

Police Briefing Sunday 10th February 2013 South Herefordshire & Golden Valley

A slight change to the norm this week as your briefing comes from another member of the Local Policing Team based at Peterchurch, Kate Middleton. I know that you are all used to and fond of the briefings that Fiona does so well, however the holiday that she so well deserves is no longer a distant speck on the horizon and so I thought I would get some practice. If you feel I have missed something out that Fiona normally does, or an improvement to my briefing please don't hesitate to send me an e-mail and I will tweak it next time around.

Well I will get on with the briefing! As ever if you have any information about any of the incidents listed below or any I have not mentioned please make contact with the Local Policing Team.

Clehonger

Between 01:00 and 09:30 on Sunday 3rd February somebody has broken the locks to some units. The person has had a good look around the units before taking some power tools from within.

Incident number 237S030213.

Between the early hours of Sunday 3rd February and the early hours of Monday 4th February suspects appear to have driven at least one vehicle up a drive and into a courtyard area, where there are a number of brick outbuildings, a coach house, stable block, and a metal barn are located. They broke the lock off the metal shutter doors and they took a number of power tools from the shed and made an attempt to take a small tractor which was inside the shed. They were unable to start the tractor, and were only able to push it a short distance to the edge of the shed. Suspects then went to a residential area they gained entry to the garage through insecure door, and kicked a car causing damage. A window to another residential property was found wide open and marks were found on the windowsill, indicating it may have been forced. Incident number 22N040213

An Ifor Williams trailer parked on a residential driveway was stolen overnight on the 4th/5th February. It was secured by two chains. It appears that the suspects entered the driveway and cut the chains and moved the trailer to the main road. No other vehicle was seen or heard, but due to the location it is believed that the trailer would have been hitched away. Incident number 27n050213

Ewyas Harold

On Saturday 02-02-2013 at about 1800 hours a resident has left his vehicle parked near to his property. He has then returned to his vehicle on Monday 04-02-2013 at around 0725 hours and on starting the vehicle he has realised the exhaust on the vehicle has been tampered with and the catalytic converter has been stolen. It appears that the vehicle has been jacked up by some type of jacking system, the vehicle has sustained damage from the jack whilst it was jacked up. A silver BMW and a red pick up were seen in the area at the time of the incident but no further details were obtained, and it is not known if the vehicles were involved in this incident. Incident number 72s040213.

Hoarwithy

In the early hours of Sunday 3rd February a window was forced and entry gained to a commercial premise in the area. Edible items and cutlery were taken from within.

Incident number 364s030213.

Longtown

Between 20:15 on Thursday 7th Feb and 22:30 on Thursday 07 Feb persons unknown have approached metal storage container located next to house approx 100 yards off road. They have cut/forced four padlocks from doors to enter the container. They have then removed items from within including a quad bike and power tools. A vehicle was seen on the previous evening and again the evening of the theft by a witness. The witness reported that the quad was being followed by this vehicle. The registration number for the suspicious vehicle was **WV6*X*C**. If anyone has seen this vehicle please make contact with us as we are actively following leads up at the moment. *Incident number 197N070213.*

A resident of longtown has been away from their property for a few weeks and during this time someone has broken the lock of the metal container which he uses as a shed and gained entry .A hedge cutter and a grass strimmer were stolen from within. *Incident number 261s020213.*

Michaelchurch Escley

Between 20:00 on Thursday 31st Jan and 07:15 Friday 1st Feb a property that is being renovated was broken into. The gates to the property were stolen and the door smashed to get inside. There were several power tools taken from within the property. *Incident number 90s010213*

Peterchurch

Within the last week a car parked in closure place has been scratched using a sharp object. Someone has etched a word into the passenger door of the vehicle. Enquires are continuing. *Incident number 428S080213.*

Kingstone

I property which is currently being renovated has had a window smashed using a breeze block. This happened between 17:00 on Monday 4th Feb and 13:00 on Sat 2nd of Feb. *Incident number 304s070213.*

Dorstone

The driver of the black Seat Leon that was reported as being seen in suspicious circumstances in the village on 27th January has been in touch, having received one of our 'what were you up to?' letters. He states he was trying to find somewhere he could do a bit of ferreting, but won't be back, I don't think he appreciated being asked to account for himself by the police!

Madley

On 04 February between 00:00 and 03:00 several parked lorries in an industrial estate were targeted for their fuel. The thieves got away with 500 litres of fuel. *Incident number 09N040213.*

Allensmore

Between 08:40 and 14:00 on Thursday 7th Feb a residential property was broken into. Person's smashed through a UPVC window and searched the house. They stole items including jewellery and watches. *Incident Number 86n070213.*

Bullinghope

In the afternoon of the 27th January an ipad was stolen from an insecure vehicle parked on a driveway in the area. *Incident number 98n310113.*

Suspicious phone call

A resident in the local area has received a phone call from a 'withheld number' - it was a confident young man who didn't give a name or say where he was calling from but he asked for the resident by name and stated that he was in the area today and would like to come over and talk to them about crime prevention - when he was asked who he was and where he was calling from he laughed and put the phone down.

Very strange but something to be mindful of.

A reminder about Potholes:

There have been numerous reports regarding large potholes in and around the local area. Please drive with caution and report where possible, to prevent any further incidents. Many vehicles have had wheels ruined (tyres sheared in two/ blow outs, wheels damaged, and flat spots). All have been created as a result of driving through them.

Please report via Hereford Council on **01432 260000**, so that Highways/Amey can deal with the problem as soon as possible.

As valentines day is close by I thought the following advice on internet dating was very apt.

Online dating scammers are not out to steal your heart - instead they want to steal your cash!

Every year West Mercia Police investigates many cases where fraudsters have tricked money out of unsuspecting victims on internet dating sites - sometimes thousands of pounds.

Scammers can sign up to online dating agencies or chat rooms just like anyone else. Many online dating sites allow anyone to join for free and they usually do not screen their members. Scammers take advantage of the anonymity of the internet to create the 'perfect profile', making any number of promises to tempt their victims to letting their defences down.

How Do I Know If It's A Scam?

The scammer will ask you for money! This will not happen immediately, however before long the scammer will ask for financial help for any number of reasons. Almost always they will ask you to send money using an untraceable source such as electronic money transfer services (even using legitimate services, such as Western Union or Moneygram). They may ask you to send funds to the account of a third party who may be described as a work colleague or administrator. However, the third party is often a victim themselves who is being used to launder money on behalf of the scammer.

Some of the most common reasons they give for why they need your help include:

- "I want to meet you, but I don't have enough money to travel to see you."
- "I have been robbed and beaten, I require urgent surgery or treatment for a serious illness; or myself or my family member has been a victim of a serious or fatal accident and you are the only person who can help."
- "I am stranded abroad and I don't have money for travel or visa costs."
- "I am a US or UK serviceman serving in Iraq or Afghanistan. I need to buy myself out to come to see you."
- "My money is tied up in shares or investments."
- "I am in the process of selling my gold mine, oil company or other valuable asset."

Other tell-tale signs are:

- Your new date looks like a model - this is probably because the scammer has used a stolen or magazine picture!

- Your new date only gives you a post office address and/or a phone number which he or she never answers and which does not have voicemail, or they tell you they can only receive text messages.
- Your date talks a lot about herself or himself and does not answer your questions - probably because they are sending standard emails to hundreds of other people at the same time.

What can I do to protect myself?

Only use a reputable online dating or chat service and follow the basic safety tips for online dating:

- Be sceptical and ask yourself simple questions like: "Why am I the only person who can help them when I have only just met them?"
- Test your date - ask them lots of questions, try to phone them or post them something, or possibly suggest meeting them. If all attempts fail, you are probably dealing with a scammer.
- Most important of all, don't ever part with any of your hard earned money. Let's be honest, if you had met this person face-to-face rather than over the internet, do you think you would give them your money if they asked you for it? The answer is likely to be no, so why give it to someone you have never met and who is clearly defrauding you, however much they play on your heart strings?

What can I do if I have already lost money?

If you have already sent money there is little chance of you ever recovering it from them. However what you can do is:

- Contact [Action Fraud](http://www.actionfraud.org.uk) on 0300 123 2040 for advice and to report the matter
- Call [Consumer Direct](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk) on 08454 04 05 06 for advice and to report the matter
- Report the scam to the dating or chat room site where you met the person.

Thank you
Katie Middleton

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