

Marlborough Rural East

Neighbourhood Police Bulletin



Covering: Aldbourne, Baydon, Ramsbury & Axford, Chilton Foliat and Froxfield.

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General

Please use this Monthly bulletin as a parish police report and extract any relevant information you see fit to parish magazines and web sites. If you require advice on any specific area please ask.

Christmas Drink & Drug Drive Campaign

Drink-related road deaths are, nationally, still far too high, despite repeated publicity messages and Wiltshire Police will be stepping up roadside enforcement throughout the whole of December and into the New Year, in a determined effort to catch those drivers who ignore the warnings and advice.

All Wiltshire officers will be taking part in this campaign, but specifically, members of the Roads Policing Unit who will be conducting high profile roadside checks at various times, and their activities will be reinforced by members of the A.N.P.R.(Automatic Number Plate Recognition) team. In addition to this some of the checks, particularly those near to county boundaries will be done in conjunction with officers from neighbouring Forces.

The campaign is aimed at raising awareness of the consequences of being caught drink-driving which could include a minimum 12-month driving ban, a large fine, a criminal record, and the serious implications for future insurance premiums. It may also have a huge impact on personal lifestyle with the possibility of job loss and the reliance on public transport to get around.

To help tackle drug-impaired driving, Roads Policing Officers in Wiltshire have been trained in Field Impairment Testing (FIT) techniques.

“Whilst the Police have always had, and retain, a power to arrest drivers whom they suspect may be unfit to drive through drink or drugs, the FIT tests help us to better determine at the roadside, whether or not the driver may be under the influence of drugs. These tests are a useful practical addition to our capability to tackle the misery of death and injury on the roads caused by driver impairment - be that by consumption of alcohol, drugs, or both”.

Drug-impaired driving is a growing problem. However, the increased levels of drink-driving and alcohol-related road casualties are also a real concern.

During 2008 Wiltshire officers conducted 5559 breath tests, 681 of which were positive and those drivers were arrested and prosecuted.

We are also promoting the Drink-Drive hotline number again this year, and as a reminder, members of the public are able to report a drink-driver by telephoning 0845 408 7000 and selecting option 4.

Council Tax Scam

Wiltshire Police have been asked to circulate this press release on behalf of the Valuation Office.

A telephone scam that targets council tax payers, falsely claiming they have won a council tax rebate, is today exposed by the Valuation Office Agency.

Many households across the country have received calls from crooks claiming to be VOA or council officials who tell their victims that they are eligible for thousands of pounds in council tax rebate.

The 'lucky' people are asked to send the caller their credit card or bank account details so the money can be refunded. Other scams ask for a one-off administration fee to process the refund.

VOA Director of Council Tax, Tim Eden, said:

“This is outrageous and targets vulnerable people with false promises. People must not pay any attention to these crooks and should report such calls to the police. Some of the callers are very aggressive and intimidating to make people pay up, but people should not be fooled into thinking these calls are legitimate. The VOA does not ask people for financial details.

“If people have questions about their council tax band, they should go to our website, www.voa.gov.uk, where they can get information on how bands are determined and what to do if they disagree with their banding.”

General Festive Season advice

Christmas Shopping

When the shops are crowded, the pickpocket has more chance to steal from you. If you can't arrange to shop during less busy times then have your purse/wallet close to your body and don't carry too much cash. The same applies to travelling on crowded buses or trains.

If you travel by car, make sure you park in a well-lit area, lock all doors and windows and do not leave anything in view. Always remove your satellite navigation systems from your vehicle.

Try not to return to your car to leave purchases in the boot before continuing with your shopping trip as thieves may well watch car parks for just such a chance. Arrange to collect heavy items from stores when you have finished all your shopping or get them delivered.

Keep your chequebook and cheque card separate at times, make sure you stay alert and be extra careful with your wallet or purse

Christmas Home Security

Having bought all those wonderful presents, don't make it easy for someone to steal them from your home. Keep them out of sight until last thing on Christmas Eve and if you 'hide' or store larger items such as bicycles in the shed or outbuildings, make sure they are very secure.

Now is a good time to check that you know what you have both normally (TV, Video etc) and with the extra presents you have bought. You may well find you need to check your insurance to make sure you are covered for the value of goods in your home. Take the frame numbers of new cycles and the serial numbers of new electrical equipment for future reference. Remember, empty boxes left outside advertise that you have new goods inside - dispose of packing carefully.

If you go out for the evening - make it look like someone is at home by turning on lights and the radio. Try to use a timer so that it looks like someone is in. Don't leave curtains open so people can see your decorations as potential thieves can see in. Be extra careful about locking doors and windows and if you have an alarm always set it. As a fire precaution, don't leave Christmas lights on in the house whilst you are out.

If you go away for the holiday period - use an automatic timer for lights and ask a trusted friend, neighbour or family to watch your home. Don't forget to cancel newspapers and milk if you have them delivered and either redirect your mail through the Post Office or have your neighbour take mail into the house - unopened Christmas cards and mail is a sure sign that a house is empty.

Strangers at the door - genuine delivery personnel usually have uniforms and liveried vehicles and should not need to come into your home. DO NOT LET anyone into your home unless you have clearly looked at their identification and with the front and rear doors locked phone the company from the telephone number in the phone book to verify who they are.

Charity collectors will have identification and will not be offended if you ask to see it. Always check that there is a registered charity number which you can check with the charities commission. Always check if you receive any literature to be away of private limited companies who use this time of year to gain benefit from your charitable nature through doorstep collection of clothing. If you are not sure but want to make a donation, ask whether these can be made in other ways, perhaps through a bank.

If you are within a cold calling zone do not answer the door. If you decide to answer the door please ensure the rear door is locked first and then put the chain on. If they do not have identification that they should hand to you or act suspicious lock the front door and ring 999 with a description and direction of travel.

Sometimes the elderly and vulnerable can be targeted by "Bogus Officials" please look after your neighbours and do confront cold callers by asking if they are looking for someone and a particular address.

With office parties and general Christmas celebrations, pubs, restaurants and other venues are often crowded. Don't leave bags over the back of your chair and keep wallets and purses close to your body to make it more difficult for the pickpocket. Busy places make it easier for the opportunist thief, so be alert at all times. Stay with friends if you can.

Make prior arrangements as to how you will get home. Book from a reputable taxi firm and ensure that the vehicle is displaying the District Council registration in the rear window and the driver is displaying their personal license. Remember to keep enough cash for your journey home and keep your keys separate from your bag.

Avoid any potential disturbances on the street by ensuring that you do not drink to excess. An estimated 23,000 alcohol-related incidents take place in Britain each week. Regular visitors to pubs and bars are twice as likely to be victims of assault.

Try and travel home with a friend.

Avoid violence by avoiding intimidating groups, alleyways and short cuts home. If you are confronted try talking your way out of potentially aggressive situations and avoid using aggressive body language or verbal communication. It is important that you appear to be in control of the situation. Too much alcohol will reduce your ability to be able to do this.

Don't flash your mobile around in public (81% of mobile phone theft victims are young men).

Make sure someone knows where you are going and what time you will be back. Don't drink too much - you could become a target for thieves.

That's a lot of advice to take in!
It's not all Doom and Gloom
Crime figures for our area are generally down
Please don't be paranoid and have a good break

Regards

PC BATCHELOR

1661

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In an EMERGENCY dial 999, all NON-EMERGENCY calls 0845 408 7000

(Your call will be recorded)

www.wiltshire.police.uk