

## St Stephen's Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, March 2014

We are fortunate in St Stephens to have experienced a low incidence of crime and “un-neighbourly” behaviour – long may this continue. Nonetheless, we should maintain a reasonable degree of vigilance to protect ourselves and our community from criminal or disreputable elements and, indeed, traders and others whose activities, merchandise or services are most certainly not in residents’ best interests.

Our Scheme is a registered member of The Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network (England & Wales) from whom bulletins are received on matters of general concern. We are also members of The Canterbury & District Neighbourhood Watch Scheme whose newsletters give news and advice on a local basis. In addition, we receive very frequent email messages from Kent Police via the Kent Community Messaging Service (KCMS) which give up-to-the-minute news of criminal activity in our area and also from Kent Trading Standards (KCCTS) providing information about “dodgy” traders and how they try to profit from you. You can see, therefore, that there is a degree of vigilance exercised on your behalf, perhaps without your knowing it, and in our newsletters we aim to let you know some of the tricks which might catch out the unwary.

Here are some recent examples made known to us through KCMS:-

- **“BT” scam** Under a fake BT logo, “valued customers” are advised by email of a need to update billing information for a variety of reasons and requests confidential personal information. Check with BT before doing anything – you will find that this is a scam so the message can safely be deleted.
- **Cash machines** Kent Police are reminding people to be on their guard at ATMs – there have been instances recently of cash being snatched. Put cash and cards away before moving away from a machine and do not let anyone see your PIN number. Do not be distracted while using a machine and keep your card in sight at all times.
- **“Ransomware”** There is a particularly nasty scam in use at present – an example of what is known as “ransomware”. You receive a pop-up message on your computer telling you that your files have been encrypted and unless you pay £100 within 72 hours all will be deleted. **NOTE** – deleting this virus will not release your files! Seek further information immediately by searching “crypto-locker”.
- KCCTS have also advised us recently of a number of scams of which the following are the more serious examples:-
- **“Post Office” emails** You receive an email claiming to be from [support@thepostoffice.co.uk](mailto:support@thepostoffice.co.uk) stating that a tax rebate of £x is due. An attachment opens a webpage with a Royal Mail logo containing a form requesting personal and bank details so that a payment can be processed. Don't be fooled by this scam – Royal Mail will never send an email requesting

personal information. Report the matter to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or to KCCTS via the Citizen Advice Consumer Service on 08454 040506.

- **The “Cobalt” charity** KCCTS advise that charity collection bags bearing the name “Cobalt” are being distributed across Kent. Cobalt carries out diagnostic imaging work helping those affected by cancer and other life – limiting conditions and no longer uses bags to collect donations. Any donations using these bags will not reach the charity. If you wish to donate to Cobalt, go to [www.cobalthhealth.co.uk](http://www.cobalthhealth.co.uk)
- **“Tesco Rewards”** KCCTS have warned of an email claiming to be from Tesco Rewards Dept with the address [online@tesco.co.uk](mailto:online@tesco.co.uk). This advises that you have been randomly selected to receive a £1000 Tesco voucher reward. This is believed to be a phishing email, asking for bank and other personal details which will be used for fraudulent purposes. Do not click on any links referred to in the email – go to the Tesco website [www.tesco.com](http://www.tesco.com) for advice on identifying genuine Tesco messages and reporting such phishing emails directly to Tesco.

Finally, The Neighbourhood and Homewatch Network has just published a comprehensive collection of crime prevention and safety advice - a copy may be downloaded at [www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource\\_centre/document\\_library/our\\_guide\\_to\\_crime\\_prevention\\_safety\\_advice](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource_centre/document_library/our_guide_to_crime_prevention_safety_advice). If you want more information on any aspect of our Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, please contact us at [ststephensra@googlemail.com](mailto:ststephensra@googlemail.com)

Best wishes, Terry Patten

---

### **It’s that time of year again....**

#### **Subscriptions are now due for 2014-2015.**

If you provide us with your email address, you will receive updates from the Association and from Neighbourhood Watch, when appropriate. The subscription is set at a minimum of £2. Please complete this form and return it with your subscription to your street representative who is:

\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

**Your name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone [optional]** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address**-----

**Thank you.**

