

Crime-Stoppers

Winter means long dark nights. There is an assumption that crime increases at this time of year, this is not necessarily the case, though you do need to take some additional precautions.

Most burglaries occur during the day but at this time of year 'the day' has more darkness. I suggest you have a light on a timer so that it comes on as dusk falls and your home then doesn't look more inviting than the others in the road.

As the working day now has more hours of darkness you may get legitimate callers to your home whilst it is dark, such as meter readers or delivery men, but you still need to be vigilant. Bogus callers may take advantage of this. Ensure that the door or porch is well lit; use a spy hole and door chain and check the identity of all callers. **Remember no one has the right to enter your home without your consent wherever they say they're from.** If you see anything or anyone suspicious ring the police; you will not be

wasting their time. If it doesn't look right it's probably wrong.

New Police Non-Emergency Number

101 is the new number to contact the Police for non-urgent issues. **101 replaces 0845 8 505 505, although both numbers will run side by side until the end of March.**

Calls to 101 (from both landlines and mobile networks) cost 15 pence per call, no matter what time of day or duration. 101 can be used to report crime such as: your car being stolen or your property damaged or where you suspect drug use or dealing or if you want to report a minor traffic collision or if you want information about crime.

In an emergency please continue to use 999.

**Bill Butcher
Crime Reduction Adviser
West Oxfordshire**

Could You be a Befriender to the Wychwoods?

Volunteer Link Up, the Volunteer Centre for West Oxfordshire, is keen to recruit more befrienders to support **local** people who feel lonely, or who have difficulty getting out and about.

For example take **Mrs B**, who is in her 80s and lives in **Shipton-under-Wychwood**. She has very limited speech since suffering a stroke three years ago but understands everything. She has a great love of literature and would particularly like somebody to read to her. Then there is **Mrs G**, who lives in **Milton-under-Wychwood** and would like a volunteer to visit her for two hours once a week for a cup of tea and a chat. She has dementia but is able to hold a

conversation. This would provide some respite for her husband, who is her main carer.

As a befriender, you might find yourself having a cup of tea and a chat with a client, taking them on a local shopping trip, or helping with paperwork.

We recruit volunteers of all ages and backgrounds with no previous experience.

To find out more call Liz Williamson, Volunteer Co-ordinator on: 01993 832711 or pop into Volunteer Link Up's office at The Methodist Church, 10 Wesley Walk, Witney between 9:00am and 1:00pm, Monday to Friday for an informal chat. You can email us at office@vlu.org.uk or visit our website at www.vlu.org.uk.

Liz Williamson