

Community Beat Officer Report & Neighbourhood Watch Bulletin

July 2005

New Milton and area.

Last month saw the first upward move in the recorded crime figures for twelve months, and that was just a marginal 20 incidents, an increase that was expected, May being one of our busiest months. The figures for June show that we have resumed the downward trend. Recorded crime for June in the New Milton Police area was 148 reports, which compares to 285 reports for the same month in 2004 – a 48% fall! For the first six months of the year, recorded crime is one third lower than for 2004.

'Ethical' Crime recording

We are told that there are 'lies, damn lies and statistics', and that being the case we all quite rightly understand that figures do not give the full story. However, Hampshire Constabulary is committed to 'ethical' crime recording. That means that we stick to the nationally agreed standard for recording crime, and that we do not massage the figures. Sometimes, following the national standard can give a distorted impression, for example, because we record all assaults that are reported to us, however trivial, Hampshire is well up in the league for violent crime according to the statistics – which of course is far from the truth. Our commitment to ethical crime recording should give the public confidence in the statistics we quote, and whilst they are not the 'whole' story, they can be relied upon as an accurate guide.

In a recent survey of New Forest residents, 51% expressed the view that they thought that this police area had the highest crime rate in the county, when in actual fact, it has the lowest!

Low reported crime means that, once again, we have little of note to bring to your attention. However, when crime is low it allows officers to make more contact with the public and to give more time to preventative work, which hopefully will in itself continue the downward trend of crime in our area.

New Milton Pub Watch

Since the last CBO report, the 'Watch' has been extended to include all of the public houses in the New Milton police area. That means that we now have 26 premises signed up and committed to making New Milton and its satellite villages a quieter and safer place to live. The Watch meet monthly to discuss the events of the preceding month. Incidents and names are raised and decisions taken as to how the Watch wishes to respond. Depending on the detail of the incidents discussed, a warning letter may be sent to an individual, or, if it is a more serious matter, then a letter of 'banning' can be sent. Providing certain criteria are met, the police can legitimately release to Watch members, photographs of banned persons if they are on record. In respect of the photographs, and concerning all matters discussed, strict confidentiality is required and expected from the Watch members.

As with all preventative measures, it is hard to evaluate the worth of any scheme, as we have only the absence of alcohol related crime to go on. However, it is noteworthy that during the sunny month of June, with its light and balmy evenings, we have had absolutely no drink related assaults anywhere on the patch.

Burglary

The offence of burglary is at an all time low across the whole county, and the figures for the New Forest area reflect that trend. For the first six months of the year our particular part of the Forest recorded 48 burglaries. This compares with 69 for the first six months of 2004. As pleasing as it is to see such significant falls in a crime which brings such misery in its wake, we could potentially see a further

reduction in excess of 20% - that is the percentage of burglaries where the burglar finds open doors and windows!

'Bogus Caller' Campaign

Although we have not had any further reported offences of this sort during June, I leave this item in as a reminder to us all to be vigilant in respect of these types of callers.

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

The 'New Forest Community Safety Partnership involving the police, NFDC, Neighbourhood Watch and Trading Standards, has put together a free pack of information and advice and useful telephone numbers. The pack is available from the Police Station, New Milton Town Hall / Parish Council Offices, the Health Centres, your Local Beat Officer and Community Safety Officers. In addition, if any group would like a visit from either a police officer or Trading Standards to explain the campaign in more detail, this can be arranged. Contact PC Steve Jennings or PS Dave Tanner on 0845 045 45 45.

The Town centre – PC Steve Jennings

Reported incidents of crime for the town centre area during June totalled 27 reports, compared with 45 last month. During June 2004 we recorded 89 offences. I have checked and double checked these figures in disbelief, and I assure you they are correct. Town centre crime is over 60% lower this June compared to last!

Assaults

There were only three assaults in the town during June and all three were domestic in nature, that is, between people connected by relationships. As already suggested, I feel that this is a direct result of the action taken by 'Pub Watch.'

Damage

Reports of damage were fewer in June with 7 reports. Two attempts were made to force entry to the Junior School in Old Milton Rd, the first on the 29/05 and the second on the 01/06.

There were two separate incidents of alarm wires being cut at the back of Boots in Station Rd. The first was at lunch time on the 13/06 and the second during the early evening of the 25/06. If you witness any suspicious behaviour behind shop premises – 999!

Milford and Barton – PC Del Jones

Burglary

Again this month the numbers of reported burglaries was low with only three reports within the last 30 days, of which two were dwelling burglaries and the other was a shed, broken into at Milford Primary School.

Vehicle Crime

There were a number of thefts from vehicles this month where damage was caused in order to get at items left on display. People committing these crimes appear to be targeting car parks in the area, particularly on the Cliff top at Barton.

Youth issues

There is still a great deal of concern about the numbers of youths gathering in Milford, and in particular, on the cliff top. I have received many complaints of drinking and general anti-social behaviour. Whilst I am working with local licensees to reduce the amount of alcohol available locally, most young people appear to be bringing it with them from home.

General Matters

This month I have been helping a relative deliver leaflets door to door, both locally and in New Milton. I am still amazed by the number of people who leave their cars on driveways with the windows open and the keys in the ignition. I have been to houses where the key to the front door was left in the door. Other houses where the occupants are obviously away had not cancelled the milk or had the post collected by friends or relatives. The Police often face an amount of criticism for crime rates locally, but we can all do our bit by securing our property against the opportunist criminal.

New Milton West – WPC Chrissie BENFIELD & WPC Jodie Bosworth

BURGLARIES

Unfortunately we have had an increase in dwelling burglaries this month. There have been a total of four dwelling breaks, two of which were ‘attempts.’ There is a general pattern in that they all occurred within the first week of June, and three of the breaks were in the area of the North Milton Estate. Towards the end of the month, two reports were received of suspicious persons in and around that same area, but the offenders remain unidentified. For anyone who may have concerns about doorstep sellers and other callers, may I take this opportunity to remind you that we have a Comprehensive Bogus Caller Pack which you can pick up from New Milton Police Station.

ASSAULTS

The number of reported assaults for this month has halved with a total of five reports. Again, in all instances the aggressor was known to the aggrieved, and four out of the five reports involved juveniles.

DAMAGE

There has been a reduction in the number of damage reports during June. In May Police took 10 reports of damage compared to the 4 taken in June. There seems to be no particular pattern to the incidents in either time date or location.

Theft

Last month we received 7 reports of theft, one of which was an attempt. Again there is no pattern to the thefts other than 3 out of 7 were thefts of garden ornaments such as hanging baskets and plant pots.

Davis Field and North Milton Estate

It is with great delight that I can inform you that Police have received no reports regarding damage, assault, theft or juvenile nuisance in and around this area. I'm sure that you will agree that the continual development and improvement on the Davis Field Bridge is having a very positive effect on the surrounding area. If there are still ongoing issues that are going unreported, please can I urge you to contact either myself WPC BENFIELD, or WPC BOSWORTH, in confidence, so that we can tackle any problems we may, at the moment, be unaware of.

New Milton East – PC Sam BLAKE-WATKINS

There were 18 reported crimes for the Beat in June and that compares with 50 for the same period in 2004.

Ashley Rec. Ground

During the last month again there were very few calls to the police regarding the Rec. Police and Community Safety Officers continue to patrol the area. Please continue to report any anti-social behaviour you witness, preferably at the time.

Assaults

There were only 2 reported assaults during June. These were between family members.

Burglary

Three burglaries were reported during the month. A property in Hare Lane was forcibly entered by use of a spade taken from the garden shed. A property in Manor Road was burgled by means of forcing a rear window, and finally, a property in Burnleigh Gardens was broken into when the offender gained entry through an open window at night. The offender was disturbed and arrested by Police. Please try to restrict access to the rear of your property by fencing and gates that can be locked, also try to ensure that garden tools are put away into a locked shed. During the hot weather when going out, please remember to shut windows as this will deter burglars.

Criminal Damage

There were 4 reports of damage in June. Two incidents in Woodland Way, a wall was knocked down and some plants were damaged. In Manor Road some 3ft fence panels were damaged and in Sundew Close a car window was damaged and two females were arrested as a result.

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

The total amount of reported crimes for the area was slightly down from last month at a recorded level of 36. I am pleased, that with the increased amount of public activity including fetes, carnivals and the presence of holidaymakers, reported crime has kept at a low level. Sway Carnival again ran very successfully with an excellent turnout from the village, and the weather was also on our side. I would also like to thank Hordle School for inviting me to their summer BBQ.

Burglary

There was only one reported dwelling burglary and that occurred in Hinton. Two sheds and a barn were broken into, the offenders appeared to be targeting riding tack.

Damage

Seven reports of criminal damage were taken from across the area. The cricket nets at Sway Cricket Club were subjected to damage. A number of local youths were subsequently dealt with and all admitted damage through recklessness. Unfortunately, I have also been made aware of damage in our area that has either been witnessed or discovered by a member of the public but not reported to us. We can only combat crime if it is reported, so please do not hesitate to pick up the phone.

Vehicle Crime

There were six reported thefts from unattended motor vehicles this month that occurred in forest car parks. These were mainly in the Setthorns and Wilverley areas. We are continuing to patrol the car parks on a regular basis, and to help us, please remove any valuables when you leave your cars.

Theft

During June we took nine theft reports. Of these, two were mobile phones stolen while unattended.

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