



# Colin's Blog

19<sup>th</sup> May 2017

May is marching on, and we are now only ten days away from my 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday, which I will be celebrating with my wife and family.

The General Election is just around the corner, so who knows what good or

indeed bad news, that will be put before us in the aftermath!

One thing is certain. I have long held very strong forthright views, about Policing and law and order, and to date, they have never been listened to, or acted upon, so I don't expect much change there!

## **Volunteers Week 2017 1<sup>st</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

Over 21 million people volunteer in the UK at least once a year and this contributes an estimated £23.9bn to the UK economy. Behind these big numbers is a big contribution.

These 21 million people are a shining example of how we can all make a big difference to individuals and communities every day from improving the environment we live in, spending time with those who may otherwise be lonely and contributing to a range of other essential services and support. We believe such a big contribution is worth a big celebration!

Today we're sharing the news that we will be extending the Volunteers' Week celebrations this year and will be running the event from the 1-12 June.

'But that's not a week!', I hear some of you cry. And you're right. So, let me explain why we decided to extend the week this year.

### **More time to celebrate**

This year there are an additional five days enabling more people than ever to take part and more time to celebrate. Since the campaign started back in 1984 people have always been creative with how they've celebrated and some of you have already started extending the week, Gateshead's Volunteers' Month being a good example.

Events are always a big part of Volunteers' Week and last year over 750 events were posted on our Volunteers' Week map from recruitment fairs to award

ceremonies and tea parties! It was great to see lots of you making use of our new bunting to celebrate in style.

The end of Volunteers' Week will also coincide with the Patron's Lunch on 12 June, a celebration of Her Majesty the Queen's lifetime of service to more than 600 charities and organisations to which The Queen acts as a Patron, on the occasion of her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Communities across the UK will be encouraged to participate by holding their own street party or event. Why not consider including a street party to bring those together in your community.

We're hoping to see a vibrant mix of activities and celebrations across Volunteers' Week and replicating the celebration on the mall to demonstrate how communities can come together to celebrate those volunteers who give up their time in the service of others.

## ESSEX POLICE ACTIVE CITIZENS SCHEME



Active Citizens are volunteers in the community who help us to lower crime and the fear of crime by interacting with the public. They can get involved in a wide range of work to assist us:

- Help us run community days of action
- Patrol with local police officers and Police Community Support Officers
- Provide reassurance and crime prevention advice
- Assist with some administration tasks

Becoming an Active Citizen is a real opportunity to make a positive difference in your local area and get involved in supporting your local community. It is also an excellent way to gain experience of working with the public which can enhance employment opportunities or personal study.

We'll ask you to go out into your community at relatively short notice (normally a couple of days). Everyone has something to offer and we're especially keen if you have experience or skills that would be of benefit to the community. Speaking a foreign language or experiences in public sector working are two typical examples

This is a non-confrontational role and support will be given. Volunteers must be 18 or over and must have resided in the UK for at least the past 3 years. If you are interested, you can request which district you would like to volunteer in.

**How to apply:** If you or anyone who may be interested in joining their local Active Citizen team require more details please email: - **[active.citizen@essex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:active.citizen@essex.pnn.police.uk)**.

Many of my readers are longstanding members of Neighbourhood Watch, and I am sure, are well aware of the even greater need for more people to come forward to swell the members, so that together, we can make an even greater difference throughout Essex.



Why not choose this opportunity to become an ambassador for Neighbourhood Watch, by encouraging, your friends, neighbours, and if you are still working, even your work colleagues, to join us along the way! Anyone interested can contact me at: -

[colin@neighbourhoodmatters.org.uk](mailto:colin@neighbourhoodmatters.org.uk)



There are also many Rotary Clubs across Essex, seeking new members to help them to raise much needed funds for good causes. They offer great comradeship, and a chance to put 'Service above Self!' More details available:-

[colin@neighbourhoodmatters.org.uk](mailto:colin@neighbourhoodmatters.org.uk)

**CRIME STOPPERS** are also looking for volunteers, find out more by contacted them on their telephone number below:-



Having spent some 55 years working in, and or, alongside the voluntary sector, I experienced first-hand the value of volunteering, and the difference to outcomes that it makes. Think of each volunteer along the lines of a piece of jigsaw, it takes all the pieces to come together to complete the picture, and the satisfaction that is felt when the picture is created is often magnificent!

All of us have something to give, through using, or sharing, our knowledge and life skills, for the benefit of others!

I recall a song, which was also used to advertise a certain drink, the song starts of by singing: 'I'd like to teach the world to sing, in perfect harmony!' We, my father used to tell me that I was 'Tone deaf,' so I will refrain from giving a rendition, just in case he wasn't joking, however, imagine what a difference that you could make through using your skills to help other people to live and work in harmony, and to achieve their goals, or aims in life!

We all need to believe in ourselves and to be inspired, so that we, in turn, can inspire others!

It was my desire to help others, that inspired me to join the then, Essex Constabulary, as a Special Constable, way back in the 1960's, a role that I enjoyed for more than eight years, prior to joining up as a regular Police Officer, the rest is now also history!

## **City of London Police issue protection alert in wake of international ransomware cyber attack**

Following the ransomware cyber-attack on Friday 12 May which affected the NHS and is believed to have affected other organisations globally, the City of London Police's National Fraud Intelligence Bureau has issued an alert urging both individuals and businesses to follow protection advice immediately and in the coming days.

In order to protect the public and businesses from 'WCry' or 'WannaDecrypt0r' ransomware, the National Crime Agency (NCA) is working closely with a range of partners both in the UK and overseas. The NCA leads the UK law enforcement response to cyber threats and is investigating this incident with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC).

### **Key Protect messages for businesses to protect themselves from ransomware:**

- Install system and application updates on all devices as soon as they become available.
- Install anti-virus software on all devices and keep it updated.
- Create regular backups of your important files to a device that isn't left connected to your network as any malware infection could spread to that too.

### **The National Cyber Security Centre's latest technical guidance**

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/> includes specific software patches to use that will prevent uninfected computers on your network from becoming infected with the "WannaCry" ransomware.

Additional in-depth technical guidance on **how to protect your organisation from ransomware** is also available from the NCSC and on the **Microsoft website**.

The NCSC has also provided guidance and advice for **companies** and **individuals**.

### **Key Protect advice for individuals is essentially the same, with one additional point:**

- Install system and application updates on all devices as soon as they become available.
- Install anti-virus software on all devices and keep it updated.
- Create regular backups of your important files to a device (such as an external hard drive or memory stick) that isn't left connected to your computer as any malware infection could spread to that too.
- Only install apps from official app stores, such as Google's Play Store, or Apple's App Store as they offer better levels of protection than some third party stores. Jailbreaking, rooting, or disabling any of the default security features of your device will make it more susceptible to malware infections.

Criminals use opportunities like this to further defraud people using phishing and smishing tactics. We would therefore urge people to be cautious and wary when contacted by people who claim to be from the NHS in relation to the ransomware attack.

**The protect advice for phishing and smishing is as follows:**

- An email address can be spoofed. Don't open attachments or click on the links within any unsolicited emails you receive, and never respond to emails that ask for your personal or financial details.
- The sender's name and number in a text message can be spoofed, so even if the message appears to be from an organisation you know of, you should still exercise caution; particularly if the texts are asking you to click on a link or call a number.
- Don't disclose your personal or financial details during a cold call, and remember that the police and banks will never ring you and ask you to verify your PIN, withdraw your cash, or to transfer your money to another "safe" account.

**Any individuals or businesses who believe they have been a victim of the ransomware attack are urged to report to Action Fraud.**

[http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report\\_fraud](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud)

**ActionFraud**

Report Fraud & Internet Crime

**0300 123 2040**

A weight off my mind, but more weight on the body.

I have seemingly been out to lunch every day since my retirement, so whereas, I no longer have to worry about getting up and going out to work, however, I am now already concerned that my figure is changing. A good friend and colleague has recently lost over four stone in weight, so, I will be seeking his counselling!

Talking of weight, not just our NHS, but many organisations across the world were affected by the unprecedented Cyber-attack, which has added extra weight, and a big burden, to those who have been subjected to the disruption caused by this callous and crippling criminal act. Some people have been quick to criticise the NHS, probably the same ones who would equally criticise IT expenditure, by the cash strapped organisation, who, like many public sector organisations are sinking under the enormous pressures and demands, that they have to cope with on a daily basis.

Some sixty-six years ago, the NHS saved my life, and have treated me well ever since. I owe them a debt of gratitude, as do many millions of people across the UK.

We need to continue to pressure, which ever political party comes to power next month, to do the right thing, by ensuring the survival of our vital services, and to put money where their mouth is, because, as we all know, **actions speak louder than words!**

As you can tell, I will not be retiring quietly, and retirement gives me the opportunity to continue to try to make a difference to the things that really matter in our community!

## **NOW MORE ON MY 'BITTER LITTER CAMPAIGN!'**

There have been numerous media reports recently, about the unfair behaviour of council and other legal enforcement agencies, taking an aggressive rather than a common sense approach to dealing with those who drop litter. Here is the latest response from the Keep Britain Tidy campaign group: -



The public must think it's right to fine litterbugs press release  
16 May 2017

**Keep Britain Tidy** believes there should be a national standard for enforcement to ensure that the public continues to support the fining of those individuals who think it is OK to treat our country as a rubbish dump.

That is why we run the only accredited training academy for enforcement officers, ensuring they work to the highest standards.

Millions of people hate litter and earlier this year more than 300,000 individuals showed just how much they care about the issue by rolling up their sleeves, getting out there and cleaning up as part of the Great British Spring Clean.

As a country, we need a robust mechanism for enforcement. Littering is illegal and antisocial and if people flout the law they should expect to be punished.

We need the public at large to support councils' enforcement of the littering legislation and this is why enforcement by anyone, whether a local authority or a private enforcement company, must be seen to be reasonable and proportionate.

Poor enforcement damages the reputation of those of us who are working to create a cleaner environment because it loses public trust.

Keep Britain Tidy is adamant that all enforcement must be done in line with the Defra guidelines. This means that **Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) must not be issued for accidental littering – eg if something falls out of a pocket – and that the offender should be given the chance to pick up the litter before an FPN is issued.**

**Anyone carrying out enforcement must be appropriately and adequately trained.** Keep Britain Tidy runs the WAMITAB-accredited, five-day National Enforcement Academy that trains individuals who are responsible for enforcement. The course ensures all enforcement officers fully understand their role and obligations under the law.

To find out more about The National Enforcement Academy please contact us on **01942 612655** or email: **[network.enquiries@keepbritaintidy.org](mailto:network.enquiries@keepbritaintidy.org)**

**Colin's Footnote: -**

**Sadly, the good work of enforcement officers, who use 'common sense and discretion,' is often over-shadowed by a minority of over-zealous jobsworth's, who, in their quest for commission or bonus payments, allow this to cloud their judgement, and therefore, in my view, such incentives should be outlawed.**

**Upholding the law, must be carried out fairly, and not used as a way to extort money out of people, unless they wilfully break the law!**



## **LATEST FROM ACTION FRAUD**

Alert: We have fresh reports about this fake BT email that takes advantage of the global WannaCry ransomware attack:-

**Do not respond to this Scam Email!**



## Cyber Breaches

Dear BT Customer,

Due to security breaches on an international scale. BT have launched preventative measures in ensuring your customer data remains safe.

BT have been busy upgrading our security to keep your personal details safe. To do this in the most secure way possible, we have temporarily limited access to profile features that contain your sensitive data. To confirm your security upgrade and reestablish full access to your BT account please follow the link below

[Confirm security upgrade](#)

Deficiency to do so will result in limited access to your profile.

### Need more help?

Please don't reply to this email as we won't get your message. If you've got any questions, or for more ways to get in touch, go to [bt.com/help](https://bt.com/help)

Thanks for choosing BT.  
Libby Barr  
Managing Director, Customer Care

**ActionFraud**  
Report Fraud & Internet Crime  
**0300 123 2040**

[http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report\\_fraud](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud)



## **NEIGHBOURHOOD MATTERS**

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**THE ESSENCE OF COMMUNITY  
COHESION THROUGHOUT ESSEX**

**Epping Forest, Brentwood and Harlow Neighbourhood Watch**