



# VILLAGE WATCH



Newsletter of South Anston Village Neighbourhood Watch  
in conjunction with South Yorkshire Police  
Edition 298 – DECEMBER 2022

View on the Anston Parish Council website: <https://www.anston.gov.uk> under **Community**

## ➤ CHINESE ROBOCALL SCAMS

In the last few years, countries with large Chinese immigration populations such as the U.S., Canada, and Australia have been inundated with phone call scams. These fraudulent calls target mostly Mandarin-speaking people and Chinese immigrants and sound like an automated voice. By falsely representing a well-known company or official institution such as a bank, consulate, or government department, the scammers try to rob their victims of money. If you receive a Chinese robocall, you might not understand a single word, which is just as well - you should hang up immediately anyway.

The script of a robocall in an automated Chinese voice may be trying to warn you that your name was found on some credit cards that are being sold illegally in Shanghai, so your credit score is now damaged and your bank accounts closed. A pretence of some sort of money problem is always at the gist of it.

The other most common type of a Chinese robocall scam tells the victim they are being contacted by a Chinese embassy or consulate. The recipient of the scam call is told that a package has been found (usually at an airport somewhere in China) containing the victim's passport, social security card, or bank cards. The victim is then told that they are now under investigation and are at this point usually transferred to talk to a person that's pretending to be an investigator. The "investigator" then tries to convince the victim to send funds to an account in China or Hong Kong as soon as possible so as to avoid prosecution.

## ➤ CRIME LOCATIONS

The crimes reported in the tables (unfortunately not available at time of printing this month) come from the Police national website at <https://www.police.uk>. Each crime has a latitude and longitude allocated, but this is only an approximate location of the crime – called a "map point" – it is not the exact place that it happened. Each map point is specifically chosen so that it:

- appears over the centre point of a street, a public place such as a Park or Airport, or above a commercial premise like a Shopping Centre.
- has a catchment area which contains at least eight postal addresses or no postal addresses at all.

*(From studying the data and applying it to maps, the above statements are not strictly true.)*

When crime data is uploaded by police forces, the exact location of each crime is replaced with the nearest map point. So it's possible, for example, that a crime that took place at the end of a long road (which will have a map point at the centre of the road) may be reported as being "on or near" another road, because the latter is the nearest map point.

## ➤ VILLAGE WATCH NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

The distribution of this newsletter depends upon the community spirit of people (our Distributors/Co-ordinators) who are willing to go out in sometimes not very pleasant weather, and sometimes to locations several streets away from where they live, to deliver to residents of North and South Anston.

When someone cannot continue and has to resign from their delivery role, if notification is received in time, a note asking if any other resident could fill the role can be sent out, usually with the last delivery. Then, unless another volunteer comes forward, that particular location will cease to receive the letter every month. Hence residents can receive copies for some years, then deliveries may cease, then months or even years later, they can begin again.

## ➤ PASSWORD PROTECTION

To protect yourself from online scams, hacking and identity theft, there are three quick and easy steps you can take to secure your accounts.

- Create a separate password for your email account(s)

Your personal email account contains lots of important information about you and is the gateway to all

your other online accounts, including banking, social media and online shopping. If your email account is hacked all your other passwords can be reset, so use a strong password that is different to all your others.

- Use three random words

Weak passwords can be hacked in seconds. Three random words is the recommended way of generating passwords, as it is easier to remember and takes trillions of years for a computer algorithm to crack. Start with your most important accounts (such as email, then banking and social media) and replace your old passwords with new ones.

Look around the room and pick three things you see, for example table, curtain, paper would become tablecurtainpaper. DO NOT use words that are associated with you, for example names of pets or surnames, as these are easy to identify if you are someone who uses social media. Some accounts require greater security by using numbers, capitals and characters in your passwords.

- Turn on two-factor authentication (2FA)

Two-factor authentication (two-step verification or multi-factor authentication) is a free security feature that gives you an extra layer of protection online and stops cyber criminals getting into your accounts - even if they have your password. To reduce the risk of being hacked you are sent a text or email with a code (typically four to six numbers and letters) to use at login. Check if the online services and apps and email you use offer this. Some, especially banks, insist on it.

## ➤ CONTACTS

- ❖ **SY Police:** <https://www.southyorks.police.uk>

- ❖ **Emergencies:** call 999:

- When there is a threat to life (including traffic accidents where persons are injured, the road is blocked or a vehicle involved in the accident has failed to stop); ■ A serious offence is actually in progress; Violence to a person or damage to property is imminent; ■ A suspected offender is still at the scene of a crime or any delay in reporting the incident may prevent the offender being apprehended; ■ Serious disruption to the public is currently taking place or, is likely to take place.

- ❖ **Non-emergencies: call 101:** to report a crime not currently taking place, or to give information. Calls to 101 cost 15 pence per call from landlines and mobiles - no matter how long you're on the phone.

- ❖ **Report an incident online:** As an alternative to 101, you can report a non-emergency incident online at <https://www.reportingcrime.uk>, or from the main SYP web page under **Report something**

- ❖ **Crimestoppers:** report crime or suspicious activity anonymously by calling 0800 555 111 Monday-Friday 08:00-22:00; Saturday and Sunday 10:00-16:00 or online at <https://crimestoppers-uk.org>

- ❖ **Action Fraud:** To report fraud if you have been scammed, defrauded or experienced cyber crime: the Action Fraud contact centre: 0300 123 2040. You may make the report anonymously. Text phone users can ring 0300 123 2050. Report fraud online at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

**National Cyber Security Centre NCSC:** You can report a suspicious website link or URL using the form in this link: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/about-this-website/report-scam-website>

- ❖ **Advertising Standards Authority (ASA):** Report an online scam ad at: <https://www.asa.org.uk/make-a-complaint/report-an-online-scam-ad.html>

- ❖ **Citizens Advice**

The Citizens Advice service offers practical, up-to-date information and advice on a wide range of topics, including; debt, benefits, housing, legal, discrimination, employment, education, relationship and family matters, welfare benefits, immigration, consumer and other problems. Advice is available to everyone regardless of race, gender, sexuality, age, nationality, disability or religion.

Citizens Advice consumer helpline: 03454 04 05 06 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

The website of the national organisation: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>

### **Rotherham & District Citizens Advice**

<http://www.citizensadvicerotherham.org.uk>

The Rain Building, Market Hall, Eastwood Lane, Rotherham, S65 1EQ

Advice Line: 03444 111 444 open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm

- ❖ **Safe from Scams:** Expert Advice to Prevent Scams. SafefromScams is about scams of all types - from the classics that are still being run regularly, like bill-padding, cowboy builders' scams, and chain letters - to the new ones that keep appearing, such as phishing, mobile phone scams, or fake lotteries. We tell you how the scams work, why people fall for them and how to make sure you don't.

<https://www.safefromscams.co.uk>

- ❖ **South Anston Village Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator: Bryan Saunby: 01909 565194**