



Colin's Blog

The Final Countdown

27th July 2017

What now, I hear you say. Don't panic at this point, I am merely referring to this being my last blog, before the end of 'Scam Awareness Month.'

Just because the campaign is coming to the end, it doesn't mean that scams will go away at the same time. Indeed more and more scams come to light every day, which emphasises the importance of everyone being alert and vigilant, every time they use technology in their daily lives.



Looking at the cartoon, hopefully none of us should ever think that Our computers are safe havens.

Do you know what is living or lurking, in yours?

Is it friends or foes?

Have you installed anti-virus software, and do you make sure that it is kept up-to-date?

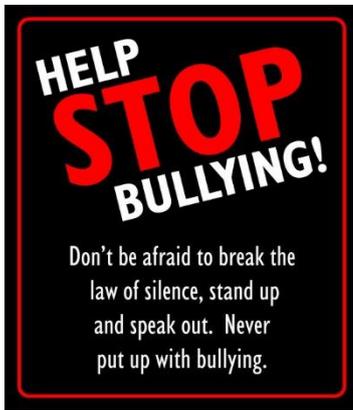
How often do you scan your computer for viruses and malware?



Many thousands of children are looking forward to changing schools and experiencing the new world of secondary education.

As year six primary school pupils, they are used to being the king pins, or some might say, the top dogs in their school. Many will be excited at the thought of going up to a new school, but some may be filled with fear or anxiety at the very thought.

After all, they will going into an environment, where they will be the youngest pupils in the school, and this prospect may be somewhat daunting to them.



Particularly when a child is of a nervous, or sensitive disposition, or may have already experienced the evils of bullying.

Having been seriously bullied for two years when I moved schools, way back in the 1960's, I am all too aware, of the harm that the thoughtless actions of others can do.

These days, children, cannot be disciplined in the same way, as I and my peers were. In some respects this is a good thing, but, children need boundaries, and need to know the consequences of crossing them. Recent history has proved, time and time again, that a namb-pamby approach does little or nothing to resolve issues.

So, in some ways, it makes it more difficult to deal with, those who abuse or threaten others, and to get them to tow the line, and behave.



To challenge some of today's current thinking, would indeed open up a can of worms, and it's not something that would I wish to pursue, in depth, through the auspices of my blog.

However, one worries about the rise of gang culture, and the carrying of knives and other weapons, that some schools have to deal with. I have no magic answers, and the police do not have sufficient resources, to deal effectively, with many of the problems that confront them today.



I urge anyone who wants to find out more about any, or all, forms of bullying, to go online to: <http://www.bullying.co.uk/>

Meanwhile, I take my hat off to all teachers, and other professionals, who face the challenge of dealing with bullying at school.



Neighbourhood Watch volunteers still have an “incredibly important role” to play in tackling new and emerging crime trends, says Home Office minister Sarah Newton MP.

The Minister for Vulnerability, Safeguarding and Countering Extremism opened the Neighbourhood Watch **Connect2Protect** conference in London earlier this month. She paid tribute to the impressive reach of the Neighbourhood Watch movement and called on members to find new ways of reaching out to tackle new, hidden crimes that cause so much misery and harm in our communities.

She thanked volunteers for their help in reducing traditional crimes such as burglary and car crime over the last three decades and asked them to now turn their attention to raising awareness of cybercrime, domestic violence, child sexual abuse, human trafficking and extremism.

This all makes good reading for those of us who are actively involved with Neighbour Watch, however, lest we forget, under David Cameron, the previous, coalition government, made great play on the introduction of the 'Big Society,' cutting around one hundred million pounds from existing voluntary sector budgets and at the same time, stopping the printing of many Neighbourhood Watch publications and even the NhW window stickers. Perhaps that's a prime example of: *'Always read the small print!'*

Politicians come, and Politicians go, some 'Make a Difference, some don't.' However, we in Neighbourhood Watch keep going regardless, in our constant aim towards improving the safety and well-being of our communities, as we work towards alongside our various voluntary and public sector partners, 'Community cohesion.'



Colin goes to London

Last weekend, My wife and I, together with my brother-in-law and sister-in-law. Spent the weekend in London, alongside thousands of foreign tourists, crocodiling their way around London, some in an orderly fashion, others obstructing pavements, or barging their way through, without a thought or indeed consideration for others, trying to make their way in the opposite direction!

I love the vibrancy of London, the wonders that you can behold around every corner of central London, the parks, the different architecture, and the challenges, of avoiding traffic, especially some cyclists who apparently think that they exempt from obeying the rules of the road, and who think that traffic lights at junctions, or at pedestrian crossing, should be ignored, or treated as disco lights, as they dance around, others who chose to obey the law!

At last, we arrived at our destination, and admired the splendours of the interior of the Shaftesbury Theatre, and sat down to watch the incredible 'MOTOWN MUSICAL,' a real feel good experience, with a historical element, reminded us of the appalling and unacceptable racial prejudice, that existed in America, during the early years of 'Motown.' It was a great show, which we enjoyed to the full, and applauded throughout. If you haven't already enjoyed the experience, but remember, and indeed still enjoy Motown music, I recommend that you go and enjoy the fantastic music.

True to the word of Lenny Henry, we enjoyed an excellent night in a Premier Inn, followed by a superb breakfast, then spent Sunday on our crusade to explore more

Here are the main types of Cyber Crime:-

HACKING

Gaining access to a system relating to your mobile phone, tablet, computer or other electronic device, in order to either prove that they can, or financial gain.

PHISHING

Which aims to trick internet users into clicking on links, or downloading attachments from malicious in an effort to infect your machine with malware, or to gain access to your device's system or data. The links often direct the user to a dodgy website, then ask them to enter their personal or financial details and information. Once your details have been accessed, the criminals may well try to sell them on to governments, private companies or other criminals.

RANSOMWARE (Remember the recent worldwide attacks?)

Is malicious software, specifically designed to infect a computer's system, encrypting files, and threatening to delete them, unless their payment demands are met, or displaying intimidating warnings, claiming that the machine is now infected with a virus, and requires payment to clean it.

ROMANCE FRAUD - Pulling at your Heart strings.

Another nasty one, which involves tricking someone into handing over money. This usually follows after they have met on a dating site or app, in the guise of being romantically interested.

Fraudsters, often spend a long time gaining the trust of their victims, before inventing fictional illnesses, for which they need medical treatment, or travel costs and other bills which need settling, in order for them to ask for money. Don't fall into the trap!



HARLOW COUNCIL – PROTECTING LOCAL RESIDENTS & THE ENVIRONMENT

Well done to Harlow Council, who were successful in obtaining a High Court injunction, extending the ban of travellers, other than those resident on their fixed sites, from entering and setting up camp until 2020. I witnessed first hand, the devastation, filth and intimidation that occurred across Harlow, prior to the first injunction being put in place. I am a great believer in being tolerant and accepting of people from all cultures, provided that they comply with the rules of the land, and that they do not abuse, the life, health and well-being of others, through a lack of respect and decency. The many acts of littering, flytipping and human faeces that they left behind, for others to clear up, showed that they had little or no respect for everyone else in the town.

I am happy to accept anyone who is law-abiding, from any culture, creed or gender, and from any country in the world, who is willing to abide by our way of life, and to conform to our basic principles or morals, but, should they abuse the privilege of living in our civilised society, then, in my view, they are not welcome, and should not be embraced, into our community, regardless of their background.

If you need a reminder as to the devastation that can follow, just a few weeks ago, travellers dumped forty tons of rubbish, leaving a 300 foot long trail of rubbish, outside a 13th century church in Laindon, Essex, including, the stripped out interior of a car, cabinets, broken crockery, mattress, and of course, human waste.

In the papers last Monday, was a horrific report of 250 tons of rubbish, left by travellers, after they were evicted from a field in Bickley, by Bromley Council. Perhaps, they should have been detained in custody, until they paid for the site to be cleared of their rubbish!

Enforcement action is one thing, but, it needs to be backed up by effective prosecution in the courts. Backed up with penalising sentences being passed by the judiciary, to ensure that offenders are made to pay for their crimes, or serve time, to reflect upon their actions!

An even worse national flytipping problem, is currently being tackled by multi-agency teams, who are trying to combat the ever increasing bulk dumping of commercial waste by criminal teams of unlicensed waste removers, sometimes resulting in the mass tipping of hundreds of tons of rubbish/ commercial waste.

DON'T RUBBISH ESSEX - 2017

I can hear you all saying: Now what!

Well, I feel that once again, especially, following on from the previous article, it is time that those of us who passionately care about the County in which we live and or work, to make a difference and stand up against the litter louts that try to blight our County and spoil the environment, through their thoughtless and irresponsible discarding of litter and the ever-increasing problem of fly tipping!

There are some members of our community, of all ages, who seem to think that it's alright to drop litter, because **'someone else will pick it up!'**

Others, who 'just don't give a damn,' as long as they can dispose of it, and many, who don't appreciate what harm that they are actually doing.

Our District Councils have environmental teams who carry out excellent work in helping to protect our local area. They are part of enforcing the laws by taking action in respect of anti-social behaviour, but perhaps it's time that those of us who belong to Neighbourhood Watch groups, Resident's Associations and other community groups get involved to help stop litter louts by educating and or reporting those responsible.

Anyone who 'deliberately' drops litter, from the smallest sweet wrapper, chewing gum, cigarette end, food wrapper, can, bottle, paper or other packaging, commits an offence. This often occurs within a short distance from a litter bin. Many discarded items could also be put into recycling bins or taken home to be recycled. **There really is no excuse!**



WARNING FROM OUR FRIENDS AT CHELMSFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL



We have received a report of tree surgeons working as Chelmsford Tree Services to be potential scammers. I must advise this company must not to be confused with Noel Creighton of Chelmsford Tree Services.

The victim was a gentleman in his 80s. The leaflet was posted through his door and he arranged for the company to work at his property. Upon completion of the job, the company took back the leaflet and demanded cash payment. An individual accompanied the gentleman to the bank to oversee a withdrawal of £1600, and fortunately the bank refused the transaction.

Naturally, the victim and his family are very distressed, and they will be contacting the police. The actual Chelmsford Tree Services are deeply concerned their name

is being used by the perpetrators to commit such scams.

The victims daughter has managed to find a leaflet and this is attached for your information.

TRIBUNAL FEES SCRAPPED

I have been concerned of the blatantly unfair and unjust charging for victims to take employers to court, since fees were imposed a few years back. Especially where it

is apparent that employers have unfairly discriminated against, or bullied employees. Organisations, companies and individuals, across all three sectors, need to be brought to account, when injustices occur, and the imposition of fees, effectively, barred many people from seeking compensation or redress for what they suffered.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Perhaps it's also time to address another issue, whereby many people who suffer from domestic abuse issues, can no longer get legal aid, especially when we have read recently about the number of convicted prisoners, who seem to receive legal aid to take on the authorities.

Meanwhile many people who suffer from domestic abuse, have to try to find funds and support, to take the culprits to court, especially, when they have been left by a partner, who fails to meet their legal obligations in respect of his or her children.

This is a serious area, which seems to be ignored by those who are responsible for the public's right to have free or affordable access to representation, in order to protect their families from those who flout the law, and ignore their responsibilities.

Perhaps, when we eventually, have less financial and legal obligations under the umbrella of Europe, we can spend more time and money, protecting the rights of our own citizens, through our own judicial system? Mind you, I won't hold my breath!

PRESS RELEASE: First PCC to take on governance of a fire and rescue service



Essex Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Roger Hirst's proposal to take on responsibility for Essex Fire and Rescue service has been approved by the Home Secretary, it was announced today (Tuesday, 25 July) marking an important step in the government's drive to see police and fire collaborate further and faster to benefit their local communities.

Mr Hirst's proposal was submitted following a public consultation and endorsement from all three top tier local authorities in the area. He is now set to become the first Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in October 2017.

Through the Policing and Crime Act 2017, the government has introduced a range of measures to drive greater collaboration between emergency services, enabling services to share best practice and become more efficient and effective. This includes enabling PCCs to take on governance of fire and rescue services where a local case is made.

Since coming into post in 2012, PCCs have brought clear local transparency and accountability to police forces and their performance, as well as ensuring communities have a stronger voice in local policing. PCCs will be able to bring this same level of accountability to fire and rescue services which will help the continuous improvement of the service.

It will also help to encourage greater collaboration between police and fire services in Essex, including the sharing of back office functions and premises. This will enable the two services to work more effectively together to protect the public and secure best value for money. The important distinction between operational policing and fire-fighting will still be maintained.

Speaking at Essex Fire and Rescue headquarters today, the Minister for Policing and Fire Nick Hurd said:

It's great to see Essex taking the lead in this field and bringing forward a proposal which has support from local authorities across the county and from many of the public.

I want to see our emergency services continue to drive closer collaboration to encourage joint working, the sharing of best practice and more innovative thinking.

Having a directly accountable leader overseeing policing and fire will help both services enhance their effectiveness, maximise available resources, boost local resilience and improve the services delivered to the public. I'm really looking forward to seeing the benefits this will bring to the local area.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex, Roger Hirst, said:

The people of Essex deserve to have the best possible emergency services. By bringing together the governance of the Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service we can support closer working and make investment decisions that will bring even bigger benefits in the future.

By ensuring a more joined-up response to incidents, providing crime and fire prevention advice, creating community safety hubs, and sharing buildings we can improve how we work and generate significant savings which can then be reinvested back into front line services.

Essex has always been an innovative and forward thinking county as shown by the support we have received for this proposal. Together we can do more to improve the service we give to the public and help keep people safe.

A number of other PCCs are currently developing business cases or exploring options for the future governance of fire and rescue services.

In 2016/17, the Home Office awarded £1 million from the Police Transformation Fund to nine PCCs for their work in developing business cases to take on the additional responsibility for the governance of fire and rescue in their area.



WORLD FRIENDSHIP DAY Sunday 30th July Can someone please tell those poor victims caught up in conflicts across the world?

Initially created by the greeting card industry, evidence from social networking sites shows a revival of interest in the holiday that may have grown with the spread of the Internet, particularly in India, Bangladesh, and Malaysia. Digital communication modes such as the Internet and mobile phones may be helping to popularize the custom, since greeting friends *en masse* is now easier than before. Those who promote the holiday in South Asia attribute the tradition of dedicating a day in honour of friends to have originated in the U.S. in 1935, but it actually dates from 1919. The exchange of Friendship Day gifts like flowers, cards and wrist bands is a popular tradition of this occasion.

Friendship Day celebrations occur on different dates in different countries. The first World Friendship Day was proposed for 30 July in 1958, by the World Friendship Crusade. On 27 April 2011 the General Assembly of the United Nations declared 30 July as official International Friendship Day. However, some countries, including India, celebrate Friendship Day on the first Sunday of August.

Sunday 30th July is also the day that I am proud to say, that my son is taking part in a 100 mile cycle ride across London and the home counties, to raise money for Diabetes UK.

BURGLARY HOTSPOTS

Paul Harris is now in post as the new Essex Watch Liaison Officer, covering Epping Forest, Brentwood, Harlow and Uttlesford, and has now taken over responsibility for sending out the Burglary Hotspots information.

I will continue to write and distribute my blog, under the auspices of Neighbourhood Watch, and in my capacity of the NhW database controller for Epping Forest, Brentwood and Harlow, and as a committee member in each of those districts, and a trustee of Essex County NhW, and member of the Board of Advisors for London Community Watch. Colin I. Freeman MITOL

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