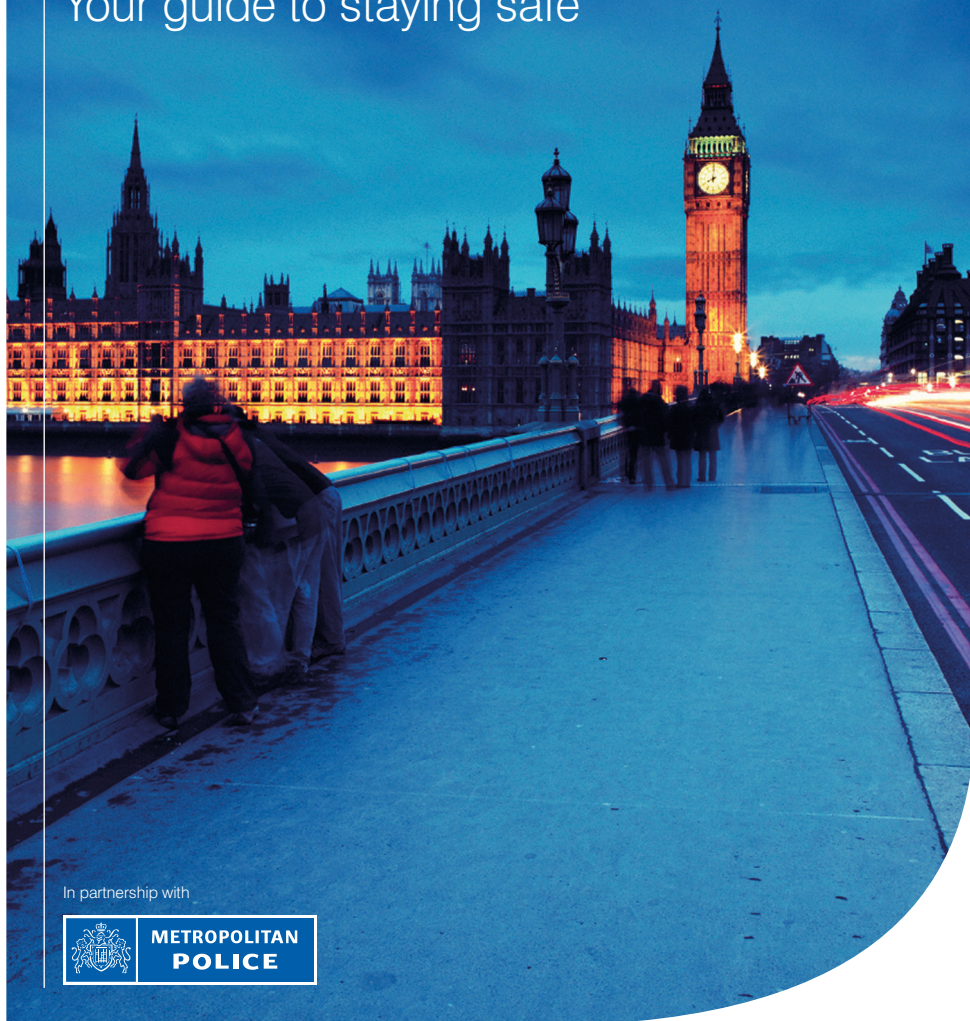




# Safer Westminster

Your guide to staying safe



In partnership with



**METROPOLITAN  
POLICE**

## **Westminster City Council**

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@CityWestminster  
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**City of Westminster**



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## Foreword

Keeping residents, visitors and workers feeling safe is one of the council's main priorities. This is why it's vital we continue to work closely with our partners in the Metropolitan Police to keep crime down, tackle anti-social behaviour and support victims.

In October 2014 we saw the first overhaul of anti-social behaviour legislation in 15 years. The new laws are simpler and provide power to the council, police, housing associations and, most importantly, victims themselves.

As part of these changes, if you feel you have been a victim of repeated anti-social behaviour and the situation has not improved, you can now request a review of your case if you have made three or more complaints in the last six months.

Victims of anti-social behaviour can now also agree a non-financial out-of-court settlement rather than going to court or pressing charges.

Over the coming year we will continue to work closely with the police and explore new ways to help you stay safe and enjoy the city you live in.



**Councillor Nickie Aiken**  
Cabinet Member for  
Public Protection

## Useful numbers

### Crimestoppers

Contact Crimestoppers to report a crime anonymously: **0800 555 111**

### Domestic abuse support

ADVANCE (women only support):  
**020 8960 7016**

Broken Rainbow (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender support):  
**0800 999 5428**

Men's Advice Line (men only support):  
**0808 801 0327**

National Domestic Violence Helpline:  
**0808 200 0247**

### Environmental Action Line

Report any environmental related anti-social behaviour such as rubbish dumping or fly-tipping: **020 7641 2000**

### Neighbourhood Watch

Find out if there's a Neighbourhood Watch in your area, or set up your own:  
**020 7641 2117** or **ourwatch.org.uk**

### Police

For non-emergency calls, or if you would like to speak to your local police, call **101**. In an emergency always dial **999**.

### Safer Neighbourhood Teams

Safer Neighbourhood Teams are police teams that work with residents to tackle local problems. Find your local Safer Neighbourhood Team at **met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods**

### Victim Support

Advice and support if you've been a victim of crime: **0808 1689 111**



### Tell us your views on local policing

The Westminster Safer Neighbourhood Board was set up in 2014 to give residents a greater voice in the policing of their area.

What do you think the priorities of the police in your area should be?



Email **snb@westminster.gov.uk**



## Protect yourself from scams

Every year people lose millions of pounds to scammers. Scams target people of all backgrounds, ages and income levels, but you can protect yourself by learning more about some of the new tactics being used.

In the last three months of 2014 almost 1,300 people reported being targeted by the 'courier scam'. Victims lose on average £4,000 each and the average age of people targeted is 70.


The scam involves a phone call from someone claiming to be from your bank or the police, saying someone has accessed your bank account. You are then asked to call your bank immediately. Although you'll hear a dial tone, your phone will still be connected to the scammers when you dial your bank's number and they will ask you to key in your PIN. A courier or taxi then comes round to pick up your card.

Marie\*, 90, from Queen's Park, was warned about the courier scam by Westminster Trading Standards and was able to spot the signs.

She says: "I was called by someone claiming to be the police saying my bank account had been used. They kept asking for my bank details and how much money I had in my account. I didn't tell them anything but it was really unnerving and it shook me up. It's so important to be aware of these new scams."

\* Name has been changed.



 If you receive one of these calls **end it immediately and wait at least five minutes before making any calls** as the scammers may be blocking your phone line. Report the incident to Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040** or visit **actionfraud.police.uk**. In an emergency always dial **999**.

### Remember:

- ▶ your bank and the police will never ask for your PIN
- ▶ your bank will never send a courier to your home to collect your bank card.

### Stay on top of new scams

NatWest Bank, in partnership with the Metropolitan Police, has produced the 'Little Book of Big Scams' with simple steps to avoid being conned out of your money. Visit your local NatWest to pick up a copy or visit **westminster.gov.uk/scams**

## Report anti-social behaviour

If you see something in your area which concerns you – from threatening behaviour to rubbish dumping – report it. Don't assume someone has already told us about it.

### Step one

Keep a record of the incident. Writing down the times, dates and vehicle registrations can help, especially if there could be CCTV footage. Photographs can also help when we are gathering evidence, but never put yourself at risk.

### Step two

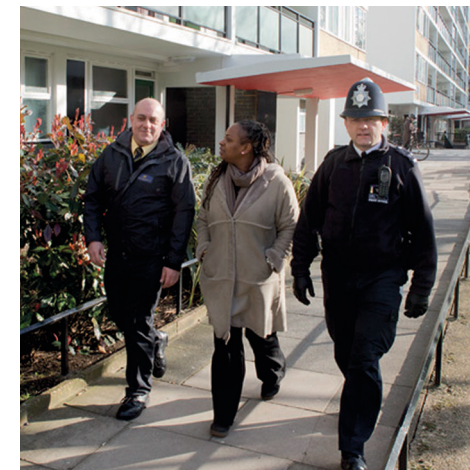
If you believe a crime has taken place it should be reported to the police.

For ongoing anti-social behaviour speak to your housing provider or local policing team. You can also speak to the council on **020 7641 1085** or **communityprotection@westminster.gov.uk**

### Step three

Your complaint will be passed on to the relevant council officer who will begin working with the police or your housing association to help resolve the problem.

For more information visit **westminster.gov.uk/anti-social-behaviour**



Residents living in a block of flats in Fitzrovia reported ongoing problems with one of their neighbours. The tenant had been seen dealing drugs, getting into fights and damaging the property. Residents reported the problem to their housing provider who contacted the council.

The council's Professional Witness Service quickly met with the affected residents, took witness statements and carried out surveillance and, just a few months later, the perpetrator was taken to court and evicted from the property.

Chris\*, 42, one of the affected residents, says: "Before the Witness Service got involved I could not sleep, work or live in my home. Thanks to the Witness Service I now feel safe in my home and can get on with my life."

\*Name has been changed.

## Tackling crime

Crime in Westminster dropped by 14% in 2013–2014 and the council and the police are always working on new ways to make the city even safer.

### Reducing motorcycle theft in St. James's Square

In late 2014, council officers, the police and security marking specialists Datatag spent a day on St. James's Square, a motorcycle theft hotspot, offering riders the opportunity to add security markers to their bikes at a reduced rate. The process deters thieves and helps the police recover vehicles if they are stolen. The council has also installed ground anchors in the Square for riders to chain their bikes.



Save 10% on motorcycle locks and 20% off Datatag security marking at Metropolis Motorcycles with Westminster City Save. Visit [westminster.gov.uk/citysave](http://westminster.gov.uk/citysave)

### Working with offenders to improve the local environment

As part of the Community Payback scheme offenders make amends for their crimes by working in the local community. In 2014 offenders painted 100 bollards along Villiers Street and removed graffiti to improve the local area, painted railings on the Brunel Estate and removed litter from around the Queen Mother Sports Centre.

### Helping young people to break free from crime

Tackling youth violence is a top priority for the council and our Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU) works with young people to help them end their association with gangs. In 2014 the IGU worked with gang member John\*, 20, who was at serious risk of violence, to keep him safe and move him away from gang activity. The team met regularly with John to talk about his options for exiting the gang. Once they'd gained his trust they were able to build up his confidence, prepare him for interviews and even find job opportunities in the city. He has since found full-time employment and still meets with the IGU to move his new life forward.

\*Name has been changed.

## Don't put your money in the wrong hands

Begging is a criminal offence in this country, but many people use it as a means to make a lucrative living.

Some beggars can make up to £300 a day as career beggars. They are not genuinely homeless or in need of help, and the money they receive from people like you is not used to help house and feed them, or their children.

These beggars are often members of organised begging groups and are persistent and manipulative.

As well as deceiving people like you, they may be using children as a way to make money.

Other beggars may use your money to fund a drug or alcohol addiction.

Don't put your money in the wrong hands. Support Charity Not Crime and use your money to help genuine homeless people by donating to a registered charity.



For more information and a list of registered charities visit [westminster.gov.uk/wronghands](http://westminster.gov.uk/wronghands)

### Keep your belongings safe

- ▶ spread your valuables about to keep your keys, wallet and ID separate
- ▶ register any valuable property on the national property database **immobilise.com**
- ▶ leave the glovebox of your car empty and open to make it obvious to criminals that there is nothing worth taking
- ▶ if someone does try to take your belongings or money, let them go, call **999** and ask for the police
- ▶ if you discover your belongings have been stolen call the police on **101**



- ▶ if you have information on any crime, or have been a victim of crime but do not want to talk to police, call Crimestoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111**.



# KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE

**A few simple checks can help keep your home safe.**

- ! test your smoke alarm once a week
- ! know your fire plan – visit **knowtheplan.co.uk** to help plan your escape route
- ! get your gas appliances checked once a year by a Gas Safe registered engineer
- ! know how to turn off your electricity, water and gas supplies in an emergency.

Sign up to  
Community Safe to  
receive immediate alerts  
of incidents in your area,  
from extreme weather to  
serious threats to safety.  
Register at  
**communitysafe.gov.uk**

For more information on how to keep your home safe visit **westminster.gov.uk/preparing-emergency**



City of Westminster

