



### Melksham Rural and Villages

Hello and welcome to this month's Community policing report.

With the countdown to Christmas fast approaching, we will see millions of people going online to buy presents for their friends and family. What many do not realise, is the hidden threat that we now face from criminals online. Internet shoppers are being targeted with scams, which on the surface promise to save them time and money but in reality only deliver festive heartache and misery.

To make life as difficult as possible for the cyber fraudsters, we have put together the top tips for a safe and happy festive season online :

#### **1. SHOP, SHOP, SHOP -**

- If something seems too much of a bargain, it's probably poor quality or doesn't even exist.
- Always check payment pages are secure, and log out when you've finished shopping online.
- If possible use online retailers / brands that you are aware of and trust. For major brands always go to the official website to find a list of authorised sellers.

#### **2. AUCTION BARGAIN ... OR NOT? –**

- When making a purchase from an auction website, use insured payment methods like PayPal and never do a bank transfer to people you don't know.
- Do all you can to check the seller or buyers are authentic. And look out for fake goods: they're illegal and cost livelihoods and can be dangerous.

#### **3. JUST THE TICKET –**

- Only look at tickets from a reputable website that is secure (showing padlock) and before buying, do an internet search for reviews.
- Avoid entering your bank or credit card details on public or shared computers.
- Never pay for the tickets by way of money transfer.

#### **4. COME FLY AWAY... -**

- Whether you're planning a break at Christmas or next year, make sure the holiday or flight is genuine by researching it thoroughly, and check travel agents for an ABTA/ATOL number.
- Always pay with a credit card; if they don't accept, don't buy from them.
- Research the internet and consider the reviews of the company / person you wish to use before booking your trip.

## **5. CHRISTMAS E-CARDS**

- If you receive an anonymous e-card, better to play it safe and delete the e-mail. Many are genuine, however cyber-criminals have been known to create their own version which may contain a virus that will embed itself into your computer.
- Use a reputable anti-virus product on your electronic advice.
- If you believe that your electronic device has been infected, switch it off and disconnect from the internet to prevent further information being stolen.

## **6. WHO'S ASKING? –**

Scam emails, calls, texts and posts are getting cleverer and you're bound to get some over Christmas. Think twice before you get talked into anything, however busy you are.

## **7. YOUR PASSWORD IS YOURS. KEEP IT THAT WAY! –**

Passwords that are easy to guess, that you use for more than one account or that you share with others, are a no-no!

## **8. SECURELY CONNECTED? –**

Secure Wi-Fi is vital for your privacy. At home, check your router security settings. Out and about, never use free Wi-Fi hotspots when what you're doing is private.

## **9. GREAT OFFER, OR SUBSCRIPTION TRAP? –**

Don't sign up for 'free' or 'low-cost' trial goods without thoroughly reading the small print. You could be signing up for massive direct debits.

## **10. MOBILE PAYMENTS**

- Do not save passwords or personal / financial information onto your mobile device unless it is absolutely necessary. Make sure the phone is password protected.
- If stolen, most mobile devices have the software to wipe all data from their memory remotely – learn how this works.
- Do not leave your Bluetooth switched on.

## **11. DATING / ROMANCE FRAUD**

Many singletons will be making a New Year resolution to find their ideal partner, and signing up to an online dating website. This can be a great way to find true love, but you also need to be on the lookout for fraudster trying to wind your affection.

- Guard your privacy when chatting online and be selective with the information you provide about yourself.
- Never send money or give credit card or online account details to anyone you do not know and trust.
- Trust your instincts, if something feels wrong take steps to protect yourself.
- Recommend dating locations are in public and a friend is told where you will be?

## **CRIME EXCEPTIONS**

These figures are based on an evaluation of data, over a two year rolling period. Using this data we can predict what figure is the average that should be reported in a specific month, and what are the higher and lower parameters that we may expect. Figures outside of these parameters are classed as 'Crime Exceptions'.

### **ED12 (Shaw, Whitley, Atworth, Broughton Gifford, Beanacre, Bowerhill etc)**

For the month of October this area collectively has experienced 46 crimes reported to Police. This has been classed as an overall crime exception as a whole, and above the predicted number of 29. The areas in which the increases have been significant are Violence against the Person, and Criminal Damage where we have had 18 and 15 crimes reported respectively.

Looking at the first category, most of the offences were in the Bowerhill area, with 6 offences being attributable to two separate residences.

In relation to the second category, 4 of these offences have been committed at the Police Station, and other than that there is no specific pattern identified to indicate any link between them, neither is there one particular area identified as a hotspot for this type of offence as they are all spread out over the entire location.

### **ED13 (Seend, Bulkington, Poulshot, Keevil, Semington, Great Hinton, Steeple Ashton etc)**

For the month of October this entire area has seen 10 crimes reported to Police, which is in line with the figures predicted for that month. No one crime type has been assessed as being an exception, with 7 different crime types having experienced less than what was predicted.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

Steeple Ashton report for October 2017

14<sup>th</sup> Handbag stolen at Village Hall Jumble Sale.

There have been several reports over the past few months reference Hare Coursing and today was no exception as officers turned out to another call to Mudmead Lane. Unfortunately the suspects got away but there was some suspicious activity in the same area where a vehicle was dropping off Cannabis plants. These have been seized and will be destroyed. The vehicle involved was a silver BMW with two white males around 19:00hrs.

For a detailed breakdown of the crime in your area visit...

**<https://www.police.uk/wiltshire/>**

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