



# NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE



## NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE – 2 OCT 26

*(The Community Awareness Update provides general information to enable personnel to keep up-to-date with routine crime prevention and security awareness correspondence; it is not provided for mission-related items and does not replace the Emergency Messaging System.)*

**WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW 'FAMILY' MEMBERS; THE COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE YOU WITH, HOPEFULLY, INFORMATIVE AND USEFUL INFORMATION.**

- Common current scams.
- Halloween – UK and US.
- Bonfire Night Safety.
- Bonfire Night – Pet Safety.
- Live Facial Recognition – Appearing in a city near you.
- Advanced Driver Distraction Warning (ADDW) system.
- Autumnal Fog & Mist.
- UK clocks go back by one hour at 2:00 AM on Sun 25 Oct 26.

### COMMON CURRENT SCAMS

The most common and recent scams in the UK include parcel delivery text fraud, O2 and bank impersonation calls, and AI-driven deepfake scams.

- Parcel Delivery & QR Codes: Fake texts from Royal Mail or couriers claiming a small delivery fee or missed package, linking to phishing sites.
- Marketplace & Tickets: Fake social media listings for high-demand event tickets, cars or designer goods requiring direct bank transfers.
- Follow-On Scams: Fraudsters contacting previous scam victims and pretending they can recover lost funds for an upfront fee.
- Fake Speeding & Parking Fine Texts: Messages claiming you were caught by a speed camera or have an unpaid parking penalty, linking to copycat government websites designed to steal data

### How to Protect Yourself:

- Stop and Check: Never transfer money to a "safe account" or share a one-time passcode with anyone.
- Use 159: Call 159 to reach your bank securely if you receive an unexpected or suspicious call regarding your account.

Report It: Forward scam texts to 7726 and report financial fraud to Action Fraud at 0300 123 2040. Also check official warnings via [FSCS Fraud Guidance](#) if targeted by recovery scams.

### HALLOWEEN – UK and US

Halloween is a yearly celebration observed on 31 October that blends ancient pagan traditions, Christian history and modern secular fun.

**Is it an emergency? Call 999**

If it is not life threatening: Call 101 for the Civil Police; Call 111 for the NHS.

If you want to report a concern anonymously, you can report it via the Crimestoppers website or via their hotline on: 0800 555 111.

NIFC (24/7): 01480 847013



## **NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE**



Modern Traditions: Today, Halloween is mostly non-religious and celebrated in many countries around the world:

- Costumes: People of all ages dress up in spooky or fun outfits, a tradition descending from wearing disguises to hide from spirits.
- Trick-or-Treating: Children go from house-to-house asking for sweets and treats.
- Jack-o'-lanterns: People carve scary or funny faces into pumpkins and place candles inside them.

Scale and Timeline:

- USA: Celebrations span the entire autumn season, with decorations and pumpkin-spice items appearing as early as 1 September. Houses go all out with competitive, full-yard displays.
- UK: The holiday usually enters the public consciousness only a few days before 31 October. Outdoor decorations are typically minimal—such as a single carved pumpkin or a skeleton in a window.

Trick-or-Treating:

- USA: Children canvas entire neighbourhoods, visiting every house with an active porch light and trick-or-treating lasts for hours.
- UK: Participation is much more localized and brief. Kids generally only knock on doors of neighbours they know or homes clearly marked with a lit pumpkin. In some traditional areas, children might perform a small joke or song (similar to Scottish/Irish "guising") or occasionally receive small change instead of just sweets.

Costumes and Themes:

- USA: Costumes run the gamut from traditional ghosts and ghouls to pop-culture icons, Disney princesses and funny outfits.
- UK: Costumes strictly favour scary, ghoulish or horror-themed attire (such as witches, vampires, and zombies) to maximize the scare factor.

Costume Safety:

- Pick short costumes so kids do not trip.
- Look for clothes that say "flame-resistant".
- Use face paint instead of masks so kids can see well.
- Add reflective tape or bright colours so cars can see you.
- Carry a flashlight or glow stick.
- Avoid sharp toys like plastic swords or long canes.

Walking and Road Safety:

- Adults must walk with kids under 12 years old.
- Older kids should walk in groups in familiar places.
- Stay on sidewalks and do not run.
- Cross the street at corners and crosswalks.
- Look left, right, and left again before you cross.
- Only visit homes that have a porch light on.
- Never go inside a stranger's house or car.

**Is it an emergency? Call 999**

**If it is not life threatening: Call 101 for the Civil Police; Call 111 for the NHS.**

**If you want to report a concern anonymously, you can report it via the Crimestoppers website or via their hotline on: 0800 555 111.**

**NIFC (24/7): 01480 847013**



## NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE



### Treat Safety:

- Wait until you get home to eat your candy.
- Adults must check all treats before eating.
- Throw away open, torn, or unwrapped candy.
- Avoid homemade treats from people you do not know.
- Watch out for choking hazards like small hard candies for young kids.

### Home and Fire Safety:

- Use battery-powered lights in pumpkins instead of real candles.
- Sweep wet leaves off your steps so people do not fall.
- Keep your pets away from the door so they do not bite or jump.
- For more great advice, visit [Safe Kids Worldwide](#)

### BONFIRE NIGHT SAFETY

Attend public, organized displays for the safest Bonfire Night experience.

### Bonfire Safety:

- Build the fire far away from houses, sheds, fences, trees, and bushes.
- Check the pile for hidden children or animals like hedgehogs before you light it.
- Build a 5-meter barrier and keep everyone behind it.
- Burn only dry, untreated wood.
- Never use petrol or other fuel accelerants to start the fire.
- Keep water or a hosepipe nearby.

### Firework Code:

- Buy only [CE-marked](#) or [UKCA-marked fireworks](#).
- Keep fireworks in a closed box and take them out one at a time.
- Light fireworks at arm's length using a taper and stand well back.
- Never return to a firework after it has been lit.
- Do not drink alcohol if you are handling fireworks.
- Adults only should handle and light firework.

### Sparkler Safety:

- Wear gloves when holding sparklers.
- Hold sparklers at arm's length away from your face and clothes.
- Never give sparklers to children under five years old.
- Put used sparklers hot end down into a bucket of cold water or sand.

### BONFIRE NIGHT - PET SAFETY

Keep your pets safe and calm during Bonfire Night by bringing them indoors, blocking escape routes, and creating a quiet, cozy hiding space.

**Is it an emergency? Call 999**

If it is not life threatening: Call 101 for the Civil Police; Call 111 for the NHS.

If you want to report a concern anonymously, you can report it via the Crimestoppers website or via their hotline on: 0800 555 111.

NIFC (24/7): 01480 847013



## NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE



### Before the Fireworks Start:

- Walk early: Take your dog for a walk during daylight hours before celebrations begin.
- Secure the house: Close and lock all doors, windows, and cat flaps.
- Create a safe den: Set up a cozy hiding place under a table, in a crate, or behind furniture with extra blankets and familiar bedding.
- Protect outdoor pets: Move rabbits, guinea pigs, and other small outdoor pets into a shed or garage, or bring their hutches indoors. Cover hutches with thick blankets for insulation, leaving proper ventilation.
- Check IDs: Verify that your pet's microchip details are up to date and they are wearing a collar with an ID tag.

### During the Celebrations:

- Block lights and noise: Draw your curtains or use blackout blinds to muffle sounds and block out flashing lights.
- Mask the sound: Turn on the TV or play calming music (such as [Classic FM Pet Classics](#)) at a comfortable volume.
- Act normally: Let your pet pace, whine, or hide if they feel stressed. Do not punish them or force them out of their hiding spots.
- Stay home: Avoid leaving your pets completely alone during peak firework times.

## LIVE FACIAL RECOGNITION - APPEARING IN A CITY NEAR YOU

Live facial recognition (LFR) uses real-time camera feeds to map facial features and compare biometric data against a predetermined watchlist of wanted or missing persons.

- Real-time scanning: Cameras deployed in public areas capture live video feeds of passers-by and convert facial features into biometric templates.
- Watchlist comparison: The system instantly cross-references these templates against a specific, task-based database of individuals wanted by the police or courts.
- Human oversight: If an alert flags a potential match, nearby officers evaluate the comparison and choose whether to engage with the individual; the technology does not make automated detention decisions.
- Data deletion: According to police forces such as the [Metropolitan Police](#), images and data of individuals who do not match the watchlist are deleted immediately and automatically.

### Is it Legal?

- Lawful status: Yes, police deployment of LFR in England and Wales is legal and supported by the [College of Policing](#) under existing common law crime-detection powers, alongside compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Legal framework and expansion: Government announcements and policing white papers outline plans to expand LFR deployments and rollouts across forces, though the regulatory framework relies on a patchwork of guidelines, common law, and oversight
- Controversy and challenges: Civil liberties groups, human rights organizations like [Liberty](#), and equality watchdogs argue that LFR can infringe upon privacy rights and protest freedoms under the European

**Is it an emergency? Call 999**

**If it is not life threatening: Call 101 for the Civil Police; Call 111 for the NHS.**

**If you want to report a concern anonymously, you can report it via the Crimestoppers website or via their hotline on: 0800 555 111.**

**NIFC (24/7): 01480 847013**



## **NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE**



Convention on Human Rights, leading to ongoing legal scrutiny and challenges - the technology does not make automated detention decisions.

### **ADVANCED DRIVER DISTRACTION WARNING (ADDW) SYSTEM.**

Buying or hiring a new car in an EU country? If so, it's probably fitted with an Advanced Driver Distraction Warning (ADDW) system.

Modern vehicles contain multiple sensors capable of collecting location, movement and technical data. The ADDW system includes driver-facing cameras designed to monitor driver attentiveness and signs of fatigue.

Current regulations prohibit the use of ADDW systems for biometric identification and require local processing of data – so, 'big brother' is not watching you.... yet.

### **AUTUMNAL FOG & MIST**

Roads across Cambs are likely to be affected by autumnal fog & mist; you go from a clear road and you hit a bank of low-lying fog/mist, possibly only for about 100m, but it can be hazardous. Mist and fog can often appear after rain, when warm water vapour in the air meets cold air close to the ground before condensing and forming a low-lying cloud.

Misty autumn mornings can look spectacular, particularly in rural areas where the fog clings to fields and lakes. But mist and fog can also be treacherous for drivers, as they're hit with a sudden decrease in visibility that makes it harder to spot obstacles ahead.

Get your lights right:

- If you encounter fog, make sure your dipped headlights are turned on. Don't be tempted to use your high beams, though, as the light is often just reflected back at you, reducing visibility even further.
- You also need to be careful when using your car's fog lights. If the visibility is reduced to 100 metres - about the same length as a football pitch - turn them on. All cars have a rear fog light but not all vehicles have fog lights at the front.
- But DON'T use your fog lights unless visibility is really poor, as they can dazzle other road users while also obscuring your own brake lights. You can actually face a fine of up to £50 for using your fog lights incorrectly.

Reduce your speed:

- If you hit a bank of fog or mist, check your mirrors and then reduce your speed when it's safe to do so, because you want to increase the distance between you and the car in front so that you've got plenty of time to stop in case of an emergency.
- Fog doesn't just reduce visibility, it also messes with speed perception, making it even more dangerous to drivers. We typically judge speed by what's going on in our peripheral vision - i.e., driving past trees and buildings - so when that's taken away, you might end up driving much faster than you actually realise.

**Is it an emergency? Call 999**

**If it is not life threatening: Call 101 for the Civil Police; Call 111 for the NHS.**

**If you want to report a concern anonymously, you can report it via the Crimestoppers website or via their hotline on: 0800 555 111.**

**NIFC (24/7): 01480 847013**



## **NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE**



It's also worth remembering that fog might also render wild animals on the road invisible, with deer mating season beginning at the end of September and posing further problems.

### **UK CLOCKS GO BACK BY ONE HOUR AT 2:00 AM ON SUN 25 OCT 26**

In the UK, the clocks will go back by one hour at 2:00 AM on Sun 25 Oct 26. This change marks the end of British Summer Time (BST) and the return to Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

#### **Key Details:**

- Time and Date: 2:00 AM becomes 1:00 AM.
- Sleep: You gain an extra hour of sleep.
- Daylight: Mornings will be brighter, but evenings will get dark an hour earlier.

**Is it an emergency? Call 999**

If it is not life threatening: Call 101 for the Civil Police; Call 111 for the NHS.

If you want to report a concern anonymously, you can report it via the Crimestoppers website or via their hotline on: 0800 555 111.

**NIFC (24/7): 01480 847013**



## **NIFC COMMUNITY AWARENESS UPDATE**



### **STAY ALERT, STAY ALIVE:**

**The Counter Terrorism Policing message remains in that you should trust your instincts and report anything that doesn't feel right when you are out and about in the coming weeks.**

Sadly, the threat from terrorism is a real one. Every year across the UK, Counter Terrorism Policing receives over 10,000 reports from the public and a fifth of those provide intelligence which is particularly useful to investigators. Since 2017, CTP, along with partners, have disrupted over 40 terrorist

Policing and security authorities encourage the public to trust their instincts and report anything that doesn't feel right to security or the police.

- You can help by sharing campaign messages for any events you are organising or supporting.
- You can increase your awareness by taking the free online ACT Awareness e-learning training.

Promoting the awareness and vigilance is also a powerful way of using communications as an extra layer of protective security. By supporting the campaign and using security-minded communications, you could help to deter hostile activity at major events.

**We all have a role to play in keeping each other safe.**

**Wherever you are, whatever the situation....**



**If you see something, say something.  
Stay Alert, Stay Alive!**

**Is it an emergency? Call 999**

If it is not life threatening: Call 101 for the Civil Police; Call 111 for the NHS.

If you want to report a concern anonymously, you can report it via the Crimestoppers website or via their hotline on: 0800 555 111.

**NIFC (24/7): 01480 847013**