

The Borough Bulletin

News from the Guildford Neighbourhood Watch

Fortnight
commencing
24 March, 2008

Endsleigh says we're on top

Once again, a report by Endsleigh Insurance Services Limited ranks Guildford as the safest place in the UK for household theft.

The report analyses the percentage of claims in different UK towns and cities against the number of Endsleigh policy-holders, ranking them according to the comparative risk of burglary rather than on the total number of claims.

Guildford regularly tops Endsleigh's list of the ten safest places in the country, which is a reflection of the high quality of policing across the borough. It also reflects, to some extent at least, the work of the Neighbourhood Watch in keeping our homes and streets safe from the attentions of burglars and other villains.

Let's keep up the good work and make sure that Guildford keeps its position in the insurer's next report.



This is no myhttake

Regular readers will know that from time to time the *Bulletin* publicises a dire-sounding incident or event which, on closer examination, turns out to be an urban myth.

This week, though, Surrey Police crime reports mention two incidents that are probably genuine.

The first and more worrying incident occurred on Saturday, 8 March. A woman driving along Salt Box Road in a Mazda was tailed by a silver Audi, which drove up close behind her as she approached the lights at Grange Road. The lights turned red, she stopped - and the Audi lightly shunted the back of the Mazda.

Both drivers got out to inspect the damage (as you would), and while the Audi driver kept the woman engaged his passenger got into the Mazda's driver's seat, started it up (the keys were in the ignition) and sped away. The Audi driver quickly returned to his car and left in the same direction.

The driver was a white youth about 18 years old and around 6ft tall. He had a slim build and short, light coloured hair in no particular style. He also had what was described as a "traveller accent" and had crooked or uneven upper teeth, and was wearing a light coloured jumper, possibly beige and possibly with a diamond pattern and lighter-coloured sleeves.

The passenger was also said to be white, and also about 18. He had a slightly stock-

ier build and light or dark brown hair and wore a dark top, perhaps a jumper.

The second incident centred on a hotel on the Farnham Road. A man claiming to be from "the fraud department" at Guildford Police Station (there is no such post) and asked for the names and telephone numbers of guests staying at the hotel over the following weekend.

Come the weekend, the man calls the guests - this time posing as a member of the hotel's staff. His story is that a junior has accidentally shredded the guest's credit card details, so please could he have them again?

At least one trusting guest fell for it ... and later found that several fraudulent transactions on his account.

Urban myths tend to play on our fears, and both these incidents are spot on target in that respect. But these come from police reports, not a circulating email. Both incidents are being investigated, and the *Bulletin* will follow the progress of the investigations. In the mean time, though ...

If you are involved in a minor traffic accident, try to pull over in a spot that would make it difficult for someone to drive your car away (hard up against another parked car, for example) ... and don't leave the keys in the ignition when you get out!

As for the card fraud ... unless you are making a phone purchase from a reputable dealer, don't give away your card details away to anyone.

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Crime round-up

Featuring a selection of crimes reported over the past fortnight.

Surrey Police would greatly appreciate any information about these crimes. To contact the Police Crime Reporting Centre, phone 0845 125 2222 (and please tell them you are a member of Neighbourhood Watch). Only dial 999 when you have a genuine emergency requiring the police to attend, such when as a crime in progress or someone is in immediate danger.

Ash

A woman was robbed in **Fairview Road** on the evening of Saturday, 15 March, as she returned home from a pub. One of three men who walked past here simply grabbed her handbag and ran off down an alleyway.

The three were aged 18 to 20 years and all wore jeans and jumpers. One of them had brown hair.

Someone stole a Yamaha DT50 motorbike from a back garden in **Longacre** on Sunday, 9 March, and on Monday, 17th, the front windscreen of a Peugeot was smashed. A car was damaged in **Wyke Lane** on Wednesday, 12 March, and a window above the garage of a detached house in **Loddon Way** was smashed on Tuesday, 18th.

Ash Vale

The thief who broke in to a Mercedes taxi parked in **Vickers Road** on Wednesday, 12 March, got away with some loose change but nothing else.

Bellfields

In **Weyside Road**, on Wednesday, 12 March, a thief got into a shed-office at the bottom of a suburban garden and a laptop computer and its peripherals. A week later, in **Hornbeam Road**, someone smashed the nearside front and rear windows of a Citroen Saxo.

Burpham

A five-bedroom detached house in **Gosden Hill Road** was burgled on Friday, 14 March. The thief jemmied open a uPVC door and picked up a coat and a bag but dropped them on the road outside.

Chilworth

An unoccupied three-bedroom semi-detached house in **New Road** was hit overnight on Saturday, 8 March. The burglar got inside by putting a tool of some kind through the cat flap and using it to lever off the bottom door panel. He went on to steal items of jewellery and an engraved silver plate, but didn't touch the expensive audio and video kit ... or the spare keys to the owner's BMW.

Effingham

There was something of a mini crime wave in Effingham over the past fortnight. The mayhem began in **Chester Road** on Sunday, 9 March, when a Ford Focus was stolen and, later, left burning on the hard shoulder of the M25. The following night, a pair of thieves raided a house in **Orestan Lane**, picked up two bunches of car keys and drove away in an Audi A4 and an Audi A3.

There were two incidents on Tuesday the 11th: in one, a three-bedroom detached house in **Howard Road** was burgled. The front door was closed but not locked, and the thief simply reached in, removed the car keys from

the inside lock and drove off in the Mini Cooper S that had been parked on the drive. The other was in the early hours in **Old Lane Gardens**, where the thief or thieves did considerable damage to the front door as they tried to break in. Their noisy efforts woke the home owners, prompting the villains to run off.

Friday 14th saw two more incidents. In **Forest Road**, a camera and some jewellery were pinched by a thief who forced a ground floor window in a detached house, while in **Lindens Close** a semi-detached house was burgled, via a sliding patio door, while the owners were away. Their loot included a computer monitor, a games console, a CD played DAB radio, a large flat-screen television, a watch and an iPod.

A semi-detached house in **The Crossroads** was hit on Sunday, 16 March: a white man aged in mid 20s forced the front door but was immediately confronted by the occupant. However, the intruder managed to grab a handbag from hall before escaping.

He was about 5ft 10in tall and of medium build with short, straight hair slightly spiked, and wore a dark coat. If anyone has a clue who this might be, please do call the police.

The final incident in Effingham over the fortnight was in **Church Street** the same day, where both sets of plates were taken from an Audi A6.

Fairlands

A cottage on the **Aldershot Road** halfway between Fairlands and Wood Street Village, to be exact, was damaged on Tuesday, 18 March, when someone threw a stone through a double-glazed window.

Gomshall

A uPVC double-glazed bedroom window in a ground-floor in flat **Tower Hill** was smashed on Saturday, 8 March.

Guildford

Apart from the usual rash of assaults and other drink-fuelled incidents in and around Bridge Street, there were a just few other crimes of note over the fortnight. In **George Road**, on Wednesday, 12 March, a determined thief first forced a solid wooden door, then pushed over the fridge-freezer that was on the other side. Inside, he moved a few things around before ripping a large flat-screen TV from the wall for a take-away.

That same day, a man walking down **North Street** paused to punch the offside wing mirror of a Mercedes parked near the junction with **Leapale Road**.

The next day, the 13th, a ground floor flat in **Stocton Road** was burgled while the occupants were out. The

thieves - there were three of them - forced open the rear patio doors and rifled through drawers and cupboards before lifting an iPod Nano. At this point they were disturbed (as the report says), and ran off.

All three were white men in their early 20s: one was about 5ft 8in tall with a slim build and short, dark spiky hair. The second was around 6ft tall, also slimly built and wore a blue Cagool-type hooded top with the hood up, a baseball cap and dark tracksuit trousers with red stripe down the side. The third was also 6ft with a slim build and wore a baseball cap.

Merrow

Overnight on Tuesday, 11 March, one or more thieves expertly forced the rear doors to a Citroen Berlingo van in **Wykeham Road** and got away with a tradesman's toolbox. The next day, a Subaru Justy was scratched up while it was parked in **Hiller Road**.

Onslow

An unoccupied semi-detached house in **The Oval** was burgled on Saturday, 8 March, rifling through boxes of belonging to new people who were moving in. The same day, the front door of a house in **Mareschal Road** was damaged when someone thrust a metal broom handle through the letter box. The following Tuesday, the 11th, a Mazda 5 parked in **Ludlow Road** had its rear windscreen smashed.

Park Barn

The fortnight's catalogue of crime in Park Barn is relatively minor - but nevertheless distressing to its victims. First, someone poured white paint over a Ford Mondeo in **Southway** on Saturday, 8 March (possibly settling a grudge). The next day in **Roundhill Way**, a Ford Cargo van was broken into (although nothing appears to have been stolen), and Fiat Punto was rolled down the street after its handbrake had been released: the idea, apparently, was to gain access to and steal a Ford Cargo lorry, but the attempt, if that's what it was, was unsuccessful.

Back in Southway, overnight on Wednesday, 12th March, a mobile phone was stolen from a Peugeot 307 parked in **Kings College** car park after the thief had carefully drilled out the lock on the driver's door. In the same place and at about the same time, the same technique was used to get into another car. The thief stole a mobile phone and a bag - which the owner later said had nothing in it but a pair of old trainers. Pheewooo!

Earlier that day, a man playing football on the pitch at **Park Barn School** returned to his Toyota Yaris to find that someone had smashed the rear driver's-side window and stolen his jacket - which just happened to house his wallet and mobile phone.

Pewley

Another mini crime-wave, this time in the environs of Pewley. A large four-bedroom detached house in **One Tree Hill Road** was hit on Saturday, 8 March. The thief got in by breaking the locking mechanism of a double-glazed window, searched the house and escaped with a flat-screen TV and some jewellery.

On Monday, 10 March in **Epsom Road**, the bottom corner

of an up-and-over garage door was bent back, allowing a thief to reach in and unlock it. He took away the more valuable of the two bicycles left inside.

Next, **Albury Road**, where seven bottles of alcohol (of unspecified variety) were stolen from a garage on Tuesday, 11 March, and on **Pewley Hill** itself, on Saturday, a Volkswagen Golf and a BMW 540i were keyed on 15th March.

Pirbright

A Pontiac car parked in **Vapery Lane** was damaged on Monday, 17 March.

Horsley

Two men jemmied open a downstairs window in a house in **Norrells Ride** on Thursday, 13 March, but there was someone home so they ran off.

Ripley

On Sunday, 9 March in **Linden Way**, a clever thief used a tool to reach through the letter box of a semi-detached and pull down the door handle (it was shut but not double-locked). There, on the hall table, he found the keys to an Audi A3 ... which by now may well be overseas.

A few days later, on Thursday, 13 March, a CCM Supermoto R30 motorcycle was stolen from under the car port at side of house in **Georgelands**.

Send

A Husqvana chainsaw was stolen from a garage in **Vicarage Lane** on Sunday, 16 March, even though its chain was missing ... a lawn mower, a sit-on mower, an electric hedge trimmer and other tools were inexplicably left behind. As well, a selection of tools was stolen from a large wooden shed at the bottom of the garden of a house in **Broadmead Road** on Tuesday, 18 March.

Slyfield Green

Using a garden fork found at on site, someone damaged the front door of a house in Farm Close on Friday, 14 March.

Stoughton

A grey Volvo V40 parked on **Byrefield Road** was damaged on Thursday, 13 March.

Tongham

After smashing the front offside window, someone took the radio/CD player from a Peugeot 106 parked in **Blenheim Close** on Saturday, 15 March.

Weymouth

A disabled parking badge was pinched from a Rover 620 parked in **Wodeland Avenue** on Tuesday, 11 March.

Join the panel and have your say

The neighbourhood panel meeting for **Ripley, Ockham** and **Wisley** will be held on Thursday 3rd April at 7.30pm in the small hall at Ripley Village Hall. This is a chance to have your say about how your neighbourhood is policed, so come along and make your opinion count!