

Community Beat officer Report and Neighbourhood Watch Bulletin December 2004

New Milton and area

Cold wet nights and continued police action against the hard-core of anti social youths, has resulted in November's crime being 16% lower than October's, with exactly 200 crimes being reported. To demonstrate the continued downward trend, November's reported crime figure is 24% lower than that of November 2003. During last month 78 persons were arrested in Sector South (Lymington and New Milton combined).

The operation reported on in last month's bulletin, the targeting of juvenile alcohol abuse in the area, continued throughout November with attention paid, not only to the town centre, but also to the outlying areas and villages. Over the five weekends concerned, patrols have seized a total of 254 bottles/cans of beer and 29 bottles of spirits – 3 persons have been arrested for theft of alcohol – 2 persons reported for buying alcohol for juveniles – 2 juveniles dealt with for purchasing alcohol - and 1 person reported for selling alcohol to a juvenile. As a result of the alcohol checks, 5 youths were arrested for causing damage and 2 others were arrested for drug offences.

On the 9th November police met with representatives from the area's off-licensed premises, the Mayor and a representative from Trading Standards to discuss the supply of alcohol to juveniles. A unified approach was agreed by those persons present that any person who appeared to be under 21 would be asked for photographic ID, only a Photo Driving Licence or Passport will be acceptable, so if you are asked for ID when purchasing your alcohol please do not be offended. Shop staff will be made aware of policy and supported in its implementation.

Although we are aware that some areas are still experiencing problems, we believe that we have already seen a marked decrease in virtually all categories of crime as a result of this campaign to curb juvenile drinking. Reports of assault are down by 28% on what we might have expected, and damage down by 44%. If you are still suffering, please bear with us.

In the run up to Christmas remember to use those '**Locks**' on your windows and doors and to leave '**Lights**' on when you are out in the evenings, and as always, to be on the '**Lookout**' for anyone who is out of place or behaving suspiciously. If you are away at Christmas have a friend call in to put on lights and draw curtains to make your home appear occupied.

The Town centre – PC Steve Jennings

Crime continues to fall in the town centre with crime significantly down on last year's figure, and a massive 40% down on last month. The action taken against juvenile drinking has I believe resulted in a quieter time on this beat. There is little that is noteworthy apart from the following two issues:

Counterfeit currency

During the last week of November a large number of fraudulent £20 notes were being passed in the town. Most of these were being passed at licensed premises but were also in smaller amounts being offered in shops. The notes are not of good quality but it is easy to be deceived. So far, the bogus notes bear two different serial numbers, and the one to the left as you look at the Queen's head ends in either the numbers '124' or '125'. The hologram is very poor and a U.V pen will leave you in no doubt. Beware!

Shoplifting

I anticipate an increase in theft from shops in the run up to Christmas. Some of the thieves will be from outside and will use the train. We also have our own home grown variety, one or two of whom

can be quite prolific. If you suspect the behaviour of someone you see in town please consider alerting the shop staff or if they are in the street, dial 999.

Milford and Barton – PC Del Jones

Youth issues

As already reported at the outset of this report, we have had considerable success in targeting underage drinking, tackling not only the youths themselves, but also the supply of the alcohol, and in this context I am currently engaged in dealing with several such incidents on my beat.

Drugs

We have continued to target this problem in both Milford and Barton. Stop-checks have been conducted in both areas and small amounts of cannabis and drugs paraphernalia have been seized and persons detained and dealt with.

Burglary

Only two burglaries have been reported in November on this beat. This is two too many. The Hampshire Constabulary is currently promoting 'Safer Homes' and the 'Lights on' campaign in an effort to draw people's attention to home security. At this time of year we may well have presents at home waiting to be wrapped, an ideal target for burglars.

Damage

There have been a number of damage reports from Milford; in particular, there has been a spate of damage to house name plates in Barnes Lane.

General Matters

On the evening of the 28th November we received numerous reports of youths scattering bags of rubbish around the streets of Barton. I personally removed 60 full bags from the roads. If anyone has any information as to who might have been responsible, please contact me on 0845 045 45 45.

Several reports were received that door to door callers were asking for antiques, gold, coins and medals. These people often apply pressure to residents to sell items for less than they are worth. Make sure that you know who you choose to deal with on the door step, and if in doubt call us.

New Milton West – PC Colin Stratton

Reported crime for November is about the same as for October, but in line with the rest of the Sector, that figure is markedly lower than last year's. Only one vehicle crime on the beat last month, so October's spate of theft from vehicles, fizzled out.

North Milton Estate

On the 12th November, as a result of intelligence received, a search warrant was executed on the estate and a quantity of amphetamine was seized and an arrest made.

Evidence is still being collated for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO'S) in respect of a number of youths on the estate, and since this process started these youths, aware that they were being looked at, have quietened down considerably.

Davis Field Railway Bridge

After a quiet spell there has been an increase in the number of incidents occurring at the bridge, usually in the evenings, including two assaults. Youths are starting to gather in this area again and will be targeted by patrols.

New Milton East – PC Ray Gait

Public order

There were 6 reported incidents of public disorder this month and these again were all related to domestic situations. Having said that, we still have a problem with youngsters gathering in the recreational areas of the beat, and in particular, the grounds of Ashley Junior School and the Recreation Ground, where there has been evidence of drinking. You will no doubt have seen that there has been some success in confiscating alcohol from youths in these areas in the local press. Far from celebrating this fact, we are saddened by the amount of alcohol we have been able to seize from young people. Usually the only way they can get hold of it is for someone over the age of 18yrs to supply them with it, or in some cases, where parents are not vigilant enough with their own personal supplies. We have identified one adult who has bought alcohol from an off licence with the specific intent to supply the youths and are in the process of identifying a second person. The local off licenses have had a meeting with the Police recently with a view to tighten up the sale of alcohol to under age persons by proof of age by way of acceptable identification such as Photo Driving Licence or Passport, so if you are asked for ID when purchasing your alcohol do not be offended.

Burglary

Since I last reported to you there has been only 1 house burglary reported and no other burglaries reported at all. This is very comparable to last month when there was one house burglary reported and 4 non house burglaries reported. We must all still remain vigilant and not be complacent. We are in the run up to Christmas now and the odds are that burglars are looking for presents for their families as well. MAKE SURE THE PRESENTS HE GETS THEM ARE NOT FROM YOUR HOME.

Criminal Damage

There have been 8 reported incidents of damage this month which is slightly up on last month by 1. Of these, 3 were of damage to vehicles and 3 others were of a domestic nature. The others were a broken window in a shop and the other was a garage door in the recreation ground.

Hordle and Sway – PS Dave Tanner

Public disorder

Anti-social behaviour in Hordle village has received a lot of media coverage in recent days. Much of what has been reported was old news which we believed we had addressed. That is not to say that the village may still not have a problem, but to be honest, we don't know. So, whether the problems are real or perceived, we would wish to respond. However, when residents would rather speak to a newspaper than call the police at the time of the incident, it does leave us rather hamstrung. I believe that we have demonstrated that we can respond to public concerns, but not without being told 'when' 'where' 'who' and 'how.' To give a little insight into our perspective of the Hordle situation, during the month of November, Hordle village residents reported just 5 crimes out of the beat's total of 25 crimes – 3 thefts, 1 damage and 1 burglary. In addition to that, during the whole month just 3 calls were received concerning anti-social behaviour. If you have a problem, please take the trouble to give us a call and allow us the opportunity to respond.

Public/Private meeting

Much has been made of the meeting that took place on the 7th December, with the added criticism that the meeting was a 'secret.' In reality, knowing that some in the village were concerned that there is an unaddressed youth problem, a number of people were invited to attend, who either were known to us as having reported a problem, or who would be in a position to address those complaints and contribute positively to a solution. This meeting, far from being a 'secret' or designed to sweep the matter under the carpet, was a positive expression of our resolve to stamp out anti-social behaviour.

The opportunity for all to speak follows on the 13th December at the village Parish Council meeting.

Sway

Sway continues to be a low crime area as there were no dwelling burglaries during November, but 4 non dwelling burglaries had been reported from barns / outbuildings.

4 vehicles were the target of thieves in the Forest Car Parks, ladies, please remember where possible to take your belongings with you or at least place them in the boot , DO NOT leave your handbag in your car in full view of that would be thief .

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

'Crimestoppers' – 0800 555 111