

Community Beat Officer Report & Neighbourhood Watch Bulletin December 2005

The Officers and staff of new Milton police station would like to wish everyone a HAPPY CHRISTMAS & a peaceful new year.

New Milton and area.

We begin this month's report by emphasising that each month's report relates to the preceding month and not the month in which it is written and distributed. This therefore is November's report.

There were 175 reported incidents of crime during November. This figure compares with 169 reports for October and 216 reports in Nov 2004. So, although we would normally expect November's crime to be lower than October's, we none the less have, yet again, a considerable fall on last year's figure.

It would be useful to point out that in addition to 'crime reports' we do record incidents which do not constitute a 'crime.' For example, in November, we recorded 15 reports of what could best be described as anti-social behaviour, but which did not amount to a recordable crime. In addition there were over a 100 other recorded occurrences covering a variety of reports from road traffic incidents (30), suspicious person reports(10), domestic disputes where no offences were committed (13), and an assortment of other matters ranging from missing persons, sudden deaths and concerns for safety.

Mopeds, Go-peds, Mini-Motos & electric scooters.

Increasingly we are seeing mini-motor vehicles of varying types being ridden on our roads and pavements by children and young people. It is usually the case that these machines have been bought by parents who are unaware of the dangers such machines pose for their children and other road users, and the offences that may be committed. The following information may be timely as some of these machines will be given as Christmas presents.

Mini-motos, mopeds, go-peds, scramblers and electric scooters, are all 'motor vehicles' for the purpose of the Road Traffic Act and therefore the following legal requirements apply:

- Riders must be over 16 yrs of age.
- Riders must hold a relevant driving licence and a learner driver must display 'L' plates, and crash helmets must be worn.
- Riders must have passed their CBT (Compulsory Basic Training)
- The vehicle must be DVLA registered and bear number plates.
- Road tax, insurance and MOT tests apply.

If not complying with the above conditions, such machines can only be used on private property with permission of the owner. They cannot be used in public parks or open spaces or on the pavement.

Although in the first instance we would seek to advise parents to ensure the law is complied with, we will consider prosecuting offenders or, depending upon the circumstances, we do have a power to seize machines.

If you are aware of machines of this sort being used in contravention of the regulations we would be interested in hearing from you. Tel. 0845 045 45 45

Pub related thefts from motor vehicles

There have been 7 reports of vehicles being forcibly entered whilst parked and unattended in pub car parks. Five different pubs were involved, so it could happen at any premises. As always, the advice is –don't leave items of value in your cars! Should you see anyone acting suspiciously at any time, anywhere, please call us and let us know.

Don't make it a merry Christmas for thieves

With the Christmas holiday season almost upon us, now is a good time to remind people to take steps to ensure that your Christmas isn't spoiled by criminals. Christmas presents, when wrapped and under the tree, are often seen as easy pickings for burglars, so remember the 'Lights, locks and Look out' campaign and protect your home.

It is not only your home which may be vulnerable at this time of the year. Remember when you are out shopping not to leave purchases and valuables in your car. Be aware of what is going on around you in the shops and in the street as well as being careful about where you park your car.

Becoming a victim of crime is distressing at any time of year but causes extra heartache at Christmas. I hope that the following crime reduction advice will help keep you safe on the street and prevent gifts for family and friends from becoming early Christmas presents for heartless thieves:

Christmas Shopping.

Park your car in a well lit public places, avoid isolated dark areas and do not leave objects on display. If you have to return to the car to unload purchases make sure that they are locked out of sight. Try not to do this too often. It might be prudent to make more than one trip to the shops rather than leave the unattended car loaded up with expensive items. *To a thief, your car is little more than a glass display case on wheels!*

Avoid carrying too much around with you, the more bags you've got the more vulnerable you are to street crime.

Keep your purse or wallet somewhere close to your body where you can feel it. Keep your chequebooks and cheque cards separately. Mobile phones should also be out of sight

If you take a tea or lunch break, don't leave your bags unattended, not even for a few seconds.

Be alert to card crime. Card crime not only involves someone stealing your card but also skimming, which is a method of illegally obtaining your card details by swiping your card through a small card reader. The details can then be used to make a counterfeit copy. Be careful with receipts that bear your card details.

Be extra vigilant at cash machines. You should report anything which looks out of place on the machine, *particularly anything attached to the card entry port*, or anyone you see hanging around in the vicinity of the machines. Make sure no one can see you entering your personal identification number (PIN) and do not walk away from the machine with cash in your hand for everyone to see.

At Home

Ensure the security of your house is adequate, this is important at all times but especially so at Christmas. Front and rear external doors should have good quality locks fitted to them along with door security bolts. All windows should have locking catches. If you have any doubts about the basic security of your home contact the Crime Reduction Officer via your local police station or visit the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk

In the run up to Christmas store presents in a safe place – the loft is always a good bet – and don't put them out on display too early.

With expensive presents ensure you make a note of serial numbers, reference numbers and/or identification marks before they are wrapped for Christmas so that should the worst happen, you have evidence of what was taken. Remember also that empty boxes and packaging left outside will advertise the fact that these goods are available inside! Dispose of packaging carefully. Are you adequately insured?

Try not to position the Christmas tree right by a window, this may attract attention to presents from anyone looking in. It is best not to put the presents under the tree too long before Christmas. The longer they are on display the more opportunity there is for a burglary to take place.

When out of the house make sure all your doors and windows are locked. After dark make it look as though someone is at home by leaving lights on, a radio playing is also a good idea. If you're going to be out for a

longer period, say over night, use timing switches on lights around the house. If away over the holiday make sure that you cancel the milk, papers etc, try and arrange for a neighbour to check your property and pick up the mail, or contact the Post Office and have the mail re-directed.

Out on the town.

With office parties and general Christmas celebrations, pubs, restaurants and other venues are often crowded. Don't leave bags over the back of your chair and keep wallets and purses close to your body to make it more difficult for the pickpocket. Busy places make life easier for these type of thieves so be alert at all times. Make prior arrangements as to how you will get home. Avoid potential disturbances in the street and stay with your friends if possible. Make sure someone knows where you're going and what time you will be back. Don't accept drinks or lifts from people your not sure about and don't drink too much - this could make you a target.

For more, in depth personal safety advice see www.suzylamplugh.org or www.homeoffice.gov.uk

'Locks, Lights & Lookout!' Campaign

With Christmas fast approaching it is time to remind you all to be alert to your own security. 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. For some reason people hesitate to call the police concerning situations where their suspicions are aroused. Who knows better than yourself who is out of place in your street! Call us! We want to know! Tel. 0845 045 45 45

The Town centre – PC Steve Jennings

During November there were 28 reported incidents of crime in the Town Centre compared to last November's figure of 35.

Juvenile nuisance

There were a number of reports of anti-social behaviour during November, mostly associated with the Rec. Grnd. during the evening and related to juvenile drinking. However, the number of these reports is considerably lower than those received in October. Patrols have continued to target the Rec. checking the youngsters and seizing alcohol, and where relevant, carrying out searches for drugs.

Damage

Damage was caused to the children's play area in the Recreation Ground when the chute was set on fire. Replacement of the apparatus will be necessary and the cost will be considerable. This area is a popular gathering place for youths in the evening. Police and CSO patrols have always given the Rec. attention but we will in future be concentrating on moving groups away from this inappropriate location.

Assaults

Once again I can report that the number of assaults for this beat remains low. With just 3 reports for November – and only one of those occurring in the town and drink related – this is now the third consecutive month that 'assaults' have been conspicuous by their absence. These figures should reassure those who believe New Milton town centre to be a violent place.

Theft

November saw an increase in theft in the town, with reports increasing from 4 in October to 12 in November. In part, the reason for this is that we all make things far too easy for the thief. There were 3 reports of purses taken from bags and trolleys whilst the owner was shopping, and also 3 reports of charity boxes being taken from shops.

Flexible Licensing Hours

The last week of November saw the introduction of the new flexible licensing hours. In the event, none of the town centre licensed premises took advantage of the extra hours, and although extra police resources were made available, together with members of the Special Constabulary, there were no problems over that first weekend. It is expected that the first real experience of later closing will come with the Christmas period, however, it is expected that we will see more pubs staying open until mid-night on the lead up to the holiday,

particularly at weekends. The Licensing Authority rejected an application by the Kebab House in Station Rd to extend opening hours to cater to those leaving licensed premises. The Kebab House, which is the only fast food outlet that remains open after 2200hrs, will continue to remain open only until mid-night.

Milford and Barton – PC Del Jones

Assault

During November eight assaults were reported for this beat. Once again, the majority were as a result of domestic disputes. The common factor in most of these cases was that one or both parties were in drink.

Burglary

In the month of November there were four reported dwelling burglaries, all in the Barton area. At the time of writing there have been a further two in the same area at the beginning of this month. In response to this we have increased our patrols in this area. The offenders appear to be targeting premises where the occupants are obviously not at home. Simply putting a light or radio on in the house whilst you are out is often enough to deter the would-be burglar.

Criminal Damage

Although there were six reports of damage for November, there is no particular trend to report. If you have any information about this or any other crime please call us or you can call crime stoppers on 0800 555 111

Beach Huts

For the first time this year, I am pleased to be able to report that there were no reported beach hut crimes in November. However, several huts were damaged by bad weather. We are still looking for more volunteers to join 'Beach Hut Watch.' If you have a dog, why not volunteer. I'm sure "Shep" would love a few extra walks each year!! If you are interested please contact me at New Milton Police Station to find out more 0845 045 4545. I plan to launch the scheme in early January just in time to rescue you from the sales!!

Other Matters

Numerous calls were received in November from concerned members of the public reporting suspicious door-to-door callers. We are always interested to see who is going 'door to door' and would like to find out what they are selling or offering to buy. If callers are genuine they will have checkable identities and will be more than willing to have them verified. If you have any concerns about a caller at your home, give us a call 0845 045 4545 for advice or to ask an officer to call. Many doorstep callers leave a leaflet or card behind this is always of use to us so please retain them.

New Milton West – WPC Chrissie BENFIELD

Davis Field and North Milton Estate

I would just like to take this opportunity to re-visit the disastrous and disappointing event that struck the Round Table's effort for their Charity Bonfire display in Fawcett fields. After a week's hard work of assembling a 'Galleon', set to be the main attraction in an impressive fireworks display, it was found that the minority had ruined it for the majority by dismantling it two days before the event. Through sheer hard work and determination, families and members of the Round Table re-built the galleon in time for a spectacular and very successful display, raising £1000 in total for charity. If you have any information as to who was responsible, I would ask that you contact me in confidence at New Milton Police Station.

Thefts

There was an increase in the number of thefts reported in November, totalling 9, this compares to the 4 reported last month for October. Two of November's reports relate to thefts of motor vehicles and 5 others to thefts from motor vehicles. The locations and dates all appear to be random. Please make sure that your vehicles are secure and that all valuables are removed or kept well out of sight. If you have any concerns

about suspicious people in and around your area please do not hesitate to contact the police. Tel. 0845 045 45 45

Assaults

There were 6 assault reports taken during November. On each occasion the offenders were known to the person assaulted. Two persons have been arrested and enquiries are still on going in relation to two of the assaults.

Criminal Damage

During November there were 5 reports of damage. The reports are random and consist of broken windows, damaged garden walls as well as minor damage to motor vehicles. One individual has been successfully prosecuted with regards to damage caused to a motor vehicle.

New Milton East – PC Sam BLAKE-WATKINS

There were 21 reported crimes for the Beat in November which compares to 33 for the same period in 2004.

Criminal Damage

Police received 7 reports of damage in November. Five of these reports were of damage to motor vehicles. In Holly Lane a car had its tyre slashed, in Hermitage Close keys or similar were used to scratch two cars parked in a private driveway, in Brook Ave a concrete block was used to cause damage to a car bonnet, and lastly, in Andrew Lane a car was seriously damaged with two windows and the windscreen being smashed as well as dents to the body work. In Queens Court, bins were set on fire and Police attended and extinguished the fires. This is the second incident at Queens Court and consequently the area is being patrolled more frequently to deter the culprits, thought to be children.

Attempted Burglary

In Benmore Close a tool was used to try and force a wooden conservatory, entry was not gained.

Distraction Theft

A theft of money occurred at The CO-OP Ashley where 3 males entered the shop and distracted staff. One male walked to the Managers office and removed cash from the safe. Businesses, please be vigilant when groups enter premises.

Drugs

A male was detained in Ashley Common Road, he was searched and found to have cannabis in his possession. He was subsequently charged with 3 offences.

HORDLE & SWAY – incorporating: EVERTON, BASHLEY, TIPTOE and HINTON - PC Dave WOOLFREY

November saw an increase in reported crime to 41 cases, which compares with 29 reports for the same period last year. The main factor behind this rise in the figures is undoubtedly the increase in non-dwelling burglaries where the targets have been sheds and outbuildings.

Dwelling Burglary

There were only two reported attempted burglaries this month. A large property in Holmsley was targeted and a house in Crossways, Everton had an attempt made on the patio doors.

Non Dwelling Burglary

A total of 16 reports were received with the majority being shed breaks. These appear to have been committed overnight and were mostly in the Sway/Hordle areas. The thieves took lawnmowers and other garden and power tools. Please be vigilant and check the security of your outbuildings. The Hordle Pavilion was the subject of an unsuccessful overnight attempt to force a rear door. Also, youths were believed to be responsible for setting off and stealing a fire extinguisher from the W.I. hall in Hordle.

Theft

A set of alloy wheels were taken from a garden in Mill lane near Pennington. A handbag was taken from the rear of an insecure car in Stanford Rise at Sway, and a mobile phone was stolen from a bag in Bashley Caravan Park.

Public Order

A small public order incident involving youths at the Hordle Recreation ended with two being arrested for an offensive weapon and for making threats. Residents in Sway have been subjected to anti-social behaviour from local youths around the Youth centre during evenings. Eggs and stones have been thrown at moving vehicles and items placed in the middle of the road. I am myself giving this area more attention, and in addition, the Community Support Officers are targeting both Sway and Hordle villages to counter the youth problems.

Damage

There were 7 reported incidents of damage during November; these included a car, damaged in Stoneleigh Avenue and graffiti in Charnock Close, Hordle. Also, a window was broken at the Pavilion in Hordle and a couple of caravans were damaged in the Knightscrest Caravan Park at Everton.

Vehicle Crime

Vehicles were broken into in Yew Tree and Longslade forest car parks. A storage case on a flat bed van was forced in Everton two cars were entered in the Plough and Hare & Hounds pub cark parks.

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**
