



OUR NEWS

> THE NEWSLETTER FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SUPPORTERS

CELEBRATING NEIGHBOURS ACROSS ENGLAND AND WALES

Dear Supporters,

As we begin February still in lockdown due to the Covid-19 crisis, we have been hearing of the fatigue and struggle many are feeling as we try to get through this very challenging period. We are supporting the Every Mind Matters campaign (p6), to ensure mental wellbeing is something we all take care off. We are all hoping for the quickest end to the restrictions, although we know there is still a good distance to go.

There are some positive and exciting campaigns and programmes beginning this year at Neighbourhood Watch such as the fantastic partnership with Co-op Insurance in support of Universal Picture's springtime film release, *The Croods 2: A New Age*, which you can read about in this newsletter. Please share with us the great ongoing work you are doing to support the vulnerable and isolated members of our communities and help prevent crime by emailing enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

John Hayward-Cripps, CEO | Neighbourhood Watch Network



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH WEEK

5th -11th June 2021

Lockdown...



or not...



#LetsStayConnected
SAVE THE DATE

www.ourwatch.org.uk/nwwweek



Neighbourhood Watch Network is a charity registered in England & Wales. CIO No. 1173349

Save the Date!

If the pandemic has taught us one thing, it is that neighbourliness and community spirit is just as important as ever.

Neighbourhood Watch Week 2021 will be an opportunity for us to ensure that we build on the new and existing neighbourly relationships formed throughout the pandemic.

We have all been affected by the virus in some way or form, **so now that we have made valuable connections, let's stay connected!**

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THE DREAMWORKS
CROODS 2
A NEW AGE
IN CINEMAS

WIN!

DESIGN A CROODS 2 INSPIRED TREEHOUSE AND WIN IT FOR YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

In partnership with **'The Croods 2: A New Age'** and **Co-op Insurance**, we want children up to the age of 16 to design their very own **Croods 2 inspired treehouse** for their local community.

The winning entry will be brought to life and built within a nearby **Wildlife Trust** location to be enjoyed by the public for years to come.

What do you need to do?

- Head over to Co-op Insurance website to download the treehouse template www.co-opinsurance.co.uk/croods2
- Design a Croods 2 inspired treehouse for your local community - it can be as wacky as you want, let your imagination run wild!
- You can draw, paint, use computer software or even cave drawings to create your design, but above all be sure to think about how this could be used by the community and bring a lot of fun.
- Share your design on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram using the hashtag #Croods2Treehouse and tag Co-op (@coopukinsurance on Facebook and Twitter) and Neighbourhood Watch Network (Facebook: @ourwatch; Twitter: @N_Watch and Instagram: @neighbourhood.watch.insta) to enter.
- The competition closes on 22nd February and the winner will be contacted within 5 days via social media.
- The treehouse will be built by 26th March, just in time for the new film's release and Easter holidays!



Spot the signs of a romance scam



Romance fraud happens when someone believes they have met their perfect match through an online dating site or app, but the other person is in fact a scammer using a fake profile to build the relationship.

They slowly gain your trust with a view to eventually asking you for money or obtaining enough personal details to steal your identity. This type of scam is especially insidious because **the scammer is manipulating and abusing the victim's emotions.** It plays on the need we all have for love and companionship and many people fall victim every year.

“My son was taken in on a dating site. Luckily no money changed hands even though he was asked. This experience made my son suicidal and made it difficult for him for a few months. He is bipolar and autistic so my husband and I had to take the consequences of his reaction to this crime.” Neighbourhood Watch member

Spot the signs

People who have fallen victim to romance scams tend to report the same pattern. If someone you know is using online dating or friendship sites and reports any of these signs, it may indicate they are being scammed:

- Generally the scam starts with an initial contact by the scammer. The scammer may be a member of the same online dating site as you or any online forum you have joined. The scammer may also contact you on social media such as Facebook – this is why you should never accept friend requests from people you don't know.
- Their profile picture is very attractive. It's common for scammers to use stolen photographs of beautiful people. You can check whether someone's profile picture is associated with anyone else by accessing the website in Google Chrome, right-clicking on the picture and then clicking 'Search Google for image'. Google will then display any other websites that the image is on. If the person has a different name on other websites, chances are they are tricking you.
- The scammer asks you a lot of questions about yourself. This is because the more information they know about you, the easier you will be to manipulate. The scammer will spin a tale about him or herself as well. Eventually you begin speaking over the phone. This stage can last for weeks, even months.
- The discussion is friendly at first, but turns romantic very quickly. They shower you with compliments and claim to be falling in love with you. Victims usually report that this shift occurs very early on in the relationship – so if it all seems to be happening too fast, it might very well be a scam.
- Their story, or parts of it, change over time. If someone is making up their life story, it can be easy to forget what they've said before. If some part of their story doesn't sound quite right, or match what they said last month, that could indicate they are lying.
- Their grammar and spelling is poor. Many scams originate overseas. If the scammer tells you they're from the UK, but writes as if English is not their first language, this should be a red flag.
- They refuse to Skype or video call you, or meet in person. They always find an excuse as to why they can't do this.
- Eventually the scammer asks you to lend them money. They use any number of reasons: to pay for the flight or other transport to meet you; they are in some sort of trouble; to pay for medical care, either for themselves or someone close to them; or they have a great business or investment opportunity that could benefit you both.

Spot the signs of a romance scam

Don't be a scam victim

Just because there are some dishonest people out there doesn't mean you have to stop using dating sites altogether. You just have to be aware that scammers do exist, and follow some simple rules to protect yourself online:

- If you're using social media sites like Facebook, don't accept friend requests from people you don't know.
- Don't give away too many personal details about yourself online. Revealing your full name, date of birth and home address could lead to your identity being stolen.
- NEVER send or receive money or give away your bank details to someone you've only met online.
- Use reputable dating sites and keep communicating through their messaging service. Fraudsters will want you to quickly switch to text, social media or telephone so there is no evidence on the dating site of them asking you for money.

What to do if you've been scammed?

If you've fallen victim, don't be afraid to talk about it. Scammers count on this fear because your knowledge is power. Informed consumers are much harder to deceive.

If you tell your story to other people, you may prevent someone else from being victimised in the same way.

You can report romance scams to Action Fraud at [actionfraud.police.uk](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk), or call 0300 123 2040.

If the scam occurred on an online dating site or some other online forum, you should also report the individual's username to the site moderators, who can take steps to prevent the scammer from targeting anyone else using the same website.

Become a Scam Marshall

Friends Against Scams are looking to recruit as many Scam Marshals as possible in 2021 to help combat postal scams.

If you, or someone you know, is affected by postal scams and would like to turn the negative experience into a positive one, consider signing up as a Scam Marshal at www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/ScamMarshals.

Each letter received by the team is investigated and used to disrupt the postal scams from reaching victims, so each Scam Marshal signed up has a knock on effect that helps prevent others becoming victims.



**NATIONAL
TRADING
STANDARDS**
Scams Team

[This article from This Is Money featuring Thomas Wyness](#), a Scam Marshal, tells his story of being a scam victim and how the Scam Marshal scheme helped him fight back against the criminals.

If you have any questions about the scheme, please email FriendsAgainstScams@surreycc.gov.uk.

Friends Against Scams is a National Trading Standards Scams Team initiative

#DrugsKnowMore 8th - 21st Feb

Last month we heard from one of the great young people behind the **Let's Talk Drugs Campaign**. We are delighted to say they are ready to launch the new drug awareness campaign, which is fully curated by young people, for young people.



Pressures on young people have been immense over the past year and we are extremely proud that these young campaigners had the resilience and passion to create this important work.

There will be a number of ways for young people to connect with the campaign, including sharing their views on drug use, talking to their friends about drugs, and tuning in to listen to **#DrugsKnowMore podcast** series, in which young people will be talking to professionals and recovering addicts about the consequences of drug taking and being involved with drugs.

Between **8th and 21st February** we invite you and your young neighbours to visit www.ourwatch.org.uk to connect with the campaign, download campaign resources, and share these with your members, community and loved ones. You can also follow and share the campaign on Twitter and Instagram (@drugsknowmore). Don't forget to use the **#drugsknowmore** hashtag when sharing the campaign!

If you have any questions contact Mair at youngpeople@ourwatch.org.uk.

Rural crime on our website

We are pleased to announce that we have launched a rural crime section on our website.

This is a result of the collaborative work of our Rural Crime Working Group, made up of Association Leads from across our network and our Rural Crime Partnership (which includes National Farmer's Union, CLA, Countryside Alliance, Historic England and the National Rural Crime Network).

Our rural crime section, which can be found [here](#), covers topics such as: fly-tipping, heritage crime, theft of livestock and machinery and livestock worrying - a very serious issue and devastating to our rural communities.

Julie Dowton, Lead for Devon and Cornwall Community Watch Association, has helped compile the livestock worrying page which includes a case study that looks at how Devon and Cornwall have helped raise awareness of livestock worrying in their community.



Did you know we have a rural crime section on our website?

[www.ourwatch.org.uk/
rural-crime](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/rural-crime)



Neighbourhood Watch Network is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered in England and Wales, no: 1173349

We will be developing this section over the coming months, so keep an eye on it!

Visit: www.ourwatch.org.uk/rural-crime.

When things aren't so good out there... make inside feel better

COVID-19 has affected the whole country - for almost everyone life has had to fundamentally change, and we know this is having a significant impact on people's wellbeing.

With people living in national restrictions, we know that looking after our mental health is vitally important. There is evidence that self-reported mental health and wellbeing has worsened during the pandemic, with reported increases in a range of mental health conditions, including low mood, poor self-esteem, sleep problems, anxiety and depression. This is why, as Neighbourhood Watch, we are supporting Every Mind Matters Campaign.

There are things we can all do to look after our mental wellbeing and support others to do so. Every Mind Matters can get you started with a **free NHS online plan**, showing you simple steps to help manage anxiety, sleep better and boost your mood.

Visit www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/ to share practical tips to help your friends, family and neighbours manage common mental health problems, and direct them towards the Every Mind Matters Mind Plan so they can get tailored mental health advice.

Don't be caught out by a Covid-19 vaccine scam

Remember to remain vigilant as criminals begin to take advantage of the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccine to commit fraud. The vaccine is free - you will NOT be asked to pay.

The NHS will never:

- ask you for your bank account or card details
- ask you for your PIN or banking password
- arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine
- ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport, driving licence, bills or pay slips

If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up.

If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk.

Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726 which is free of charge.

If you believe you are the victim of a fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling **0300 123 2040** or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk.

Scam text about Covid-19 vaccine

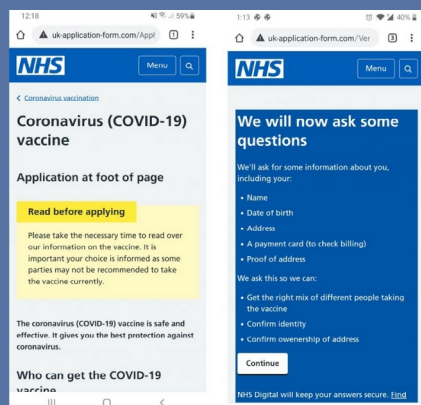
Dangerous fake NHS texts have been circulating, telling people they're eligible to apply for the COVID-19 vaccine. Here's how to identify one:

Poor grammar is a tell tale sign

This URL takes you through to an extremely convincing fake NHS website that asks for your personal details

NHS: We have identified that your are eligible to apply for your vaccine. For more information and to apply, follow here : uk-application-form.com

Do NOT click on links in unknown texts - always check it first



NEVER give out your personal details.

With the recent approval of multiple vaccines in the UK, these types of scam attempts are likely to continue as fraudsters look to take advantage of the rollout to so many people.

Cold calls regarding the vaccine are also beginning to take place - we've already had reports of scammers asking people to pay for it over the phone. If you receive one of these calls, hang up.

Protect others by reporting incidents like this. If you, or anyone you know, have been affected by this fraud or any other scam, report it to Action Fraud by calling **0300 123 2040** or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk



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Our Community Grants Programme

As we settle into the new year, we are pleased to update you about the Community Grants Programme. We have now distributed **£4,212 in grants to 12 local projects** throughout England. We have not yet had any applications from Wales, so we really encourage areas in Wales to apply.

Some examples of projects we have funded include: distributing alarms to 150 vulnerable people; engaging local young people to plant window boxes for vulnerable residents; a campaign to raise awareness around bogus callers, with 'no cold caller' stickers and leaflets; projects to engage new members and volunteers; project encouraging pride in the area with a street clean and refresh; 'help' cards for support for the isolated and a 'good neighbour' recognition scheme.

The grants are to a **maximum value of £500** and to be spent within 6 months of receipt. As the projects progress, we will publish case studies on the differences these grants and the local volunteers using them have made in their communities.

If your group or association would like to apply, please go to ourwatch.org.uk/communitygrants to find out more. Please read all the guidelines before applying to ensure your project is eligible.

Eden Project's Virtual Community Camp now open for applications

This camp, which will be held in March 2021, is for people who want to develop ideas, activities or projects in neighbourhoods and communities.

All levels of experience are welcome from beginner up and the camp introduces you to an ongoing network of people who support each other ongoing.

This year participants can also receive a certificate confirming completion of a Prospect Awards Endorsed Programme in Creative Community Leadership. This is integrated into the programme of sessions with no coursework or assessment. Sessions will run a few hours per week for 5 weeks.

Early application encouraged. For more info or to apply please click this link:

www.edenprojectcommunities.com/community-camps



Short student survey

Could you help us reach students in your area by sharing this student survey encouraging students to take part? You could share the survey via email, WhatsApp or social media - whatever works best for you.

We recognise that currently we do not offer student-specific resources or activities, and we want to change that. Through this short survey, students can help us make sure their needs are included in our future work. This survey will help us understand what students think about safety and the community they live in, what types of crimes they are most concerned about, and how safe they feel in their community. We will share the anonymised survey findings with all our members.

The survey runs for one week only from the **3rd to 9th of February** and can be accessed by clicking [here](#) or typing in this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/5SSNMHC>.

Completing the survey should only take 5 minutes, and students who complete the survey will have a chance to enter a prize draw and win one of six gift cards worth **up to £30**. Please contact Aga on aga.korfel@ourwatch.org.uk if you have any questions about the survey.

FREE Online workshops for Coordinators

15th - 19th February 2021

**Campaigns,
running them
locally**

**Developing
your
membership**

**Holding
online crime
awareness
events**

**Developing
your role -
your views**

Volunteers are very important to us and we value the work that our Coordinators do in their communities.

As a development tool, we are holding a variety of online workshops over a week period, to compliment their role. At the end of the week, we are holding a Listening Workshop to enable you to have your say about how you would like to develop the Coordinator role and how the Central Support Team can support with that.

The workshops available are: (Please click on the link to book your place)

- [Campaigns - running them locally:](#) Monday 15th Feb, 1 - 2.30pm
- [Developing your membership:](#) Wednesday 17th Feb, 3 - 4.30pm
- [Holding online crime awareness events:](#) Thursday 18th Feb, 2 - 3.30pm
- [Developing the Coordinator role:](#) Friday 19th Feb, 3.30 --5.30pm

Discounts on ERA Home Security

SAVE UP TO

£200

Use Code: NHW21

SALE

Solar
Siren Kit



SALE: £79.99

was £129.99

Solar Siren &
Keypad Kit



SALE: £99.99

was £169.99

Smart Alarm
Kit & Camera



SALE: £279.99

was £469.99

Family Smart
Kit & Camera



SALE: £299.99

was £499.99

Shop now:

responseelectronics.com

ERA

Expires 28/02/21. T&C's apply.