

LOOK-OUT

**Muirwood Neighbourhood Watch
Incorporating Thomson & Easter Currie Watches**

Drug Dealers Don't Care, Do You?

During the last two years the Police have been using this slogan to conduct a campaign against drug dealing in Scotland. In the Edinburgh area, it has been becoming more and more successful during the past six months or so. Large quantities of controlled drugs and assets from drug dealing have been seized and are being used to fund the operation.

The Police stress that progress on this front depends on help at local level and have extended their thanks to communities which have supplied them with information. They contend that success must not be measured solely on the level of seizures but on the willingness of communities to report on criminal activities. Many people are keen to reduce all kinds of crime but are unwilling, for various reasons, to be identified as informers. This is one of the advantages of using **Crimestoppers**. As reported frequently in Look-out, this is a method of reporting crime anonymously.

If you have information which you think might be useful to the Police, ring **Crimestoppers** on **0800 555 111**. There is no need to give your personal details unless you wish to do so. Using this system, it is even possible for you to receive a reward (if one is offered for the type of information you can provide) without having to sacrifice your personal anonymity.

Let us show we do care!

POLICE TELEPHONE NUMBER

Balerno Police Station

449-5991

Police News Update - July to December, 2006

Vandalism:

- 02/07 **Bryce Road** - VW car scratched.
- 14/07 Pentland Medical Centre - Window smashed over weekend.
- 16/07 Palmer Road - Renault car scratched.
- 31/07 **Bryce Crescent** - House fence damaged.
- 01/08 **Bryce Crescent** - House fence damaged.
- 18/08 Dolphin Road - Vehicle window smashed.
- 03/09 **Thomson Grove** - Garden gate damaged.
- 04/09 Palmer Road - House window smashed - youth charged.
- 07/09 **Bryce Road** - Front window smashed at Vicky's Flower Shop.
- 08/09 **Riccarton Mains Road** - Plant pots in garden were damaged.
- 08/09 **Lanark Road West** - Concrete pillars forced off walls of houses.
- 18/09 Pentland View - Wing mirror forced off a Ford car.
- 03/10 Lanark Road West - Fence to rear garden of house was damaged.
- 04/10 Lanark Road West - House fence damaged.
- 12/10 Dolphin Road - Honda car was scratched.
- 14/10 Dolphin Gardens West - Ford car scratched.
- 19/10 Rowantree Ave, Dolphin Gdns W, Currievale Dr and Curriehill Castle Dr - A number of vehicles damaged, some scratched extensively.
- 23/10 Pentland View - Renault car had window smashed.
- 30/10 Dolphin Gardens West - House window smashed.
- 24/11 **Riccarton Mains Road** - Wing mirror broken off Honda car.
- 25/11 **Weaversknowe Crescent** - Peugeot car tyre punctured.
- 22/12 Lanark Road West - Business premises window smashed.
- 29/12 Pentland View - Parked car had its wing mirror damaged (evening).
- 29/12 Pentland View - Parked car had its wing mirror damaged (overnight).
- 31/12 Palmer Place - Parked car had its wing mirror damaged (overnight).

Break-ins:

- 02/07 Kirkgate - House entered via insecure front door by a male, 20-25 years old wearing a grey baseball cap and a fawn top.
- 26/07 Dolphin Gardens West - Attempt to break into a garage.
- 23/07-06/08 Dolphin Road - Audio-visual equipment stolen from house. A male and a female have been charged.
- 02/08 **Corslet Place** - House entered and property stolen. Male charged.
- 08/08 Kirkgate - Attempt made to enter a car.
- 21/09 Pentland View Court - 2 insecure and unattended vans entered and contents stolen. Male charged.

- 27/09 **Lanark Road West** - Attempted break-in to H & S Stores.
 27/10 Currie Bowling Club - Attempt made to break in.
 28/10 Currievale Drive - Honda car broken into - car radio stolen.
 03/11 **Lanark Road West** - Attempted break-in - Mark McGill, Butcher
 03/11 **Lanark Road West** - Attempted break-in - H & S Stores
 03/11 **Bryce Road** - Dental Surgery - door window smashed - nothing taken.
 05/12 Overnight - Three motor vehicles were broken into:
 Corslet Place - Navigation system and other electronic goods stolen.
 Thomson Road - Navigation system stolen.
 Riccarton Crescent - Nothing stolen.
 26/12 **Nether Currie Crescent** - Navigation system stolen from car - male traced and arrested.
 27/12 **Weaversknowe Crescent** - Car broken into but nothing stolen.

Theft:

- 08/07 Forthview Crescent - Garden furniture stolen - female charged.
 23/07 Lanark Road West - Vauxhall Astra car stolen.
 28/07 Dolphin Avenue - Pedal cycle stolen whilst left unattended.
 17/11 - 20/11 **Lanark Road West** - Property (including two sets of ladders) stolen from garden.

Miscellaneous:

- 28/07 Lanark Road - Male arrested for drink driving.
 21/08 Pentland View - Male caused a disturbance in a shop.
 28/09 **Nether Currie Crescent** - Unattended pedal cycle stolen.
 12/11 **Thomson Grove** - Phone call to Police from member of public - Male acting suspiciously - later traced, apprehended and charged with breaking into cars in the area.
 18/11 **Corslet Place** - Male charged - carrying an offensive weapon (a knife)
 01/12 Pentland View Court - 3 youths reported - Breach of the Peace.
 08/12 **Corslet Place** - Male reported for contravention of bail conditions.
 23/12 **Corslet Place** - At 2.15pm male entered a store - using a hammer he unsuccessfully demanded money from staff - traced and arrested.
 28/12 Pentland View - Male presented knife to a youth - enquiries ongoing.
 30/12 **Corslet Place** - At 7.15pm male was reported for Breach of the Peace.

Satellite Navigation systems, most of which are compatible with any make or model of vehicle, are becoming a popular car accessory and the new target for thieves. Please be aware (as many thieves are) that most people seem to store these devices in the glove box or out of sight in the car. It is safer to choose a device which can be fully removed (including the cradle) from the car when not in use and take it with you or conceal it in a suitably safe place in the car - perhaps the boot.

Annual General Meeting on 1st November, 2006.

There were 37 members who attended the AGM and heard reports from our new Police Sergeant Tony Catlin, Archie Clark from the Traffic Forum and from our Chairman David Eatock. The formal business was conducted and the meeting finished with light refreshments, closing at approximately 9.10p.m.

Constitution:

It was unanimously agreed at the AGM that the merger of the three watches should go ahead and the Constitution was amended in accordance with the attached copy which is for your information. Please keep this copy for future reference.

Committee:

The Committee members for the current year are as follows:

David Eatock, Brian Latto, Gordon Laing, Jim Herbert, Ian Lawrie, Ian Shepherd, Alex Kane, Elizabeth Wightman, Robert Kerr, Ian Proudfoot, Gordon McFadzean, Bill Gordon, George Ballantyne, Hamish Sutherland, Gwynneth Ross.

Duncan Law, Gill Burnside, Marion Brown, Margaret Mitchie, Douglas Scrimger.

Dave Oxenham, Andrew Craigie, John Saunders, Tim Shepherd.

Subscriptions:

It was agreed that the subscription for the year to 30th September 2007 be fixed at £1. It has been fixed at this figure for 16 years now and with increasing costs it may have to be raised at the next AGM.

Street Co-ordinators have until 30th April 2007 to collect these subscriptions which should be handed over to our Treasurer, Mr Brian Latto, 7 Muirwood Place, Currie in due course.

CALA have applied for outline planning permission to build houses, affordable houses and a commercial development on the site from Riccarton Garden Centre Westward to Curriehill Road. Your Watch considers this should be opposed and has sent out a flier listing their objections and asking all members who agree to write to the Head of Planning to register their protest. Past experience has shown that the volume of objections is what counts with the planners and your support is sought.

Dark Nights – Bright Lights

Housebreakings may increase during the winter months as criminals take advantage of the dark nights. Houses in darkness look unoccupied and so attract the attention of thieves, however by taking a few simple precautions, the chances of becoming a victim of housebreaking can be reduced.

- Fit timer switches to lights, both upstairs and downstairs, but never just leave the hall light on – who spends their evening in the hallway
 - Make sure doors and locks are sturdy and well fitted
 - Ground floor windows should be locked and all keys, including those for motor vehicles, should be kept out of sight
 - Desirable items for thieves include jewellery, digital technology, cash and credit/debit cards etc. Think about where you store these items and consider purchasing a safe for high value and sentimental items.
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Bogus Callers – If in doubt Keep them out

Most callers are probably quite genuine, but some are not. They could be confidence tricksters or thieves. That is why it is important to take precautions when people call at your home.

Not all thieves have to break and enter: thieves won't go to the trouble of breaking in if they can just knock and be invited in. So always be on your guard when anyone you are not expecting (be it man, woman, child, singly, in pairs or in groups) turns up at your door. Men, women and children may use any excuse to gain entry to your home. Young people can sometimes ask to use the toilet. Men and women may use the excuse that their car has broken down or they require water for their radiator. Should they ask to use your telephone, make sure that you dial the number for them and so avoid very expensive calls to 098 numbers. If you feel it is necessary to ask for assistance, then call a neighbour before allowing them into your home.

Genuine callers will normally make an appointment first and will carry identification with their photograph and details of their company/business. Any identification produced requires a thorough examination and not just a brief glance.

If you see or hear anything suspicious then phone the police straight away. The police need your help. Don't be put off by the switch board at the police call centre at Bilston: they are still experiencing problems.

Summary: Minutes of Committee Meeting - Monday, 4th December, 2006

Welcome: David Eatock, Chairman, welcomed 12 members.

Secretary: No nominations. Ian Proudfoot agreed to take minutes.

Matters Arising:

- Meeting place for 2007: Gordon Laing to check on availability of Gibson Craig Hall.
- Traffic Forum: Has ceased to exist. Considered to be a Community Council matter but Watch will keep an eye on things.
- Chairman and Secretary: David will stand down at AGM, 2007. Since no volunteer to be Secretary, a rota was agreed to take Committee Minutes.
- Personal Alarms: To be advertised in next Look-out.
- Committee Members Names: Names will be stated in next Look-out but no addresses or telephone numbers to comply with Data Protection.
- Distribution Network for Look-out to be established. New distributors may be needed.

Treasurer's Report: Funds as at AGM plus bank interest. Brian Latto to liaise with Liz Blackburn to co-ordinate finances.

Friends of Muir Wood Park: Gordon advised that 45/50 members had tidied up park. Committee agreed to a flier being inserted in Look-out for distribution to streets around the park.

Chairman: David summarised Chairman's duties.

Planning: CALA have applied to build on green belt westward from Riccarton Garden Centre. (See p 4)

Jet Petrol Station Development: David outlined what was known.

Kinleith Mill: Council have agreed to fund a pedestrian phase for lights at Gillespie Road and not to wait for developers to fund this work.

Road signs/Street Names: David to write to Council to point out that signs at ends of streets have been refurbished but not those within streets.

Alarms: What action to take if an alarm went off. Consensus- Don't place yourself in danger. Contact Police.

Street Co-ordinators Meeting: Should be arranged for 2007.

Next Meeting: **Currie Kirk House, Monday 5th February, 2007 at 7.30pm**

Bits and Pieces

Editor's Apology: In last Summer's Look-out I included an article under the heading of "Going away for a few days?". This was based on a page put through my door with no attribution but was in line with many of the advice sheets put out by Government departments. After publication I received a letter from 1st Call Locksmiths of Juniper Green pointing out that the original page was their publication with the name cut off. I have apologised unreservedly to them and assured them that I would acknowledge them publicly in the next issue.

At the AGM, 1st Call Locksmiths exhibited an excellent display table of their products and Mr Crosbie, one of their Directors, answered all questions put to him by those attending. The Company have also offered to members of our Neighbourhood Watch a 15% discount on all their services, including labour, but with the exception of house numbers, nameplates and engraving.

Personal Alarms: There are still a few alarms available. They may be bought for £4 each from our Treasurer, Brian Latto. (449 2831)

Safelink: Five years ago we drew attention to this scheme which was then starting. Particularly people living (or spending a lot of time) alone at home are given a small container in which to keep details of medical history and medication. If they should be found unconscious, or unable to speak, by a neighbour or carer, this information could be invaluable to the emergency services to ensure correct treatment from the outset. Details can be obtained from our Treasurer, Brian Latto. (449 2831)

Identity Theft: One of our members has reported that two blue bags of waste paper were removed from outside his house before the collection van called. This immediately raises the possibility that someone was hoping to find personal information to be used to facilitate identity theft. It is recommended that any papers which contain details likely to be of use to a third party should be shredded before being put out. Personal shredders are very cheap and can be easily obtained from Supermarkets etc

Look-out: Contributions of short articles for inclusion in Look-out are always welcome. Suggestions from members of subjects they would like to see covered in future editions would also be most helpful.

Fire Safety

The Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service has issued a helpful guide on Fire Safety in the Home. The service offers a free home safety check to all. Firefighters will visit your home and give you free fire safety advice on:

Kitchen safety

Electrical safety

Smoking safety

Making a fire action plan

What if I need a smoke alarm?

Long life (10 years) smoke alarms are provided and fitted free.

Where will the smoke alarm be fitted?

One smoke alarm fitted to the ceiling on each level of the property.

How long will it take?

Around half an hour - including fitting of smoke alarms, if required.

Can I arrange an appointment?

Yes - an appointment can be arranged at a time to suit you.

Can I check the identity of the firefighters?

Yes - all firefighters carry identity cards. They will also have a card with a telephone number which you can call to check their identity.

What number do I phone to arrange a check?

Call free on: 0800 169 0320

Look-out

Articles for inclusion in the Newsletter are welcomed. Copy for the next issue should be sent, as soon as possible, to the Editor at 31 Nether Currie Road, EH14 5HX (449-5566) or by e-mail to:

jimherbert@blueyonder.co.uk

Look-out is published quarterly by Muirwood Neighbourhood Watch.

Printed by Balerno Community High School

Cartoons by Mr Bert Burnap

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The views expressed in this Newsletter do not necessarily represent the views held by the Editor or the Muirwood Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

Muirwood Neighbourhood Watch
(Incorporating Thomson and Easter Currie Neighbourhood Watches)

CONSTITUTION

1. Name of the Scheme

The Scheme shall be known as the Muirwood Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (Incorporating Thomson and Easter Currie Neighbourhood Watches)

2. Area of Responsibility

The geographical limits of the Scheme shall be those agreed at the inaugural meeting *plus subsequent extensions*.

Extensions to the existing Scheme shall only be agreed by a majority vote at a General Meeting.

(As of the 1st November 2006 this extends to Provost Haugh in the South, plus the properties on the south side of Lanark Road West between Muir Wood Road and Curriehill Road, Muir Wood Road in the East and Curriehill Road in the West plus all streets north between Muir Wood Road in the east and Curriehill Road in the west)

1. Objectives of the Scheme

Muir Wood Neighbourhood Watch Scheme shall carry out certain crime prevention measures and community initiatives aimed at improving:

- The security of homes
- Reducing crime and the fear of crime, and
- Increasing the awareness of environment issues within the watch area

1. Qualification of Membership

Membership of the Scheme shall be open to all residents within the Scheme's area of responsibility including the supervisory police officers.

2. Committee

The Scheme shall be administered by a committee as follows:

Chairperson (Area Co-ordinator)

Vice Chairperson

Honorary Secretary

Honorary Treasurer

Up to 24 appointed members

The Chairperson normally to stand down after two years

The Vice Chairperson will be appointed at the first Committee meeting to be held in December

3. Finance

A dedicated bank account will be opened and all moneys raised will be credited to this account. The signature of either the Treasurer or the Chairperson will be required for the withdrawal of cash from this account. A properly audited set of accounts shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting each year.

4. Financial Year

The financial year for the Scheme will end on 30th September each year.

5. Membership Fees

All members shall pay an Annual Membership fee which shall be paid by 30th April following the Annual General Meeting. Such membership fee shall be fixed annually at the Annual General Meeting

6. Frequency of Meetings

The Committee should meet on at least three occasions per annum in addition to the Annual General Meeting, which shall be held within six weeks of the end of the financial year. A quorum shall comprise the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson and not less than *six* remaining Committee members.

7. Dissolution of the Scheme

In the event of a proposal to wind up the Scheme, all members shall be notified in writing, giving twenty-eight days notice of an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting. The Scheme may be dissolved only with a majority vote from all members attending. In the event of the Scheme being wound up, any funds remaining shall be dispersed equally among the extant membership or donated to a charity or charities nominated by the Committee.

8. Alterations to the Constitution

Proposals to amend the Constitution should be notified to the Secretary at least twenty-eight days prior to the Annual General Meeting, this being the only meeting at which these matters may be competently discussed