



## Elmsett and Aldham Neighbourhood Watch

This month's column includes a crime alert for the farming community, more scam alerts and some advice on unoccupied homes.

**Crime update:** A theft of 350 litres of fuel occurred from a tractor left in a field in Offton Road, Elmsett between 3pm Thursday 9th and 1pm Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May. The farming community should consider their

security arrangements and if possible join a local watch scheme to alert them and others of any suspicious activity in the area.

**Local Police Activity:** Following a report of nuisance youths in Elmsett, the police responded recently and gave advice to those in the area. Our Community Officer Pc Niall Johnson has been involved and continues to assist in this case.

### Scam Alerts:

Suffolk Trading Standards have warned that recently a SCAM call was made by someone purporting to be them. The caller, 'James Mitchell', advised that Trading Standards needed to inspect the loft insulation at the property and an appointment had to be arranged. When the resident queried the caller, they were advised that they would send an email and ended the call. All Trading Standards officers carry identification and can be verified by calling the national consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133.

**STOP:** take a moment to think before giving away information or spending money

**CHALLENGE:** ask yourself could it be fake? Only criminals will try to rush, panic or confuse you.

**PROTECT:** Contact your bank or credit card company immediately if you think you have been scammed. Also report it to Action Fraud see [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or 0330 123 2040

### Email Account Hacked:

A male resident's email account was recently hacked and the scammer sent out the following message to people on his contact list: "I hope all is well with you? I can't call for now, that's the reason why I emailed you. Actually, I need a favour from you. I'd appreciate if you could email me back when you get this ASAP. Amanda"

There are several warning signs in this message. They include asking for a favour, not phoning and signed by a female (the email address hacked belonged to a male). Unfortunately a person did contact the scammer and sent them Amazon vouchers (another warning sign). DO NOT respond directly to emails like this. If you want to do anything, contact the alleged sender by a trusted means. It is also helpful to tell them of the hack.

### Holiday Advice:

Especially as the holiday season approaches, even if you are away for only a couple of nights, as well as making your unoccupied home as secure as possible only tell people who NEED to know such as a neighbour who is keeping an eye on the property for you. DO NOT advertise the fact that you are going away on for example social media or post your pictures of where you are when you are there. If you do, you are advertising that you are away and may unintentionally invite unwanted visitors. This especially applies if you are away regularly or for a long period such as on a cruise because you are also giving criminals extra time to plan a burglary.

### Courier Fraud:

Suffolk Police have recently issued warnings and advice about what is known as Courier Fraud. People in their 80's are especially likely to be targeted by scammers posing as police officers or bank officials and then duped into handing over money, valuables or bank/credit cards which are collected from their home usually by a courier.

Tactics vary often claiming that there is a problem with your account and they need your help to catch the real criminals. The victim may also be encouraged into handing over their bank cards and PINs, as well as high value items such as jewellery, watches and gold (coins or bullion) or persuaded to buy items such as gold and jewellery from legitimate retailers on behalf of criminals.

If you know of anyone that you feel might be susceptible to this, please help ensure they are aware of the dangers and consider measures such as a call blocker. Also if you have any concerns or feel you or someone you know may have been targeted, please report it to the police and to Action Fraud. Advice is available on the Action Fraud website.

Many elderly people rely on their landline phone and getting a call blocking device fitted will stop unwanted scam and nuisance calls from getting through. The device allows calls through from a trusted caller list set by the user for friends, family members, doctors and any other trusted contacts.

To find out more about call blockers, visit [www.truecall.co.uk](http://www.truecall.co.uk).

Finally a white van was seen several times in Hadleigh Road on 10<sup>th</sup> June with a 61 number plate. If you see this or any other vehicle acting suspiciously, if possible note the registration number, make, model and colour and a brief description of the occupant(s). Then notify the police via 101 or on line. If you think a crime is being committed, phone 999.

Always look out for your neighbour.

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