



VILLAGE WATCH



Newsletter of South Anston Village Neighbourhood Watch
in conjunction with South Yorkshire Police
Edition 301 – APRIL 2023

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

➤ ENERGY SCAMS

❖ Energy Price Guarantee (EPG)

- The Energy Price Guarantee is a limit on the amount you can be charged per unit of gas or electricity. It is equivalent to an annual saving of around £2,500 for the energy used by a typical household in Great Britain. Actual energy bills will still be higher or lower depending on how much energy is used - for example energy bills will still be lower for a well-insulated home that uses less energy. This guarantee is in effect from 1 April to 31 June 2023.

❖ Energy Bill Support Scheme

- This is a discount that is applied to household electricity bills for 6 months. It is £66 in October and November 2022, and £67 in December, January, February and March 2023.

You do not need to apply for these, and there is no need to contact your energy supplier, the discount is automatic. If you get a message telling you that you need to apply, or asking for your bank or credit card details, this is a scam. To report messages you think are suspicious go to:

<https://www.gov.uk> and type “scam” or “phishing”.

➤ HOW TO AVOID AMAZON SCAMS

No website is completely immune to scams, and Amazon is no exception. Amazon is a trusted global platform, and scammers take advantage of that.

❖ Amazon phishing scams

Amazon phishing scams often send emails with graphics to make them look real. Amazon phishing emails come in several forms, and often include a link to a spoofed website where the victim is prompted to make a payment or enter personal details.

- Update payment information - these try to convince people that their Amazon payment information needs to be updated or has expired
- You’ve won! - dangling a prize in front of victims to trick them into clicking a link to a spoofed Amazon website
- Order confirmation – this can happen when customers receive an email or text message with an infected link asking them to verify a recent purchase
- Amazon gift card scams - Requesting an Amazon gift card as a form of payment is a common scam that pressures the victim into purchasing one and disclosing the activation code in the following ways:
 - Urgent assistance – the scammer poses as a friend/relative asking for urgent help in the form of an Amazon gift card.
 - Tech support - a person pretending to be an Amazon tech support agent convinces the victim that they need to upgrade a plan or purchase a service, using an Amazon gift card as payment.
 - Survey reward - Scammers offer Amazon gift cards as a reward in return for filling in a survey. They collect sensitive personal information in the survey responses.
 - Debt payment - Victims usually receive a call claiming they have an unpaid debt – such as a tax penalty – and asking them to pay it using an Amazon gift card. Outside of purchasing products on the real Amazon website, any individual asking for payment using an Amazon gift card is not legitimate. If you’re unsure if a text or email about an Amazon gift card is real, check the phone number and registration link. Real Amazon gift cards come from the number 455-72, and the registration link should include *amazon.com/g/* followed by the claim code.

❖ Beware of fake Amazon websites

Many Amazon scam messages contain links to web pages imitating the real thing. These pharming sites have almost undetectable differences from the real Amazon site.

❖ How to protect yourself from Amazon scams

- Never provide personal information over the phone
- Always check URLs when visiting websites

- Don't click links in suspicious emails
- If it seems too good to be true, it probably is
- Don't pay individuals with a gift card
- Don't buy from a third-party website
- Install antivirus software
- Use different passwords for all your accounts
- Use 2 factor Authorisation (2FA) to log in to your accounts. 2FA is using two separate methods to confirm your identity. Typically this is by asking for any two of: a password, numbers from a pre-set PIN, some memorable information that you have previously set up, sending a code to a mobile phone or by email that you then enter on the login screen. There is also multi-factor authentication (MFA) which uses two or more factors to verify your identity.

➤ HOME SECURITY

- **ERA** is a producer of security products that is recommended by the National Neighbourhood Watch and is recommended by Which? - the not for profit organisation for the protection of consumers. You can find window and door locks, door chains, alarm kits, outdoor security cameras, video door bells at: <https://eraprotect.com>
Patlock provides home security products for French Doors and Conservatories. It is recommended by the National Neighbourhood Watch. Patlock works by holding the internal door handles secure, meaning the external handles cannot be operated. This ensures that the door mechanism remains in the locked position, even if the locks are snapped or removed.
Find them at: <https://www.patlock.co.uk>
Patlock are affiliate members of The Master Locksmiths Association (MLA), a not for profit organisation established to promote the level of skills and ethics within the industry. The MLA have an established licensing scheme whereby its approved companies are vetted and undergo regular inspections to ensure quality.
- **Secured by Design (SBD)** is the official police security initiative that works to improve the security of buildings and their immediate surroundings to provide safe places to live, work, shop and visit.
- Accredited Security Products and accredited companies can be found at:
<https://www.securedbydesign.com>

➤ 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**
- ❖ **Areyouok?** Information and advice on violence and abuse: <https://www.areyouok.co.uk>
- ❖ **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
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>
- **South Anston Village Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator:** Bryan Saunby: 01909 565194

Crime data for February were not available from the police.uk website in time for printing the newsletter.