



Watch Schemes Newsletter

Somerset

Spring 2019

District Superintendent

I hope everyone had an enjoyable and peaceful Christmas. As I write it's bright, beautiful and the sun is shining for the first time this year. We look forward to what the New Year brings. Still it appears that we will have to deal with the uncertainty of what our relationship with Europe will look like.

From a police point of view, after much ground work we have really consolidated what our Neighbourhood Policing offering looks like. The Chief Constable and the PCC have made it a priority to protect that resource and we have worked to enhance and focus it, you should have started to see improved visibility of local officers, particularly PCSOs. Through 2019 we plan to ensure that we really underpin our offering to communities.

My colleagues in Response have done like wise to emergency calls and those phoning our non-emergency 101 number, where our call handling is amongst the best in the country. In Investigations (old school CID) we have worked tirelessly to manage the most serious and complex crime investigations. We have introduced new technology from Body Worn Video to new personal issue laptops, all designed to support frontline delivery.

Just before Christmas I clocked up 25 years' service in the police, for half that period I have been a Superintendent. I am really optimistic for the year ahead – I think we have built a really strong foundation to build on despite the difficult budgetary position we have faced for many years. This year we will also be strengthening our proactive local problem-solving capabilities so that we can prevent, deter and disrupt the crimes that we know are making some of our communities feel less safe – serious violence, knife crime, drugs and house burglary.

Superintendent Mike Prior

Neighbourhood Policing Support Team

Neighbourhood Watch Schemes continue to be our eyes and ears within the Community, providing us with help, support and information so we can deal with the issues that matter most. The commitment of the Neighbourhood Watch Administrators, Lindsey, Katie and Trevor throughout 2018 meant you all received strong support and guidance, whether it be setting up a new scheme or being involved in an existing one. These efforts will continue in 2019.

Our traditionally busy periods, Halloween, Bonfire Night and Christmas were still busy of course, but due to the efforts of the Beat/Response Officers and Police staff we were able to keep demand manageable. We worked closely with schools, shops, other organisations and of course Neighbourhood Watch to deliver crime prevention messages and support through this period, as well as ensuring a targeted approach to Police patrols at key locations over the Festive period.

2019 will of course continue to bring significant challenges. We do not yet know yet what impact Brexit will have on the service or whether it will have one at all. Of course strong feelings either way can lead to protest and potential disorder which could clearly have an impact on the public and Police resources.

The other issue is how we support the most vulnerable members of society, this is complex with many aspects and partners involved, but by being our eyes and ears you can all help by informing us of any suspicious activity and concerns you may have about your friends and neighbours.

Look after one and other, Happy New Year to you all!

Inspector Lee Moore

DATA PROTECTION – GOOD PRACTICE FOR EMAIL SAFETY



As we are continually reminding people to be careful when disclosing our personal information, we would like to remind co-ordinators to use BCC when emailing multiple people. BCC, or **Blind Carbon Copy**, hides the email addresses of all the people receiving a message, protecting their privacy and reducing the opportunity for scammers to use this information. If using Outlook, when you hit the button for a **NEW EMAIL**, a new screen opens. If you then click **CC** a second screen appears giving you the option to **BCC**. This is where you put the email address of the people you want to contact.

FRAUDS AND SCAMS – ADVICE FROM OUR CRIME REDUCTION OFFICER

Fraud and 'scams' involving criminals gaining money or personal information from an individual can be by email, text, phone or in person, in the street or on the doorstep. They may even purport to be from banks, police or other organisation. Some elderly adults can be especially vulnerable to this type of crime.

There are ten rules to help attempt prevent this.

- Be suspicious of all offers and deals that are 'too good to be true'.
- Do not agree to offers or deals immediately – insist on time to get independent or legal advice before making a decision
- Do not hand over money or sign anything until credentials have been checked
- Never send money to anyone you don't know or trust
- Never give banking or personal details to anyone you don't know or trust
- Always log onto a website directly rather than clicking on links in an Email
- Find solid, independent evidence of a company's success
- Always get independent or legal advice if an offer involves money, time or commitment
- If you spot a scam or have been scammed, report it and get help. Contact Action Fraud on **0300-123-2040** or via their website www.actionfraud.police.uk. Call the police on **101** if you know the suspect or if they are still in the area.
- Don't be embarrassed – scammers are cunning and clever. By reporting incidents you will make it more difficult for them to deceive others.

SCAMS
TARGET YOU
PROTECT YOURSELF



CYBER SECURITY

Fraud is an ever-evolving crime and fraudsters are finding new ways to target victims, especially the most vulnerable people in our society. While the type of offences change as technology advances, the devastating impact on victims does not. Here are some tips to help improve your security online:

- Be wary about the personal information you post online and on your social media sites, always check the security and privacy settings.
- Use anti-virus software on all devices and update it regularly.
- Don't use public Wi-Fi for online banking, accessing emails or anything involving sensitive information. When doing these things in public use your 3G/4G or 5G connection. Data passed over these connections are always protected.
- If you are having issues with your computer, contact the retailer you purchased it from regarding service and repair. If you are having issues with your internet speed or service, contact your service provider for advice.
- Be extremely wary of unsolicited phone calls, emails or text messages purporting to be from your bank or your phone provider. Particularly if they are requesting personal information such as date of birth or passwords.

If you have been a victim of fraud or know anyone who has please report it to Action Fraud via 0300 123 2040 or actionfraud.police.uk