



MARCH 2026

Elmsett and Aldham Neighbourhood Watch

This month I am covering parcel security, telephones and scam advice.

Parcel deliveries: Whilst delivering the village Newsletter, I was surprised to see the number of parcels left openly on doorsteps. If you are expecting one, arrange for it to be left in a safe place or with a neighbour otherwise it may not be there when you get home!

Landline switch to Digital with a full fibre cable connection: BT customers may have received notice that they are being switched to a digital phone system. If not, they will as everyone will be switched in the near future. It is important to realise that after being switched, if there is a power cut your phone will not work as there will no longer be a back up from the exchange. One way round this is to use a mobile phone.

When you are being switched, check if you are entitled to a free digital phone and a back up power supply. This supply will power your router for a while after the power is cut and should keep your phone working for a while. In any event, you should be entitled to a free DV adapter which will allow most older phones to keep working. It is unlikely that any of these will be sent to you automatically so you need to order them yourself.

It also seems that the switch by BT is now in two phases. The first is switching you to the new system and the second replacing the copper cable to your house with fibre. The latter will require an engineer to change the master socket in your home.

A useful website is - www.bt.com/about/all-ip/connected-together.

Other companies may have already switched you or will in the near future.

Mobile Phone Security:

- Be aware if using it in public of either someone looking over your shoulder watching you make entries – 'shoulder surfing' – or someone close who might snatch it. Two wheel vehicles are also used so that the pillion snatches it as they drive past you including on the pavement.
- Particularly if it has been lost, text or call it as someone may answer.
- Lock and locate it. Use a tracker if you have one installed and report it immediately to your service provider and the Police.
- Change your passwords for mobile banking, email, social media etc in case the thief is after your data.

Scam calls: the latest include fake calls supposedly from Heathrow Police Station, about cryptocurrency accounts and Home Emergency cover.

'Which' advises:

- don't think that the caller knowing accurate details about you makes the call genuine – verify information by logging into your account with the company the call is claiming to be from.
- Never disclose your financial information over the phone.
- Register with the Telephone Preference Service (TPS), which will stop legitimate companies from making unsolicited sales and marketing calls to your phone number, so when you receive a call, you'll know it's from a scammer.
- Consider installing a call blocker for nuisance calls.
- Call 159 if you receive a call claiming to be from your bank. When you call, you'll be put through to your bank's genuine customer service line.
- Scam calls to your mobile can be reported by forwarding the number to 7726.

- If you lose any money to a scam, call your bank immediately using the number on the back of your bank card and report it to Report Fraud - www.reportfraud.police.uk.

Scam websites: some scammers will use the letter r in front of .com i.e. .corm as the r may not be spotted. A useful website is - www.ourwatch.org.uk/passwords.

New 'voice cloning' scams have started – more on this next time. In the meantime, do not give away any personal information on the phone unless you are ABSOLUTELY SURE it is a genuine call.

'Which' offers a free update for scam alerts, see – www.signup.which.co.uk/wlp-scamalert-newsletter

Finally, if you are considering buying another car, some useful information can be obtained from www.vehiclecore.co.uk.

Keep safe and secure during these longer nights and lookout for your neighbour.

John Sones Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator
js338@btinternet.com 01473 658804