



»»» DECEMBER 2024 «««



# OUR NEWS

FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SUPPORTERS ACROSS ENGLAND & WALES

## What's in December's newsletter?

This issue of Our News is a bumper one, full of insightful articles, crime prevention and safety guidance, and festive treats - we hope you enjoy! The Board of Trustees and Central Support Team (CST) wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and remind everyone to stay safe and connected over the winter period.

**Reminder:** the CST office will be closed from Monday 23rd December - Thursday 2nd January, but you can still access our website & resources over this period.

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# Connecting over the festive period

**During December, a month when people often celebrate festivities with their family, friends, loved ones, and communities, we want to encourage our supporters and members to reach out to their neighbours and say 'hello!'.**

For some, December's colder weather and longer nights can feel isolating - reaching out to say hello to your neighbour, especially if you know they live alone or are vulnerable, may make all the difference to them.

Staying connected with your community has mental health benefits too! Research shows\* that when people are socially connected and have stable and supportive relationships, they are more likely to have better mental and physical health. Social connectedness can also help create trust and resilience within communities.

## REACH OUT THIS DECEMBER



## SAY HELLO!



**This December, reach out to your neighbours and community.** Maybe it's the offer of a cup of tea to an elderly neighbour, or taking in their parcels while they're out. Maybe it's supporting your local Neighbourhood Watch group to organise a Christmas fair on your street, or perhaps donating unwanted items to charity shops ahead of the present-buying rush! All of the little gestures, as well as the big efforts, make a difference in bringing our communities together, and making them safer places to live.

If you're concerned about a neighbour during the festive period, or you need some support for yourself, **Samaritans** are always available to lend a listening ear and talk with you. [Click here to visit their website for more details.](https://www.samaritans.org/)

*\*<https://www.cdc.gov/emotional-wellbeing/social-connectedness/affect-health.htm>*

# Remember the NW Shop when buying your Christmas presents!

**December is here, which means Christmas present shopping... Whether you're the organised type and have all your gifts wrapped and under the tree already, or you've suddenly remembered a friend who fell off the present list, we have you covered at the Neighbourhood Watch shop!**

Our Shop includes a wide range of exclusively branded items, including snazzy window stickers and road signage, branded mugs and lanyards, and crime prevention booklets.

Visit our Neighbourhood Watch shop and tick off that Christmas present list - when you buy our products, you're supporting our charity and volunteers to deliver work in local communities across England and Wales.

**SHOP NOW**



# Raising awareness of child exploitation in your area with #LookCloser



**Not all young people will tell you when they are in trouble. And sometimes they won't know they are in danger, because they have been groomed to believe otherwise.**

Exploitation often happens when individuals or groups develop friendships with young people, before taking advantage of their innocence to force them into criminal activity. From sexual abuse to forced labour, money laundering, and drug trafficking, young people across the UK are being exploited. It can happen on public transport, in shopping centres, car washes, public parks, or online, through social media and gaming platforms.

It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard our young people. For this reason, The Children's Society launched the #LookCloser campaign, which aims to help people spot and report the signs of child exploitation.

## The signs

Although children react to trauma in very different ways, typical signs of exploitation include:

- Unaccompanied children visiting a house where only adults live
- Young people who appear anxious, frightened, angry, showing signs of neglect or displaying other behaviours/injuries that concern you
- Increased callers at a property
- Increased antisocial behaviour at a property
- Not seeing the resident for long periods of time
- Unfamiliar vehicles at the property

**If you spot any of these signs, you have a duty to act. What should you do about it?**

By raising awareness of the signs of exploitation, we can keep children and young people safe. If something doesn't feel right, it might not be. **As a Neighbourhood Watch supporter, you and your neighbours are in a position to spot the signs and report them to the police on 101, or 999 in an emergency.** If you are unsure, you can call the NSPCC for advice on 0808 800 5000. The #LookCloser campaign also has a range of resources that you can download. Use these to raise awareness and safeguard your community. Share the hashtag on social media and visit [The Children's Society website](https://www.childrensociety.org.uk) for more information.



# Enter ERA's Christmas home security competition!

**We've teamed up with our partner ERA to give one lucky Neighbourhood Watch member the chance to win a home security bundle, worth over £200!**

With over 185 years of experience securing British homes, you are in safe hands with ERA. This wonderful prize bundle can be with you for Christmas, giving you the peace of mind that your home will be secure all year round. **Included in the prize bundle...**

## **The ERA Protect 7 piece alarm kit!**

Featuring a hub, PIR motion sensor, door/window sensor, two remote controls and a battery operated siren, the alarm kit wireless system is easy to install and ready to use in a few minutes. It can be controlled by portable remote, keypad or app! The free app is easily downloadable from the Google Play store or Apple App store. RRP £169.99



**The ERA Fortress Door Cylinder!** This high-performance euro profile locking cylinder has six hardened high security pins for ultimate anti-pick, anti-drill and anti-bump resistance. Providing maximum resistance to forced entry, it has been awarded the British Standard Kitemark, Sold Secure Diamond and the Police Secured By Design accreditation. RRP £35.98

## **To be in with a chance to win, simply answer the following question...**

Which product below is not included in the ERA Protect 7-piece alarm kit?

1. A window/door sensor
2. A Christmas tree
3. A PIR motion sensor

**Email [eranw@hroc.co.uk](mailto:eranw@hroc.co.uk) to enter before midnight 18th December!**

**ERA's heavy duty door bar restrictor**, approved by Secured By Design, visibly increases your home's security to help you feel safer when opening your front door. It allows you to identify visitors before granting them entry and acting as a physical barrier to those who might attempt to force entry. Available in gold, chrome, and graphite finish. RRP £10.99



# ERA

Entries close at 23:59 on 18/12/2024. The draw is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. Entry is free and open to UK residents aged 18 and over. Only one entry per person is permitted; bulk entries will not be accepted. There is no cash alternative, and the prize is non-transferable. Fitting is not included in the prize bundle. In the event of loss or damage to the prize or product during delivery, ERA will provide reasonable assistance in resolving the issue. In the event replacements are not available and alternative will be offered, and no financial compensation will be provided by ERA. We reserve the right to cancel the competition if circumstances beyond our control arise. We ask the winner please send a picture of them with their prize within 28 days of receiving their prize for Neighbourhood Watch digital marketing and social media. By participating, you agree to comply with all rules.

ERA would like to keep you informed of their latest products, promotions, and news. Please tick the box if you would like to opt in to receive marketing communications from ERA.



# Keep your holidays scam-free with Phonely's CallGuard

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*The UK's only digital landline with built-in scam protection!*

**Christmas is a time for joy, not worry. That's why Phonely are delighted to announce our new partnership with Neighbourhood Watch, bringing you even stronger protection against scams.**

Not only that, but we were recently featured on BBC's This Morning Live, where our innovative scam protection technology was showcased. Missed it? [You can catch the segment on BBC iPlayer from \(1:05:00\) to see how CallGuard is making a real difference.](#)

As an employee-owned company, protection feels personal, as we all know someone affected by a scam. This is why we're dedicated to providing reliable, accessible protection through our CallGuard service, which outwits scammers at every turn.

**And, to help further, Neighbourhood Watch members enjoy 10% off their plans, with Phonely donating for each new customer to support Neighbourhood Watch! [Click here to access your NW discount - applied when you select a plan that suits you!](#)**

## How CallGuard protects you

Scammers don't take holidays - but with CallGuard, they won't ruin yours. Here's how it works:

- Real-time blocking: Instantly block flagged numbers with updates every hour via our Who Called Me platform - one of the UK's most popular scam-reporting websites
- Anti-fraud safeguards: From the "think twice" anti-fraud greeting to advanced keyword detection, CallGuard keeps scammers at bay
- Trusted intervention: If a suspicious call gets through, our trusted person feature allows live intervention, from a friend or family member, ensuring your safety
- Call recording: For added peace of mind, every call is recorded, so you're always in control

## Why it matters

In 2023, Ofcom reported that 45 million UK residents faced potential scam calls or texts within three months, with 61% targeting landlines and those aged over 75. CallGuard brings essential peace of mind against these alarming trends. As one relieved customer shared, *"The built-in security provided by Phonely gives me confidence that I am less likely to be bothered by scammers."*

## Get affordable protection with Phonely

At Phonely, we are on a mission to make scam prevention easy and affordable, especially for the elderly and vulnerable. Join Phonely this Christmas from just ~~£9.97~~ £8.97 per month, with your exclusive 10% Neighbourhood Watch member discount.



SECURED BY

**PATLOCK™**

## Festive Home Security Tips

- If putting festive lights outside, don't feed cables through windows that will be left open or ajar.
- Away over Christmas? Ask a neighbour to park on the driveway, and cancel any expected deliveries.
- Be cyber aware and try not to advertise your new gifts or trips away on social media.
- Don't leave presents under the tree if visible through a window or door.
- Dispose of packaging carefully – don't advertise expensive gifts or purchases to would be thieves.
- Keep doors and windows locked at all times, even when you are in the house.

**Have a safe and happy Christmas  
From all at Patlock.**

The simple solution for securing French doors is to fit a PATLOCK. PATLOCK has no keys or combination lock and is quick and easy to fit with ratchet locking bars that secure in seconds.

It's as easy as.... Push, Click, Secure.

- ✓ Instant French door security.
- ✓ The only French door lock recommended by UK Police Forces.
- ✓ Locks patio doors securely, designed to deter and stop intruders.

**CLICK HERE to buy PATLOCK at your NW  
Member discounted price of £42.50**

# Staying secure this Christmas with SimpliSafe

**Bring a festive twist to your SimpliSafe security system this season to spread holiday cheer and foster community spirit. Here are some things you could try with yours:**


- Turn your Indoor Camera into a fun "Santa Catcher" for kids - who will get a glimpse of Father Christmas on the 25th?
- Use the SimpliSafe app to share clips of holiday lights, surprise snowball fights, or festive doorstep decorations to spread smiles across the neighbourhood
- Use Entry Sensors to keep sneaky hands off the festive sweets and treats until the big day
- Protect your presents with perfectly placed Motion Sensors to make sure surprises stay surprises
- Got some last-minute presents arriving? Keep your parcels safe with the Video Doorbell Pro.
- Finally, if you're going away for the festivities, check in on your home via the SimpliSafe app. And for those that opt into our Professional Monitoring service, know that we've got you covered 24/7, 365 days of a year.



Make the season merry and bright while keeping everyone safe with SimpliSafe! Why not check out their offers over the festive period, and Neighbourhood Watch members also get an exclusive 50% discount

**SimpliSafe®**  
Home Security





# Making your lists and checking them twice...

*...Spotting online shopping scams this Christmas with Avast*

**As the Christmas countdown begins, we're all on the hunt for the perfect gifts for friends and family. The past years have seen shoppers shift from trekking down the High Street to endlessly scrolling through influencer-approved products on socials, looking for the perfect deal.**

This year, cybersecurity experts at Avast have warned holiday shoppers to be wary of deals that seem too good to be true on social media. According to their research, over two-thirds of UK consumers who were scammed during the last festive season said it happened while making a purchase on a social media platform.

It's a troubling trend that's only expected to get worse. Last year, UK Finance estimated that criminals swiped up to £100 million across 200,000 payment fraud cases. And with data showing that TikTok alone generated £3 billion in global consumer spending in 2023, social media swindlers are becoming increasingly savvy to tap into the funds.

Over half of Brits are already concerned that their social feeds will be overrun with hard-to-spot scam ads this holiday season – and a troubling 40% say they've made Christmas purchases by clicking straight on those dubious-looking promotions.

**Luckily, the team at Avast has some top tips to help shoppers stay safe:**

- Think twice: Is the discount worth potentially sacrificing your digital identity?
- Shield your data: Use an alternative email address that is not your usual address that you use for your daily, personal life
- Double-Check Websites: Instead of blindly buying through a social media ad, visit the retailer's official website to make sure the deal is legit.
- Do your research: Check reviews and watch for red flags like suspicious payment methods
- Authenticate deals: Legitimate coupons do exist - try to find codes from the retailer directly and not third-party providers.
- Protect your information: Use antivirus protection such as Avast Free Antivirus to secure your device

**This Christmas, a few extra minutes of caution could save you from becoming another fraud statistic. With Avast's tools and some smart shopping habits, you can celebrate with confidence, leaving the worries behind.**





## Expert tips to help secure your home this Christmas.

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**Check locks and keys.** Ensure doors and windows are secure, and consider servicing locks before winter. [MLA Approved Companies](#) provide expert advice on winter-proofing your locks.

**Pro tip:** For independently tested lock cylinders, check out [Sold Secure](#).

**Install outdoor lighting.** Some MLA Approved Companies offer services which include fitting locks, lighting and surveillance.

**Boost visibility with CCTV.** Install a weatherproof CCTV system with infrared night vision for added security.

**Pro tip:** Consider a professionally installed, monitored alarm system from an [MLA Approved Company](#).

**Set up outdoor sockets for Christmas lights.** Avoid running cables through partially open windows or doors.



### Christmas Gift Security Guide

Protect Your Presents from Theft.  
Expert Advice from the UK's Largest Locksmith Association.



**Expecting a delivery?** Use secure delivery boxes or designate a safe drop-off spot, like a neighbour's house.

**Pro tip:** [MLA Approved Companies](#) offer advice on locks for gates, porches, and smart delivery systems.

**Keep gifts hidden.** If you place gifts under the tree, keep them away from windows. Avoid leaving empty boxes outside—store packaging in a shed or garage until collection day.

**Secure high-value gifts.** Store valuables like jewellery in a professionally specified, supplied and installed safe from an [MLA Approved safe engineer](#).

**Pro tip:** For independently tested Safe options, check out [Sold Secure](#).

**Cyclist gift idea.** Gift a high-quality cycle lock for added bike security. Pro Tip: For independently tested cycle security, check out [Sold Secure](#).

### Extra peace of mind this Christmas

The festive season can be hectic, and losing your keys or being locked out is a nightmare. For peace of mind, visit [locksmiths.co.uk](https://locksmiths.co.uk) to find your local MLA Approved Locksmith and save their details to your phone – just in case.



# Homemade festive dog treat recipes from LockLatch



**LOCKLATCH®**

When it comes to best security measures and those vital early warnings, your furry friend is up there at the top of the list. Big or small, they have been keeping you safe all year round, alerting you to knocks at the door, things that go bump in the night, strangers that may do you harm, or simply - when things just don't seem right. So, isn't it time you returned the favour?

While we believe every day should be a celebration of your animals, we thought we would use this opportunity to share some easy and cost-effective ways to show your pup you care this festive season.

However, there are many brands of doggie treats on the market and it can be difficult to discern which ones are made from healthy ingredients or are suitable for your pup. That's why we've put together this list of organic dog treat recipes that you can make at home, so you can have more control over how you spoil your best friend...

## Homemade peanut butter dog treat recipe

If there's one thing dogs love, it's peanut butter, and this clever recipe combines this old favourite ingredient with a bacon and peanut butter glaze. This recipe can be finished in less than an hour (including baking time!), and makes 30 (large) dog treats, so it's worth the labour. *Always use Xylitol-free peanut butter in your dog treat recipes, Xylitol can be toxic to dogs.* [Get the recipe from Pinch of Yum here!](#)

## Vegetarian dog treats

Unless otherwise specified by your vet, dogs should have a balanced diet that gives them the protein, vitamins and minerals required to keep them healthy. These homemade vegetarian dog biscuits are a great way to give your pup the extra nutrients that may be missing from their store-bought pet food. [Get the recipe here!](#)

If you are making any dog treat recipes at home, it's important to remember that every dog is different. You should speak to your veterinarian about any allergies or dietary considerations your dog might have before giving them any sort of treat, whether it is store-bought or homemade.

**Brought to you by PetLatch from LockLatch, a great alternative to a doggie door!**





# NHS 111 stickers available in the NW Shop!

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**This winter, the NHS is encouraging people to get to the help they need by using NHS 111, and we want to remind you of the window stickers that are available to order from our shop now. This is part of our partnership with the NHS to encourage people to use 111 online or call 111 when they think they need medical help fast.**

We are recommending that the sticker be affixed so that both sides of the sticker remain visible. Through this message being placed within homes, it will prompt residents to use NHS 111, either for themselves or a member of their community. NHS 111 helps assess and direct people to the most appropriate service for their medical needs.

**The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can call, go online or use the NHS App to get:**

- the right healthcare in your area; or
- a call back from a nurse, doctor or paramedic; or advice on self-care.

**People should call 111 to speak to someone if they need to:**

- discuss complex medical problems;
- discuss worries about a long-term condition; or get medical advice for a child under five.

