

**NEIGHBOURHOOD
WATCH**



**WHAT KIND OF
NEIGHBOURHOOD
DO YOU WANT
TO LIVE IN?**



Source: Laurentiu Garofeanu, Lewisham Council

Neighbourhood and Home Watch is about local people working together to create safe, attractive, friendly places to live, places where crime is less likely to happen and people are less likely to turn to antisocial behaviour. It's about you looking out for your neighbours and them looking out for you, crossing barriers of age, race and class for everyone's good. It's about making sure that no one need feel alone, scared or vulnerable in the place where they live.

Neighbourhood & Home Watch groups get involved in all kinds of activities. They might provide home security equipment for the elderly, organise fun events for the young or help improve the local environment with work like communal gardening. Groups often join forces not just with the police, but with many other organisations to make their neighbourhoods secure and pleasant. Being part of a group also makes it much easier to get funding and support for the kinds of things your neighbourhood needs.

LOCAL SOLUTIONS FOR LOCAL ISSUES

There is no set Neighbourhood or Home Watch programme because each group is owned and run by its community. Every community has its own needs and Neighbourhood & Home Watch groups are exceptionally well placed to meet them. After all, who knows what a community needs better than the people who live in it?

Neighbourhood & Home Watch schemes can vary in size from a few houses to a large estate. They are generally led by a volunteer coordinator from the local area who takes on the role of linking the community to the police. By being more aware of local issues, sharing information and advice, local residents are able to develop closer links while reassuring and supporting vulnerable households.





HOW WE WORK WITH THE POLICE

Anyone can reach the police quickly and easily in an emergency by dialling 999, so why have Neighbourhood or Home Watch to liaise with them? The simple answer is that it helps you and your neighbours give police a much clearer sense of your long-term needs and issues. Watch group members know their communities best and can develop an even deeper knowledge by talking to their neighbours and finding out what matters to them. Police and other organizations can then take action based on this knowledge.

The police do not run Neighbourhood or Home Watch schemes, but are glad to get clear guidance from them. That's why they work closely with Neighbourhood and Home Watch groups, often providing them with space in the local police station and appointing dedicated officers to work with and support local volunteers. Your police may also be able to support you in accessing funding opportunities and in getting councillors to act as an advocate for your area.

OUR WATCH

Since coming to the UK in 1982, Neighbourhood Watch has evolved into a coordinated national network. The idea is not to create central control, but allow easy sharing of advice, information and resources between groups and associations across England & Wales.

A great deal of this is now done through our website, www.ourwatch.org.uk, a great place to find out more about what we do and how to get involved, as well as safety and crime prevention in general.





GETTING INVOLVED OR SETTING UP A GROUP

If you're interested in getting involved with Neighbourhood or Home Watch, the first thing to do is check whether there's a group in your area already. You can find your nearest groups by using a simple postcode search at www.ourwatch.org.uk or telephoning the Neighbourhood & Home Watch Network (NHWN) on 0116 229 3118.

If there is no group in your area, you might like to set one up in your own neighbourhood. Talk to your neighbours to gauge interest and, if there is sufficient support, contact your local Neighbourhood Policing Team. They'll be able to give you the advice and information you need to get started and put you in touch with your local association. You can get lots more information about joining or starting a group and find your local Neighbourhood Policing Team by visiting www.ourwatch.org.uk

Whether you attract interest from a lot of households or only a few, you should be able to set up an effective group. Neighbourhood & Home Watch groups often start small and then grow as people see what they're about and want to get involved. All it takes is for a few energetic and creative people to show the way.

Once you have joined the network, you may be surprised at how much it changes life in your area. You'll probably find yourself talking more to your neighbours and to local agencies and businesses.

You'll not only feel more connected to the life around you, but be showing others, especially the most vulnerable, that you're looking out for them and that they're not alone. You'll discover that, together, all of you make a community and that when the community is united, you're not just safer, but happier and able to achieve much more.





Being a member of a formal Watch scheme might not suit you, but you can still exchange information and keep up-to-date on what's happening in your local area without joining the Network. Visit ourwatch.org.uk and register to receive local information, find local services, contact a coordinator or Watch association in your area, or simply signup for our national newsletter.

Why not get started now?

www.ourwatch.org.uk

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Neighbourhood & Home Watch Network (England & Wales)

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