



Horsham Neighbourhood Watch

Using the Neighbourhood Alert system to manage your Scheme

A guide for co-ordinators

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(awaiting approval for use throughout Sussex)

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1 How does the system work?

1.1 What systems do you see?

All Neighbourhood Watch (NhW) registrations are held in a UK-wide central system called Neighbourhood Alert (NA) that is managed by a company called Visav (pronounced “Visa-V”). User logins, passwords and preferences are held in here and all emails that are sent come from this system.

The public register on the system either via the Surrey/Sussex NhW microsite called “InTheKnow” (ITK) or the UK NhW portal called “OurWatch”. Both systems hold the data on the central Neighbourhood Alert system and have the same capabilities.

As a co-ordinator, you can log into your account and change your user details and manage the people in your Watch.

For those registered via ITK, go to www.intheknow.community and click on “sign-in” top right. Similarly, for those registered via OurWatch, go to www.ourwatch.org.uk and at the top right hand corner click on Menu, and then at the bottom right hand corner you can sign in. Alternately, go to www.ourwatchmember.org.uk where you can sign in directly. For both routes, if you have forgotten your password you can recover this by clicking on ‘Forgotten your password?’ For practical purposes, the only real differences between the ITK and OurWatch is that the former has a “green and grey” coloured theme and the latter a “yellow and white” theme. Sussex Police usually use ITK for their NhW communications.

1.2 The hierarchy of users in a Scheme

As the registration data is held on a computer system that is used by all counties across the UK, there is a hierarchy to the registrations that you need to understand:

Resident >> Member >> Co-ordinator >> Lead Co-ordinator

Everyone who registers on the system becomes, by default, a **Resident**. When the registration has been finished, the system will immediately send the registrant an automated email with a link that must be clicked to validate their email address. This is standard security practice and ensures correct email use (and that the email address has been typed in correctly). If the registrant does not respond to the email within 14 days their account will not be activated and they will not receive any emails or notifications. Note that a failure of the resident to acknowledge the validation email could be the result of them typing an incorrect email during registration, or because the automated email has gone into their spam/trash mailbox.

Residents can set up a Scheme. This requires a minimum amount of information such as the number of houses in the Scheme. The Resident then gets promoted to being a **Lead Co-ordinator**. This Scheme will be “self-declared” until approved by a local NhW administrator. Someone (in the Horsham area the Secretary or the Area Co-ordinator) will be in contact to discuss the new Scheme and to gain assurances that the co-ordinator has set up the Scheme properly, for the right reasons, and will manage it well. The coordinator will be sent a simple form to complete, sign and return. This states that the co-ordinator agrees to the NhW and Police organisations sending them NhW communications (this is a General Data Protection Regulations – GDPR - requirement). The form will be passed to the police for a check to be made that they know of no reason to object to the potential co-ordinator. Once this check has been carried out then the administrator will amend the registration to show that the co-ordinator has been Neighbourhood Watch Network approved.

The **Resident** can also request to become a **Member** of a Scheme. They can join it when they register, or log in at a later date and join to that Scheme. The Lead Co-ordinator will receive an email from the system to ask them to log in to their ITK/OurWatch account and approve the Member. The advantage of being a **Member** rather than remaining as a **Resident** is covered in the Emailing section of this Guide.

A **Resident** can also request to become a **Co-ordinator** of an existing Scheme. As with Members, the Lead Co-ordinator will receive an email from the system asking them to log in and approve the Co-ordinator (or reject the request). There are many advantages to having a Lead-Co-ordinator and one or more Co-



ordinators for a Scheme. Both will receive communications aimed at Co-ordinators that Members and Residents would not receive. In large Schemes, Co-ordinators can manage part of the Watch – a street or block of apartments, say.

Note that the system allows for Deputy Co-ordinators but we ask you not to use that role as they may not receive all the communications sent to the other co-ordinators.

1.3 What can everyone who registers do?

When the post-registration auto-email is responded to, the system displays the Membership Administration Area page where all the options are available. At any other time you can log into your account either via InTheKnow: <https://www.intheknow.community/> or OurWatch: www.ourwatchmember.org.uk. Both systems give you the same features to edit and maintain your account, and to send emails.

Once logged in, the options you have include:

- Edit your details (including email address and password)
- Configure who can contact you
- Message settings
- Unsubscribe Options (see below)
- Email Sharing
- Scheme Admin
- Crime Statistics as held on PoliceUK data

1.4 Options and “unsubscribe”

The minimum set of organisations you should opt in to is listed in the image below (from ITK)

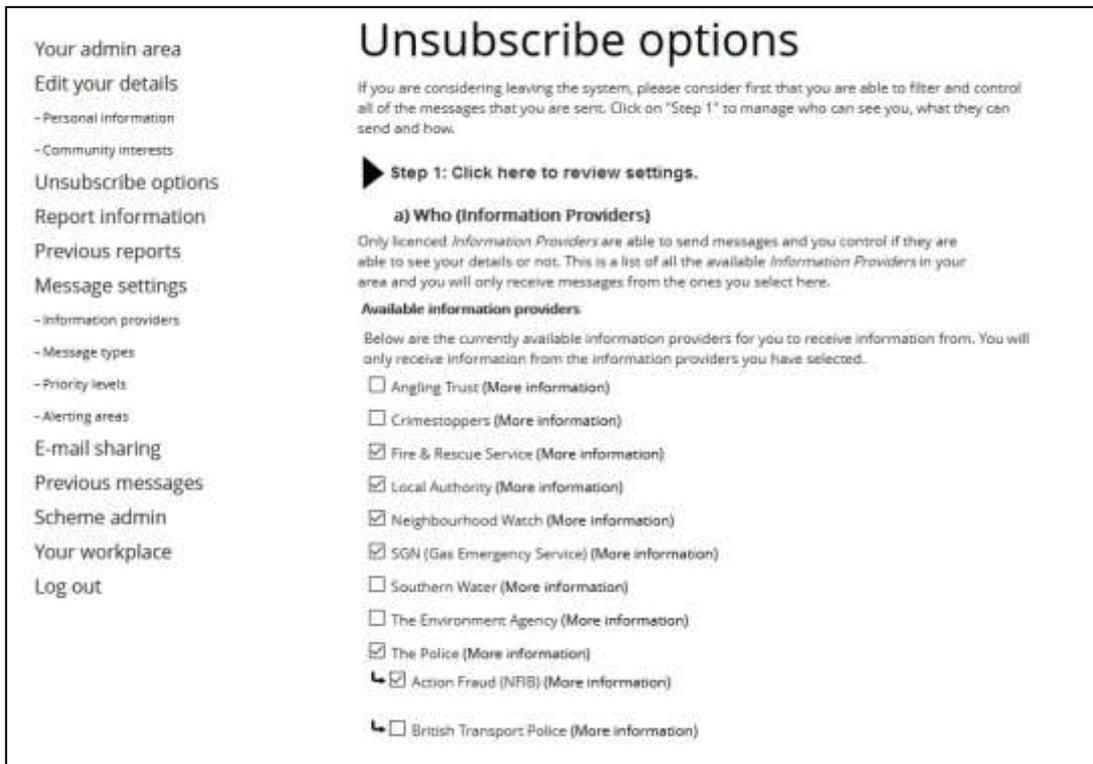


Fig: 1 Unsubscribe options

This set will result in you receiving any Alerts from the Police, Neighbourhood Watch, your local authority, and the fire service. The “SGN” option is Southern Gas Networks and that organisation provides useful information on traffic and roads. Ticking all the others is fine, but the above is the minimum recommended.



1.5 Mapping a Scheme

When a co-ordinator registers on the system they have the option to map their scheme. Not all co-ordinators do this mapping (they just register as a “co-ordinator”), but it is quite important to do as it tells potential new residents what streets, part of streets, block of flats, or virtual community you cover; and even down to specific houses if you map it accurately. An existing map can also be redrawn at any time.

For InTheKnow: Log into ITK via <https://www.intheknow.community/>. Scroll down to “Manage your scheme membership”. If you have mapped your scheme you will see the map. To create or change it, scroll down to “Edit your scheme name, map and description”. There are 3 icons to “draw”, “edit” and “erase” the map. Clicking “edit” allows you to select points and drag them. Double-click to save the new map. When you are satisfied with all the details, save changes at the bottom of the page.

For OurWatch: Log into OurWatch via www.ourwatchmember.org.uk. Scroll down to the “Scheme admin” option and select. If you have mapped your scheme you will see the map. To create or change it scroll to the bottom of the page and select the “Edit your scheme name, map and description” option. The suggested sequence is to “Clear points”, “Add points”, hover over the map and redraw by clicking at the boundary points, and drag the cursor down the “Save points” to save it (the instinct is to double-click to finish, but this does not work – drag to “Save points”). You can always delete and retry if you are not happy with the map.

1.6 Conforming to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Co-ordinators will conform to the GDPR providing they just hold and manage the neighbour’s basic details (name, address, email address, etc) and use them solely for the purpose of managing the Scheme and sending and receiving communications from those in the Scheme.

To use those details for political or commercial reasons is forbidden, and the Co-ordinator will be removed from the system.



2 Member Emailing

All registrants, whether Residents, Members or [Lead] Co-ordinators, have access to quite powerful emailing facilities. Co-ordinators can, of course, continue to forward Police and Neighbourhood Alert emails from their own personal mailbox, but this built-in email facility is useful for larger Watches and allows co-ordinators to set up sub-groups. Advice when using personal email to communication with members in your Scheme are given at the end of this section.

2.1 Using ITK/OurWatch for emailing

For most co-ordinators, the best option is to generate a Group of people whose email address is known. The obvious best use of this is to be able to forward Police and Neighbourhood Alert emails to neighbours who are not registered on the system; or to friends, relatives, etc. The co-ordinator needs to know the recipient email address, of course, but it does mean that emails can be forwarded very quickly. Even better, any of those recipients can choose to unsubscribe from the Group and so prevent the facility being over used. To forward an email the recipient simply clicks the “Share” option at the bottom of any Neighbourhood Alert email. No need to even log in.

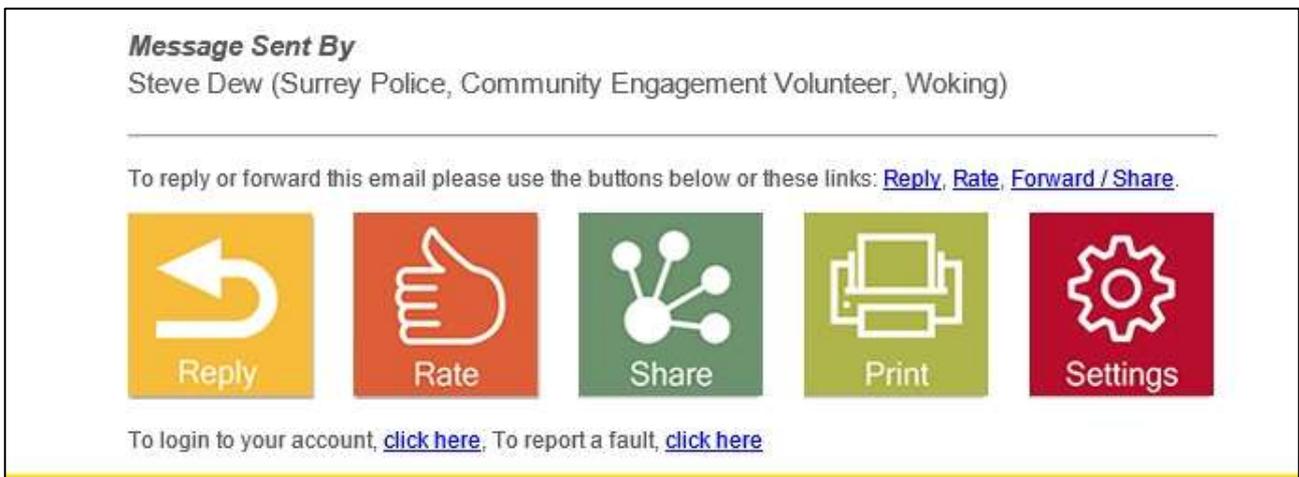


Fig: 2 Follow-on options on an Alert

In the Administration Area page, one of the options is “Email sharing”. The examples below are taken from the OurWatch system, but they are also all there in the InTheKnow system

The email sharing options allows co-ordinators to email all registered members in their Scheme and to set up a Group of email addresses which is useful for forwarding emails to residents who are not Members in their scheme. The first step is to retrieve existing recipients/groups, or set up new ones.

The email sharing link can be from the main screen or the menu drop-down

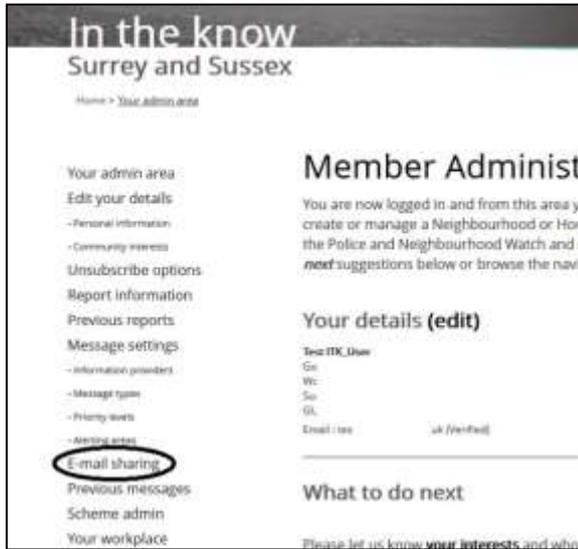


Fig: 3 Email sharing InTheKnow

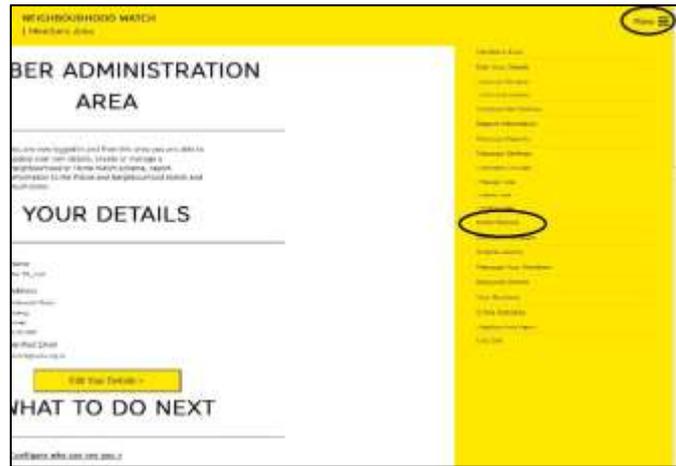


Fig: 4 Email sharing OurWatch

The section will continue with images from InTheKnow, but the same are available in OurWatch.

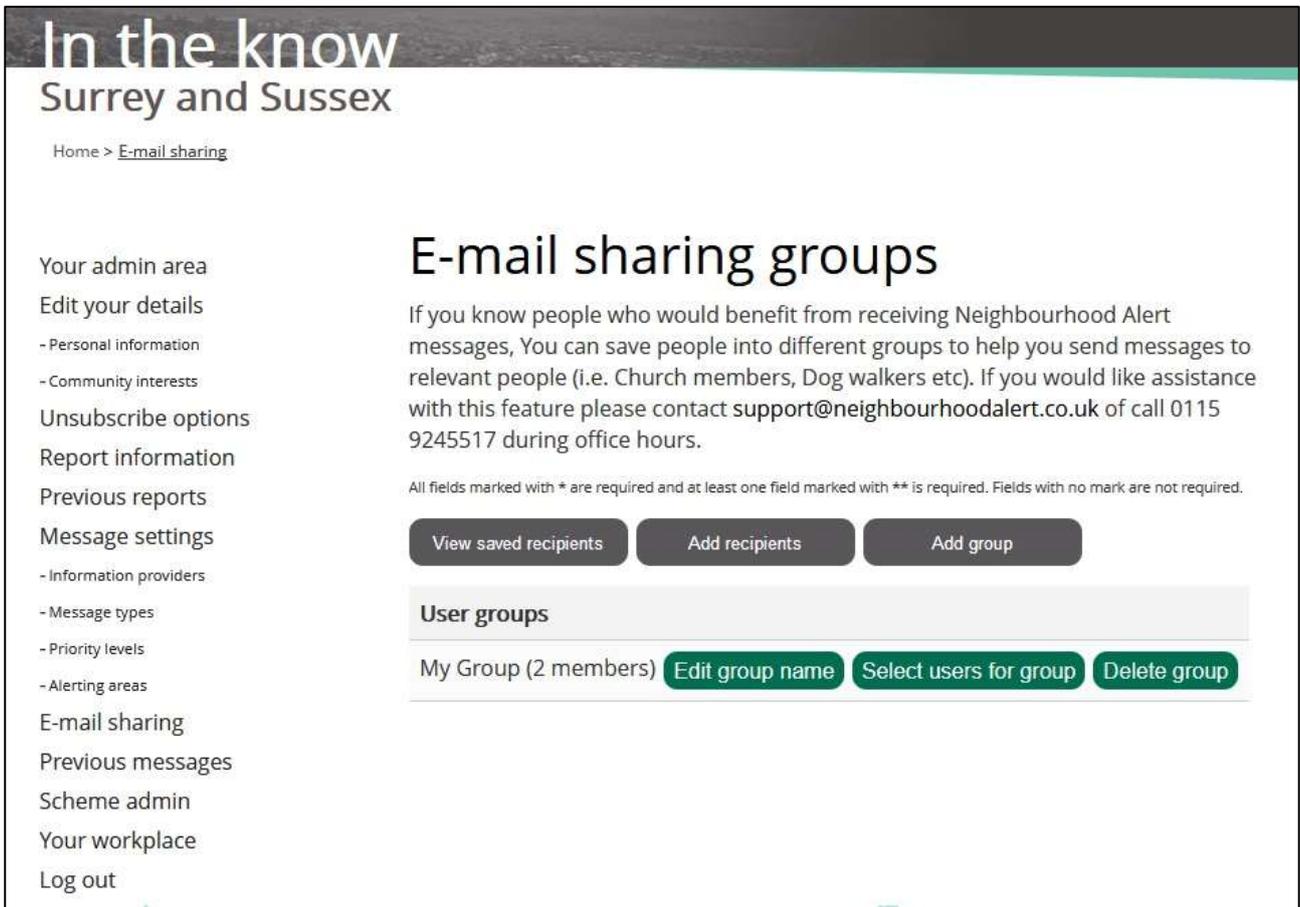


Fig: 5 Email sharing Groups

The first step is to add neighbours and friends into a Group. I already have a Group (called “My Group”) in my account, but I will add a 2nd. Create the group by clicking on “Add group” as in image above.

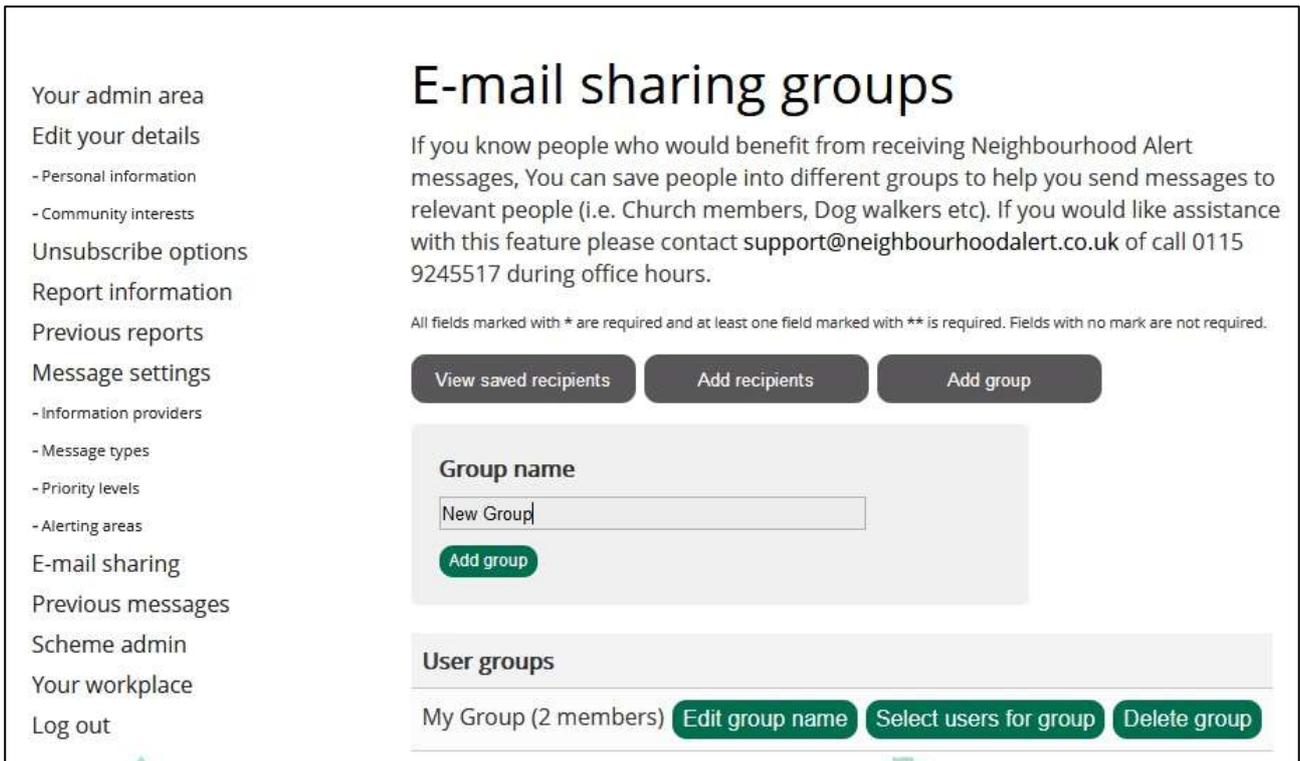


Fig: 6 Email sharing adding a Group

Give it a name and click “Add group” box.

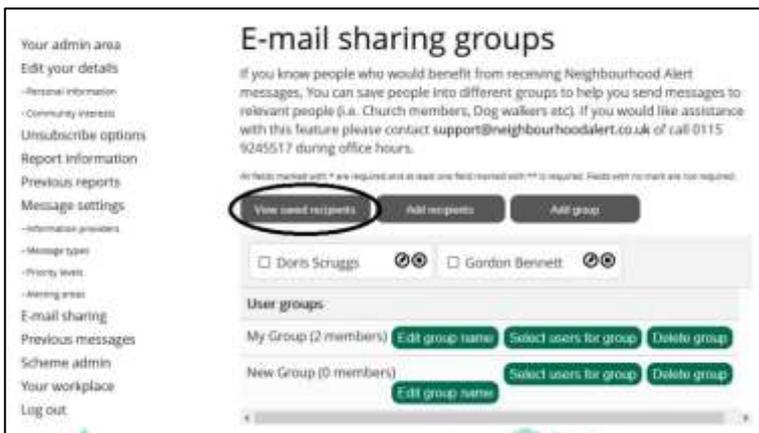


Fig: 7 Email Groups – viewing the Group

You can see in the above image I have already registered Doris Scruggs and Gordon Bennet. I can now do a number of actions:

- 1) Select one or both for my New Group (by ticking the box to the left of the name)
- 2) Edit the user (the pencil image to the right) or delete the user (cross image)
- 3) Add a new recipient ready to add to my new (or existing) Group.

I will add a recipient and place them in my New Group. See below. Do not forget to click on the “Add a recipient” box.

Because I have already registered 2 recipients for the existing Group I can “View saved recipients” to remind myself who they are, and maybe also select them for my New Group.



Your admin area
Edit your details
- Personal information
- Community interests
Unsubscribe options
Report information
Previous reports
Message settings
- Information providers
- Message types
- Priority levels
- Alerting areas
E-mail sharing
Previous messages
Scheme admin
Your workplace
Log out

E-mail sharing groups

If you know people who would benefit from receiving Neighbourhood Alert messages, You can save people into different groups to help you send messages to relevant people (i.e. Church members, Dog walkers etc). If you would like assistance with this feature please contact support@neighbourhoodalert.co.uk of call 0115 9245517 during office hours.

All fields marked with * are required and at least one field marked with ** is required. Fields with no mark are not required.

[View saved recipients](#) [Add recipients](#) [Add group](#)

Doris Scruggs Gordon Bennett

Recipients name
James Riddle

E-mail address
Jimmy@Riddlehome.co.uk

Available groups
 My Group
 New Group

[Add a recipient](#)

User groups

My Group (2 members)	Edit group name	Select users for group	Delete group
New Group (0 members)	Edit group name	Select users for group	Delete group

Fig: 8 Email Groups – adding details

I now have a second group called “New Group” that contains one recipient.

Your admin area
Edit your details
- Personal information
- Community interests
Unsubscribe options
Report information
Previous reports
Message settings
- Information providers
- Message types
- Priority levels
- Alerting areas
E-mail sharing
Previous messages
Scheme admin
Your workplace
Log out

E-mail sharing groups

If you know people who would benefit from receiving Neighbourhood Alert messages, You can save people into different groups to help you send messages to relevant people (i.e. Church members, Dog walkers etc). If you would like assistance with this feature please contact support@neighbourhoodalert.co.uk of call 0115 9245517 during office hours.

All fields marked with * are required and at least one field marked with ** is required. Fields with no mark are not required.

[View saved recipients](#) [Add recipients](#) [Add group](#)

User groups

My Group (2 members)	Edit group name	Select users for group	Delete group
New Group (1 member)	Edit group name	Select users for group	Delete group

Fig: 9 Email Groups – new Group loaded



Note that if you have **Members** in your Scheme, these will automatically be displayed in the list of available recipients you can select.

You can add more recipients or remove them at any time.

Now, when you want to Forward an Alert you have received by clicking the “Share” icon at the bottom of the Alert email, you will be presented with the Groups. Share >> Share via Email >> Forward message.

You will now have the option to send to one or more individuals in any of your Groups; or send to one of more Groups; or add a new recipient. This email will be sent by the system to the recipients with none of the other recipient’s details showing.

Note that you can also Forward the Alert to Facebook and Twitter, although this option may have been disabled by the sender for technical reasons for the individual Alert.

Warning: There is one restriction on who you can add to your Group: If the email address you type in is already registered to someone in the system (typically, a **Resident**) you will receive the message in the image below. This means that the recipient concerned has already registered on InTheKnow independently of your **Scheme**. Unfortunately, this annoying restriction cannot be bypassed. If this causes you a problem there are three things you can do:

- 1) They can remain on the system as a Resident and you will have to Forward them Alerts from your personal email system
- 2) Ask them to upgrade to be a **Member** of your Watch
- 3) Ask them to Unsubscribe to everything and so effectively remove their details from the system (not recommended)

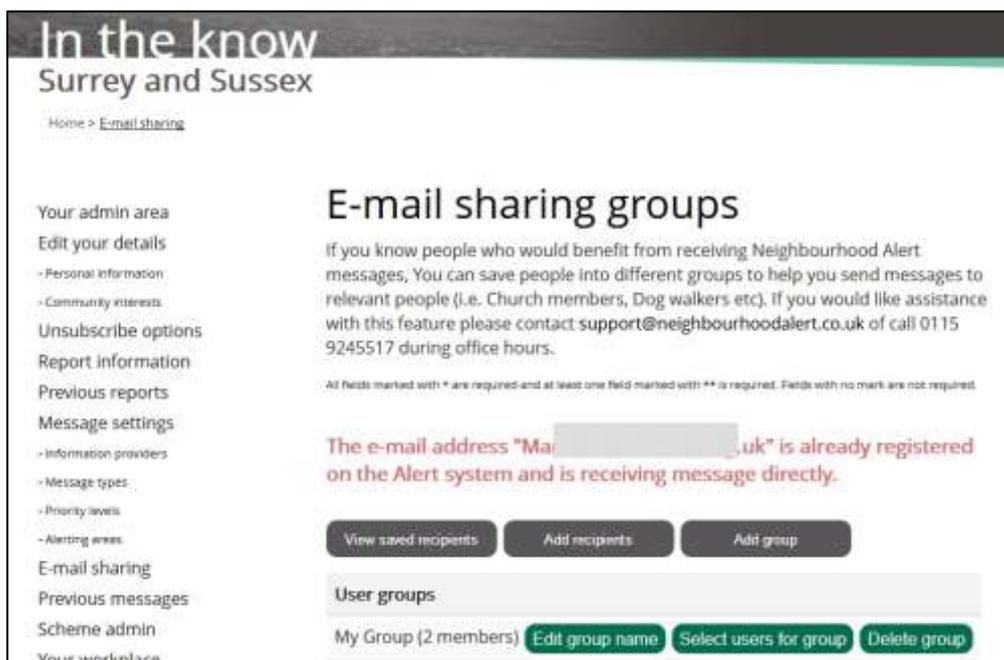


Fig: 10 Email Groups – unable to add the user

2.2 Using personal email

Many Coordinators will be happy to use their own personal email to contact neighbours, Residents, Members and other Coordinators in their Scheme. There is no problem at all with this, but please consider the following advice.



- 1) Unless everyone in your Scheme knows each other and their email addresses, you should always send emails with the recipient's addresses in the BlindCC (Bcc) box.
- 2) If you hold their contact details solely for the purposes of NhW you need to ensure that those details are kept as securely as possible, not divulged to anyone else, and you manage them with due care and attention (these are GDPR rules).
- 3) Always start the "Subject" line with something to identify you. For example, "Acacia Avenue Scheme – " or "Riverview Residents Assoc. – ". Recipients will get to know this and hopefully open immediately. There is also much less chance that the recipient's email Spam checker will intercept it.
- 4) Add a line at the start of the email along the lines of: "This email has been sent to all residents of Riverside Scheme".
- 5) Always use "Forward" option when sending on Alerts received from the system as that passes on all the pictures, icons, links and text.
- 6) Always add a "signature" at the end of your text to say who you are. Include your role and telephone number, and maybe even your address. Something like:

Doris Scruggs
Lead Coordinator
Riverside Neighbourhood Scheme
01483 123456