

**Minutes of the
PRESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH MEETING
held at the Red Lion on Monday 27th March 2017**

Present: PCSO Heather Burrows, Sarah Gill, Carol Bowden, Alison Bierrum, Ita Leaver

Apologies: Ken Murray, Tim Justham, Ian Robinson, Jane Cole, Lynda Woodward, Pat Loustau, Brenda Reintjes

The following points were discussed:

1 **Local crime update**

Fortunately 2016 was a very quiet year overall in Preston.

On the 20th/21st October the reservoir on St Albans Highway was broken into. A diesel bowser and digger bucket were taken. On the same night an electric fence energiser, solar charger, battery and the trolley it was on, were taken from Poynders End Farm which is adjacent to the reservoir.

On 9th February 2017 a property in Back Lane was broken into. The offenders smashed the back patio door and items of jewellery were taken. The Police suspected this may have been linked to other burglaries in the North Herts area which happened around the same time.

They reported 43 similar house burglaries in February and stepped up patrols as part of their investigations. CCTV images of a man wanted in connection with a burglary in Whitwell were released. Other villages affected were Codicote and Ickleford.

It was agreed that every six months PCSO Heather Burrows will send Ita the list of crimes in villages that may also affect Preston; ie. Kings Walden, St Ippolyts and Gosmore.

Flytipping in the rural areas is still a big problem.

In May 2016 a large amount of rubbish including 6 big fridges, was dumped in a field off the Charlton Road. In February 2017, St Albans Highway was strewn with flytipping. A three piece suite and a fridge were dumped on the Charlton Road also.

Flytipping should be reported to NHDC using their online form or to Veolia on 0800 328 6023. Anyone witnessing it taking place should call the Police. Details are advertised in the latest Parish Newsletter.

2 **The OWL System + note distribution**

Ita and Jane are set up on OWL (Online Watch Link) and receive messages via email. Ita sends any relevant information to committee members for distribution by note to households in their assigned area. Jane deputises when Ita is away.

Outlying households are kept informed of incidents by email.

A note is also posted on the notice board at the Green.

Ita also now uses The Preston News Service (a new email database set up by the Trust) as a useful way to get news out quickly. Although, as not all villagers have signed up, the committee agreed it would be best to continue with the note system as well.

The OWL System is also very useful for relaying information other than crime-related matters where links and attachments can be accessed easily. All villagers have been given the option of signing up to receive these emails and several households have already signed up for the service.

3 **Police Surgeries with Heather**

These are held on **Saturday mornings** from **10am - 12 noon** in the **Village Hall** and when possible will coincide with the Community Book Swap.

Dates are published in the Newsletter, village website and on the notice board at the Green. The Primary School and PHC are also notified.

The next one will be on 15th July.

4 **Any Other Business**

Local area meetings are held in Lilley every three months or so. PCSO Heather Burrows also attends and recent crimes in the area and examples of policing successes are discussed.

Heather receives a copy of the Parish Newsletter each month.

PC Matt Jenkins is now back on our Safer Neighbourhood Team. He had been seconded to another role by HQ.

Be vigilant at all times and always report suspicious activity.

The non-emergency number to call is 101.

Ita thanked Heather and the committee for their help and support.

CC. *John Healey, Chairman Preston Parish Council*
Richard Coles, Chairman Preston Trust