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| A white and black logo  Description automatically generated | On the beat in…  North Shropshire  Market Drayton  Wem  Whitchurch  Safer Neighbourhood Team Newsletter | May  2025 |

*Current statistics on calls to police and crime recording for your neighbourhood can be found at* [***www.police.uk***](http://www.police.uk)***.*** *If you wish to discuss further, please contact a member of your Safer Neighbourhood Team.*

**Market Drayton – Team contact details:**

**Team email:** marketdrayton.snt@westmercia.police.uk

**Safer Neighbourhood Officer:** PC Iain McIntosh **Mobile:** 07811 748 732

**Police Community Support Officer:** PCSO Andy King **Mobile:** 07870 163 116

**Police Community Support Officer:** PCSO Tara Carruthers **Mobile:** 07971 050 442

**Police Community Support Officer:** PCSO Richard Parker **Mobile:** 07483 123 858

**Wem – Team contact details:**

**Team email:** wem.snt@westmercia.police.uk

**Safer Neighbourhood Officer:** PC Jack Harper **Mobile:** 07817 885 113

**Police Community support Officer:** PCSO Lizz Walmsley **Mobile:** 07967 303 567

**Police Community support Officer:** PCSO Olly Morris **Mobile:** 07970 879 117

**Whitchurch – Team contact details:**

**Team email:** whitchurch.snt@westmercia.police.uk

**Safer Neighbourhood Officer:** PC Ben Jones **Mobile:** 07973 885 557

**Police Community Support Officer:** PCSO Jamie Robinson **Mobile:** 07967 301 147

**Police Community Support Officer:** PCSO Dave Andrew **Mobile:** 07971 395 050

**Police Community Support Officer:** PCSO Sarah Parker **Mobile:** 07483 121 957

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| **Please** encourage your parishioners to sign up to Neighbourhood Matters…  **Sign up to Neighbourhood Matters…** your brand-new community messaging service | |
| A red and blue square with white text  Description automatically generated | Neighbourhood Matters enables residents, businesses, and community groups to keep in touch with local policing teams. You can choose exactly what type of alert you wish to receive and how you receive them; whether that be by email, text or telephone. Sign up now at:[**www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk**](http://www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk) |



**Reporting A Crime**

**Is it an emergency?**

Call **999** in emergency situations like these:

* there is an immediate danger to life
* someone is using violence or is threatening to be violent
* a crime is happening right now, like a house burglary or a theft
* the suspect is still at the scene

**If it's not an emergency**

If you’ve witnessed or been the victim of crime that isn't an emergency, please report it to us.

Your report will be sent direct to our control room. Before you give us the details of the crime, we'll ask you a few questions to make sure you go to the right online form. [**www.westmercia.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/**](http://www.westmercia.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/)

**Hello Parish Councils,**

This is your North Shropshire Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) Newsletter for **May 2025**. Please see the link above to **police.co.uk** for crime recording stats for your area, or any other area in the UK should you wish.

Please get in touch if you would like to discuss anything further, if we can provide more information we will, our contact details are above. If there is anything specific that is affecting your parish area above and beyond the three priorities you have nominated, again please let us know and we will endeavour to support you.

The official West Mercia Police website **www.westmercia.police.uk** has a wealth of information and includes dedicated sections in relation to **News, Recruitment, Watch Schemes, Neighbourhood Matters, Crime Prevention Advice, Support For Victims, other Advice and Information and Thanks & Complaints.**

Our North Shropshire SNTs work in a very challenging and varied role and no two days are the same, naturally there are many requests for our time, support and assistance. Obviously, much of what we do we can’t tell you too much about, but rest assured that much of our focus is on the three Parish Council Priorities that you provide us with quarterly.

Much of the good work that SNTs engage with are posted in the following places:

* Parish Council attendance in person or North Shropshire SNT Newsletters
* Neighbourhood Matters –[**www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk**](http://www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk)
* Facebook **-** [**www.facebook.com/MktDraytonPolice**](http://www.facebook.com/MktDraytonPolice) **(North Shropshire specific)**

[**www.facebook.com/ShrewsburyPolice**](http://www.facebook.com/ShrewsburyPolice)

[**www.facebook.com/westmerciapolice**](http://www.facebook.com/westmerciapolice)

[**www.facebook.com/WMPRuralMatters**](http://www.facebook.com/WMPRuralMatters)

Below is just a small snapshot of the good work North Shropshire SNTs have been involved with recently…

A blue and white logo

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A person in a police uniform

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A person standing in front of a display

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A screenshot of a phone

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A car on the road

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A car on a tow truck

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A police badge and handcuffs

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A blue car on a tow truck

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As part of the monthly Newsletter, we will be adding trending and/or appropriate crime prevention advice and information. Along with any recent updates from our other policing departments and partners.

This month’s Newsletter contains sections on ‘**Online Hacking’**, **‘Scam Subscriptions’**, and **‘Gift Card Fraud.’**

**Online hacking - Over 35,000 account hackings reported in 2024**

Protect your online accounts from hackers and enable 2SV: Action Fraud issue new warning about social media and email account hacking as new data is revealed.

This year Action Fraud and Meta are encouraging the public to protect their social media and email accounts as data shows there were more than 35,000 reports made last year.

Data shows there was a rise of social media and email account hacking reported in 2024, with a total of 35,434 reports made to Action Fraud, compared to 22,530 reports made in 2023.

Action Fraud, the national fraud and cybercrime reporting service, has launched a campaign, supported by Meta, to encourage people to take an extra step of online protection by enabling 2-Step Verification for each online account they have. The warning comes as reporting shows nearly £1 million was lost to hackers last year.

The most common motives for social media hacking were either investment fraud, ticket fraud or theft of the targeted account, reporting insights revealed.

Adam Mercer, Deputy Director of Action Fraud, said:

“As social media and email account hacking remains the most reported cybercrime this year, this Action Fraud campaign marks a critical issue for everyone who has online accounts. That’s why we’re raising awareness of the ways people can protect themselves online.

“Follow Stop! Think Fraud advice and protect yourself online: enable 2-Step Verification on each online account you have – this will help prove your identity and stop fraudsters trying to steal or access your valuable information. Secure your social media and email accounts by ensuring each password is strong and uses three random words. Remember to never share your passwords with anyone else.”

David Agranovich, Security Policy Director, Meta, said:

“Scammers are relentless and continuously evolving their tactics to try and evade detection, which is why we’re constantly working on new ways to keep people safe while keeping bad actors out. Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) is one crucial example of how people can add an extra layer of security to their Meta accounts, to help reduce the risk of scammers accessing your accounts. We’ve also started rolling out facial recognition technology to help people get back into compromised or hacked accounts and are always working on new ways to stay ahead of scammers.”

In the reports made to Action Fraud, there were various different methods of hacking highlighted, these include:

**On-platform chain hacking**

This is when a fraudster gains control of an account and begins to impersonate the legitimate owner. The goal is to convince people to reveal authentication codes, including one-time passcodes, that are sent to them via text. Many victims of this type of hacking believe it’s a friend messaging them, however the shared code was associated with their own account and the impersonator can now use it to access their account. Usually when an account is taken over, fraudsters monetise control of the account via the promotion of various fraudulent schemes, like fake tickets or crypto investment schemes, while impersonating the original account owner.

**Leaked passwords and phishing**

The other common method of hacking is when account details are gained via phishing scams, or the use of leaked information used from data breaches, such as leaked passwords. This becomes prevalent as people often use the same password for multiple accounts, so a leaked password from one website can leave many of their online accounts vulnerable to hacking.

**What can you do to avoid being a victim?**

• 2-step verification (2SV) will keep criminals out of your account – even if they know your password. Turning on 2SV gives your most important accounts an extra level of protection, especially your email and social media accounts. It can be turned on in a matter of minutes – time well spent to keep the fraudsters out. Find out how to enable it here.

• Email and social media passwords should be strong and different to all of your other passwords. A good way to make sure your passwords are ‘long enough and strong enough’ is to combine three random words to create a unique password which is easy to remember. Find out more here.

Report suspicious emails by forwarding it to: report@phishing.gov.uk

Find out how to protect yourself from fraud: https://stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk

If you’ve lost money or provided your financial information to someone, notify your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud at actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040. In Scotland, call Police Scotland on 101.

**Scam subscriptions**

Many people are falling victim to fraudulent subscriptions or “Scamscriptions” that they have unwittingly signed up to via fake emails or through tempting “Free Trial” offers of products or software, which are also often falsely endorsed by celebrities without their knowledge.

These subscriptions will seem to be too good to be true with offers of free trials/samples, but these can stop abruptly, but the subscription rolls on and then becomes very difficult to cancel in many cases.

**So beware of the following:**

• Hidden Contract Terms in the small print, so always read these very carefully before committing with a Card payment

• Billing descriptions on your bank statements may carry unclear or misleading business names, so may go by unnoticed

• You may think you have a free trial period, but a charge is imposed from the start which is difficult to reconcile or dispute with the company which may also be fictitious or uncontactable

• Scammers rely on you forgetting to cancel your payments, not noticing small monthly payments from an account or just simply not checking the bank statements at all.

**So always;**

• Check the small print

• Look out for negative reviews

• Mark your diary with the end of the so called “free period” and cancel if appropriate especially with “free” software offers

• Report any suspicious charges to your Card provider as soon as possible to give you a better chance of being able to cancel and recoup any charges

**Gift Card Fraud**

As the name suggests, Gift Cards are a handy way to send a gift to a friend or relative. However, they are an equally handy way for Fraudster to extract money from an unsuspecting victim, and there is very little chance for a victim to get any reimbursement of the money lost.

Some retailers are now placing warning notices at Gift Card sales points, or restricted the value of Gift Cards made in a single purchase, but the reports of losses through Gift Card scams continue to come in.

**What are the commonest types of Gift Card Frauds?**

• Emails claiming to be from Government Agencies such as HMRC, DVLA, or a Utility company demanding overdue payments with immediate reimbursement of the sums due by Gift Cards – would such an organisation really accept payment by Gift Card?

• Urgent email or text from a person claiming to be a family member or friend by cloning their identity. They may spin out a hard luck excuse for a reason they cannot get out and buy the Gift Card themselves so ask you to purchase the card, then pass on the code off the back of the card. Always double check with that person by contacting them on a trusted number to make sure they had actually made that request.

• Romance Fraud victims are often asked to send money via Gift Cards after the Fraudster has spun out some hard luck story to gain the victims sympathy, and once again asks them to then pass on the code off the back of the card.

• Fake Prize Draws/ Competitions - you have won a major prize! You are then asked for a payment by Gift Card to cover the delivery costs of this fake prize, and once again your money is lost.

**Always remember.**

• The criminal does not need the actual card to redeem the money, just the code scratched off the back of the card

• Never make payments by Gift Card to someone you have never met

• Always check that the Card has not been tampered with when you purchase and always ask for a receipt for the value of that card. Unscrupulous retailers may also switch the card at point of payment and hand over a valueless card.

• You can always report the fraud to the Gift Card company, but you are only likely to have any chance of reimbursement if the fraudsters have not used the card details and drawn down the funds using the code sent to them

Please feel free to share these messages with any vulnerable friends, relatives or neighbours

***If you’ve fallen for fraud***

Report it to **Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040** or via actionfraud.police.uk

***Fake Text messages can be forwarded to 7726*** *to help phone providers take early action and block numbers that generate spam on their networks. You can also report fraudulent mobile calls by texting* ***7726*** *with the word* ***“Call”*** *followed by the* ***fraudster’s phone number****.*

*Forward* ***Fake Emails*** *received to* [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

If you think your bank account or personal banking details have been used fraudulently, then use the short phone number **- 159** - to contact the Fraud Prevention Department of most major UK banks.

**Are you aware of Community Speed Watch, and is it relevant to your parish?**

With Community Speed Watch now in its eighth year of operation within West Mercia, local communities are being reminded about the scheme and how volunteers can get involved in speed monitoring and improve the quality of life in their area if speeding traffic is causing concern.

Community Speed Watch is a community driven road safety initiative, coordinated by West Mercia Police but managed and run by volunteers in the community. It involves trained volunteers from the community monitoring the speeds of vehicles with approved, hand-held speed measurement devices. Where vehicle speeds are found to be inappropriate, a letter is sent to the registered keeper by the police with the aim of encouraging them to reduce their speed when driving in the future.

The scheme was introduced within West Mercia in 2014 and has gone from strength to strength over the last 8 years with over 40 active sites currently operating. It was introduced to enhance the force’s speed enforcement strategy, by addressing community concerns in areas that do not meet either speed or collision criteria for police-led enforcement.

A Community Speed Watch scheme is initiated when ‘speeding traffic’ has been identified as a community road safety concern by a parish council or Safer Neighbourhood Team. However, several criteria must be met before a scheme can be established:

* The area must have a 30mph or 40mph speed restriction.
* Speed data collected by West Mercia Police must show that speed levels in the area do not meet the national industry requirements for police enforcement.
* No other enforcement activity is currently in place.
* There must be at least six volunteers in each Community Speed Watch scheme.
* Speed checks must be conducted by at least three volunteers at any one time.

A group of people in reflective vests standing on the side of a road

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As part of Operation Snap, members of the public can report and submit digital footage showing potential traffic offences via a secure online form.

[**https://secureform.nextbase.co.uk/**](https://secureform.nextbase.co.uk/)

This can range from driving dangerously or carelessly to overtaking on solid white lines, using a mobile phone while driving, ignoring traffic lights or dangerous driving around other road users, such as horse riders and cyclists.

Please note; issues with number plates, windscreens and minor traffic offences are unable to be dealt with via Op Snap.

General parking complaints (other than illegal parking on zig zags) should be raised with the relevant local authority. Notification of untaxed vehicles can be reported directly to DVLA, reports of no MOT or no insurance should be logged to 101, not via the Op Snap portal.

Your submission will be sent to West Mercia Police where the evidence will be reviewed by one of our road traffic police officers.

One statement is required for each submission/offending vehicle. We are unable to process multiple offences sent as one submission.

We will strive to update each submitter regarding the outcome of their allegation. All submissions are dealt with pro-actively to help reduce risk taking and poor driving on our counties roads.

Any footage submitted through the portal can be used by us to help educate other road users and to advise on case results.

Please note - if you operate a recording device in a public place, you may have obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). It is in your interest to familiarise yourself, and comply with, any such obligations as apply to you. If you are in any doubt as to your obligations, please obtain independent legal advice to ensure you do not put yourself at risk of prosecution. By submitting footage you acknowledge you have read and understood this before proceeding.

For more information, please see the Frequently Asked Questions section or email [OpSnap@westmercia.police.uk](mailto:OpSnap@westmercia.police.uk)

**The contacts below may be of interest to those in the parish who may be more comfortable reporting crime or giving information to the police, anonymously:**

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**Are your parishioners aware of Action Fraud?**

If you’ve been the victim of a scam, fraud or online crime (cybercrime) you can report it to Action Fraud:

* Action Fraud website
* on [**0300 123 2040**](tel:03001232040) (Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm).

Action Fraud is the national reporting centre for fraud and cybercrime. It collects reports about fraud on behalf of the police in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. For fraud in Scotland please report it directly to Police Scotland.

A close-up of a logo

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A poster of a smart water device

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A poster of a smart water security pack

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