

## WHADDON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH—FEBRUARY 2008

It had been my hope to report that the last three months since the November Whaddon News was published had been quiet with little of significance to report; however, there was a burglary at a residence at the Church Street end of Meldreth Road on Saturday 2 February at around 7.00 pm. Unfortunately the occupant was also attacked during the intrusion. The matter is still under investigation but meanwhile the police have asked the following:

“Did you see or hear anything which you considered to be suspicious at this time or do you have any information which you feel could be related to this incident? If so please report it to Cambridgeshire Police on 0845 456 4564.

It is likely that this was an isolated incident as many burglars tend to be opportunists but please follow the security advice below to ensure that your home remains secure, reducing the risk to your property.

- \* Ensure you lock all windows and doors;
- \* Don't leave spare keys in obvious places such as under the mat or in a plant pot;
- \* Keep car and house keys out of sight;
- \* If you are not home during hours of darkness, consider leaving a light on so it looks like you are home;
- \* If you are going away for a period of time, inform a neighbour;
- \* Never leave garages or sheds unlocked.”

We might add:

- \* Before opening the front door, ensure the back door is locked;
- \* And always ensure that any caller you do not recognize, such as someone from a utility company, shows you their ID. If in doubt close the door and call the company or the 0845 number above if necessary;

Please remember that Whaddon is relatively crime free and that the burglary mentioned above is an isolated incident; nevertheless, all the actions above are simple, normal and sensible precautions for us all to take.

On a similar note, as a neighbourhood watch organization we also discourage house-to-house buying and selling. It is not an offence for people to sell in this way but it can be worrying, particularly for those on their own and it can be a cover for other activities. We have window stickers saying this which are available from your NW coordinator.

In the previous Newsletter I reported the theft of lead on two occasions from St Mary's Church. Thankfully there has been no repeat and we await feedback on the result of the police investigation into what has been a national problem with this region suffering more than most. Action is being taken at St Mary's to counter future thefts.

Three of us from the village attended the third Neighbourhood Panel meeting, this time at Foxton Village Hall, and at which the police and SCDC provide an update on local crime and disorder issues. The focus of police attention remains with the same three concerns: anti-social behaviour (ASB) (notably in Bassingbourn and Melbourne), burglary and speeding. There seems to have been some success regarding ASB in Bassingbourn but Melbourne is proving a greater challenge.

Part of the effort to counter ASB is monitoring the sale of alcohol to under-age young people. Our PCSOs, working in partnership with South Cambs Trading Standards, conducted a series of test purchases in a number of local village shops. All shops in the Melbourne/Bassingbourn area passed with flying colours. Bearing in mind that under-age drinking is part of the ASB problem we might ask where the youngsters are getting the alcohol from.

We had asked for speeding to be monitored on the Meldreth road but, in the event, only one check was done, and that in November for about 30 minutes in the middle of the day with the PCSO being fully visible. Not surprisingly, drivers observed the speed limit. The police have been pressed for further checks at peak times but it is clear that resources are limited and higher priorities are likely to limit what can be done.

Finally, everybody has been given a "yellow card" which provides both the emergency telephone numbers to report a crime and the names and numbers for your local village NW coordinator. Please feel free to call them whenever you feel it appropriate.

Mike Monks