

POLICE NOTEBOOK

THE OFFICIAL statistics for crime have been rising sharply under governments of all political shades since the 1950s. While the debate on the causes continues, the extent of the growth is clear. Some have argued that recording has improved, exaggerating the true growth. What nobody denies is that the weak, the vulnerable and those living in certain neighbourhoods are the most frequent victims of crime, particularly violent crime. Crimes of violence are a small proportion of the growing total, but for those in these categories they are nevertheless a grim reality.

For a whole range of offences the criminal law appears to have given up. Why are so few villains convicted? The short answer is that we have stacked the advantage more and more heavily on the side of defence. The problem does not lie with the jury system. It lies instead with the tightening of rules of evidence, the conduct of trials, in which the rights of the defendant nearly always override those of the victim. If legitimate authority fails, people will eventually be pushed into taking the law into their own hands. The sad truth is that today our criminal law, and the courts which implement it, persistently fail to protect the weak and defenceless against experienced villains who exploit its growing complexity and bias against the prosecution. As confidence in legitimate authority, and in the courts, declines, so other unattractive vigilante organisations will develop to fill the gap, as they have in the



Thames
Valley
Police

U.S.A. Here juries have become increasingly unwilling to convict those who retaliate.

The government plans to reform the police service are welcome, but the greater need is to reform the way the courts operate.

CRIME BUSTERS REVIEW

Since the last issue, both Milton and Shipton have experienced an increase in mindless vandalism. Somebody must be aware of who is carrying out these criminal acts! We are lucky to live in a small and relatively close-knit community, but as we have so often seen in larger communities, these acts can be the beginning of the destruction of the peace and tranquillity that we presently enjoy.

Between 1800 hrs on Saturday 13th, and 0830 hrs on Monday 15th February 1993, Milton-under-Wychwood village hall was broken into. The most sad and annoying aspect of this crime, was that four young trees planted in memory of a departed villager were broken off and destroyed.

Between 1700 hrs on Saturday 13th, and 0830 hrs Sunday 14th February 1993, a child's swing was

dismantled in a garden adjacent to Church Walk, Shipton-under-Wychwood. Very little was stolen, but it would appear it was damaged for the hell of it.

Between 1930 and 2030 hrs on Monday 1st March 1993, old sump oil was poured over the path leading into the old chapel, Shipton Road, Milton-under-Wychwood, were you around this area at about that time?

Beware of bogus fishsellers which have been operating in our area. They usually sell from an unmarked van, often sell at inflated prices, and dubious weights. There can be as many as five persons with the van, and it may be a cover for criminal activity.

Between 17.00 hrs on Tuesday 9th March and 09.30 hrs on Wednesday 10th March, a Panasonic radio cassette player, model CQD50FNV, was stolen from a Volkswagen Golf motor car parked in High Street, Ascott-u-Wychwood.

Have you been offered anything similar, or did you see anything suspicious in High Street at that time?

Please pass on any information you may have, no matter how small, the number is still:-

0608 642021

PC 377, Salmon

ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD YOUNG FARMERS CLUB

Provisional Programme:-

Tuesday	6th April	Oxaid - Talk from charity.
Tuesday	13th April	Collectable toys - What are they worth?
Tuesday	20th April	Ascott-v-Enstone YFC games evening
Tuesday	27th April	The Body Shop
Tuesday	4th May	YFC Rally preparations
Wednesday	12th May	Laser Quest in Oxford
Tuesday	18th May	Rally Float building
Tuesday	25th May	Rounders / Float building

Meetings are usually held at The Swan, Ascott-u-Wychwood on Tuesday evenings at 8 pm.

Recent meetings have included a talk from the listening bank, a history lesson on Roman Britain, a look around Lyneham Golf Course, as well as music quizzes and games evenings. We've also been socialising at discos and balls.

New members are always welcome and we even welcome back old members who have got out of the habit.

Anyone aged between 14 and 26 can join, and you don't have to be a farmer or even have a pair of wellies. For more details please ring Tim on 0608 76617.