

Bowland & District/East Rural Villages

Autumn/Winter 2009



**ECSO 7357
Susan Hartley**



**ECSO 7335
Karl Elliott**

Welcome to the latest edition of In Touch, the newsletter that keeps you up-to-date with what's happening with the policing in your area. As most of you will by now be aware, we are Emergency Community Support Officers, which means that we work for the police, the fire service and the ambulance service. In our last newsletter, we did name some of the many villages we cover, but we failed to mention Chatburn! We send our apologies to Chatburn and for fear of offending another village, we are not going to list them all.

As part of our role, we carry out high visibility patrols, supporting your local police officers and offering reassurance to the public. We also do talks about fire safety in schools, other clubs and societies and carry out home fire safety checks. As First Responders, we are fully trained in the use of defibrillators and oxygen in an emergency. If you require any advice or assistance, you can leave a non-urgent message on our new voicemail number 01200 458766. Alternatively you can email us at ribblevalley.npt@lancashire.pnn.police.uk, or you can call into Clitheroe Police Station, where we are based. However, as we spend most of our time within the community, we may not be able to see you there and then, but if you leave a message, we will get back to you as soon as we can. If you require an immediate police response, please ring **0845 1 25 35 45**, or 999 in an emergency.

Be Safe be Seen

With the onset of the darker nights, we have started to see cyclists riding their bikes on the roads without lights, as well as people out walking without suitable clothing, making them difficult to see. As lots of the roads in the Ribble Valley are unlit, we are asking you to make sure that you are as visible as possible at night. Bright/fluorescent clothes are recommended and reflective strips, which can be seen from long distances. When riding bicycles at night, lights on both the front and the rear are a must, otherwise it's virtually impossible for motorists to see you! These simple safety steps could help save your life.



Motor Cross Nuisance

Motor cross bikes and quad bikes are more popular than ever and as such, we have seen an increase in calls to the police about them causing nuisance, as well as public concerns for potentially serious injuries. We understand that quad bikes are an important tool for the farming communities. In these circumstances the vehicles are used in the correct manner and we have no problem in this regard. However, many others are using quad bikes and motor cross bikes on the roads, on public land and on private land without the landowner's permission. Riding these vehicles in such a way is in breach of traffic legislation and if we see anyone riding where they should not be or causing a nuisance, they will be issued with a warning and could have their bikes seized.

There have been quite a few high profile news stories about people being seriously injured and our aim is to prevent further accidents and make sure the next story isn't about you!

Crime Prevention

Now is as good a time as any to review the basic security of your home. We would like to remind you to be aware of potential thieves and to be mindful of leaving items on display either inside your vehicle or around your garden. In the past, the Ribble Valley has suffered at the hands of travelling thieves, who have targeted specific items such as diesel/oil, scrap metal, stone and garden ornaments. Residents can be quite complacent in the rural communities, but we would urge you to lock gates at night and look at ways of improving your security, with padlocks and outside lighting, to keep your property safe. You should also keep an eye out for suspicious people and vehicles operating within your villages and if you see anything that causes you concern, please contact the police.

Useful Numbers

Citizens Advice
428966

Electricity
0800 1954141

Gas
0800 111999

Water
0800 330033

Environmental Health
01200 425111

Refuse Collections
01200 414404

Highway/Cleaning
01200 429405

Dog Warden/fouling
01200 414464

Free Smoke Alarms!

If you don't have a smoke alarm in your home, what are you waiting for? Call **0800 169 1125** for a home fire safety check. We will provide and install free smoke alarms and provide practical advice.

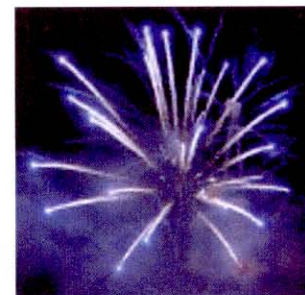
Parking

We regularly receive complaints about parking and vehicle obstruction, particularly on or close to junctions. The reason for parking restrictions at junctions is so that cars pulling out have a clear view. Whilst some areas are worse than others, we ask that you just give a little thought to where you park your vehicle. We also receive complaints from residents about not being able to park outside their own house because other people park there. Unfortunately, there's not a lot you can do as Common Law states that the highway is "a way over which the public have a right to pass and re-pass." In simple terms, this means that you do not have the right to park on the road outside your own property. If you are having problems, please try speaking with your neighbours.

Fireworks - Be Safe not Sorry!

Millions of people throughout many centuries have enjoyed fireworks, but accidents can and do sometimes happen. If you are planning to use fireworks this Bonfire Night, please follow these simple guidelines to avoid you or your family being injured as a result of carelessness:-

- Keep fireworks in a closed box
- Follow the instructions on each firework
- Light fireworks at arm's length
- Stand well back
- Never go back to a lit firework
- Never put fireworks in your pocket
- Never throw fireworks
- Keep pets indoors



Did you know?

Fireworks must not be sold to anyone under the age of 18.

It is against the law to possess fireworks in public if you are under 18.

It is against the law to throw or set off fireworks in the street.

Operation Julius

This high profile campaign ran throughout July, with excellent results, the most significant of which being a 38% reduction in burglaries – the division's lowest month on record! Over the month, 72 people were arrested across the division and officers carried out 36 search warrants, which led to the recovery of stolen property valued at £83,100. Whilst burglary is at its lowest in 35 years, we want to keep it that way and further activity is ongoing. You can help us to tackle this community problem by remaining vigilant, reporting any suspicious activity and following some simple crime prevention steps, such as locking doors and windows, using your burglar alarm if you have one, and keeping valuables, such as mobile phones and car keys in a safe place, particularly when you go to bed.

Don't Shop for Thieves this Christmas

With Christmas fast approaching, it will soon be time to hit the shops in the hunt for the perfect presents for your family and friends. Unfortunately, opportunist thieves will be thinking the same thing and when the shops are crowded, pickpockets have more chance to steal from you. When out shopping, stay alert and be extra careful with your wallet or purse, keeping it close to your body. Don't carry too much cash and keep your chequebook separate from your cheque card. Also, don't overload yourself with presents as this will make you more of a target for thieves. If you travel by car, park in a well-lit area, lock doors and windows and do not leave presents in view. Try not to return to your car to leave purchases in the boot before continuing your shopping trip as thieves may well watch car parks for just such a chance.

Having bought all those wonderful presents, don't make it easy for someone to steal them from your home. Keep them out of sight until last thing on Christmas Eve and if you 'hide' larger items such as bicycles in the shed or garage, make sure they are secure. Record frame numbers of bicycles and the serial numbers of new electrical equipment. Once Christmas Day has passed and all the presents have been opened, remember that empty boxes left outside advertise that you have new goods inside - dispose of packing carefully. Finally, although a little early, we would like to wish everyone a safe and peaceful Christmas and New Year.