

Community Beat Officer Report & Neighbourhood Watch Bulletin

APRIL 2006

New Milton and area

We continue to experience difficulty in searching our computer system and so are unable to give figures to illustrate the state of recorded crime. This is not just a New Milton problem but is county wide and is being addressed as a matter of urgency. Having said that, across the New Milton area March was a quiet month for crime and general disorder.

Off Road Use of Motor Cycles

In recent weeks there have been several complaints of motorcycles being ridden around New Milton and Ashley Recreation Grounds.

The Law basically states that if a motor vehicle / cycle is being used in a Careless or Inconsiderate manner, 'Off Road' ie, on our local Recreation Grounds, in an Anti Social manner ie, Causing, or is likely to cause, alarm, distress or annoyance to members of the public then a warning under

Sec 59 Police Reform Act 2002 can be issued. The warning can be issued on The Rider, The Owner, or to the Motor Vehicle / Cycle itself. Should The Rider, The Owner or the Motor Vehicle / Cycle receive a second warning the Motor Vehicle / Cycle can be seized and can only be recovered by payment of a £105 fee.

The Police do not need to witness the incident to issue a warning but do require the assistance of the public to deal with this problem. If a member of the Public is prepared to make a short statement either identifying the rider or the registration number of the motorcycle, then the appropriate warnings can be issued. We often receive complaints of motorcycles riding around our Recreation Grounds but on our arrival they have already left the area.

If you are a dog walker, local resident or just visiting the Recreation Ground and witness a motorcycle riding around please give us a call as we do require the evidence to justify our action / prove the offence. If you make a statement your name etc. will not be disclosed to the rider / owner receiving the warning as this is not a court procedure.

Cold Calling Exclusion Zone

You may have read in the press that Wavendon Avenue and Hengistbury Road in Barton have been declared a 'No Cold Calling Zone'. This is a pilot scheme and is the first of its kind in Hampshire. The aim of the scheme is to raise the awareness of local residents to the potential dangers associated with cold calling.

Police and Trading Standards recognise that most cold callers represent legitimate companies, yet the hard, pressurised selling tactics which some firms adopt, can often be intimidating for householders, particularly the elderly and vulnerable.

Some cold callers are less honourable than others and visit unsuspecting homeowners demanding extortionate fees for substandard work, while others will pretend to be from bona fide companies to con their way into people's homes.

With this in mind, the aim of the 'No Cold Calling zone' is to deliver a strong message to all traders, that any form of cold calling will not be tolerated within that zone.

Similar schemes are being set up in other towns and cities across the county following a similar model to our own scheme.

We have raised this issue many times in the past and make no apologies for repeating ourselves. It is clear from recent incidents reported in New Milton and Milford that these people are still operating in our area.

Please report to the police any persons seen going door to door canvassing for work, or if you think an elderly person is being taken advantage of. Remember to get any registration numbers where vehicles are involved.

'Bogus' callers fall into four main groups:

1. The cold caller or salesperson with the hard sales pitch, not taking 'No' for an answer.
2. The tradesman providing poor quality work at inflated prices.
3. The distraction burglar.

4. Those who use the telephone as a means to deceive.

Remember!

- ALWAYS use your door chain
- DO NOT let them into your home until you have checked their identity and are happy with it.
- SPEAK to your neighbours and call them for support if you have an unwanted caller at your door.
- KNOW your Consumer Rights.
- HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO SAY 'NO'.
- IF IN DOUBT – KEEP THEM OUT!
- CALL THE POLICE – DIAL 999.

If you are the organiser of a vulnerable group and would like a talk regarding 'Cold Callers' please contact PS Dave TANNER at New Milton Police Station.

The Town centre – PC Steve Jennings

Reported crime in the town centre was low during March and was probably the quietest month of the winter, if we can call the month of March 'winter.'

Cold Caller – Distraction Burglary

An elderly lady living on a warden assisted sheltered housing complex was at home during the evening watching TV when she heard a knock on her door. On opening the door she saw a male who asked her if she had water leaking through her kitchen ceiling. As she was concerned she immediately went to take a look, partially closing the door behind her. There was no leak in her kitchen and on her return to the front door she saw the male, leaving her hallway and discovered her handbag missing that had been hanging on a chair.

Credit cards - beware

I would take this opportunity to give a warning about the security of your credit cards. We are still getting a steady trickle of reports where bank cards have been cloned and used to withdraw money from accounts. Criminals can only obtain your card's details with your assistance. They need to know your pin number and discover the information recorded on the magnetic strip on the back of the card. The details on the magnetic strip can be obtained by the use of a simple device that could be attached to a cash machine in the street, or held out of sight in a shop or a restaurant. For this reason check the cash machine before you use it, and if there is apparently some device fitted over the card slot then do not use the machine, but report it to the police. When using your card in shops and restaurants never let staff take your card out of your view.

Building sites

There are a number of building sites around the town and there is always the risk that these will be subject to thefts, particularly overnight. By definition sites are not secure places, and fixtures and fittings, let alone tools and equipment, left on site are vulnerable. If you live near a site, or are just passing, and see persons or activity in the evenings then please let us know at the time.

Recreation ground

There have been reports of motorcycles being taken into the Rec again. This is something that we can deal robustly with. If you see a motorcycle in the Rec, even if it is not being ridden, please take its number and let me know about it.

Spencer Rd toilets

The toilet block continues to be an area of concern and patrolling attention has been given to it. Since the 01/12 we have had half a dozen calls about this facility and know that it has been both the subject of damage on several occasions and also a focus for nuisance. The block has been broken into twice since the decision was taken to lock the block, and subsequently, significant damage has been done on each occasion. The nuisance has involved the activities of youths, and some of that has included drug misuse. Another area of nuisance is that some men are using the block for sexual liaisons. When all of these activities are listed it would be easy to believe that it would be just a matter of checking the toilets to catch those involved. However, the reality is that the instances of abuse and misuse are not continual, and are even irregular in their occurrence. This being so, it is very difficult to

effectively resolve this problem, in the short term at least. I personally have checked the block regularly when on patrol in the town, calling there several times during my tour of duty and am yet to find anything amiss. I have advised one man of his behaviour when a member of the public noted a registration number for me. We will continue to check the area as often as we can to deter crime and anti-social behaviour and would welcome calls at the time of any suspicion of such activity.

Milford and Barton – PC Del Jones

Crime

Twice in the last month a premises in Angel Lane has been “visited” in the early hours of the morning by persons attempting to break into garden sheds and vehicles. On both occasions the offenders were disturbed by the occupant and they made off in a vehicle towards the A337. Fortunately they left empty handed on both occasions. We are continuing with our enquiries to locate these people and the vehicle used.

In a similar incident earlier in the month a garage in High Street, Milford on Sea was entered by force and gardening tools to a value of £2500 stolen.

A cash point card from a wallet, stolen in the area, was used at several local cash point machines where the offenders were able to withdraw cash because the owner of the wallet had left his PIN number in the wallet. Please keep PIN numbers secure and separate from your bank cards. If you have trouble remembering the PIN numbers they can be changed by your bank to a more memorable number.

Despite additional patrols Beach huts are still being damaged at both Barton and Milford although not to the same degree as on previous years.

Cold Callers

As you will have read from the introduction, cold calling has again become an issue locally. Whilst we have set up a pilot scheme in Barton we must still be aware that cold callers are operating in all areas of our community. Two recent examples occurred in Milford on the same day during March. At about 8.30 in the morning a male called at a house in Keyhaven Road, this male claimed to be working for the water board and asked to inspect the drains. Fortunately, the occupant was suspicious of the male, refused him entry and checked his identity with Water Company. They were able to confirm that no members of staff were due to carry out work in the Milford area that day.

Later the same day two males called at another Milford address whilst the occupant was out. On his return they claimed to have undertaken some gardening work. This work was neither required nor requested, but the resident paid the money so that the men would leave. It would appear that very little, if any work had been completed by these men.

Cold calling can affect us all, it's not just the vulnerable and elderly who fall victim to these people. If you have any concerns about callers contact the Police at the time so we can attend and check their identity etc.

Milford School

There have recently been many concerns about the safety of the children attending the school. Most concerns relate to speeding vehicles and parking in the bus lay bys. We have begun a program of regular speed enforcement in the area with a view to reducing the risks faced by our children on their way to and from school. In relation to the bus stops, my colleagues and I will continue to monitor the situation and where necessary will issue fixed penalty notices.

New Milton West – WPC's Chrissie BENFIELD & Kirsten TROMAN

It is almost been 12 months since the Police and other multi agencies completed the Crime Reduction Environment Week, which “kick- started” the project to improve the Davis field Bridge. This month we have seen the completion of the project, to which has been a huge success.

The amount of juvenile nuisance and criminal activity has reduced dramatically.

However I will continue to ask that you report any anti-social behaviour or activity to the Police, so that together we can keep this area a safe and pleasant one, for all to enjoy.

Criminal Damage

During March Police took a total of 17 criminal damage reports. 14 of these were damage to motor vehicles.

Between the 23rd and 24th March 8 motor vehicles were damaged over night in Marryat Road, where by tyres were slashed and several windows were smashed. A local youth has been arrested and interviewed in relation to the damage but enquiries are still ongoing. If you have any information that may assist this investigation please contact myself or PC Troman in confidence at New Milton Police Station. Alternatively you can call crime stoppers anonymously. Their number can be found at the bottom of this report.

Assaults

A total of five assault reports were taken this month. Two complaints have not been pursued at the request of the aggrieved and the other three were linked to juvenile assaults. On each occasion the offender has been identified and positively dealt with.

Theft

A total of four theft reports have been taken this month.

There was an attempted theft around the 3rd March at the building site on Kennard Road. Fortunately nothing was removed, the offender has not been identified. If you heard or saw anything that may assist police with this enquiry please don't hesitate to contact New Milton Police Station. There is no particular time or date pattern to any of the theft reports.

Burglary

There have been a total of three burglary reports this month. Two of which are non dwelling burglaries.

On the 11th March a dwelling was broken into in the area of Beaulieu Close. The offender has been identified and arrested with enquiries still ongoing.

The other two reports related to garage breaks in Kennard Road and Carisbrooke Court.

New Milton East – PC Sam BLAKE-WATKINS

Burglary

Only one reported burglary this month in the Ashley Area. Burglary is a very high priority for the force and all efforts are made to locate and detain offenders who commit this type of crime. Recent investigations have resulted in one youth being detained and charged with burglary offences on the Ashley Beat area, he has been remanded in custody.

Ashley Recreation Ground

There have been several reports of youths using motorbikes on the recreation ground. We appreciate that genuine users of the grounds feel intimidated by their presence and will not challenge them. We can however, deal with them in a robust and effective way (as described in our introduction).

Damage

There have been many reports of damage this month mostly relating to youths smashing windows and on more than one occasion stones have been thrown at moving vehicles causing damage. In another area of the beat a railway underpass near to Oak Road has suffered a considerable amount of Graffiti. Two youths have been interviewed in relation to this; further youths are still to be dealt with. There have also been reports of damage to some of the headstones in the cemetery in Lower Ashley Road, we have increased the number of visits by both Police Officers and Community Safety Officers and are happy to be able to report that there has been no further incidents reported.

Hordle & Sway – incorporating Everton, Bashley, Tiptoe and Hinton - PC Dave WOOLFREY

Non Dwelling Burglary

The Scout Hut Activity Centre at the Wilverley Enclosure was broken into overnight. A number of food items were taken, along with a quantity of fuel.

A Hairdressers in Everton Road was subjected to an attack on its front window overnight, other premises in the Hordle area were also broken into on the same night. As a result patrols have been increased in the area.

Theft

Staff at Balfours in Stopples Lane, Hordle caught a shoplifter stealing alcohol before he managed to force his way out. Fortunately he was also caught on CCTV and enquiries continue.

Vehicle Crime

A vehicle in Sway had its window smashed and an expensive laptop computer taken during one evening when the vehicle was unattended. Please remember to remove all valuables from your vehicles when leaving them unattended.

Criminal Damage

The Hordle Recreation ground had its rear playing field area damaged by vehicles tracks in the soft ground. This caused deep ruts in the ground forcing the council to cordon off parts to prevent injury to the public. Police enquiries are underway to locate the suspect vehicles.

If you would like to make any comment regarding the content of the Bulletin, or you have information that would enable us to target our patrols to address your local problem, your input would be welcomed. You can leave a message for either PS Dave TANNER or PC Steve JENNINGS on 0845 045 4545.

**If you have information about any crime you can call 'Crimestoppers'
0800 555 111**
