watch, is believed to have made off with a wallet from a resident's home.

The man told his victim he was from NHW and offered to change locks at a reduced rate. He said he would return in a couple of days. After he left the victim discovered a wallet containing cash was missing. He never returned.

He is described as white, approx 35-40yrs old and about 5' 6" tall. He was wearing a beige patterned shirt, mauve shorts, brown trainers and had a London accent. NHW co-ordinators do not have identification cards. However, as they are not qualified crime prevention officers or qualified to carry out any works in your home, there is no reason why they would need access to your property.

A genuine NHW co-ordinator may wish to personally hand you your welcome pack, newsletter or crime figures but will not require access into your home. If you are in any doubt do not let them in.

Community comes together

Merton Police recently held a public meeting to bring together the local community. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the problem we all face regarding knife related crime and how Merton intends to deal with it locally.

Chief Superintendent Chris Bourlet, who led the meeting, said "We are seeking to gain the support and commitment of the whole community to increase police activity to create a safer environment for young people. This will be achieved through a number of tactics, including the highly visible use of search arches and search wands at key locations such as transport hubs and routes where intelligence indicates the use or carrying of weapons is likely, before these tactics will be introduced, police officers will visit schools and explain to young people the extent of police stop and search powers and Operation Blunt 2, a London wide initiative to stop the killing of young people by weapons, primarily knives."

Over 50 people attended the meeting which was held in Vestry Hall, Mitcham. Speakers included representatives from Merton Educational Services, Merton Youth Services, Stop and Search Monitoring Group and local senior police officers. A range of questions were asked by the local residents from "what activities are available in Merton for young people" to "what support is available to parents with teenage children". One local resident said, "I'm really pleased I came. It's been both interesting and useful listening to what's being done".

SNTeam close cannabis factory in Ravensbury

On 18th October Police officers from Ravensbury SNT executed a drugs warrant at an address in Leonard Avenue, Morden.

The SNT had received information from a local resident stating that the house had been unoccupied for some months, but people were still seen regularly coming and going from the property at all hours of the day and night. On entering the property, police found over 300 cannabis plants.

The complete rear of the house had been converted to include a sophisticated hydroponics system. There was nobody at the address at the time of the search and no arrests have yet been made.

Simple Tips to Avoid Cycle Theft

With the rise in petrol / diesel prices more people are considering using pedal power. We should be aware that this could lead to a rise in cycle thefts if simple crime prevention measures are not taken.

Bicycles are easy to get about on by cyclists and thieves alike. When leaving your bike unattended, there are some simple things you can do to deter thieves.

Invest in a good bicycle lock, they are relatively inexpensive - D locks are best - look for 'Sold Secure Ltd' approved models or ask at a bicycle shop for a recommendation.

Whenever you leave your bicycle unattended, make sure you lock it to something secure; a purpose built bicycle rack is ideal. If there are no bicycle racks, contact your local council to see if any are planned.

It's a good idea to take any removable parts (for example, wheels, saddle) with you when you leave your bicycle, or lock them with the bicycle if you can.

Get your bicycle security-marked or engraved - contact the crime prevention officer at your local police station or check out diary dates with your local Neighbourhood Watch for details of security-marking events.

Lee Roberts to become a mother



Lee Roberts, NHW Manager, is leaving us to become a mother to her first baby. Lee has been with the Merton NHW Association since it first started in December 2003. Lee has been a tower of strength to NHW in Merton, and her enthusiasm has been infectious showing continuous commitment in the 2-days-a-week that she manages the NHW office. She will be surely missed, and we are already counting the days to her return.

We, The Merton NHW Association, all the NHW co-ordinators and the 30,000 members in Merton wish Lee the very best and a very happy parenthood.

The Merton NHW Association welcomes Zoe Pullman from Safer Merton, who will be stepping in and can be contacted in the usual manner.

Don't lose your cards this Christmas

Police at Merton are asking residents and visitors to Merton town centres this Christmas to be extra vigilant when using Automated Teller Machines (ATMs). Police have received reports from victims claiming they were deliberately distracted whilst using a cash machine, which later resulted in money being taken from their bank accounts.

ATMs (Cash Machines)

General Advice:

- Try and use a machine that is in a place where you feel safe and secure, like in the bank or a supermarket.
- Be aware of who is around you. If you see anyone acting suspiciously then use another machine.
- If you are distracted at the cash point or think that someone has seen your PIN, cancel the transaction and leave.
- Check the machine to see if there is anything stuck to it or if anything else looks out of place. Run your finger along the slot for your card. If there is something odd, do not use the machine.

Skimming

This is when a skimming device attached to the card entry slot to record magnetic stripe details without the cardholder's knowledge. A miniature camera is hidden over the PIN pad. This enables the criminal to produce a counterfeit/fake card and withdraw money at a cash machine using the legitimate PIN. The cardholder does not know this is happened and so it is often some time before they or the bank notice unusual transactions.

Shoulder surfing

This is when criminals look over a cash machine user's shoulder to watch the PIN being entered, then steal the card using distraction techniques or pick pocketing. Distraction techniques include telling the person using the cash point that they have dropped something or 'accidentally' spilling a drink over them.

Card trapping devices

A device is inserted by a criminal into the cash machine's card slot, which traps and retains the card. After the cardholder gives up trying to get their card back and leaves, the criminal removes the device, along with the card. Withdrawal of cash often happens immediately, before the cardholder has reported the card's loss to their bank. On occasions the criminal poses as a 'helpful bystander' and tricks the victim into re-entering their PIN, which the criminal observes and memorises or records.

Safer Merton

Working Together To Keep Merton Safe & Sound

What bothers you?

Safer Merton are again asking residents to outline their three main concerns to help inform their planning for 2008-9.

It's important that the views of the public are taken into consideration when planning the priorities for the police, council and other partners over the next 12 months, therefore they would greatly appreciate you spending five minutes telling Safer Merton what you would like them to focus on. The survey goes live in October and can be found at www.merton.gov.uk/communitysafety

Last year Merton's priorities were burglary, anti-social behaviour, youth crime, domestic violence and alcohol.

CRIME CAN PAY

If you have information about any crime, phone CRIMESTOPPERS on 0800 555 111.

Your call is free, you can remain anonymous and you may receive a reward



The Chair's corner

by W.B.Picano

Welcome to our latest edition of the "Merton Watch" Newsletter, which again is full to the brim with useful information and tips on keeping you safe this Christmas.

Christmas is also that time of year that we all become pre-occupied with things like, who's going to who for Christmas dinner, what presents to buy people, what food and drink to get and will it be enough to last the Christmas break.

Whilst this is happening, it can become very easy to be a victim of crime, like card fraud, stolen car or burglary. Please take the time to read all the useful tips in this edition in order to ensure you all have a very safe and crime free Christmas.

The Merton NHW Association and myself wish all our coordinators and members a Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Focus on Crime

Merton is divided into three police areas, Wimbledon, Mitcham and Morden, supported by Safer Merton.
Here, Merton NHW Association offers advice on keeping your vehicle safe this Christmas

Keep your vehicle safe this Christmas

Car crime can be distressing and annoying due to the inconvenience it causes. You could be without a car for weeks, waiting for a garage to make repairs or for your insurer to pay. That's why the security features of your car should be as important as any other feature. A lot of vehicle crime results from criminals seeing opportunities and taking them.

Keep valuables and possessions safe

Do not leave anything on display in your car, even an old coat on the back seat is a temptation for someone to smash and grab, they steal first and think of the value later. Take all your belongings with you when you leave the car, if you can not, then lock them in the boot, out of view, preferably before you start your journey. Items such as mobile phones, laptop computers, cash, vehicle documentation and personal documentation etc, are particularly attractive to thieves.

Electronic immobilisers and Alarms

These are particularly beneficial in putting off car thieves, but they must be fitted by main dealers or installers accredited by the Vehicle Security Installation Board. Car alarms help to keep your car secure but they must be installed professionally to be effective.

Mechanical immobilisers

Such as steering-wheel locks are a good alternative to electronic immobilisers. They are not expensive and are easy to fit, they are also a visual deterrent. Don't forget locking wheel nuts, as wheels are an easy target for car thieves.

Etching

Your car's registration number or the last seven digits of your car's Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) on all the windows and headlamps is another visual deterrent, as it is a costly business for thieves to change all the windows and headlamps if they want to sell the vehicle on.

Satellite navigation systems

Are becoming more popular with motorists and more so with thieves. If you have a portable system then keep it safe by taking it, together with the support



cradle and suction pads, with you when you leave your car. Remember to wipe away any suction pad marks left on the windscreen or dashboard, as these are the signs a thief will look for. Don't leave the equipment in the glove compartment, as a thief will usually check there first.

Keep your car keys safe

When you leave your car always remove the ignition key and lock all the doors - it only takes a few seconds for a thief to jump into your car and drive away. Follow this routine all the time, even when filling up with petrol or popping into a shop. At home, always keep your car keys in a safe place, out of sight and away from windows and doors.

Parking

If you have a garage, use it. Always lock your car and garage. If you don't have a garage, always try and park your car in a well-lit, open space. Thieves tend to steal from cars that are parked in places where they run the least risk of being seen. When parking your car away from home, try to avoid parking in places that are unattended, have easy access, are concealed from public view and have many escape routes. Try and find a public car park, which is well lit and secure.



Keeping Safe this Christmas

Christmas shopping can be a drag – all those presents to buy, no money left to buy them with – and your local burglars have the same problem too!

Burglary everywhere rises over the Christmas period. Make sure you don't become a statistic by:

Tips to follow

Your House:

- Lock doors, windows and gates when you go out, even if it's just for a few minutes or you are only in the garden
- Lock up when you go to bed – put the keys somewhere you can find them quickly in an emergency but keep them out of sight of prowlers to prevent letterbox burglaries
- Don't leave a spare key concealed outside the house – burglars know where to look
- Don't let people see into your home – put up net curtains or draw curtains and blinds when the lights are on.
- When you go out make it look like your house is occupied.
- Leave lights and radio on a timer switch.
- If you buy expensive new items such as a TV, don't leave the empty box by the bin as an advert.



If you're going away

- Get someone to look after your home whilst you're away. They can make it look lived in by drawing curtains, picking up mail, parking in your drive or leaving footprints in the snow if we have a white Christmas!
- If you do leave keys with a neighbour, do not label them with your address
- Use a timer switch to turn on lights or a radio, especially in the evening
- Cancel any milk or newspaper deliveries, including free papers

These few simple things can ensure you have a really happy new year!

Contacting Merton NHW

Merton NHW now have a new e-mail address, so please send all correspondence to:

mertonnhw@met.police.uk

Did you know?

Did you know that the Metropolitan Police answer on average over 1400 calls every single night within the London area.

A police dog is worth 10 officers at crime scene incidents. A dog can cover a much larger area than a single officer. It can detect human scents from several hundred yards away and also search much more restricted areas such as undergrowth.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



THE WINNING COMBINATION



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Would you like to reach nearly 30,000 addresses in Merton?

Advertising space is available at competitive rates.

If you would like to advertise your business in the next issue call the

NHW Manager on

020 8649 3213 or mertonnhw@met.police.uk

Useful Numbers to Note

Emergencies	999 or 112	Wimbledon Sector Office	020 8649 3144/3145	Highway Safety	020 8545 3206
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111	Mitcham Sector Office	020 8649 3218/3267	Safer Merton	020 8545 4146
Crime Prevention Office	020 8649 3245	Morden Station Office	020 8649 3125	Victim Support	020 8545 1637
NHW Office / Manager	020 8649 3213	Anti-Social Behaviour Unit	020 8274 5974 / 5972	Abandoned Vehicles	020 8545 3189
Merton Police	020 8947 1212	Fly-Tipping / Fly-Posting	020 8545 3170	Graffiti Helpline	020 8545 3170

Disclaimer

The Merton Neighbourhood Watch Association or The Metropolitan Police are not agents for the businesses or individuals included within the Merton Watch, and are unable to vouch for the professional qualifications, trade certifications and memberships of trade associations which may be shown against individual entries. The Merton Neighbourhood Watch Association and The Metropolitan Police advises the public to satisfy themselves as to the exact type of goods or services offered or qualifications held by the businesses and the individuals advertised in this publication.

This publication of the Merton Watch is supported by the Metropolitan Police and sponsored by the above local businesses