

# Bolton Neighbourhood Watch Newsletter



February 2026

## Keep Your Wheels Safe How to Prevent Cycle Theft in Our Community



Cycling is one of the most convenient, healthy, and environmentally friendly ways to get around—but unfortunately, bikes remain a prime target for thieves. Across the UK, thousands of cycles are stolen each year, often in a matter of seconds. The good news is that a few simple steps can dramatically reduce the risk, and our community has access to excellent tools to help keep bikes safe.

One of the most effective is **bike marking**, a quick and secure way to protect your bike and increase the chances of recovery if it's ever stolen.

### Why Bike Theft Happens

Cycle thieves look for opportunity: an unlocked bike, a weak lock, or a quiet spot where they can work unnoticed. Even a short stop—popping into a shop or leaving your bike in a communal hallway—can be enough time for a thief to strike.

Being prepared is the best defence.

### Top Tips to Prevent Cycle Theft

#### 1. Use a High-Quality Lock

Invest in a strong, Sold Secure-rated lock (preferably a D-lock or chain). Cheap locks are easy to cut, even with basic tools.

#### 2. Lock Your Bike Correctly

- Lock the **frame and at least one wheel** to a solid, immovable object
- Keep the lock off the ground to make it harder to attack

- Fill the lock's space so tools can't be inserted easily

### 3. Choose Safe Parking Spots

Always park in well-lit, busy areas or designated cycle stands. Avoid leaving your bike in isolated or poorly monitored places.

### 4. Remove Accessories

Take lights, GPS units, and quick-release items with you. Thieves often target removable parts.

### 5. Register and Mark Your Bike

This is one of the most effective ways to deter thieves and help police return stolen bikes.

## Bike Marking: A Simple Step That Makes a Big Difference



Bike marking schemes—such as those run by [BikeRegister](#), local councils, and neighbourhood policing teams—apply a unique, tamper-proof identifier to your bike. This ID is logged on a national database used by police forces across the UK.

### Why Bike Marking Works

- Marked bikes are **far less attractive to thieves**
- Police can quickly identify the rightful owner
- Recovered bikes can be returned even if the thief removes accessories or alters the appearance
- It's often **free or low-cost** at community events

Many neighbourhood policing teams run regular bike-marking sessions at parks, community centres, and local events. These sessions usually take just a few minutes and include advice on securing your bike effectively.

## Register Your Bike Today

If you haven't already, take a moment to register your bike on a [recognised national database](#). It's quick, easy, and gives you peace of mind. Once registered, keep a note of your frame number, take photos of your bike, and store your details somewhere safe.

## Together, We Can Reduce Bike Theft

Preventing cycle theft isn't just about locks and markings—it's about awareness. By taking simple precautions and encouraging others to do the same, we can make our neighbourhood a much harder place for thieves to operate.

Look out for upcoming **bike-marking events** in our area, and spread the word to friends, family, and fellow cyclists. A few minutes of prevention can save a lot of frustration later.



☕️❤️ Support Bolton Neighbourhood Watch ❤️☕️

When you donate a coffee, your contribution doesn't go to an individual — it goes directly to Bolton Neighbourhood Watch.

Every donation helps us provide crime prevention advice, strengthen local connections, and create a safer, more secure communities for everyone.

☞ Together, we can keep Bolton a place where neighbours look out for each other and families feel protected.

[www.buymeacoffee.com/boltonneighbourhoodwatch](http://www.buymeacoffee.com/boltonneighbourhoodwatch)

Police across the UK have issued warnings about a rise in **high-value gold and jewellery thefts** from Muslim households during the Islamic holy month of **Ramadan**. Thieves specifically target properties that contain high-purity, often sentimental, family heirlooms.

## Why Thefts Increase During Ramadan

The rise in burglaries during this period is linked to the timing of religious observances:

- **Empty Homes:** Muslim families often leave their homes empty to attend evening prayers or visit relatives, providing burglars with an opportunity.
- **Visible Valuables:** The cultural tradition of wearing, giving, and receiving expensive jewellery during religious festivals can attract "unwanted attention" from criminals.
- **Targeted Approach:** Perpetrators often watch properties to see when residents leave for prayers and operate in small teams to quickly ransack homes, specifically looking for gold and cash.

## Crime Prevention Advice

Police forces advise homeowners to take extra security measures:

- **Secure Valuables:** Store high-value jewellery and gold in an insurance-rated safe that is bolted down, or consider using a bank's safety deposit box. Simply hiding items is often not enough, as determined burglars know where to search.
- **Improve Home Security:** Ensure all windows and doors are securely locked when leaving the house. Use timer switches to turn internal lights on and off to give the impression someone is home. Consider installing a monitored burglar alarm or doorbell camera.
- **Be Discreet:** Avoid openly displaying large quantities of jewellery in public or on social media. When travelling to or from venues, keep valuables concealed.
- **Record Information:** Take clear photographs of each item of jewellery, note serial numbers, and keep receipts and valuation records. This aids police in identifying and recovering stolen items.
- **Report Suspicious Activity:** Be vigilant for people watching properties and report any suspicious behaviour to the police on 101, or 999 in an emergency.



# Spot It. Share It. Stop It.

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) is calling on residents to play a vital role in making our roads safer through **Operation Snap**—a simple, secure way for the public to submit video evidence of dangerous driving.

Whether you're a driver with a dashcam, a cyclist with a helmet camera, or a pedestrian who's captured something on your phone, Operation Snap gives you a direct route to share footage of road-related offences with GMP's dedicated traffic investigation team.

## Why Operation Snap Matters

Every day, people across Greater Manchester witness behaviour that puts lives at risk—speeding, mobile-phone use behind the wheel, close passes on cyclists, red-light jumping, and more. These incidents often happen in a split second, and until recently, reporting them wasn't always easy.

Operation Snap changes that. By enabling the public to upload footage quickly and securely, GMP can review incidents more efficiently and take appropriate action, from issuing warnings to prosecuting offenders.

This isn't about catching people out—it's about **preventing collisions, protecting vulnerable road users, and promoting a culture of responsibility on our roads.**



## How It Works

Submitting footage is straightforward:

- Upload your video via [GMP's secure Operation Snap portal](#)
- Provide a brief description of what happened
- GMP's Roads Policing Unit reviews the footage
- If an offence is confirmed, action is taken

All submissions are handled confidentially, and only footage showing potential offences should be uploaded.

## Your Footage Could Save a Life

Road safety is a shared responsibility. Operation Snap empowers residents to support GMP in tackling dangerous driving and reducing serious injuries on our roads.

If you regularly use a dashcam or cycle camera—or simply happen to witness something concerning—your evidence could make a real difference.

## Be Part of the Solution

Greater Manchester is a proud, connected community. By taking part in Operation Snap, you're helping to create safer streets for everyone: drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and families.

To learn more or submit footage, visit the [Operation Snap page](#) on the GMP website.

### ●●● Join Neighbourhood Watch for FREE! ●●●

Neighbourhood Watch is all about community, safety, and looking out for each other. By joining, you'll help reduce crime, share vital information, and make Bolton a safer, stronger place to live.

Together, we can protect our streets, support our neighbours, and build a communities we're proud of.

Sign up today and be the difference!

<https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/joinNW>



## Standing Together for Safer Communities

### Join the Neighbourhood Watch Community Safety Charter

Creating a safer, more connected community isn't just the job of the police or local authorities—it's something we can all play a part in. That's why Neighbourhood Watch has launched the Community Safety Charter, a national pledge inviting individuals, businesses, and organisations to stand together against intimidation, harassment, and anti-social behaviour in public spaces.

The Charter is simple but powerful: by signing up, you commit to being an active bystander, looking out for others, and helping create safer streets, workplaces, and neighbourhoods.

#### What the Charter Stands For

The Community Safety Charter focuses on four key principles:

- Awareness – Recognising the signs of harassment, intimidation, and anti-social behaviour
- Support – Knowing how to safely help someone who may be at risk
- Reporting – Understanding when and how to report concerns
- Community Action – Encouraging a culture where everyone feels responsible for safety

This isn't about confrontation—it's about confidence. The Charter empowers people to take small, safe steps that make a big difference.

### Why It Matters

Everyone deserves to feel safe where they live, work, and socialise. Yet many people experience or witness behaviour that leaves them feeling uneasy or vulnerable. By signing the Charter, you're helping to build a community where:

- People look out for one another
- Vulnerable individuals feel supported
- Anti-social behaviour is challenged, not ignored
- Local spaces feel welcoming and safe for all

It's a practical way to show that you care about the wellbeing of those around you.

Our Community Safety Charter  
**EMPOWERS YOU**  
(as an individual, business or community group)  
to **reduce crimes in public spaces**,  
such as harassment, hate crime,  
and antisocial behaviour

[ourwatch.org.uk/charter](https://ourwatch.org.uk/charter)

SIGN UP TO THE CHARTER

**ERA**

Neighbourhood Watch Network is a charity registered in England & Wales, CIO No. 1173349

### Who Can Sign Up?

The Charter is open to:

- Residents
- Community groups
- Local businesses
- Schools and colleges
- Charities and voluntary organisations
- Public-facing services

Whether you're an individual who wants to make a difference or an organisation committed to community wellbeing, your pledge strengthens the network of people working to keep our neighbourhoods safe.

### What You Receive

Once you sign the Charter, you'll gain access to:

- Practical guidance on being an active bystander
- Resources to help you recognise and respond to concerning behaviour
- Posters and materials to display your commitment
- Updates and support from Neighbourhood Watch

These tools help you feel prepared, confident, and connected to a wider movement for positive change.

### Be Part of the Solution

Safety is a shared responsibility. By joining the Community Safety Charter, you're helping to build a culture where kindness, awareness, and community spirit come first.

If you'd like to sign the Charter or learn more, visit the [Neighbourhood Watch website](#) and take the pledge today. Together, we can make our public spaces safer for everyone.



To see the updated list of locations taking part in this event, follow [Westhoughton Yard Sale](#) on Facebook

**One Community - One Messaging System**



**Neighbourhood Watch**



**Bee in the Loop**  
POLICE