

Worthing NHW Newsletter



March 2024

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Theft from Commercial Vehicles

A spate of thefts from commercial vehicles has been reported in Worthing and Lancing, so Sussex Police are offering owners the following guidance, the better to protect their property:

- Ensure that your vehicle alarm is in working order and if you have CCTV, video doorbell footage of any thefts or witness any suspicious activity around vehicles, please report it to the Police immediately.
- It is very easy to turn your back for a moment or be distracted and forget to secure your vehicle, so get into the habit of locking it and also securing windows and sunroofs.
- The easiest way for thieves to change the identity of a stolen vehicle or avoid speeding tickets and parking tickets is to fit stolen number plates, so use security screws to attach your vehicle's number plates. Also, wheels are valuable, either as parts or for their scrap value, so use locking wheel nuts to secure them.
- Anything left on roof-racks, tailgate racks, holiday top boxes or in tool chests is easily stolen when the vehicle is parked.
- Your mobile phone, coins for the car park, sunglasses, packs of medication or other items that can earn quick cash are irresistible to the opportunist thief, so take them with you or hide them. The same goes for leaving sat nav mounts, suction cup marks on windows or cables on view.
- Vans are often targeted by thieves for the tools stored inside. If you have to leave tools in a van overnight, it's a good idea to mark them clearly with your name/company name and address using paint pens and seal with a clear lacquer spray as this makes them harder to sell on. You can also take photographs of items of value, make a note of the serial numbers and register them online at a property register site.
- Obtaining possession of a vehicle's registration and insurance documents could enable a thief to pretend to be its owner, and therefore sell it on quite easily. So always ensure that no such documents are ever left behind in the vehicle.

Web Site : <https://worthingnhw.ourwatch.org.uk/>

Fire service issue e-bike safety warning following fire

A fire which resulted in a dog being rescued has sparked a new safety warning for users of electric bikes and scooters.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service is urging e-bike users to act responsibly and be aware of the risks the e-bikes pose, following a significant fire in Pease Pottage.

In the early hours of this morning (21 February), four fire crews from Crawley, Horsham and Surrey Fire & Rescue Service responded to the fire in a block of flats in Bellevue Farm Road.

Upon arrival firefighters entered the property which was filled with smoke and extinguished a fire in the living room using hose reels and a jet. One dog was safely rescued from the domestic dwelling and the occupant was assessed and treated at the scene by South East Coast Ambulance Service crews for minor smoke inhalation.

The fire was caused by an electric bike, though the exact reason for the ignition is yet to be determined. At this time, it is believed to have been caused by either the charger or a faulty battery.

Station Manager for Crawley, Alistair Green, said: "It is extremely fortunate that the property had working smoke alarms; these alerted the occupier to the fire in its early stages and gave him enough time to safely evacuate the property. This incident could have had severe consequences had working smoke alarms not been present.

The occupier also closed the internal doors which prevented the fire and smoke from spreading to other rooms, or neighbouring flats, and causing harm.

Across the country we are seeing more instances of fires caused by electric bikes and scooters, and sadly some of these incidents have been fatal. If you own one of these products, it's really important that you use them responsibly and put safety measures in place to reduce the risk of fire."

If you have an electric bike or scooter, remember to:

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for charging and storing your electric bike/scooter.

- Fit smoke or heat detection in the room where you charge or store your electric bike/scooter.

- Store electric bikes/scooters and their batteries in a cool place. Avoid excessively hot or cold places.

- Always use the manufacturer approved charger for the product.

- Don't overcharge and always unplug your charger when it's finished charging.

- Don't leave batteries to charge while you are asleep or away from the home.

- Don't charge batteries or store your electric bike/scooter near combustible or flammable materials.

- In the event of an electric bike/scooter or lithium-ion battery fire – do not attempt to extinguish the fire. Get out, stay out, call 999.

More safety advice can be found here: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/west-sussex-fire-and-rescue-service/home-fire-safety/electrical-and-heating-appliance-safety-advice/#electronic-devices-and-chargers>



Photo credit: Eddie Mitchell

Scams

According to Action Fraud, scams account for almost 40% of all crimes. Last year 1 in 17 adults in England and Wales fell victim to frauds as did one in five businesses between 2018 and 2020. It can happen to any one of us, but we can all do more to protect ourselves against fraud.

Still, scammers have a good working knowledge of psychology and thus the ability to catch their victims unawares - which is why they favour the phone as a means of communication. So remember the "Take Five" guidelines- stop, challenge, protect- and never take calls and messages at face value or be rushed into a hasty decision; also, fraudsters will keep the line open after you've told them that you're checking with your bank, so your call will only be received by the scammer.

Fraudsters can also falsify or "spoof" their caller ID to make it appear that the call is from a trusted person or business. Thus, while the calls may appear local, they are often made by unscrupulous telemarketers based outside the UK. Spoofers have scammed sellers on sites like eBay before so, if contacted this way, always check with the counterparty direct, using contact details that you know to be correct, such as those on an official website or by dialling 159 to check if a call from your bank is genuine (159 is a short code phone service number to which all major High Street banks are party).

Fraudsters know that people love a bargain, so they use discounts, time pressures and "fear of missing out " to induce victims to pay for non-existent goods or services - or they urge them to click on links to phishing messages that lead them to a bogus website, whereby the fraudster can steal cash and personal information, or infect the victim's device. So always stay on trustworthy websites and follow their recommended payment directions; avoid paying by bank transfer or virtual currency, and consider carefully before handing over money or personal details.

County council asks for feedback on proposed designs for transport improvements between Durrington and Goring-by-Sea

West Sussex County Council is asking for your views on proposals for future transport improvements between Durrington and Goring-by-Sea, Worthing.

This area is already a busy location with residents travelling to schools, work and to access local services and recreation facilities. To support these journeys, the improvements being considered include the creation of improved routes and crossings for pedestrians and cyclists to make travelling actively an easier, safer and more appealing option.



Improvements to facilities at some bus stops and junction improvements to reduce traffic congestion at the A2032/Durrington Lane/The Boulevard junction are also included in the proposals.

These improvements would help journeys to locations such as Durrington High School, Durrington-on-Sea railway station, Worthing Leisure Centre, Goring seafront as well as shopping, employment and development areas.

Cllr Joy Dennis, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport at West Sussex County Council, said: "Following initial public engagement in 2023, which indicated that there is general support for transport improvements in this area, design proposals are now being put forward and I encourage all residents to take a look and share your feedback.

"These proposals are part of the county council's transport strategy for Worthing, which also includes improving the A27, promoting better public transport, and providing more electric vehicle charging points."

Full details of the proposals can be found at <https://yourvoice.westsussex.gov.uk/durrington-goring> and we are encouraging residents, businesses and other users to tell us what they think by completing the online survey. All feedback will be considered to help develop the final designs.

Drop-in events have also been arranged to give you the chance to view our ideas in person and speak to members of the project team.

These will be held at:

Worthing Leisure Centre, Shaftesbury Avenue, Worthing, BN12 4ET, Thursday 21 March, 2pm to 6pm

Durrington High School, The Boulevard, Worthing, BN13 1JX, Monday 25 March, 4pm to 8pm.

The schemes are at an early stage of development and likely to depend on securing government grant funding, therefore it is expected to be several years before any construction could commence.

The consultation is open until 11:55pm on Tuesday, 30 April, 2024 and full details of the proposals can be found on our consultation page : <https://yourvoice.westsussex.gov.uk/durrington-goring>.

Vodafone Survey

A recent survey carried out by Vodafone indicated that 69% of boys aged 11-14 had been exposed to online content that promotes misogyny and other harmful views, and 52% were aware of (and had engaged with) content from influencers with links to the "manosphere". This term is used to describe the network of online communities (including incels) responsible for creating and promoting negative content, with 59% led there through innocent and unrelated searches - such as on fitness or gaming content - due to AI algorithms.

That survey, involving 1,000 parents and boys and over 4,000 teachers, further suggested that, on average, boys aged 11-14 are exposed to harmful content within 30 minutes of being online and 1 in 10 in as little as 60 seconds. This stems from AI Aggro-rithms pushing content promoting misogyny (69%) or violence (79%) to boys.

42% of parents reported hearing their sons making inappropriate comments because of what they had seen online while 32% and 44% respectively reported topics involving sex and violence discussed. 27% and 22% respectively noted negative comments about body image and women and girls. 22% reported a gradual deterioration in the language used to describe women and girls while 70% of teachers saw a rise in sexist language in the classroom over the past twelve months.

The insidious nature of these algorithms resulted in 76% of boys engaging with content for people and platforms that they had not previously followed online. Once that had happened, these algorithms were programmed to promote more of the same, increasing the boys' exposure to harmful views.

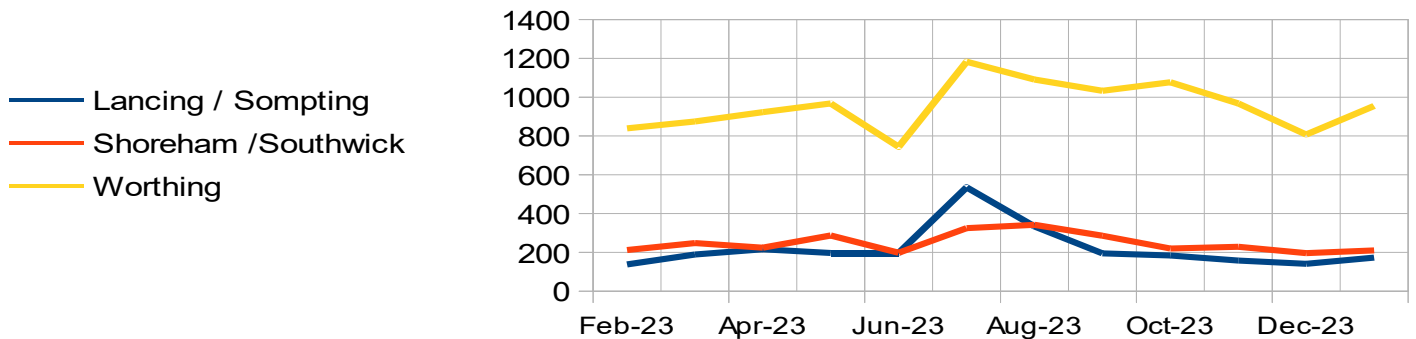
The effect of these influences led 81% of teachers to state that the deterioration in behaviour was negatively impacting female students and 79% said that a lack of respect for female teachers had negatively affected the ability of boys to listen and learn in class.

Vodafone and Global Action Plan, a charity focused on general environmental issues, have produced a video highlighting the dangers engendered - "The Rise of the Aggro-rithm" - which is available to view online.

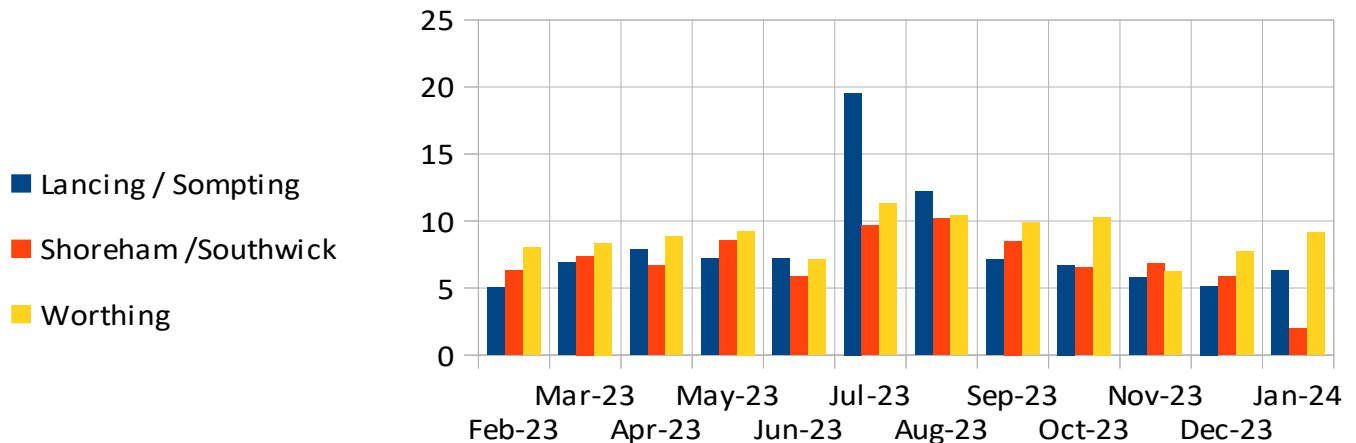
Crime Statistics for January 2024

January 2024	Broadwater	Castle	Central	Durrington	Findon	Gaisford	Goring	Heene	Marine02	Northbrook	Offington	Salvington	Selden	Tarring	Sub Total
					BN										
Antisocial Behaviour	8	7	30	3	1	11	2	8	8	3	1	3	1	8	94
Bike Theft	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	9
Burglary	0	1	5	2	1	3	2	1	0	4	1	3	2	0	25
Criminal Damage	4	4	20	8	1	5	3	5	4	3	3	0	8	4	72
Drugs	0	2	10	0	0	1	1	0	0	6	2	0	3	3	28
Other Crime	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	11
Other Theft	2	3	11	3	0	3	2	4	4	3	1	3	5	4	48
Weapons	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	5
Public Order	4	3	28	5	0	2	2	2	2	3	0	6	2	9	68
Robbery	0	2	3	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Theft Shop	13	42	31	38	0	0	1	47	14	3	2	35	4	25	255
Theft Person	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	7
Vehicle Crime	3	0	5	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	7	7	2	3	33
Violence & Sex Offences	24	25	71	5	2	16	7	33	13	16	12	30	23	15	292
Totals	60	92	220	68	5	47	22	104	46	43	32	88	54	74	955

Crimes February 2023 to January 2024



Crimes per 1000 of Population



See the latest Alerts at : [https:// worthingnhw.ourwatch.org.uk/](https://worthingnhw.ourwatch.org.uk/)