

# LOCAL WATCH-WORD



The Newsletter of the Eastleigh Neighbourhood Watch Association keeping you up to date with crime and safety issues in your area

June 2023

## QR CODED SCAM

Scammers often look to the latest trends for new cybercrime tactics. A QR code (Quick Response code) is two-dimensional code that can be scanned using a smartphone camera with a suitable app. QR codes can be used to store and share various types of information such as text, website addresses and contact information. Although QR codes have numerous useful applications, criminals can also use them for malicious purposes. Cybercriminals can easily embed malicious code or phishing URL into the QR code. The pixelated dots can be modified through numerous free tools that are widely available on the internet.

In this way, the QR code can direct victims to malicious websites used to extract consumer identity and personal information or even money.



- If not, make sure that you know who has produced the code and someone has not tampered with or put their own sticker over the original QR code. When you scan, you should see the website address appear on your phone screen, so check it looks authentic before progressing further.

If you think you are the victim of fraud or scam, you should report this to Action Fraud (look for the [Action Fraud](#) website).

If you are worried or want help with any communication, our Cyber Champions are available to offer free advice. Just go to the [Hampshire Cyber Watch Home page](#) and hit the 'request help' red button:

Our Champs also give free talks to groups on cybercrime awareness and how to avoid being a victim - to arrange one, contact us via the same [home page](#).



### Quarterly Tip

**Use 2.S.V.**

**Double protect yourself with pin, face or fingerprint verification (2 Step Verification)**

QR codes can also be used as a delivery method to download malicious code and compromise your device. Once you have downloaded the malicious file, many other outcomes are automatic and stealthy.

QR codes used properly are a great time saver, meaning you don't have to type in a long and complicated web URL. However, do be cautious when using them.

An example is where a fake QR code is stuck to a parking payment machine, disguised as a "quick pay" option. Motorists have had money stolen from their bank accounts after trying to pay for parking using fake QR codes.

### How to keep safe from this fraud

- Be careful what you scan - never just assume the QR code will take you where it says it will. If in doubt use another means of communication.
- If possible, go to the source: If you see a QR code you want to use, try instead to access the website directly by putting the address into your browser.

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# A Note From Our Chairman



Mike Anthony

advice on what we can do to protect our digital trail. For further information go to:

[https://www.getsafeonline.org/digitalfootprint/?utm\\_source=nwemail&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=nwmay23](https://www.getsafeonline.org/digitalfootprint/?utm_source=nwemail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=nwmay23)

## ADVICE FOR OWNERS OF MOTORHOMES (and other high value vehicles):

I sent out a message recently about the steep rise in thefts of motorhomes since Covid-19, and the strong second hand market for such vehicles, both at home and abroad. This demand for second hand motorhomes, and the fact that they typically remain on drives for long periods, makes them very attractive targets for vehicle thieves.

Research by insurance companies shows that, although we feel more comfortable having vehicles visible to us on our drives, this is not really a deterrent to thieves.

Most modern cars are fitted with alarms and immobilisers, but technology employed by thieves also becomes more sophisticated, to get around the advances of manufacturers. Police and insurance companies advise a 'belt and braces' approach to protecting valuable vehicles left on drives:

- make sure you lock the vehicle and close all windows.
- if you have a gate on your drive - close and secure it when not in use.
- if you have keyless entry and can't switch your key 'off', use an RFID pouch or box to shield it from thieves. Keep keys out of sight.
- use additional security measures such as steering wheel locks, pedal or gear locks, tracking devices or CCTV (make it difficult for thieves to steal and/or easy to track your vehicle).

**Our Digital Footprint:** You may have seen a recent reminder from GetSafeOnline that every time we use visit a website, send or receive a message, or email, buy or book anything online, comment on a post, upload a photo or find directions on our phone, we're adding to our digital footprint. The internet provides many positive experiences, but we could probably all think more about the trail we leave online.

The Get Safe Online campaign for May considers what might happen as a result of our digital footprint and provides tips and

Lots more information can be found on our ENWA website

[www.eastleighnhw.org.uk/](http://www.eastleighnhw.org.uk/)

and also take a look at our [Facebook](#) page

## AGM:

You will see in this that we have our AGM this year on 20th July at 7.30 pm. This will be our first face-to face AGM since the Covid lockdowns. An invitation with details of arrangements will be sent out a couple of weeks before the event but, in the meantime, please note this date and try to come along and support us.

Enjoy the arrival of summer at last.

## Corben's Corner

By John Corben

Most of us now have modern mobile phones which enable us to communicate with the outside world via emails, SMS messages and a multitude of app downloads such as WhatsApp. Whilst this can bring great benefits it can also bring its own potential problems, unless certain precautions are put in place. Just like our home computers, from time to time, the software developers discover weakness in the operating system, which hackers are potentially able to exploit. To overcome this, software update patches are released from time to time. It is important when notified on your phone of a software update, that it is downloaded and installed. To check that your phone is up to date go to 'settings' and scroll down to 'software update' and click on check for updates, and, if requested, follow the prompts.

### WhatsApp six digit text scam

Recent releases from WhatsApp aimed at its millions of users are warning them about fake scammer messages attempting to gain access to your private



chats, which could potentially lead to disastrous consequences. The scam begins when you receive a message from an actual friend starting what appears to be a normal chat with you. At the same time, a six-digit code will suddenly appear on your device. At this point, the friend will say that the code has been sent to your device in error and please could you forward it to them. If this happens to you, **stop and end the conversation at once.** It's almost certain that the friend messaging you has already

been hacked and you will be next, if the code is sent. The scam works because WhatsApp won't let a new device access an account unless it's been verified via that randomly generated six-digit code. It's these numbers the hackers need in order to access your WhatsApp account. As a further precaution, when using WhatsApp on your phone, set up 'two factor authentication'. Open WhatsApp and locate the three vertical dots normally on the top left of your screen. Click on 'account' and then click on 'two step verification' and follow the prompts.



# ABANDON ALL HOPE



A subject that came up at a recent beat surgery was abandoned vehicles, which is relevant for all areas. Please note that unless you have a reason to believe a vehicle has been involved in a crime, or is stolen, this is a council matter. If on private land, it is the landowners responsibility.

You can report to Eastleigh Borough Council - <https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/environment/clean-streets/abandoned-vehicles-and-shopping-trolleys>

From their website - Abandoned vehicles - An assessment will be made by council officers in respect of any report received of a potential abandoned vehicle. Consideration will be given to the following:

- If the vehicle is untaxed for a significant period of time. (A vehicle that is untaxed for a short while but in otherwise good condition may not necessarily be considered as abandoned).
- If the vehicle has no valid MOT (where required) for a significant period of time. (A vehicle that has no valid MOT for a short while but in otherwise good condition may not necessarily be considered as abandoned).
- Stationary for a significant amount of time - council officers may need to observe the vehicle at the reported location for a period of time to help determine if it's abandoned before any response is undertaken.
- Significantly damaged - this can include, but not limited to, flat tyres, smashed windows, bodywork missing etc.
- Run down or un-roadworthy - for example significant accident damage.

A date for your diaries  
Eastleigh Neighbourhood Watch

# AGM

July 20<sup>th</sup>

19:30

A chance to have your say.



- Burnt out and deemed to be unsafe.

If the vehicle is parked in an unsafe or illegal manner and/or causing an obstruction, please inform the Police. You can report an untaxed vehicle that you've seen on a public road anonymously to DVLA.

If the reported vehicle is found to be abandoned, a notice will be issued notifying the owner that they have either 24 hours, seven days, or 14 days to remove the vehicle, depending on its condition and location.

Abandoned vehicles on private property are generally the responsibility of the landowner who will need to make their own arrangements for their removal at their own expense, but the Council may consider action in certain circumstances.

PCSO Mica Woodcock 12948.

Are you ready for  
Neighbourhood  
Watch Week 2023?



3rd - 9th June

[ourwatch.org.uk/NWWeek](http://ourwatch.org.uk/NWWeek)

There are 3 aims of the week that are important –

- Registering your existing members onto the membership database
- Recruiting new members to your scheme
- Celebrating our wonderful volunteers

# CUTTING EDGE DEBATE



Knife crime has recently become a regular topic of news bulletins, and clearly the carrying of a blade as an offensive weapon is something the police are doing their utmost to clamp down on. Consequently, it does raise issues with what is legal for a law abiding citizen to have on their person. We are all familiar with the 'do everything' Swiss Army knife (other brands are available) and how useful such a device is to have. Maybe the removing stones from horses hooves is less of a necessity these days! But for screwdriving, bottle opening, wire stripping and nail clipping they are always useful. But as the name suggests they do also come with a knife blade. This is where some clarification of the law is required. Clearly it should be carried as a tool,

and not a weapon and some evidence needs to be available to support this.

The criteria used to define a legal blade that can be carried by a person in public is that the blade must be less than 3" long and not require the operation of a button or catch in order to fold it. However, of course, any length of blade can be used offensively e.g. Stanley knife or screw driver, and if that can be proven to be the intent of the owner, then a crime will have been committed. Carrying a knife as a form of defence is not a valid excuse, since the use of a knife in those circumstances might, or could, cause injury to another person.

So in conclusion, it is probably best not to carry any knife on your person, unless you can convincingly prove its use is intended as a tool for use in work of some sort.

## USEFUL INFORMATION FOR SCHEME COORDINATORS

### FREE EMAIL ALTERNATIVE



Would you like an email address to separate your Neighbourhood Watch post from your personal mail?

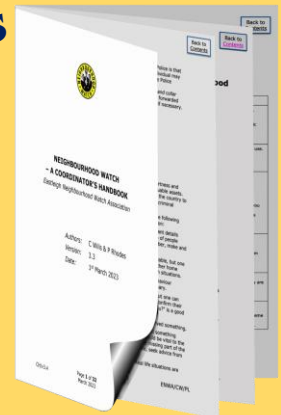
You can apply to have a 'your name or your scheme@eastleighbw.org.uk' address allocated to you. All mail coming in from this address will appear in your email inbox as normal. If you go for the 'your scheme name' option, then if you move, the email address can be redirected to your replacement scheme coordinator's email and your members will not have to update their contacts list.

If you would like to have a NW address, then contact Claire on [treasurer@eastleighbw.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@eastleighbw.org.uk) and she can set it up for you.

### NEW COORDINATORS HANDBOOK AVAILABLE

Pauline and Claire have been hard at work perfecting the new version of the ENWA handbook for coordinators, which is full of useful information for both new and existing scheme coordinators. To save paper and to allow links to other websites and documents, the handbook is presented in PDF format. You can download your personal copy by contacting Claire on [treasurer@eastleighbw.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@eastleighbw.org.uk) for the link.

New coordinators will automatically receive a copy when completing their application process.



## HIGH PROFILE SIGN OF VIGILANCE

Don't hide your membership, display it, to ward off potential criminals. There are lots of ways to add to the warning displayed on your street lamp signs. National Neighbourhood Watch stock a variety of products you could make use of. One predominantly striking sticker can be applied to your wheelie bin and will be particularly obvious on bin day.

There are other options, such as window stickers and mugs, but the wheelie bin seems to be the most effective to draw attention. You can see the full range at: <https://nwnshop.myshopify.com/products>