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NEWSLETTER #7 JULY 2017

Welcome

Summer is upon us and as we suffer or bask in the recent soaring temperatures we must turn our thoughts to the people who have been affected by the recent tragic events over the months since our last newsletter.

Our 'topsy-turvy' world continues spinning and we have seen an election come and go. The proposed probate fee increase was not implemented due to the calling of the general election on 8 June but with a new government in place there is no guarantee that this will not be 'kick-started'. Please be sure we will keep you updated if anything further is heard.

On a lighter note though despite not being successful in the America's Cup this year we have been thrilled by the British and Lions tour of New Zealand, Brits making headway like never before in Wimbledon and the women's England team winning the Australia World Cup – and it's only July!

Julie

Cupcake Day for Alzheimers

Well, sadly the cupcakes made by our own fair hands didn't last long enough to take any photos of, but on the upside we made an amazing £41.00 for such a great cause.

Well done everyone!



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7. football
8. 1234
9. 1234567
10. baseball

So we need to get creative with our passwords – as well as finding a nice secure hiding place for that record book!

Julie

Sources: *The Guardian & SplashData*

How to create the perfect password

I am always searching for that perfect password but like many people I am sure my first problem is what to use to ensure that my accounts remain secure. The second of course is remembering them.

A recent article in the Guardian gave some really useful tips in how to easily protect yourself:-

1. Check your existing password – don't use a single word as the main password. Apparently 'dictionary attacks' run through every word in a language at lightning speed and these are the first to be broken in an attack. Words with an upper case letter and even adding numbers can help but it is said that by doing this it will only take the hackers a bit longer to crack.
2. Make it long – a password of a minimum of 12-14 characters could take 811 trillion guesses to crack, whereas 8 digits can be cracked in a matter of hours.
3. Set a passphrase not a password – perhaps think of a line from your favorite film or song but adapt to be more personal to you. The example given is 'Nellietheelephantpackedhertrunk' but replace Nellie to a memorable name that is personal to you.
4. Versions of the same password on multiple sites – sticking with good old Nellie perhaps amend to 'Amazontheelephant' or 'Lloyds'.
5. Insert 'special' characters – perhaps #maZ0ntheelephan!
6. One fine idea is to make up your own word: not surpercalifragilisticexpealidocious – even if it's spelt wrong – then no amount of hacking searching will 'get it'.
7. Write it down on paper – now you wouldn't think of this being in the top tip list but as the Guardian very cleverly observes it is safer to write a long password down and secure it in a locked drawer at home than storing it on your computer, even perhaps in password manager software which are targets as much as us for cyber-attacks.

Finally the top ten worst passwords:

1. 123456
2. password
3. 12345678
4. qwerty
5. 12345
6. 123456789

Going for gold in 2017



No, you are right it isn't Olympic year but after last year's success in the Guildford in Bloom competition we have got the bug and once again have put in our application. This time we are pinning our hopes for success in the Best Garden for Wildlife category.

If you have been following our Facebook posts you will already have seen the new additions to our courtyard including a bug hotel, bird feeders, bird houses (see 'shed heaven' article below) and wonderful buddleias to encourage those butterflies over the summer. Well done Jennifer for all your hard work!

Judging will take place between 3 – 21 July so fingers crossed and we'll keep you posted.

Julie

Did you know...

Surrey County Council funds a Sensory Service's mobile bus timetable? The Sight for Surrey's hearing and sight mobile bus is funded by the council and regularly visits shopping centres, care homes and clubs for the elderly. Interestingly the service is said to be available in rural areas often overlooked by public transport.

For further information you can contact the charity on:

www.sightforsurrey.org.uk/combined-sight-hearing-loss/hearing-sight-bus-calendar

Voice Line for Deaf/Hard of Hearing: 01372 869961

SMS: 07860 026269

Tel: 01372 377701

Fax: 01372 353500

Minicom: 01372 361517

Email: info@sensoryservices.org.uk



Shed heaven

The thought of being encouraged by one's spouse into a shed may be the thing of some men's (and women's) dreams but to actually be told that this may have a really positive impact on health and mood can only be a good thing surely? In fact an article on the health benefits of 'shedding' has also appeared in the British Medical Journal. Even Jennifer has had her own domain built – see above.

The BBC recently reported this finding in an article focusing on a project called 'Men's Sheds' in Scotland. But how many of us actually knew that this was already on our doorstep with Age UK's 'Men in Sheds' project which has been up and running for quite some time.

Well, I can report that we did know and we are lucky enough to have added two bird houses made by these elusive men in their shed, which now adorn our office walls.

The Age UK project was set up as part of a 2-year pilot between 2010 and 2012 and was funded by the Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust and since then has expanded nationwide.

The 'shedders' also have a shop which offers their products for sale. Various items are available for sale such as bird tables, bird boxes, solid oak clocks and planters.

The shed is open to anyone who wants to exercise their woodworking skills and have a tea and chat with likeminded carpenters.

The branch most local to us is Ash and further information is available from Age UK Surrey by telephone on 01483 503414 or by emailing enquiries@ageuksurrey.org.uk.

Julie

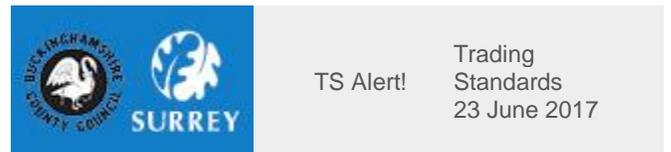
I am sure we have all watched many a programme where there is a meeting held to read the will after someone has died, creating a dramatic scene as the wicked nephew or butler takes all. I am yet to have any such meeting with relatives. I must admit I quite like the idea of all the family, the housekeeper, the gardener, the mistress and the cat all turning up for the reading of the will just to announce that everything has been left to the dogs' home but in the majority of cases it would not be particularly interesting to have a meeting to confirm everything is left to the surviving spouse. In addition we try to keep our wills as simple as possible so on reading a copy you should know who gets what.

Although I don't deal with criminal matters there must be many a time things are not correctly represented on the television. Obviously these programmes are made to add drama and suspense and keep us all guessing as to what is going to happen next but please be assured that generally court cases are not that exciting and do not end up in shouting matches.

The point of all this is to remember that what you see on the television is not always true to life and just because it worked that way on the latest episode of a soap it doesn't mean that's how the legal system works. If you need to get something dealt with take the appropriate independent up to date legal advice. I'm pretty sure that after watching an episode of Casualty you wouldn't decide to self-diagnose and medicate and it should be the same for legal matters. We have to train to do this work for a number of years and continue to learn and develop our knowledge as we go so take advantage of that knowledge and take appropriate legal advice when you need it.

Joanne

An extract from the latest Trading Standards alert – please pass on:



Who are Nottingham Knockers?

Please warn your neighbours, particularly elderly or vulnerable neighbours, not to open the door to strangers or buy or sell on the doorstep. Some doorstep callers may offer poor quality goods at inflated prices and if a caller is not genuine, they may be gathering information for future crime.

Please keep in mind that if cold callers don't get any sales in your area, they are less likely to return.

How they work:

The sellers may say that they are on a "rehabilitation course" arranged by probation services or other organisations trying to find people work. This is not the case and often they are known criminals. Probation services do not run such schemes.



Artistic license?

Pretty much all of us at the office enjoy watching a good bit of drama on the telly whether it be the latest adaptation of a book or a crime series to keep us gripped each week or even the odd trashy soap storyline. I always pay particular attention to the legal matters being shown and the lawyers themselves. In an episode of Call the Midwife I noted it was not just the medical side of things that have drastically changed with the introduction of the NHS but also the way family breakdowns and custody of children have changed with more rights for parents.

They may show a card which claims to be a “Pedlars Licence” or work permit. The following is an example of one that has been frequently seized by the police. This is not valid and they are breaking the law if they are using anything like this.



They may also hand over a card saying they are deaf or dumb.

According to the police, the bag of household products is supplied by someone who employs them (originally a man from Nottingham – hence the name), but now they are recruited from anywhere.

The lads are supplied with a full bag of household products (including the typical tea-towels!) and charged a minimal sum for the contents – it used to be £35. They can keep whatever they make, above this amount.

Usually they are deposited in an area from a transit van and given a list of streets to work. An hour or so later they are picked up and dropped off in another location. They often work from 9am to 9pm.

They will knock on a door, offering cleaning items which they know are cheap and of very poor quality; the householder also knows they are rubbish but that is part of the scam. Many people will purchase items and pay them something, just to get rid of them. There have been cases of elderly residents handing over large sums as these lads can be very persistent and confrontational.

The price for whatever has been purchased usually comes to a note – usually £10. The householder disappears to get this – this is when the scam begins, according to the police. When the note is handed over, the lad examines the condition and how long it took the person to get it. If it is crumpled, they accept it and move on. If it is crisp flat and new – they are much more interested and may engage the person in more conversation, to obtain details about them. As they leave they will smell the note. If it is slightly musty – this is an indication that there is more in the property. Those addresses are noted. The addresses of elderly/ vulnerable/gullible people are also noted.

These are handed to the employer and there is a small amount of cash handed over for each one.

These addresses are then sold on. If there is a later break-in, the employer expects a further cut of the proceeds.

These lists are purchased by all sorts of people including – tarmacers, tree workers, roofers, dodgy builders etc., and can be shared quite easily. Once on a list, your address could be sold on and on. Hence the repeat nature of these persistent callers.

(Source: Surrey CC TS Alert! 23 June 2017)

Chatterbox Cards

Have you heard of such a thing? Well we hadn't until a couple of our colleagues did an online training course and found out about these amazing aids.

The company was set up in 2008 after the founder had spent 10 years looking after her own mother who had lived with Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia.

The best way to explain them is from information provided on their own website <http://www.manyhappyreturns.org>

'The Many Happy Returns 1940s and 1950s CHATTERBOX cards are designed to be used by younger people (anyone under 65 years old) with those over 65 years old.

The 26 card subjects in each box are the result of qualitative research with over 160 people between the ages of 65 and 99 years old.

We asked, "What do you like to talk about?"

They told us that it was everyday subjects, going to school and mucking about, like toys and travel, music and movies, holidays and home life, hairdos – and hair-don'ts, like mucking about – and making out!

The cards make it easy to enjoy fascinating and fun conversations about people's life experiences from the time that holds some of their most vibrant and enduring memories – their 'reminiscence bump' years.

We also considered the design carefully. The cards are A5 size, providing large iconic images on the front and on the back, enough background information and a few conversation triggers to help get conversation going with a swing.

The cards have soft corners to make them comfortable to use and are varnished so that they can be wiped clean of any small spillages. The box has a shallow platform to make it easy to remove the cards and a slip case like a matchbox to keep the cards safe, the back of which shows thumbnail images of all the subjects that people chose

CHATTERBOX cards work by creating opportunities for people to enjoy each other's company across the generations, by encouraging interaction, communication and connection, for everyone's pleasure and benefit.

What a fabulous idea and yet so simple.

Julie

STOP PRESS - date for the diary:

We will be holding a cake sale in our courtyard on Tuesday 29 August from 11am until stocks last!

This time in aid of Age UK Surrey and if you are in the area please pop by and support a very worthwhile local charity.