



# Somers Neighbourhood Watch

*Let's watch out for each other*

Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Inc . A0018739R

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## LOCAL CONTACTS

Area Coordinator: Christine Malbon: 0402 424 632

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Next meeting- Date to be advised

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## Somers Neighbourhood Watch – has changed.

At the 2021 November AGM, Denise Kempster retired after 15 years as Coordinator/Newsletter Editor. Also retiring were Assistant Coordinator Sue Mansie and Secretary/Treasurer Ron Kempster. We were however delighted to welcome Christine Malbon as the new Coordinator.

Although the new structure is yet to be finalised the SRA has agreed to provide ongoing support for office bearer positions. This cooperation between community groups is a wonderful outcome and a great way to keep Somers Neighbourhood Watch alive, as without this support Somers NHW would have ceased.

There is not a lot of crime in Somers, but opportunistic thefts are fairly common and alerting residents is important. You may remember that NHW did prove valuable in uniting the community and assisting police to identify offenders during an unusual crime wave a few years ago.

Sincere thanks to the regular meeting attendees for their support of NHW over many years, and a special mention to Ron Kempster & Dave Pullin for their work on the House Number project. This initiative has been strongly welcomed by the emergency services and it will continue, so please use the NHW/SRA drop box to order your house number.

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## CRIME IN SOMERS



***Do you know that you can borrow an engraver from NHW?***  
*One way of assisting the return of a stolen item is to clearly identify your ownership using your driving licence number.*

Due to ongoing Covid restrictions, local crime statistics as we have known them, have not been available and it is uncertain if/when this will change. NHW will however keep in touch with our police liaison officer and keep you as informed as we can.

Those who attended the NHW AGM in November enjoyed a very interesting time with our police representative SC Andrew Ellams, who along with answering many questions demonstrated & explained all the equipment the police now wear, irrespective of the weather. Certainly not comfortable when it is hot!

Although we do not have specific statistics, SC Ellams mentioned that **bicycles are still very much a target for thieves**. As most of the crime in Somers is opportunistic, riders are encouraged to chain / lock their bike, when unattended, to a solid object or join several bikes together and always store them in a secure place at home.

Crime prevention and insurance agencies, national peak bodies and other organisations recommend that you **store your keys out of sight and always keep your home locked (even while at home)**.



VICTORIA POLICE

## Four easy steps to protect your bicycle

### Did you know?

- Bicycle thefts are increasing in Victoria.
- Bicycles are being stolen from homes, workplaces, residential streets and community locations.
- Police are still seeing bicycles left without any locks or security measures in place.
- Bicycle accessories vulnerable to theft including mounted digital cameras, are being left on bicycles.

*Locating owners of bicycles that have been found or seized by police is often difficult.*

Few people are aware of their bicycle's identifying features, so returning bikes to their rightful owners can be very difficult.

The aim of this brochure is to educate you on how to best prevent your bicycle from being stolen and how to record identifiable features about your bike.



#### 1. Use a good quality lock

The best lock to keep your bicycle safe is a D lock. The D Lock (also known as a U lock) is a solid, curved metal lock that generally provides a higher level of security and deterrence than cable or chain locks. D locks are heavier than other locks and cannot be used to lock bicycles to larger objects such as power poles or trees.

#### 2. Locking your bicycle properly

There are several important steps to take when locking your bicycle. It is important to ensure you:

- Use bicycle parking infrastructure & facilities where possible
- Remember to check your bicycle can't be removed or lifted off/over what you have locked it to
- Park in well lit, public areas where possible
- Lock the frame and wheels to the parking infrastructure by using one or more locks, especially if your wheels have quick release mechanisms.
- Also remember to remove items of equipment that could be easily stolen including lights, computers, panniers and pumps.
- When parking your bicycle at home, make sure it is securely locked and out of sight.

#### 3. Making your bicycle identifiable

If your bicycle is lost or stolen, the chances of it being returned are improved if:

- Your driver's licence number is engraved on the frame, and
- You keep a record of your bicycle details and a photograph of your bicycle.

##### Engrave your driver's licence number

- Engrave the letter 'V' (for Victoria) followed by your driver's licence number on the frame.
- If stolen and recovered police are able to return your bicycle using your licence details.
- People who do not have a licence can use the licence of a relative or a friend with their permission.

##### Record your bicycle's serial number

A bicycle's serial number is usually located on the frame near the pedals.

##### Take a photograph of your bicycle

This will allow you to give an accurate description and assist police & yourself to identify your bicycle when it is recovered.

#### 4. Insuring your bicycle

Bicycles can be insured against theft & damage through your home &/or contents insurance policy. Ask your insurance company for details.

[police.vic.gov.au](http://police.vic.gov.au)

## Where Should I Keep My Car Keys? Courtesy: NHW Victoria E-News (slightly reduced)

Around 70% of post 2001 cars are stolen using their own keys. The question now is whether people should be hiding their keys. The days of "hot-wiring" a car to steal it are largely gone. Modern car electronics mean thieves need the actual keys to steal a car. As a result, they are having to change their modus- operandi. Thieves are now stealing car keys during residential burglaries, to allow them to take the vehicles — a relatively new phenomenon referred to as "car key burglaries".

### Keeping keys out of sight can stop your car being stolen.

Keeping your keys out of sight, so they are not on display in your home, visible from outside through windows and doors or left in easy-to-access locations, can help stop your keys and, consequently your car, being stolen. Some people are concerned hiding their keys will encourage a criminal to come further into your house or attack you. This is very unlikely to be the case. Opportunistic offenders try to avoid detection and confrontation and there is no evidence to conclude that hiding the keys will change their behaviour and encourage confrontation.

### Confrontations during burglaries are low

The frequency of confrontations during conventional burglaries is low, and the frequency of confrontations during "car key" burglaries is likely to be lower because of a limited search radius and less time spent in the home.

Contemporary academic research suggests that:

- People hiding their keys at home is unlikely to have negative consequences;
- There is little risk that hiding keys will do more harm than good;
- That those who commit car key burglaries are car thieves and do not have a propensity for violence.

To reduce the risk of harm -if you are confronted, police encourage you to comply with demands.

**For Emergency – Call 000 or Mobile 112 (no pin numbers required)**

**For the police but not the sirens - Phone 131 444**

Thank you to Galaxy Printers, Hastings, for the copying & folding of this newsletter