

»»» NOVEMBER 2023 «««



# OUR NEWS

FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SUPPORTERS ACROSS ENGLAND & WALES



Maggie Lewis and the Lord Mayor of Oxford - **read more on P3!**

**Looking back at October, and forwards to November...**

## What's in this month's edition?

**Page 2:** Trust your instincts - protect against scams and fraud

**Page 3:** Local Watch spotlight

**Page 4:** Our winter 2023 Community Grant Fund applications are open!

**Pages 5 - 6:** Staying connected and secure - your views on 'smart' homes with ERA

**Page 7:** Stay warm and safe this winter with WaterSafe

**Page 8:** Patlock discounts for NW members

**Page 9:** Secure your home this autumn with the Master Locksmith Association (MLA)

**Page 10:** CCleaner Professional - Just £1 for 3 months!

**Have your say - fill in our  
2023 National Crime  
and Community survey!**



[Click here to  
complete our survey  
before Monday 13th Nov.](#)

# Trust your instincts - protect against scams and fraud

Scams and fraud can affect everyone – there are several ways you can protect yourself from becoming a victim of these crimes, and it is important to follow new and emerging advice as these crimes become more sophisticated and harder to spot.

We encourage you to **trust your instincts**. If something feels wrong, or you receive an unexpected message – trust your instincts and double-check. We want to raise awareness of the tactics scammers use to lure you in, and to help you spot if something doesn't look, feel, sound or seem right.

*“Any of us can be caught out by scammers. They deliberately target our better natures and use psychological tactics, like being overly friendly or pretending to do you a favour, making you a limited-time offer, telling you everyone else has done something or trapping you into doing little tasks for them. If you sense something's not quite right, give a clear, firm “no” - it's ok to be firm in telling scammers you are not interested.”* **John Hayward-Cripps, CEO of Neighbourhood Watch Network.**

**Action Fraud and UK Finance** have shared their Take Five to Stop Fraud campaign, with three simple steps to help you avoid becoming a victim of scams...

**STOP:** Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

**CHALLENGE:** Could it be fake? It's ok to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

**PROTECT:** Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud.



**Visit our website for more guidance on recognising, avoiding and reporting scams.**

# Local Watch spotlight

**This October, Oxford Neighbourhood Watch hosted a cybercrime prevention presentation**, inviting local residents as well as members and volunteers to hear from their Cyberhood Watch ambassador and Neighbourhood Watch volunteer, Maggie Lewis, who shared guidance from Action Fraud and the NCSC on cybercrime and staying safe online.

The Lord Mayor of Oxford, Lubna Arshad, and Mark Godsland, Thames Valley Police and SEROCU Police Cyber Security Advisor, also visited the event, highlighting the methods criminals use to steal your data or money, and advised on how you can protect yourself against cybercrime.

[Read more about Cyberhood Watch on our website!](#)

## HertsWatch continues to see amazing growth of their membership!

Since its establishment in 2004, HertsWatch has continued to grow their membership and build a strong

and vibrant organisation across Hertfordshire. By working together, HertsWatch have galvanised and encouraged new volunteers to join the system as road, area or ward coordinators.

Since 2006, the membership has grown from 20,000 in 2006 to over 140,000 during 2018, and then to 189,000 in 2023. An amazing achievement!

HertsWatch have been recognised for their huge contribution towards creating safer communities, including a Queens Award for Voluntary Service, with attendance at the 2017 Garden Party at Buckingham Palace! Well done HertsWatch!

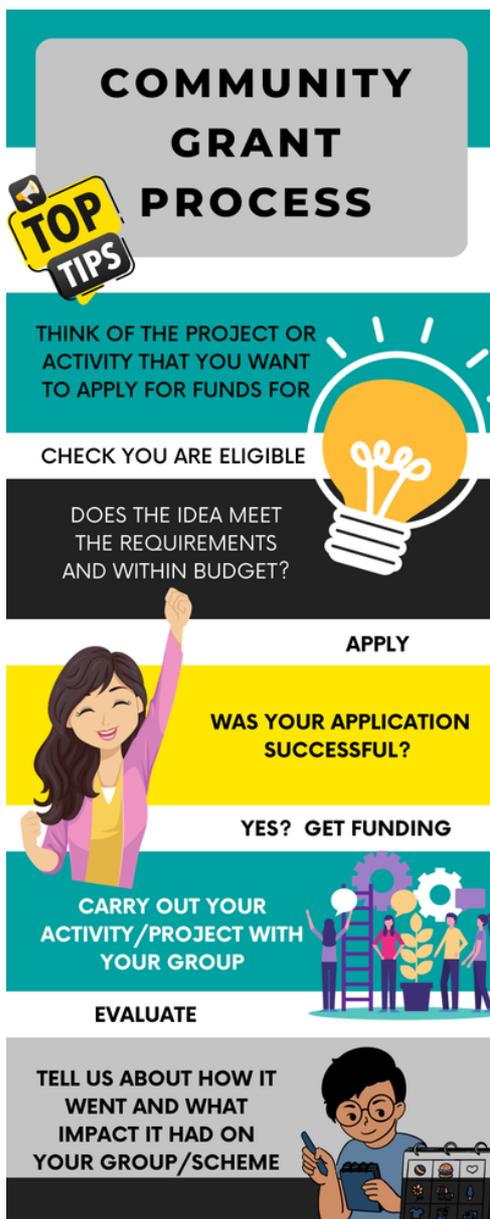
**[If you'd like us to spotlight your local watch, click here!](#)**



# Our winter 2023 Community Grant Fund applications are open!

We're proud that much of Neighbourhood Watch's work locally is delivered by dedicated and passionate volunteers, donating their time, skills and experience to help make their communities safer, more connected and vibrant.

There are of a number of routes for seeking local funding, but when these have been exhausted or may not be relevant, we offer a **Community Grants Fund**.



Our focus is to help you kickstart, improve or expand your community work. The Trustees of Neighbourhood Watch Network set aside funds for this scheme, and this latest round opened on **Wednesday 1st November 2023**. Applications for this round will close on **1st January 2024** and be paid out in February 2024.

In the previous grant cycle, all funds were allocated to activities or one-time development initiatives that aid Neighbourhood Watch volunteers in reaching out to and interacting with vulnerable populations in their communities.

Only Neighbourhood Watch members who represent a registered and approved Neighbourhood Watch programme, group, Area, or Association in England and Wales are eligible for our funding.

For the full list of terms and conditions, and to read the Community Grants Fund FAQs, [please visit our website!](#)

# Staying connected and secure - your views on 'smart' homes

# ERA

Thank you to the over 18,000 Neighbourhood Watch members who responded to our partner **ERA's** smart home security questionnaire. Your insights will help inform the content of future crime prevention awareness resources, as well as product research and development. Here are your highlights:

## 1. Smart systems

The survey showed that many of you are already connected to a broad range of digital devices and are proactively choosing smart security to protect your homes and communities.

**75%** of you have one or more smart device in your home. The three most popular were an Alexa, external cameras, and smart video doorbells, suggesting Neighbourhood Watch members are well-connected and open to smart technology in their home. Despite their superior intelligence and cunning abilities to stop posties in their tracks, dogs do not count as a 'smart' device, as one respondent amusingly wrote!

*"I love that smart solutions can make my home appear occupied even when I'm not there. Lights and other devices can be programmed to turn on and off at specific times or controlled remotely through my smartphone"* **said a Neighbourhood Watch member.**

*"As I can monitor my cameras remotely through a smartphone app, I can keep an eye on my property wherever I am"* **said a Neighbourhood Watch member.**

**39%** of members are using external cameras and **30%** have video doorbells as visible deterrents to anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and burglaries.

## 2. Make it simple

**68%** of respondents would choose to fit smart products themselves, rather than use a professional installer. More than half of you (**51%**) view ease of install as important, valuable feedback shared with ERA's product innovation team focused on creating customer-friendly smart solutions.



## 4. Data protection

This is an important consideration for Neighbourhood Watch members. Rest assured, ERA stores data and recordings on a UK-based cloud platform, using bank-grade 128-bit SSL data encryption, giving you peace of mind that both your property and data are secure.

For more information on staying safe online and keeping your devices secure, Neighbourhood Watch's Cyberhood Watch resources and practical advice can be found [here](#).

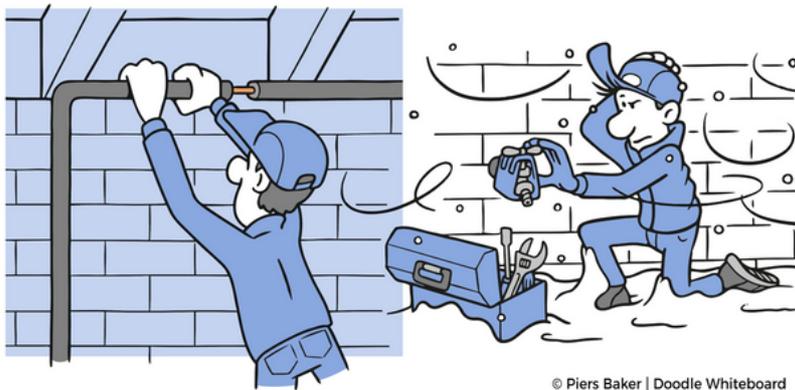
As a Neighbourhood Watch sponsor since 2016, **ERA** is committed to helping members protect your homes and create safe and secure local communities. See more information [here](#).

**Thank you again to everyone who responded to the latest survey ERA really value the insights and opinions of Neighbourhood Watch members.**

# Stay warm and safe this winter

As the clocks go back and temperatures drop, now's a good time to get our homes ready for winter. **It's important to think about how to stay warm and protect yourself against plumbing emergencies.**

**WaterSafe**, the UK's register of approved contractors backed by all water companies and drinking water regulators, works in partnership with the Met Office to share winter advice.



© Piers Baker | Doodle Whiteboard

**WaterSafe Director, Julie Spinks**, said: *“Every winter, our members see first-hand the misery burst pipes can cause. But **taking these five simple steps to get ready for winter now can make a big difference** when it comes to protecting your home.*

*Using a WaterSafe approved contractor means work will be carried out by someone who is competent and qualified.”*

## Remember these five top tips to get ready for winter:

- 1) **Fit foam lagging on your pipes** and an insulated jacket on your outside tap to prevent the water inside freezing and bursting the pipes
- 2) **Make sure you can find and use your stop tap** to turn your water off in an emergency - it's usually located underneath your kitchen sink
- 3) **Find the number of your local WaterSafe-approved emergency plumber** and save it in your phone or stick it on your fridge - just in case
- 4) **Arrange a boiler service to help keep it running smoothly**, using an engineer registered with both WaterSafe and Gas Safe
- 5) **Keep an eye on your water use**; a third of energy costs come from heating water, so saving water means saving on your water and energy bills too.

## Did you know?

**WaterSafe** provides a register of qualified, approved, plumbers and water contractors who are trained in the water regulations, are insured, and hold relevant professional qualifications. [Visit their website for more advice and guidance!](#)



**Grab your NW discount now!**



## A VISIBLE DETERRENT

Entry to French doors fitted with standard handles and locks can be forced in less than 30 seconds. Most forced entry burglaries are committed through the weakest point at the rear of the property, usually the patio or French doors. The modern white design of the PATLOCK provides a clear visible deterrent throughout the day and when you need it most, at night.

## WHAT IS A PATLOCK?

PATLOCK is the Police approved home security product for French doors, patio doors and conservatories.

PATLOCK is suitable for double doors fitted with two horizontal handles and works by holding the internal door handles secure, meaning the external handles cannot be operated. This ensures that the door mechanism remains in the locked position, even if the locks are snapped or removed.

PATLOCK has been awarded the Secured by Design accreditation and is recommended by Police Forces and Crime Prevention Associations throughout the UK to help you feel more secure.



# Expert tips to help secure your home this Autumn.

SECURE YOUR HOME. PROTECT YOUR WORLD.



Visit [locksmiths.co.uk](https://locksmiths.co.uk)

**TO FIND YOUR LOCAL MLA APPROVED LOCKSMITH.**

## Security warning as risk of burglaries rise when our clocks go back

As autumn settles in and the nights grow longer, it's disheartening to acknowledge the rise in burglaries that accompanies this season. We encourage homeowners to remain vigilant as we turn our clocks back.

As we bid farewell to longer days and embrace an additional hour in bed, it's crucial to acknowledge the heightened vulnerability of our homes. Autumn is notorious for witnessing a spike in residential burglaries. Nevertheless, by implementing a few straightforward measures, we can greatly reduce the likelihood of becoming victims of such crimes amidst the diminishing daylight hours.

[Click here to view our expert tips.](#)

## In an emergency know who you'll call

Avoid being caught out in an emergency. Find your local trusted emergency locksmith and save their number to your phone.



**FIND YOUR LOCAL MLA APPROVED LOCKSMITH.**

**VISIT: [LOCKSMITHS.CO.UK](https://locksmiths.co.uk)**

## Know you're in safe hands.

If in doubt, seek advice from a trusted and experienced professional. MLA locksmiths are independently vetted and inspected, and many will be able to perform a complete security assessment of your home free of charge.

Find your local MLA approved locksmith at [locksmiths.co.uk](https://locksmiths.co.uk).



# CCleaner Professional – just £1 for 3 months!

£1 SALE

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Speed up and optimize your PC today.



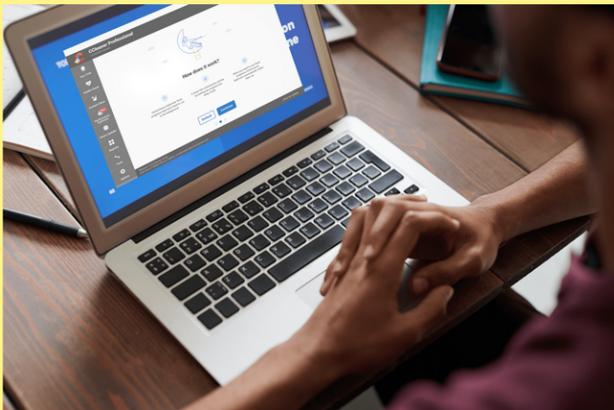
**BUY NOW**

## Award-winning PC Optimisation

Trusted by millions and critically acclaimed, there's a reason why CCleaner is the world's favourite PC optimisation tool! Easy to use, one click cleaning so beginners can optimise their computers in seconds. Plus, it's packed with advanced features for power users.

## Faster computer

Is your computer running slow? As it gets older it collects unused files, settings, resource-hogging applications, and out-of-date drivers which can make it slower and slower. CCleaner cleans up these files, temporarily freezes apps when you're not using them, and updates software drivers to make your PC faster.



## CCleaner Professional – just £1 for 3 months!

£1 SALE

Speed up and optimize your PC today.

- ✓ Faster computer
- ✓ Performance Optimizer
- ✓ Safer browsing

Buy Now



## Important note

**You'll receive the full license of CCleaner Premium for just £1. After 3 months the service will be auto-renewed for the full year unless you cancel the subscription.**