

Dear Watch members,

Welcome to the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter. We hope you will enjoy the contents but would also like to hear from you if you have any preferences on topics to include, feedback on the current format or your own good news story. If you do, please get in touch using the contact details above.

Your Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch brings neighbours together to tackle crime and promote a sense of co-operation in their local community. Each watch is led by a co-ordinator whose role it is to arrange meetings and act as a point of contact for the council and police. Police *Safer Neighbourhoods Teams* support Neighbourhood Watch by helping set up new watches, offering crime prevention advice, and acting as a point of contact for any non-urgent information about crime in your local area. Westminster City Council supports the administration of all Westminster watches, writes this newsletter, and arranges any Westminster-wide meetings.

If you would like to know the contact details for your local *Safer Neighbourhoods Team*, or have any general queries about Neighbourhood Watch please contact us on neighbourhoodwatch@westminster.gov.uk or 020 7641 2117.



Olympic Games 2012

Over the summer, Westminster not only hosted Olympic events but also saw millions of visitors come to see what central London has to offer. This was an unprecedented challenge for Westminster, to ensure that essential services continued uninterrupted, problems were resolved quickly and efficiently, and London was presented at its best. Preparation started soon after the Olympic bid was successful and the council ensured that everyone was prepared. During the games, there were numerous issues to manage including road restrictions and closures, pressure on deliveries, late night events, rising noise levels, crowded streets, extra litter, street dressing (such as banners and hanging baskets) and illegal street trading. Staff provided a 24-hour support service for any difficulties that arose. The result was a Westminster that looked great and portrayed a positive image of London across the world.

Sebastian Coe (Chair of the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games) was “eternally grateful [for the role Westminster played]...thank you so much.” Following the Olympics Westminster will be continuing its sporting legacy with neighbourhood sports programmes.



Westminster Council's Olympic Clean Team on 28th July.



Crime Reduction News

Below are some examples of recent work by the council's Neighbourhood Crime Reduction Service (NCRS) – a team who resolve both short-term and long-term problems relating to crime, disorder and environmental issues.

Serious Youth Violence

The 'Your Choice' programme gives young people clear choices to reduce the influence and impact of youth gangs. This includes support in leaving gangs, help finding employment, and enforcement against those who persist with gang-related criminality. 24 young people are currently engaging well with the scheme and there has been a reduction in serious youth violence in Westminster (from 23 incidents in September 2011 to eight incidents in September 2012).

Chinatown

The Chinatown Action Plan focused on improving a number of street-based issues in the Chinatown area. This included increased waste enforcement for businesses who were dumping rubbish, ensuring that electricity



supply works were completed in a timely manner and operations with the police to reduce drug abuse and illegal street trading. Reports of drug offences have reduced by two thirds and the streets are now looking cleaner and safer.

Begging

NCRS has played a key role in a police operation which was set up to tackle an increase in begging in central Westminster. The operation acted in two ways – to support

those who were vulnerable (including children), and to enforce against persistent beggars who were connected to other types of crime. Seven people have been given ASBOs for begging and other anti-social behaviour.

Problem family

A family who had been making their neighbours' lives a misery with a catalogue of incidents including drug dealing, using the family dog to attack and intimidate people, and racist abuse have been evicted. The family now live in another London borough and Neighbourhood Crime Reduction are working with the other borough to prevent the family causing problems at their new address.

Soho

NCRS have been contributing to the Soho Living City Project which has seen improvements to residential premises, drugs and robbery operations (which led to a number of significant arrests), and unlicensed sex shops being served with closure notices.

"Supercars"

The pre-Ramadan period in Knightsbridge often sees problems with "supercars" being driven erratically and causing a noise nuisance. NCRS led a problem-solving process with the police which resulted in £4.5 million worth of vehicles being seized for no insurance or excessive noise.

Counter-terrorism

NCRS lead on a number of projects to safeguard people who are vulnerable to exploitation by extremists. For example, a theatre group has been exploring issues of extremism with school children and community spaces are being monitored to avoid being exploited by those who wish to propagate messages of hate and intolerance.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is the power and control of one person over another. Domestic abuse can take many forms.

Domestic abuse includes:

Physical abuse – shoving, hitting etc.

Financial abuse – control of money, taking your benefits

Verbal abuse – swearing, name calling

Sexual abuse

Psychological / emotional abuse – putting you down, saying you're useless

If you are experiencing any form of abuse, or have questions, you can talk to the Westminster Domestic Abuse Surgery. You can drop in, without an appointment, and get impartial, expert advice

Every Thursday, 9am – 12 midday,
Bayswater Children's Centre. St. Mary of the Angels RC School, Shrewsbury Road, W2 5PR (free crèche available).

For more information visit:

westminster.gov.uk/domesticabuse

Email: domesticabuse@westminster.gov.uk

Fraud

The Metropolitan Police Service have published the 'Little Book of Big Scams' to help you avoid becoming a victim of crime. You can get a copy at www.met.police.uk/fraudalert but we have outlined below some of the big scams for you to watch out for.

Scam prizes

This is a letter claiming you have won a prize. You are then invited to part with money or give out your bank or personal details in order to claim it. In reality, you cannot win money or a prize unless you have entered a lottery or competition, and the prize is almost certainly non-existent. If you do fall for a scam of this kind your name and address may be shared amongst scammers and large amounts of scam mail will start coming your way.

Investment scams

Investment scammers will cold-call people and attempt to sell investments that will supposedly lead to huge financial gain. In reality they either do not exist or are worthless. Always seek independent legal advice before committing to any investment. At the moment, scams involving wine, diamonds or land seem to be popular.

Door-to-door scams

Scammers visiting door-to-door may offer you goods that are poor quality or not delivered. Another popular scam is to offer to do unnecessary building work, to cut back trees or resurface your driveway. Remember, genuine companies should always offer cancellation rights. If you have an unexpected caller, ask for identification, use a chain on the door, and phone the company to check. You will need to look up the number yourself – don't rely on the number provided by the person on the doorstep!

Psychic and clairvoyant scams

These unscrupulous individuals will approach you (usually in writing) to say they have seen something important in your future and will ask for money in return for giving you the full information.

If you think you have been scammed, you can report what's happened by calling the police on 101 or by calling Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 (www.actionfraud.police.uk)



Your Watch

If you don't already know who your co-ordinator is, contact Westminster's Neighbourhood Watch office on 020 7641 2117 or e-mail neighbourhoodwatch@westminster.gov.uk for further information, or to find out about starting up a watch in your area.

Watch Online

Find out more about Neighbourhood Watch and crime prevention through the following websites:

London Neighbourhood Watch Association:
www.lnwa.net

Neighbourhood Watch and Home Watch Network:
www.ourwatch.org.uk

What you report *can* make a difference

You and your neighbours know what should be going on in your area and, importantly, what should not.

The police and council won't necessarily know what is going on in your area unless you tell them and the more reports they receive on a particular issue, the more evidence they have to action it. If you witness a crime or anti-social behaviour, please report it.

Westminster City Council

To speak to Neighbourhood Watch officers at Westminster Council, e-mail neighbourhoodwatch@westminster.gov.uk or call 020 7641 2117

If you would like more copies of this newsletter, please contact us on 020 7641 2117.

Westminster Neighbourhood Watch is delivered by Westminster City Council in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police Service

To report problems with street lighting, noise, graffiti, roads etc to the council, visit www.westminster.gov.uk/reportafault or call 020 7641 2000

Metropolitan Police Service

Call the switchboard numbers of your local police stations to get in touch with your local Crime Prevention Officer and *Safer Neighbourhoods Team*. Please check www.met.police.uk/westminster for opening times

Paddington Green 020 7402 1212

West End Central 020 7437 1212

Charing Cross 020 7240 1212

Belgravia 020 7730 1212

Harrow Road 020 7402 1212

St John's Wood 020 7486 1212

To report non-urgent anti-social behaviour to the police, phone 101 www.met.police.uk/101

For crime prevention advice visit www.met.police.uk/crimeprevention or <http://content.met.police.uk/Site/crimepreventionbumblebee>

In an emergency (i.e. where there's an immediate threat to people or property) dial 999