

Colin's Blog

Friday 20th October 2017

'Food for thought!'



What are **you** cooking up for Halloween?

If you and or your children, are out and about, please respect the elderly and vulnerable, and those who do not wish to be disturbed.

Please remember my **safety advice** from last week!



Fireworks Displays 2017

Good advice from Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

The best way to stay safe on bonfire night is to go to a properly organised fireworks display rather than holding your own party at home. There are dozens of organised displays taking place across Essex and they are by far the safest way to enjoy fireworks.

Organised displays are bigger, better, cheaper and far safer than holding your own fireworks party.

These displays last longer and are far more impressive than anything seen at a back garden firework display. They also benefit a lot of good local charities and causes.

When something goes wrong at a firework party the situation can often escalate very quickly and burns from fireworks are some of the worst people can suffer.

Sparklers burn five times hotter than cooking oil, they should never be given to a child under five and should always be held in a gloved hand.

“Also no matter where you're going make sure all animals* are kept indoors and that young children are under constant adult supervision.”



*For further advice and information, copy and paste onto the address bar of your web browser, then download this leaflet: -

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/general/fireworks>

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Firework Code

Firework Top Ten Safety Code for Adults

Young people should watch and enjoy fireworks at a safe distance and follow the safety rules for using sparklers. Only adults should deal with firework displays and the lighting of fireworks. They should also take care of the safe disposal of fireworks once they have been used.

1. Plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable.
2. Keep fireworks in a closed box and use them one at a time.
3. Read and follow the instructions on each firework using a torch if necessary.
4. Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back.
5. Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks.
6. Never return to a firework once it has been lit.
7. Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them.
8. Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators.
9. Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire.

And finally, at number 10: **Make sure that the fire is out, and surroundings are made safe before leaving.**

The law says you must not set off or throw fireworks (including sparklers) in the street or other public places.

You must not set off fireworks between 11pm and 7am, except for:

- Bonfire Night, when the cut off is midnight
- New Year's Eve, Diwali and Chinese New Year, when the cut off is 1am

Check with your council to find out about any local rules for setting off fireworks.

Buying fireworks: -

You can only buy fireworks (including sparklers) from registered sellers for private use on these dates:

- 15 October to 10 November
- 26 to 31 December
- 3 days before Diwali and Chinese New Year

At other times you can only buy fireworks from licensed shops.

You can be fined up to £5,000 and imprisoned for up to 6 months for selling or using fireworks illegally. You could also get an on-the-spot fine of £90.

Over the years, I have seen many children and adults who have been injured and scarred through accidents involving fireworks. Follow the Firework code and **don't let it happen to you!**



Now let's talk about a different sort of 'BANGER,' yes, it's that time of the year again when I mention 'British Sausage Week,' well, this year it has been renamed as: **'UK SAUSAGE WEEK,'** and is running from the 30th October – 5th November. Why not use this theme and hold a fundraising 'Bangers and Mash evening,' in support of your local Neighbourhood Watch, or other charity? Or you could hold a 'Sausage Tasting event,' alongside 'Guess this sausage.' Another idea from the archives: **SOS event (Soup Or Sausages).**

A FACTOID FOUND AND CIRCULATED ON SOCIAL MEDIA: -

BANGERS AND MASH

A British staple, the 'mash' part of the name is easy to work out, but where do 'bangers' come from? The sausage, one of the oldest types of processed food in history, can be traced back to ancient times. British pork sausages have been mass produced since the 19th century.

The Victorians, sceptical of what was actually in a sausage and suspecting the presence of rather a lot of horsemeat, nicknamed them 'Little Bags of Mystery'.

After the outbreak of World War I, food shortages led to a dramatic reduction of meat, of any sort, in sausages. Instead, producers packed them out with scraps, cereal and water, which caused them to pop and hiss when cooked on shovels over open fires in the trenches of northern Europe — hence 'bangers'.



Do you remember Peter Sellers singing about Bangers and Mash? *"Give us a bash at the bangers and mash me muvver used to make!"*

AN ODE TO THE SAUSAGE



O, Sausage! Strange tube of unidentifiable meat,
To feast upon your spicy flesh is truly quite a treat;
Until, at last, you from savoury to distinctly churlish turn,
And in hurtful spite, revisit my affection with heartburn.

O, Sausage! In what strange configurations you are born!
Coils and curves define your divine, natural form;
Enriched with crumbs, mottled fat and lively greenish freckles:
The confetti of garden herbs with which your innards are bespeckled.

O, Sausage! How your love and misery lingered long with me;
But perhaps you were not the food with which I was meant to be.
Cruel and callous, you were naught but a scoundrel and a chivvy,
And that's why I left you, that fateful day, alone and in the privy!

Latest news via Action Fraud: -

National Cyber Security Centre: Equifax to contact 700,000 customers following breach

Equifax, the credit rating agency, suffered a cyber breach in May 2017 and on the 11th October 2017, they confirmed that a file containing 15.2m UK records dating from between 2011 and 2016 was attacked in this incident.

The majority of these compromised records may contain the name and date of birth of certain UK consumers, but Equifax have stated that they will contact by post the 693,665 customers who had sensitive data exposed.

Since being made aware of the incident, a wide range of relevant UK government departments and agencies have worked together to protect British citizens who may have been affected by this data breach. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), under the supervision of government ministers, has worked with the regulatory authorities, law enforcement and government partners to understand the impact to the UK and develop measures to support those affected and provide appropriate advice.

The UK's independent financial and information regulators have played an integral part in this process and will announce their conclusions and any further actions in due course.

On the 11th October, an NCSC spokesperson said: -

“Equifax today confirmed that a file containing 15.2m UK records was attacked. The company say this included 693,665 people who could have had their data exposed, including email addresses, passwords and phone numbers.

“It is always a company’s responsibility to identify UK victims and Equifax will contact by post the holders of those affected accounts.

“NCSC has published updated advice on its website, following today’s announcement. The guidance is tailored specifically to this incident and advises members of the public on password re-use, avoiding related phishing emails and fraudulent phone calls, as well as giving information of how to report a cyber incident to Action Fraud.”

Further information

- The NCSC advice and guidance can be seen on the NCSC website: - **<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk>**
It recommends that passwords are never re-used across important accounts and also setting up Two-Factor Authentication (also called Two-Step Verification) in the security settings
- The **Equifax statement** details that the data exposed in the 693,665 records includes Equifax membership details such as username, password, secret questions and answers and partial credit card details from 2014.



OTHER MONEY MATTERS

Don't forget to check your change and make sure that nobody tries to palm you off with an old One Pound Coin. To coin a phrase: '*You have been warned!*'

My blog can also be found at: <http://www.eppingforestnhw.org.uk/>

Have a great weekend! colin@neighbourhoodmatters.org.uk