

The Borough Bulletin

News from the Guildford Neighbourhood Watch

Fortnight
preceeding
25 January, 2010

Give thieves the boot

Opportunistic thieves are targeting vehicles around Surrey to steal thousands of pounds worth of valuables.

Surrey is one of the safest places in the country, but theft from vehicles is still a considerable problem because drivers sometimes make it easy for thieves by leaving satellite navigation systems, mobile phones and tools in their cars and vans.

To make deter criminals, Surrey Police encourage drivers to help reduce car crime, and save themselves the cost and huge inconvenience of replacing expensive items and smashed windows, by simply removing valuables from their vehicles.

You wouldn't leave a £50 note on your dashboard, so why give thieves easy access to your satnav, tools or other expensive items?

So, there are some simple steps motorists can take to help reduce car crime:

- Don't leave valuables in your car. Take them with you at all times.
- Lock the doors, windows, boot and sun-roof every time you leave your vehicle.
- Use the vehicle's security devices.
- Make a note of serial numbers.



Without them, your valuable items are untraceable.

- Keep driving documents and personal correspondence at home.
- Lock the car and remove your keys from the ignition at petrol stations. Keep the keys with you.
- Call the police if you see anyone acting suspiciously.

Watching the detectives

After dropping in the last reporting period, house burglaries have more than doubled over the past fortnight. The number includes two incidents where a thief posed as a policeman (see *Crime Roundup*), so it would be a good idea for any Borough Bulletin reader who knows an elderly or vulnerable person to warn him or her not to let anyone into the house - not even someone who flashes a police warrant card.

Although the number of shed/garage heists increased by just over 50 per cent, they remain at a relatively low level for the Borough. It's worth noting, too, that the figure was inflated somewhat by three

hits over two nights in Jacobs Well (see *Crime Roundup*).

But... car crime dropped over the fortnight: even though 'thefts from motor vehicles' increased slightly, the number of incidents is comparatively low, while the number of 'thefts of' has dropped to almost none.

Finally, there were several incidents recently - some accidental, some malicious - where snowballs were thrown through a house or car window... there could be more such, depending on our fickle, finicky weather!



SAFER GUILDFORD
a partnership approach

Boot out car thieves Watching the detectives Roundup

- Ash
- Christchurch
- Clandon and Horsley
- Friary and St Nicholas
 - Holy Trinity
 - Lovelace
- Merrow and Burpham
 - Send
 - Shalford
 - Stoke
- Stoughton
- Tillingbourne
- Tongham
- Westborough
- Worplesdon

Crime round-up

Featuring a selection of crimes reported over the fortnight preceding the publication date.

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 the 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

The crime reports record very few incidents in Ash over the past fortnight, apart from minor damage to houses or property in **Wey Close** and **Ash Street**, both in Ash South, on Wednesday, 13 January and Thursday, 21st respectively.

It was the same in **Ash Vale**, where a fence was damaged in **Avondale** on Friday, 15 January; and in **Ash Wharf**, where a window in a downstairs flat in **Murrell Road** was smashed on Sunday, 17 January.

However, there was also an aggravated burglary in **Longacre** on Thursday, 21 January, where three men assaulted a man in his own house while stealing cash and a mobile phone.

Christchurch

An elderly woman living in a terrace house in **Cranley Road** was the victim of a pair of distraction burglars on Sunday, 10 January. The two men, aged in their twenties, knocked on her door and told her that they were there to check her welfare. After letting them in into the house, one kept her occupied while his accomplice searched the house. Later, her purse containing cash and cards, was missing.

In **Broadwater Rise**, on Monday, 18 January, someone broke into a locked Peugeot Partner van by forcing the rear door lock. The thief took a couple of power tools but - strangely? - left more expensive items. And on Wednesday, 20 January, someone broke in to a Fiat Panda in **Pitfarm Road** (causing extensive damage) and stole the vehicle's documents.

As well, houses were damaged in **London Road** on Tuesday, 12 January, and in **Cranley Road** on Tuesday, 19 January.

A con-artist fooled an elderly lady in **Stoke Road** on Monday, 18 January. After showing a fake police ID badge, and claiming he was investigating a burglary, he was let into the house. After giving some crime prevention advice, he persuaded the lady to show him where she kept her cash - which he pocketed as he left, telling the victim he'd be back in 20 minutes. It may have been the same con man who'd tried the trick on another elderly person in Bellfields on 14 January.

Clandon and Horsley

West Clandon

After smashing the rear window of a locked Citroen C2 in **Tythebarn Close** on Tuesday, 19 January, a thief lifted the parcel shelf and pinched a laptop computer and a wallet from the boot; and in **Epsom Road**, on Sunday, 17 January, a vindictive person poured corrosive fluid over an Aston Martin, badly blistering the paintwork.

Friary and St Nicholas

A deranged man broke a window in the Guildford Youth and Community Centre in **Leapale Lane** on Tuesday, 19 January, and pulled out a tea towel - which he set on fire and tossed back through the window. But as he walked off, he was stopped by a police patrol and nicked.

An unoccupied four bedroom semi-detached house in **Nettles Terrace** was burgled on Thursday, 21 January. The thief got away with a laptop computer and an mp3 player. Earlier, on Friday, 8 January, another thief stole between £200 and £300 cash from an unlocked safe at the Guildford Baptist Church in **Bury Fields**.

As well, a wallet holding about 50 CDs was stolen from a Mazda 323F parked in **Hamilton Gordon Court** on Friday, 4 December; and a Skoda Octavia was damaged while it was in the car park in **Onslow Street** on Sunday, 10 January. There were also two incidents when aggressive pedestrians kicked out at parked or stationary cars.

Holy Trinity

A thief smashed the windows of three locked cars in the recreation ground car park off **Shalford Road** on Monday, 11 January, and stole two tax discs and a hand-bag holding cash and mobile phone.

There were also two incidents of damage to cars on Friday, 15 January: a Ford Galaxy in **Dene Road**, and an LDV van in the car park behind Eastgate House in the **High Street**.

Lovelace

Ockham

A bicycle was pinched from an unlocked detached garage in **Elm Corner** on Saturday, 9 January.

Wisley

A determined thief (or thieves) broke into three different rooms in a barn in **Mill Lane**, on Wednesday, 13 January, getting away with a collection of power tools.

Merrow and Burpham

It was an unusually bad fortnight for residents of Merrow and Burpham.

Burpham

First, a two bedroom bungalow in **London Road** was hit on during the day on Saturday, 9 January. The thief simply smashed the glass door pane, reached inside and unlatched the door (not on a deadlock, obviously). He got away with was the keys to the Mercedes 270cdi parked on the drive... and the car, of course.

Other thieves broke into an elderly woman's house in **Wylea Avenue** on Wednesday, 13 January - while she was asleep inside - and stole £30 cash from her purse and her gold wedding ring. Despicable, really.

A too-casual shopper in Sainsbury's in **Clay Lane** lost her purse on Friday, 15 January after someone simply lifted if her shopping bag off the hook below the shopping trolley's handle.

Someone carefully removed the wing mirror and surrounding plastic trim from a VW Golf parked in **Harms Grove** on Wednesday, 20 January; and the double-glazed bathroom window of a house in **Hanson Close** was smashed on Wednesday, 13 January.

Bushy Hill

A very dogged thief (or thieves, probably) went to a lot of trouble to break in to the Bushy Hill Community Centre in **Bushy Hill Drive**, overnight on Wednesday, 13 January. After trying to smash a toughened glass window, he eventually got in through a metal framed Crittall window after prising off the metal security grill. Avoiding the motion detector sensors, he manoeuvred a fruit machine towards the window before breaking it open and sterling some £700 in change.

Merrow

There was a daylight burglary in **Merrow Street** on Saturday, 9 January. The crook levered open a locked side door, then smashed a hole in a second door, reached through and turned the key - which was left in the lock. After searching the four bedroom detached house, he left with some cash and jewellery.

There were two other burglaries that night, both in **Merrow Woods**. In one, the thief kicked in a cat flap, reached through and hooked the keys from inside the door. Despite all that, he couldn't get into the house. In the other, the criminal got into a detached garage via a side door, and stole the electronic garage door opener from the Ford Ka parked inside.

Still in **Merrow Woods**, still the same night, someone (who'd clearly not got an English 'A' level) sprayed the word "syco" in red paint on the side of a house. Interestingly, the thief who broke into the garage left a smudge of red paint on the side of the Ka. In all likelihood, it was the same person who smeared red paint on the window of another house in Merrow Woods the next night.

As well, both wing mirrors were smashed off a Ford Fiesta parked in **Merrow Street** on Saturday, 9 January; and a Peugeot 206 was keyed in **Fitzjohn Close** on Sunday, 17 January.

Send

There was an attempt at a distraction burglary in **Sandy Lane** on Thursday, 14 January. A man knocked on the door of an elderly lady's house and asked to pop into her garden - he'd dropped a hammer over the fence (he said). He was then joined by an accomplice, but while they were looking for the 'lost hammer' they were challenged by a good neighbour, and quickly rove off in a blue car.

One of the men was about 20 years old, around 5ft 9in tall with a medium build and short-cropped, dark brown hair. He was clean shaven and wore a white top, with a black vertical line on the right side, over blue jeans. His mate was older, 40 to 45, about the same height and with a stocky build. He was wearing a black synthetic leather top. Both were white men.

A professional burglar made a very thorough search of a three bedroom detached bungalow **Send Road** on Saturday, 16 January (he opened the double-glazed sliding conservatory doors without leaving a sign of how he'd done it), but left empty handed after failing to check an envelope that held a tasty amount of cash and had been left in plain sight on the sofa.

There was also an unfortunate catalogue of damage to houses and/or property: Send Evangelical Church in **Broadmead Road** was attacked on Saturday, 9 January; and three houses in **Send Close** were hit on Monday, 18 January.

Send Barns

A large house in **Woodhill** was burgled by professional on Thursday, 17 December while the owner was on holiday. They stole six bronze statues of deer, then forced the stable lock and attempted but failed to steal a tractor... instead they took two bicycles and a portable generator.

Shalford

Overnight on Saturday, 9 January, a house in **Dagden Road** was burgled while the owners were home. The thief got in through the unlocked back door, went upstairs to the main bedroom and took a small bag containing four pieces of jewellery - not the costume variety - from the dressing table.

Stoke

Bellfields

A burglar simply walked into a house in **Yew Tree Drive** on Thursday, 14 January, went upstairs, picked up several pieces of jewellery from the bedroom... and calmly walked out. And an empty house in **Berberis Close** was vandalised and a small amount of property stolen in the two weeks leading up to Monday, 18 January.

The same day, there was an attempted burglary by a con-artist, posing as a police officer, in **Cedar Way**. One man knocked on the front door of a semi-detached house and when the elderly occupant answered, he produced a fake police badge and said there had been a report of someone trying to get into the back garden. But then the occupant's son appeared in the background, and the erstwhile thief promptly scarpered, being joined by an accomplice as he headed off towards Worplesdon Road.

The fake policeman was a white boy in his 20s with shaved blonde hair. He was wearing a felt Russian-style hat with flaps over his ears (in case anyone is wondering, this is not standard Surrey Police issue!) and a cream-coloured puffer jacket.

In **Weyside Road**, a thief broke in to a Vauxhall Corsa on Saturday, 9 January, and stole 10 CDs; and on the 16th, the back plate was pinched from a Renault Master van parked in **Larch Avenue**. Also, a Mercedes E430 estate was damaged in **Stoughton Road** on Wednesday, 13 January.

Slyfield

On Monday, 18 January, an opportunistic thief got into a flat in **Woolands Road** through an insecure window, and stole a large-screen TV, a laptop computer, two pair of expensive trainers... and some hair care products?

A couple of days later, on the 20th, two thieves caused considerable damage when they broke in to a three bedroom semi-detached house in **Old Farm Road** on Wednesday, 20 January. His search of all the upstairs rooms resulted in finds of cash, a jewellery box, and a digital camera.

Both the crooks were of Asian appearance, aged 19 to 21 and about 5ft 6in in tall, and carrying draw string bags on their backs.

Still in **Old Farm Road**, the offside window of a Mazda MX5 was smashed on Wednesday, 13 January.

Stoughton

During the day, on Wednesday, 20 January, a couple of thieves broke into the shed behind a house in **Weydown Lane**, and stole two mountain bikes.

The week before, on Saturday 9th, both licence plates were pinched from a Peugeot 206 parked in **Bryanstone Avenue**. The same thing happened to a Ford Ka in **Grange Road** on Sunday, 10 January.

Elsewhere around Stoughton, there was damage to a Renault Clio in **Worplesdon Road** on Tuesday, 12 January; a Volkswagen Passat in **Cumberland Avenue** on Wednesday 13th; and a Renault Megane in **Stoughton Road** on Friday 15th.

There was also damage to houses or property in **Johnston Walk** and **Thorpe Close** on Friday, 8 January; and in **Fentum Road** on Saturday 16th.

Tillingbourne

Shere

A Ford Focus and a Honda Accord were keyed in **Shere Lane** on Sunday, 17 January.

Tongham

The rear window of a Renault Scenic was smashed in **The Street** on Tuesday, 19 January; and plant pots and a miniature greenhouse outside a house in **Yeomans Close** were trashed by vandals on Wednesday, 20 January.

Westborough

Park Barn

Here's an odd one: in **Burrows Close** on Tuesday, 19 January, some one (or two) thieves stole an up-and-over garage door that had been tied up to a brick wall.

A motor scooter was stolen from the drive of a house in **Hillspur Road** on Friday, 8 January, and in **Broomfield**, on Saturday, 9 January, a stereo system and a pack of CDs were stolen from a Nissan Micra.

Worplesdon

Fairlands

There were two shed burglaries in Fairlands over the fortnight. The first was in **Worplesdon Road** on Tuesday, 12 January, where tools and children's toys were stolen from the garage behind an unoccupied house.

The second incident, also in **Worplesdon Road** was on Tuesday, 19 January... but nothing was stolen.

Jacob's Well

There was a small crime epidemic in **Whitehouse Lane** over Saturday, 16 January and Sunday 17th. In the first incident, thieves opened an unlocked side gate, then the shed door - also unlocked - and took two specialised bicycles. All this while the owners were at home. Another shed in Whitehouse Lane was burgled the next night. This time, the thieves had to break the padlock hasp to get in and steal some power tools.

The same night, at a different address, a thief (or two, perhaps) lifted a dozen cans of lager from the resting place by the back door of a detached house. They also explored three unlocked garden sheds, finding a bottle of nice wine in one of them.

Normandy

A burglar took the easy way to break in to an unoccupied, four bedroom detached house in **Guildford Road** on Tuesday, 19 January: he just threw a rock through a window, reached through and opened it from the inside. He then made a careful search - he was probably a professional - and got lucky when he found and unlocked floor safe holding more than £2,000 in cash. He also stole a laptop computer and a collectin of jewellery.

Wood Street

In the **The Oval**, on Friday, 8 January, a Ford Focus convertible was keyed.