

2016 ASHBY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 2015-16 NEIGHBOURHOOD SECURITY REPORT

The neighbourhood security messages are issued to those who have asked to be included in the council's free Ashby Update Service. On behalf of the Parish Council I have continued to ensure police security messages are notified to those residents as soon as reasonably possible.

Neighbourhood security remains an agenda item at every Parish Council meeting. The Parish Council receives reports from the Police service when an officer can attend our meetings, which merge with Police Alert / Homewatch issues, now issued by Police Connect. When circulating a message, residents are also advised when our Parish website has been updated. This Parish Council initiative is known collectively as the Ashby Update Service / Homewatch (Police Alerts) which remains free for all residents to receive.

From the latter part of 2015 a notable reduction of Police Connect messages occurred. One of the Police Connect messages advised of a reduced service while staff were hoped to be sourced to bring the service back up to its previous level. This has not happened.

It is sad to report but it would appear the information of any crimes within the Loddon area, which takes in all the parishes from Poringland to Aldeby, has effectively ceased. For the last few months the type of 'alerts' received have been winter driving and crime prevention advice, protection from scams and the police element of council tax. The only crime advice relayed has, for instance, been a handful of thefts and burglaries in Dereham, Gt Yarmouth, New Buckenham and the area in and around Norwich. In my role as the parish council distributor of homewatch/police alert messages I have enquired about this reduced level of service from our excellent local police contact, PCSO Kevin Nightingale. As usual a prompt reply followed. Having made his own enquiries, the reason for the much reduced service is insufficient funding and staff to continue the level we have come to expect. He assured me notice would be forwarded to the parish clerks of areas in which any crimes were committed but this may not extend to crimes in neighbouring parishes. I suspect parishioners will find this situation as disheartening as I do. It must be hoped the situation recovers soon but perhaps in the meantime our district and county councillors can be challenged to bring back a service which gives reassurance to local residents and, importantly, keeps them informed.

When the system was 'working' so to speak, I am pleased to report I cannot recall a single criminal incident in Ashby being reported in the last 12 months. This was confirmed by Kevin Nightingale. Sadly he advised me he was ceasing his PCSO duties in May. On behalf of Ashby parish council I would like to thank and congratulate him for his dedicated and exemplary service and wish him well for the future. Joe Pike at Poringland is to take over Kevin's duties.

The free messaging service is a useful tool for making known neighbourhood security issues as well as awareness of changes affecting our community through the Parish Council website. Existing recipients can opt out from this free service at any time. The neighbourhood security and website update service has 53 recipients (over a quarter of all the parish's households) and is a worthy advertisement for the community spirit of the village.

If anyone present is not a recipient of our Ashby Update Service incorporating HomeWatch / Police Alerts I can provide more details via a factsheet. To join, simply give your name, full address and email details to our parish clerk. To those who receive Ashby Updates, please encourage your friends and neighbours in Ashby to join, as being part of a homewatch group can sometimes result in lower insurance premiums. The Ashby Update service is simple, useful, beneficial and best of all, free to receive and belong to.

That concludes my 2016 Neighbourhood Security report.

Mark Rolph - Parish Councillor