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24-hour hotline for UFO reports

A 24-HOUR hotline to report UFO sightings to a team of experts, prepared to investigate at a moment's notice, has been set up. Now, sightings of UFOs in Cheshire and the surrounding counties can be recorded and investigated as soon as they happen.

Before the Crewe hotline was set up, the Cheshire UFO Studies Centre would often get letters from folk, days after their sightings, saying they hadn't been able to contact anyone at the time.

Besides the new hotline, five members at the centre now have answering machines to take calls.

"As soon as people report their sightings, we go out and investigate thoroughly," said Eric Morris, Chairman of the centre.

Silent

"Up to now, people either told the police or local newspapers, but now everything can be reported direct to us."

The years from 1985 to 1987 were very quiet for UFO sightings, but 1988 showed a surge in the number, with 885 being recorded nationally.

"We realised the need for a hotline and so far the response has been excellent," said Eric.

Ninety-five per cent of all sightings can be explained, but the other five per cent are a mystery.

"Some people who telephone

us genuinely believe in flying saucers and little green men, but we've never had sufficient evidence to support that theory," said Eric.

"When we go out to investigate a sighting, we deal only with the facts and go through a process of elimination. The witness is asked to complete a complicated form on times and directions and we will take it further if necessary."

Many reports have told of noiseless objects moving swiftly through the night sky. These were investigated and found to be USA Stealth S117A aircrafts, which are "V"-shaped bombers and fighter planes which move at an amazing speed, are silent and cannot be detected on radar.

They're often on exercises from Lincolnshire to East Anglia and are so fast, they could fly the length of Britain in an hour.

"A lot of TV shows take the mickey out of our work," added Eric, "but I've spent 15 years researching this topic. Even the Ministry of Defence and the RAF sometimes ask us for help."