

A Message From Richmond Police - 2016!

22 January 2016

Dear all

Happy New Year! Sorry for delay in getting the first email of 2016 out - no excuses other than like all of you been super-busy since the start of the year!

Hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year - we are all as you can imagine business as usual - criminals don't take any notice of holidays or cold weather seemingly!

Crime

We are still experiencing burglary on the borough but the methods are different - there is currently a burglary series whereby multi -occupancy building are being targeted - borough wide - the communal doors (often poor quality locks and security and no cctv) are being forced or kicked in or suspects are simply being let in !and then entry is forced to flats within. Please be vigilant and if you are in a communal block or a flat your security needs to be as top quality as it can be so ensure your Landlord or leaseholder is on the case..

We have this week arrested a male for a series of walk-in burglary /thefts - folk leaving front doors open even for the briefest of time allows him to walk in and take small items away such as jewellery, phones etc - he is not local to the area either

We currently have several burglaries committed by the 2 same males in Twickenham and Richmond- both black wearing high visibility jackets so they appear to be workmen and are not challenged as people believe they are lawfully on the premises - one is black, approx 5'9" ,approx. 40yrs old, chubby wearing dark blue trousers, hi - vis jacket and back work boots, the other is black, athletic approx 6ft, approx 30 yrs old, blue trousers and black work boots & Hi - Vis. The hi-vis has been described as orange and green - one has been identified through CCTV and is from the other side of London - criminals committing crime here are travelling some distance to commit crime here which makes it harder for us to identify them as they are not our 'usual suspects' or known nominal's. We have a very robust management in place of our known criminals and they get daily visits and some are tagged.

Please be very aware an do not assume that because they are wearing hi-vis that they are legitimate and as always if ever in doubt ring 999 - if they are genuine they won't mind being stopped and spoken to by police.

Met trace

We are still property marking in Whitton and Mortlake and are hopeful that the street signage will be going up in these areas very soon as well - we have seen a reduction in burglary in these areas which is excellent news. There still seems to be a certain reticence in Whitton to join the scheme despite it being free which is a shame but we will persist on visiting those residents that have not taken up the offer as yet. Remember that although this scheme is free to certain addresses that are in the burglary hotspots (albeit small numbers as we have the lowest number of burglaries in London) anyone that is a member of a NHW can get a pack for £25 instead of the retail price of £75. This is a great saving and will safeguard your property and ensure it is logged on a central database that will ensure that when your property is recovered it is returned to you as each mark is uniquely identifiable to your kit and therefore your property. This also comes with stickers for front and rear windows to alert would-be burglars that you are covered.

This interestingly brings me onto a piece of information gleaned from a burglar in custody who stated that he 'would not burgle a house in a road that was clearly a NHW area as he knew that there would be people looking out and more vigilant'. Good news for us and all the more reason to encourage NHW across the Borough and those that have signed up we need you to be very vigilant and very proactive in getting your neighbours involved and on email so they are aware of all current crime & scams.

Scams

Sadly these still continue and become more plausible particularly for our elderly residents. One elderly male was targeted before Xmas by 2 males that saw him having trouble parking and assisted and then offered their services to fix his roof - to the tune of £1000's and then returned after he had been away for Christmas to claim they had done more work while he had been away which he also paid for - he is very distressed at the loss of money and the idea of having been taken in - these scammers are very plausible - these had Irish accents - please keep an eye out for houses that are having work done in your street - if there are elderly residents in these houses there is no harm in checking yourself or ringing us to check whether they are legitimate.

Another scam this week was 2 Irish males attending an address in Twickenham purporting to be from Trading Standards and informing the resident that they had recovered her details from a scammer and needed £10,000 in order to release a further £20,000 to her. She duly went to the bank to transfer the money and the Bank staff at HSBC were brilliant and called Police and the transaction was stopped - men were spoken to and realised they had been rumbled - enquiries are ongoing. Bank staff are very alive to the fact that elderly are being scammed and raise it when unusually large transactions are requested however it is difficult sometimes to tell a person

that they can't have access to their own money - they have no idea they are being scammed so it is a delicate issue.

Theft from Motor Vehicle

This is an ongoing issue with valuables, handbags, satnav and laptops left on car seats, foot wells, some left overnight some only for 5 mins and they are stolen. Please remember to take everything out of your car and lock it - many cars still left unlocked - I am planning a 'Day of doors' whereby my officers will go down a street on their wards and try all car doors - those that are unlocked we will check owner details and be in touch with more warning advice - this is only the same as car thieves do only they do it a bit more discreetly!

We have certain streets on the Borough that are 'Hot streets' where the majority of crime takes place - burglary - house and shed, theft from m/v and theft of pedal cycle - we concentrate our efforts on these streets and this has been paying dividends but we do need help in return from residents - we need a NHW watch in all these streets which my officers are canvassing hard for coordinators and a commitment to safeguard and protect their own properties and belongings so together we can become the safest Borough in London!

I am planning another NHW conference for late February to be held at Sovereign Gate in Richmond which will be to try and recruit more coordinators but also have some interesting speakers and chance to network and ask questions. I will send out a save the date nearer the time.

The Safer Neighbourhood Board quarterly meeting is on Tuesday 26th January at York House from 7pm - all welcome.

Finally this will be my last email before I hand over the reins to Insp. Karen Duckworth to run NHW. I have really enjoyed running it and speaking to you all via email, letter, phone etc. I will still be here at Richmond for a while longer with a slightly different portfolio - my role has changed as I was successful in promotion so I am waiting to be posted at some point in the near future to anywhere in London! We have managed to reduce crime with your help and vigilance so keep your enthusiasm going and I am sure NHW will go from strength to strength under Insp Duckworth's leadership!

Take care - warmest best wishes

Hannah

T.C/Inspector Hannah Wheeler BA Hons

Safer Neighbourhoods & Partnership - Richmond Upon Thames