

Worthing NHW Newsletter



October 2025

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Smuggling

Historical crime in Worthing, with particular reference to smuggling - which was aimed at evading excise duties on items such as spirits, wine, tea, tobacco, lace and silks.

The smugglers used a rabbit-warren of storage tunnels stretching as far as Ivy Arch Road and theirs was a highly-organised business, with the hierarchy often including men of high local standing. They had friends and customers including squires, parsons, JPs, farmers, lawyers and local tradesmen.

One of the most notorious and ruthless of these groups was the Hawkhurst Gang, which was involved in smuggling throughout south-east England from 1735 until 1749, when their activities were largely brought to an end with the hangings of seven gang members at Chichester.

Meanwhile the "Thieves' Kitchen" in Warwick Street (originally properly known as the "Vintner's Arms") was, almost without doubt, one of the principal locations to receive, store and distribute wines and spirits by the shipload. Before a smuggling run began, the smugglers' agents visited well-to-do householders and hostellers to take orders. Then the smugglers made for Roscoff in Brittany, which was a full-time smuggling port.

They could buy a tub of spirits there for £2, which, with duty, would have cost £6. However, the spirits were often as much as 180 degrees above proof, so they could be watered down to proof strength; the price at proof strength would have been £10 to £18 per tub. In short, smuggling was a highly lucrative business.

Napoleon Bonaparte was delighted to take advantage of this source of English currency, while the smuggling skippers were often a valuable source of intelligence when it came to detailing the movements of French warships; hence, the authorities were the less likely to prefer charges against them during this period of hostilities.

Smuggling did not long survive the Napoleonic War and was brought to an end following the "Battle of Worthing" in February 1832 between smugglers and Customs officials but this was, without doubt, a memorable interlude in the history of our town.

Tim Drew

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

Burglaries

Whether you're planning to take advantage of Black Friday deals to update your tech, or you're already making progress with your Christmas shopping, many of us will have more valuable items in our homes at this time of the year.

Burglaries tend to spike in the winter months, with thieves taking advantage of the longer, darker evenings – but there are some simple steps you can take to keep your home and belongings safe.

ERA - one of the UK's leading home security providers, and a long-standing partner of Neighbourhood Watch - has the following top tips for making sure your property is properly protected over the coming months.

Most burglars enter the home through the front door, so it's essential you make sure yours is properly secure. A 5-lever mortice lock is a great option – look out for the British Standard kitemark that means the lock is resistant to drilling, hacksawing, and picking through steel plates.

Alternatively, a multi-point lock is a robust and secure solution – hooks, bolts rollers and mushrooms lock into sections of your door frame for maximum security. ERA has a range of 5 lever mortice and multi-point locks so you can find the one best suited for your front door.

Always remember that many burglaries are crimes of opportunity; if you have a stack of Amazon packages with your Black Friday purchases left in your porch, or a mountain of presents under the Christmas tree visible to passers-by through your windows, your property will look more appealing to potential thieves. Make sure any packages are taken in promptly and stored.

Visible security solutions act as a deterrent to potential thieves – by installing a smart alarm system you'll make them think twice about targeting your home. ERA's 7-piece smart alarm kit includes a live siren and replica siren which can be easily installed outside your property.

Council strengthens call for action on shop theft in West Sussex with amended motion

West Sussex County Council has passed a motion reinforcing its commitment to supporting local businesses and addressing the issue of shop theft across the county.

At the Full Council meeting on Friday 17 October 2025, councillors debated the impact of retail crime on local businesses, public safety, and community confidence. The motion, originally proposed by Cllr Linehan, was amended by Cllr Wickremaratchi, which strengthens the council's call for visible and consistent policing responses to shop theft, also referred to as shoplifting.

The amended motion urges the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable to ensure that tackling shop theft continues to be a priority, backed up with visible action. It also called for a formal update to the county council, in addition to the update that was given to the Sussex Police and Crime Panel earlier this year, on how the commitments made in the Police and Crime Plan are being delivered in West Sussex.

Councillors noted that shop theft now accounts for nearly 12% of all recorded crime in West Sussex, and that reporting is vital in building up intelligence in order to tackle it, with the Pegasus partnership initiative being highlighted as an example of how intelligence sharing can yield results. The motion calls for consistent investigation of shop theft reports where clear evidence exists - such as CCTV footage - even if suspects are not immediately detained. It also seeks assurance that retail staff are not expected to intervene or detain suspects, prioritising their safety.

Council Leader Cllr Paul Marshall and Cabinet Member for Community Support, Fire and Rescue, Cllr Duncan Crow, will now write to the Police & Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable to formally request continued action and an update in line with the amended motion.

West Sussex County Council remains committed to supporting local businesses and ensuring that high streets remain safe, vibrant, and welcoming for all.

Recovered Criminal Assets

New figures released by the Home Office show that almost £50 million taken from criminals was returned to victims, a 165% increase on the previous year and the highest amount in over half a decade.

This comes as law enforcement recovered almost £300 million in criminal assets as it seeks to reinforce the message that those seeking to profit from crime will be brought to justice and stripped of their ill-gotten wealth.

Law enforcement agencies have robust tools to trace, seize, and recover assets acquired through illegal activities under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. These assets can range from cash and property to vehicles and luxury items.

Criminal assets have also been reinvested to boost law enforcement's ability to secure our borders. This includes funding the cutting edge Multi Agency Cash Cell (which is a collaborative initiative that brings together various government and law enforcement agencies) in order to disrupt the flow of criminal finance into the UK. Last year, the Cell seized £7 million in cash and a further £4 million in assets, including gold and luxury watches – showing how money once destined to fund crime is being turned against the criminals.

Security Minister Dan Jarvis said:

“This year's recovery of nearly £300 million in criminal assets, together with an unprecedented increase in funds returned to victims, stands as proof of our unwavering determination to ensure that crime doesn't pay. Every pound we recover goes back into our communities, supporting victims, strengthening law enforcement and delivering safer streets - all part of this government's Plan for Change.”

£174m of criminal funds was invested in supporting agencies leading the fight against crime, a 55% increase on the previous year, and local police forces played a major role in the crackdown by pursuing offenders, tracking illicit funds, and working with specialist agencies to seize criminal cash. Notably, Greater Manchester Police recovered £16 million and seized £12 million from criminals last year, with half of those funds channelled to community projects designed to reduce, tackle, and prevent crime across the region.

Estate Planning

When people think about estate planning, they often picture wealthy retirees with multiple properties. The reality is very different. Estate planning isn't about wealth - it's about protecting the people you care about most. Neighbourhood Watch members are committed to safety and looking out for others. Estate planning shares the same principle - protecting your loved ones from risk and uncertainty in the future.

If you don't plan ahead, the law decides what happens to your estate, which may not reflect your wishes. This can leave families facing delays, legal costs, and disputes at an already difficult time.

Your will is the foundation of your estate plan, setting out who inherits your assets, who will manage your estate, and who cares for your children if they are under 18. But life changes - moving house, marriage, grandchildren - mean that even if you already have a will, it should be reviewed regularly.

Moreover, a will cannot cover everything. For example, if you lose mental capacity, who makes decisions about your health, care, or finances? Without proper planning, your loved ones may need to go through the courts, which is stressful and expensive.

Besides your will, estate planning includes:

- Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs) - appoint people you trust to make decisions in the event of incapacity
- Guardianship - ensure children under 18 are cared for by the right people.
- Organising assets from pension and insurance to digital accounts and sentimental
- Recording your wishes - such as funeral preferences or personal messages.

To make estate planning simpler, Future-Proof Estate Planning (<https://www.fpep.co.uk>) is offering Neighbourhood Watch members an exclusive 20% discount on their estate planning packages.

These packages let you create legally binding documents quickly and easily, while still getting full support throughout the process. From start to finish, a team is available to guide you step by step, so that you can feel confident that your wishes will be protected.

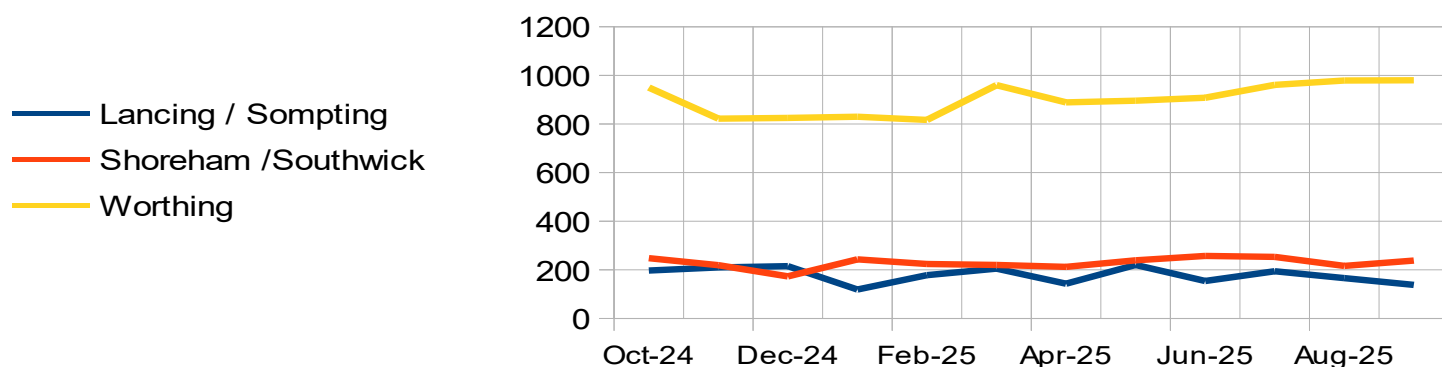
Planning ahead isn't about expecting the worst - it's about being ready for whatever life has in store and bringing you peace of mind in any eventuality.

Other options include <https://www.which.co.uk/>

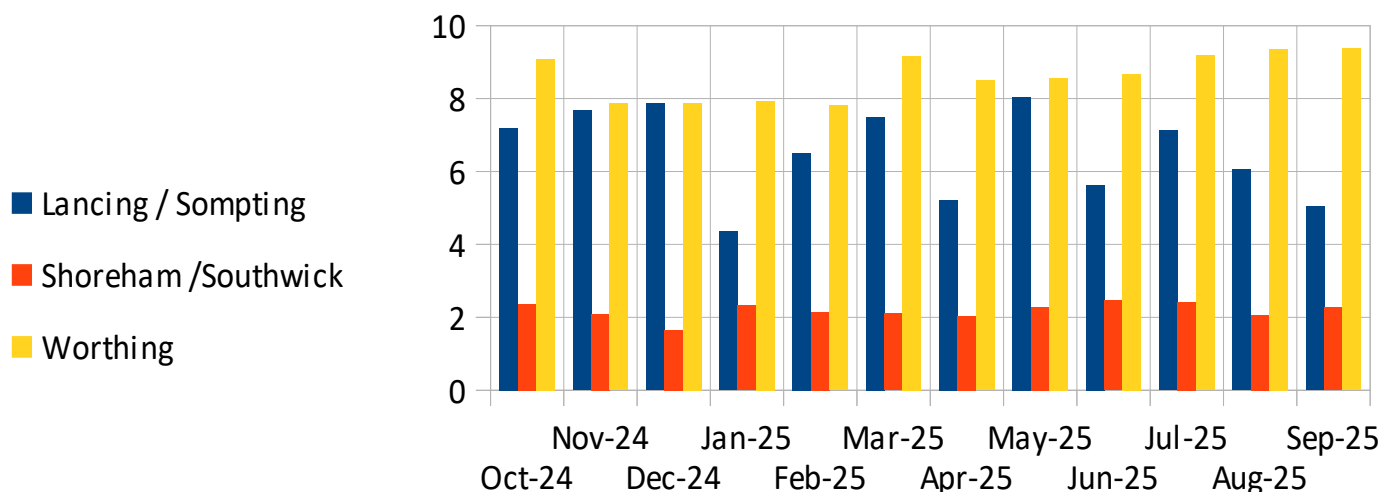
Crime Statistics for September 2025

September 2025	Broadwater	Castle	Central	Durrington	Findon	Gaisford	Goring	Heene	Marine02	Northbrook	Offington	Salvington	Selden	Tarring	Sub Total
					BN Codes										
Antisocial Behaviour	3	28	53	7	0	10	6	14	12	18	5	13	9	4	182
Bike Theft	0	3	3	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	13
Burglary	2	0	6	4	1	1	2	3	1	3	1	2	1	2	29
Criminal Damage	1	5	24	1	2	6	7	4	2	8	3	7	5	3	78
Drugs	5	3	4	1	0	1	1	2	1	6	1	1	2	1	29
Other Crime	1	1	3	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	1	1	3	1	17
Other Theft	3	5	6	0	1	1	2	5	1	4	1	2	5	0	36
Weapons	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	10
Public Order	1	5	25	2	1	2	6	5	0	4	4	1	5	6	67
Robbery	1	3	5	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	1	0	2	18
Theft Shop	8	43	23	1	0	3	0	37	8	0	13	1	11	13	161
Theft Person	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Vehicle Crime	2	3	7	3	0	2	5	2	9	2	4	11	3	5	58
Violence & Sex Offences	13	28	87	11	4	21	9	13	9	27	8	23	12	15	280
Totals	44	128	250	32	9	48	40	93	46	76	42	63	57	52	980

Crimes October 2024 to September 2025



Crimes per 1000 of Population



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