

**Minutes of the
PRESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH MEETING
held at the Red Lion on Monday 1st April 2019**

Present: PCSO Heather Burrows, PCSO Alex Bridge, Carol Bowden, Alison Bierrum, Pat Loustau, Lynda Woodward, Sarah Gill, Tim Justham, Ita Leaver

Apologies: Jane Cole, Ian Robinson

The following points were discussed:

1) Local crime update

Heather outlined the crimes which were reported during the past 12 months in the village. Compared to previous years, crime in Preston has risen. This was mainly due to the spate of vehicle crime in January this year.

At the end of June 2018, a house in **Chequers Lane** was broken into via the front door in the afternoon. The offenders were surprisingly confronted by a resident in an upstairs bedroom. They made a quick getaway in a transit van with false plates and no property was taken.

At the end June/early July 2018 an upstairs property in **Ladygrove Mews** was accessed by the front door whilst the owner was away. An untidy search was made and items taken.

We had a quiet period until mid-January 2019 when several vehicles around the village were broken into. Of eight reported crimes, all but one vehicle had been locked. A car window at **Holly Cottages** in **Back Lane** was smashed and a laptop taken. Break-ins of unlocked cars occurred in **Chequers Lane, Church Lane, Butchers Lane** and **Ladygrove Cottages**. CCTV footage of an offender in Chequers Lane was submitted to the police. A shed in Back Lane was broken into but nothing was taken.

Many areas in the locality also suffered with this type of crime. I am pleased to report that seven men were arrested at the end of February 2019 regarding these offences.

On 20 January the Cricket Club sent out a message on the PNS regarding two signs that were taken from the side of the new scoreboard. There has been no further details about this.

Heather reported that flytipping is a big problem in the locality. It should be reported to NHDC using their online form or calling them on 01462 474000. Anyone witnessing it taking place should call the Police immediately on 999. Details are advertised in the latest Parish Newsletter.

2) The OWL System + note distribution

The OWL (Online Watch Link) has proved very useful for receiving messages via email. It 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 informed by email. A notice is also posted on the board at the Green.

The Preston News Service (the Trust email database) is also being used to get news out quickly. Although, not all villagers have signed up, the committee agreed to continue with the note system where appropriate.

Residents are urged to sign up to OWL to receive local information other than crime-related matters where links and attachments can be accessed easily. Details can be found on the NHW page of the village website.

3) Police Surgeries with PCSO Heather

Three Surgeries a year are held on Saturdays from 10am - 12 noon in the Village Hall.

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

The next one will be on 20th July

4) Any Other Business

Local area meetings are held in Lilley every four months or so. PCSO Heather Burrows also attends and recent crimes in the area and examples of policing successes are discussed. This is well attended by neighbouring village representatives.

Heather is advised about village dates/activities when necessary.

Many thanks to Ken Murray, who passed away in February, for all his efforts as representative for Hitchwood and Ladygrove. Jenny will continue to deliver the notes in this area.

Also, thanks to Sarah who is moving away and has been the representative in Poynders End. Sarah will email all residents to advise about signing up to the Preston News Service to receive future crime reports.

Heather mentioned that PC Matt Jenkins will be retiring in December.

The non-emergency number to call is 101. Alternatively, report crimes or suspicious activity via the Herts Constabulary website.

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

CC. *John Healey, Chairman Preston Parish Council*
Wally Steele, Chairman Preston Trust