

Report to the Meeting of Melton Parish Council, 8th November 2006

Please accept my apologies for being unable to attend the meeting. Because of staffing problems at Woodbridge police station I am currently having to supplement patrol strength and this is affecting my ability to perform community duties.

Since my last report in July there have been 56 crimes recorded in Melton, which is about average for the parish. The figures over the summer were quite high but have now dropped off again. The summer increase is normal and is due to the school holidays and warmer weather. Details are as follows, but please bear in mind that figures can change if new information comes to light.

Burglary- Dwelling:	1
Burglary-Other Building:	6
Assault (minor):	2
Threats:	1
Theft of Motor Vehicle:	0
Theft from Motor Vehicle:	2
Theft-Other:	18
Fraud:	2
Criminal damage:	13
Drugs (minor possession):	3
Other:	8

As you will see there has only been one dwelling burglary and thanks to a call from an alert member of the public, officers were quickly on the scene and the offender arrested. He was subsequently charged with the offence. The other burglaries were mainly at commercial premises. The main problems continue to be theft and criminal damage, although all of the above offences were minor in nature. They were mostly random and the only matter of note was a series of 8 thefts of pedal cycles that occurred in the summer. This was part of a wider problem in the sector and is receiving particular police attention. As well as trying to identify the offenders the Constabulary is also trying to educate owners about locking their cycles.

The clerk has informed me that at the September meeting councillors expressed concerns about the use of the police helicopter in the Wilford Bridge area. I have asked our air operations branch to check their records for the last 6 months and they have not attended any incidents in that area or anywhere else in Melton. The nearest was a single occasion on 2/7/06 when they were monitoring a "rave" that was taking place in the forest at Sutton Heath. They have asked me to inform you that they never carry out training exercises at low altitude over populated areas and if the helicopter is used in that way it will be necessary for an operational reason.

I also understand from the clerk that the council is considering a ban on drinking alcohol in public, as exists in parts of Woodbridge. An application for such a zone would be dealt with by the district council and they would have to be satisfied that one was necessary. There has to be strong evidence of anti social behaviour linked to alcohol in a particular area, before such an application would succeed. Most of Melton is thankfully free of that kind of problem and I believe an application for a blanket ban in the parish would not be accepted. The only exception is the playing field where there have been some problems with people gathering and drinking. If the council wish to proceed with this you would need to contact SCDC who would advise on the way forward.

PC Mark Thompson