

Adur NHW Newsletter



Lancing & Sompting Issue

May 2025

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Heritage crime

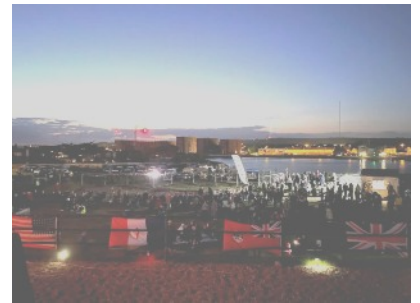
On VE Day evening a beacon was lit at Shoreham Fort, which is at the centre of an ambitious reconstruction programme led by the Friends of Shoreham Fort volunteers and aimed at restoring its appearance to that when it was first built in 1857, with the intention of eventually using it as a multi-purpose community asset. It is owned by the Shoreham Port Authority and Historic England.

Sadly, Historic England has had plenty of experience of heritage crime, which consists of any offence which damages or harms the value of England's heritage. Such crimes include theft, criminal damage, arson and anti-social behaviour such as graffiti.

Common examples include thefts of artefacts as a result of illegal metal detecting, cannons being stolen from wreck sites and lead theft from buildings, which can cause untold and sometimes irreparable damage, to the great cost and loss of the community.

Useful guidance on protecting roofs from lead theft is available on

<https://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/lead-theft/lead-theft.htm>, but, if you see anything suspicious or out of place near a heritage site, please report it to Sussex Police online or, if deemed an emergency, by calling 999.



Loan Sharks

The England Illegal Money Lending team, which works alongside the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to investigate those operating within the consumer credit market without appropriate authorisation, has asked its partners to promote its "Stop Loan Sharks" campaign digitally. "Stop Loan Sharks" runs from 19th -25th May.

Last year, 49% of people who reached out for help also reported mental health struggles – the highest level recorded to date.

StreetSafe

If you know of any locations where you feel unsafe, Adur & Worthing Police have an online tool (StreetSafe) which can be accessed via the Sussex Police website (<https://orlo.uk/Ado6s>) where you can anonymously tell the Police about these places. You can use StreetSafe to pin areas on a map where you feel or have felt unsafe, even if a crime hasn't happened.

Home Security

When locked out of their homes, many people turn to search engines to find a local emergency locksmith. But companies that rank highly on search engines are usually paying for those positions, reflecting their marketing budget rather than their expertise – and, while they may advertise low prices to attract customers, they end up charging much higher fees later on.

The Master Locksmiths Association (MLA) has seen an alarming rise in consumers being overcharged by companies that appear at the top of search results. Last year it received over 350 complaints about misleading charges, a 20% increase from the previous year. And last month, 36 reports of rogue locksmiths overcharging for emergency callouts were submitted, representing a 50% increase from the same period in 2024.

To avoid being overcharged, the MLA offers these tips:

- Ask friends or family for recommendations or visit www.locksmiths.co.uk to find approved companies
- Save a few locksmith numbers in case your first choice is unavailable.
- Share your locksmith contacts with elderly relatives, children, or tenants

Safety Marshals

Night Safety Marshals are back on duty in Worthing on Friday and Saturday nights. They are highly trained, qualified in first aid and are able to escort those who need it to a place of safety. In addition, they are in direct contact with Sussex Police and can request support from them at all times.

Ben Copsey

We are sad to record the passing last month of Ben Copsey, who led the West Downs Neighbourhood Watch Search Team for three years until July 2004. Previously, he had served on the Search Team Steering Group, which led to the creation of the Search Team Committee and the underpinning of the Search Team's relationship with Sussex Police. Ben's funeral took place at Worthing Crematorium on Thursday 8th May.

Phishing

In this month's newsletter, Neighbourhood Watch highlighted the threat posed by "phishing", which is when criminals use scam emails, text messages or phone calls to trick their victims into disclosing sensitive information such as passwords or credit card details. This they do by convincing their contacts that their message originates from someone they know, or an organisation that they trust.

Variations on this scam include spear phishing, which targets specific individuals with personalised messages, and quishing, which uses QR codes to direct victims to fraudulent websites.

Millions of phishing emails are sent every day and the crooks use a variety of techniques to persuade you to share information, including:

- asking you to click on a link to a malicious web page which requires you to enter personal details
- asking you to open an attachment designed to install malware onto your computer
- using manipulative content to encourage you to click on a link or open an attachment, for example by asking for help or charitable support

Some common signs to look out for and help you identify a phishing communication include the following:

- poor grammar, punctuation and spelling
- no use of your name when addressing you but, rather, a reference to you as "friend", "valued customer" or "colleague"
- asking you to act urgently, for example to "send information within 24 hours" or "click here immediately"
- using an unusual sender name or an incorrect impersonation of someone you know
- Always remember the saying that "if it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is"

Never click on any links in a suspicious-looking email and remember to forward all suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk.

In this era of relentless cyber threats, investing in robust antivirus software is more crucial than ever. Leading brands like Norton, Avast (Neighbourhood Watch's partner), Bitdefender, McAfee, Panda and Avira offer advanced protection features that are essential for safeguarding against sophisticated phishing attacks. These tools provide real-time monitoring, threat detection, and automatic updates to combat the latest cyber threats, ensuring that both personal and professional data remain secure.

Street harassment

With 80% of women in the UK reporting harassment in public spaces and 75% of harassment victims saying that no one would intervene, there is an urgent need for bystander intervention training which empowers individuals to step in safely and support victims of public harassment.

Street harassment is defined as “any unwanted behaviour directed at someone by a stranger in a public space. This can include acts such as unwanted comments, whistling, leering, sexual and racist remarks, persistent requests for someone’s name or personal information, general intimidation, threats, stalking, indecent exposure along with more physical acts of violence such as groping and sexual assault.” In many ways, street harassment is an act that forces an individual into an unwanted interaction where they become defined primarily as a sexual object or are reminded of their vulnerability in public spaces.

Incidents of street harassment are not only about sexism. They can involve racism, classism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of structural oppression.

Being frequently objectified or subjected to harassment can place a huge toll on someone’s physical and mental wellbeing. In addition to triggering physical stress responses, frequent experiences of street harassment and a constant concern for one’s safety can lead to increased rates of anxiety, and what starts as verbal harassment can easily escalate to physical violence, sexual assault and even murder. A culture that fails to challenge street harassment is one that makes it possible for other forms of violence to take place.

Everyone should be able to enjoy the use of public spaces without having to place limitations on their freedom of movement or taking on the additional burden of adopting safety practices, and Neighbourhood Watch has therefore promoted the “Stand Up to Street Harassment” training programme, which is being delivered by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust and L’Oréal Paris. This globally approved free bystander intervention training empowers individuals to intervene safely when considered necessary.

You can sign up for this training at www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/

The advent of AI

From deepfakes to copycat websites to fake QR codes, fraudsters are always utilising the latest trends and technology to make their scams more convincing and target more people – and that will be made more possible than ever with the advent of AI.

It has resulted in images appearing in scams which come across as being persuasive and, whether scammers use media profiles peddling dodgy schemes, product listings on fake websites or dating apps, fake images created from AI will be more widely used to make scams impersonating people or products harder to detect, so bear in mind the following:

- Look for unnatural details – scan images for small details such as lighting, hair and hands that look odd, and look out for any blurry parts of the image.
- If the image looks too perfect, it might be created by AI.
- Use a reverse image search tool, such as Google or Tineye, to check if the image has been posted anywhere else on the internet. If not, this could be a sign that it’s created using AI, especially if it’s of a well-known person. You can reverse image search on Google by selecting the image icon on the right of the search bar.

Scammers can also use AI tools to clone your voice. They will then use it to call people you know, impersonating you and asking for money. Fraudsters can get hold of your voice through calls and clips on social media. Rules implemented by Ofcom in January prohibit overseas callers from spoofing UK mobile numbers, so instead they may resort to voice cloning to make their scam calls more persuasive. Thus:

- If you receive an unexpected distressed call from a friend or relative that sounds suspicious, verify that it’s actually them by contacting them using another trusted contact method.
- Make sure your social media profiles are private as fraudsters can record your voice from your video or audio content.
- Consider setting up a safe phrase with your family or close friends that you can use to verify if you’re speaking to them.

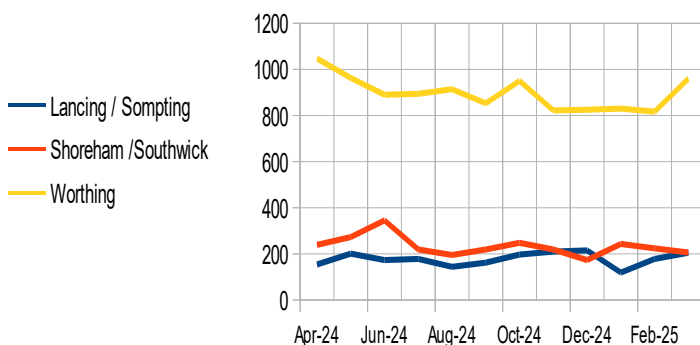
Crime Statistics for January 2025

January 2025	Churchill	Cokeham	Manor	Mash Barn	Peverel	Widewater	Sub Total
Anti-social behaviour	5	1	2	4	3	1	16
Bike Theft	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Burglary	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Criminal Damage	2	0	0	2	4	1	9
Drugs	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Other Crime	1	0	0	1	1	2	5
Other Theft	3	1	2	2	0	0	8
Weapons	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Public Order	3	2	1	5	1	5	17
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theft Shop	3	0	0	6	6	0	15
Theft Person	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicle Crime	2	0	1	1	1	2	7
Violence & Sex Offences	9	4	3	11	5	4	36
Totals	31	8	11	32	22	15	119

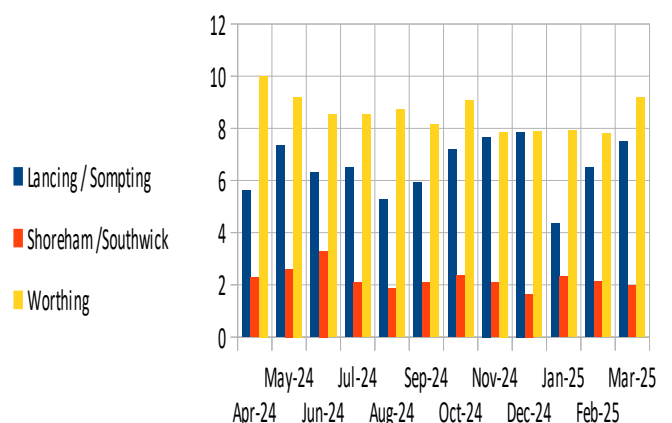
Crime Statistics for March 2025

March 2025	Churchill	Cokeham	Manor	Mash Barn	Peverel	Widewater	Sub Total
Antisocial Behaviour	14	3	5	5	2	4	33
Bike Theft	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Burglary	1	0	3	2	0	3	9
Criminal Damage	3	0	0	4	1	5	13
Drugs	3	0	1	1	0	0	5
Other Crime	0	0	6	2	1	4	13
Other Theft	2	1	5	5	1	2	16
Weapons	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Public Order	1	1	0	5	2	2	11
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theft Shop	8	0	0	26	9	2	45
Theft Person	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicle Crime	0	0	0	0	1	5	6
Violence & Sex Offences	13	5	1	19	7	7	52
Totals	45	10	22	69	25	34	205

Crimes April 2024 to March 2025



Crimes per 1000 of Population



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