

HORSHAM DISTRICT NHW ASSOCIATION

SETTING UP A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME

OVERVIEW

A Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) Scheme is a community initiative where several residents in a street or area form a scheme with the objective of preventing crime, reducing the fear of crime, and helping each other to protect their community.

The national aims are: Safety, Community Spirit, Trust, Caring, Respect. NHW promotes good citizenship and greater public awareness through NHW schemes, increases public participation in the prevention and detection of crime and anti-social behaviour, reduces the fear of crime, improves police/community liaison and increases public and community safety.

One of the residents will take on the role as NHW Street Co-ordinator ("SC").

There are over 500 such schemes in the Horsham District. By putting a postcode into www.ourwatch.org.uk nearby schemes can be identified and contact made with their SCs.

FIRST STEPS

Co-ordinator and Members.

To set-up a scheme we need someone who is willing to act as a SC, who has email access, and preferably at least 10 households, but certainly a manageable number of local residents, willing to participate.¹

One or two individuals may call personally or distribute leaflets or letters door-to-door telling people about the proposed scheme and inviting them to participate. They would explain that in addition to reducing crime in the neighbourhood members would receive, among other benefits

- A circular window-sticker to announcing that they are members of a NHW scheme
- Another window-sticker discouraging door-to-door salesmen
- Emails or messages from the police and NHW about local crime alerts and other matters
- The opportunity to obtain discounts on their home insurance premiums

Their email addresses would remain confidential and known only to the scheme Co-ordinator, who would receive and pass on the messages mentioned above.

Printed leaflets about NHW, suitable for dropping door to door, are available and can be obtained from the AC. See below.

¹ It is possible to set up a NHW scheme with just one person as an Isolated Member. Often this is a preliminary step before the scheme is expanded. Should residents in that location express an interest in joining a NHW scheme they will be directed to the Isolated Member.

Area Co-ordinator

In most villages and wards in Horsham District there is an Area Co-ordinator (AC) who stands by to assist in the setting up and running of NHW schemes locally and provide advice. Elsewhere a member of the committee of the Association will fill this role.

Vetting procedure

Before appointment, all potential co-ordinators are required to complete a NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR REGISTRATION FORM available from the AC. This authorises the police to check that nothing adverse is known about the individual concerned. THE AC will also check the bona fides of the potential co-ordinator.

Database (“Neighbourhood Alert”)

A national database known as Neighbourhood Alert maintains records of all NHW schemes and their SCs and is the messaging system whereby Crime Alerts and other messages from the police and NHW are sent to all co-ordinators. See **Distributing Crime Alerts** below.

This database is shared with several organisations such as the Fire Brigade and Farm Watch, and members of the public are encouraged to register with www.ourwatch.org.uk whether members of NHW or not.

Deputy Co-ordinator

In many cases a Deputy Co-ordinator is appointed in addition to the Street Co-ordinator. Having the scheme run by two people is very convenient for many reasons. The Deputy also needs to complete the above forms and be vetted.

MANAGING THE NEW NHW SCHEME

Role of the Street Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator will normally have access to email and the facility to print/copy/forward messages for distribution to all scheme members (e.g. information received from the Police concerning suspicious incidents/persons/burglaries in the area)

Duty Guidelines:

- * To serve as a liaison between your neighbours and the Neighbourhood Policing Teams;
- * To encourage full participation in your scheme amongst the residents;
- * To welcome new residents and introduce them into the scheme;
- * Maintain contact with your local Area Co-ordinator (if you have one). Remember they are there for your support or to help with any queries/problems you may have;
- * To encourage all members to ring the Police and report any suspicious incidents/persons which may require Police attention;

- * To circulate any NHW newsletter if required;
- * To encourage a good community spirit and communication between residents.
- * To promote interest in the scheme, especially in the young, elderly and vulnerable;
- * To promote good home security;
- * To encourage your scheme members to use the Neighbourhood Watch window stickers.
- * Should you decide to resign from your role in the future, to make reasonable attempts to find a replacement SC, often one of your scheme members ;
- * To keep an up-to-date list of members of the scheme and their email addresses and if standing down preserve this for handing over to a replacement SC.

Area and street co-ordinators provide a valued contribution to safety in their local community. As volunteers they should not feel discouraged if they are unable always to meet the above guidelines!

DISTRIBUTING CRIME ALERTS AND OTHER INFORMATION

When the new co-ordinator is added to the above databank they will begin to receive messages. Most of the messages are Crime Alerts which can include reports of burglaries and crimes as soon as the police become aware of them. There may be sensitivities where the Police can not publish crime reports. There are other messages which include information of a more general nature from the Police or the NHW Association.

One of the most important duties of the co-ordinator is to forward selected message to all members of the scheme. It is for each individual co-ordinator to select which messages to pass to their members, perhaps one or two per week from the larger number which are sent to them.

Most members nowadays are connected to the internet and messages can be forwarded using email, making use of 'blind' copies ("bcc") in order that no one can see each other's email addresses - otherwise you are likely to get complaints and may have broken data protection rules!

Many co-ordinators print copies for distribution for those not on email. Some co-ordinators arrange for those with an internet connection to print copies for their immediate neighbours, using the "Email Buddy" system, or in the case of multi-page newsletters arrange for them to be passed round a circulation list.

POLICE CONTACTS

Police Sgt Craig Burgess has overall responsibility for relations with Horsham (and Worthing) District NHW and attends NHW committee meetings. <Craig.burgess@sussex.pnn.police.uk>
To report incidents, in emergency dial 999 or 112. For less urgent matters dial 101, send a message to <https://www.sussex.police.uk/reportonline> Make sure to mention your membership of NHW.

HORSHAM DISTRICT NHW ASSOCIATION

Any of the following officers of the Horsham District Neighbourhood Watch Association will be glad to receive enquiries of all kinds.

Andrew Moffat, Chairman, 07952 889858

Michael Neale, Vice-Chairman, michael.a.neale@googlemail.com

Arthur Carden, Secretary, carden@one-name.org

Ken Broomfield, responsible for leaflets, signs, etc, kenwbroomfield@msn.com

Marc Bryant, media and events. marc.bryant.nhw@gmail.com

Queries regarding entries in the Neighbourhood Alert database should be addressed to Marc Bryant or Arthur Carden above.

There is a generic address horshamnhw@gmail.com for use by the general public.

Useful websites:

www.sussex.police.uk

www.ourwatch.org.uk

<http://www.mynhwsussex.org/> disappeared from the internet in July 2017 and has temporarily been replaced with <http://horshamnhw.btck.co.uk/>.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

Copies of many documents may be available on request from your AC or one of the above.