

OUR NEWS

Westminster Neighbourhood Watch
Winter 2013

What is Neighbourhood Watch?

Neighbourhood Watch brings neighbours together to tackle crime and promote a sense of cooperation in their local community.

Each watch is led by a coordinator whose role it is to arrange meetings and act as a point of contact for the council and police.

If you don't know who your coordinator is or have general enquiries about Neighbourhood Watch please contact us on neighbourhoodwatch@westminster.gov.uk or 020 7641 2117.

Neighbourhood Watch Association

Westminster has introduced an Association to lead the way in how Neighbourhood Watch is run

On 13th November, Westminster held its first Neighbourhood Watch Association meeting. The Association will allow Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators to work with the council and the police to support and improve Neighbourhood Watch across Westminster.

Suggested topics for future discussion by the group include Neighbourhood Watch street signage and improving communication channels between watches and the local police.

The next meeting will be held in January.



Professional Witness Scheme

Westminster has launched a professional witness service to help tackle crime.

Also known as an expert witness, a professional witness is a specialist in a subject (through training or special knowledge) and may present his or her expert opinion in court without having been actual witness to any occurrence relating to a lawsuit or criminal case.

The service aims to use technology and a keener focus on evidence gathering to more quickly resolve serious and high risk cases of anti-social behaviour (ASB), increase conviction rates and reduce repeated reports of ASB. It also aims to give more support to high risk victims and reduce the number of cases that are discontinued because victims are reluctant to support a prosecution.

Two professional witness officers will take case referrals directly from CityWest Homes. Their duties include supporting victims, securing witness statements, collecting video surveillance evidence that can be used in court, identify perpetrators and attending court to present evidence.

How will your night end?

Christmas in the West End is a busy and exciting time of year. Thousands of visitors come to the city to enjoy a night out, take in a show, do their Christmas shopping or visit a gallery or museum.

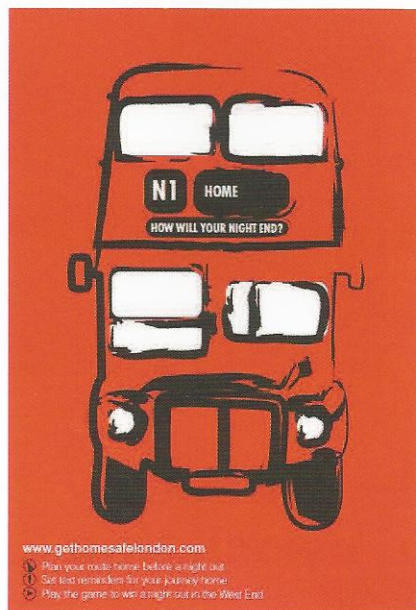
If you are planning an evening out in the West End, why not take a moment to plan your journey home. Go to our website at www.gethomesafelondon.com to plan your route in advance and set text reminders for your journey home. You can also enter our competition to win a range of great prizes and fun nights out in London.

At the start of the night remember:

- Keep money on you in case you miss your train and need to get a cab home
- Top up your oyster card before you go out, in case you misplace your wallet
- Store safe cab numbers in your phone and never get in an unmarked or unbooked minicab.

Text CAB to 60835 to get the number of three local, licensed minicab firms sent to your phone.

The Metropolitan Police are also setting up departure points at Villiers Street, Leicester Square and Soho. You can visit these points if you need assistance or information about getting home.



Crime prevention news

The updates below are from the council's Community Protection team who are responsible for coordinating responses to crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental problems on a neighbourhood basis.

To find out who your local officers are, call the council on 020 7641 1085.

Burglary, north Westminster

The police and council have been helping residents and businesses keep their premises secure from burglary and have also arrested some prolific burglars who are now in prison. Residential burglary has now dropped significantly in several areas of Westminster.

Please remember that scaffolding can be an easy route in for a committed burglar. If you have scaffolding where you live, make sure your doors and windows are secure.

Cashpoint theft, Elgin Avenue

The Harrow Road Community Protection Officer has been working with local police and RBS bank to address the issue of a wall which was shielding the cashpoint and making people vulnerable to thieves. The wall has now been removed which has led to a more open and safer environment for anyone wishing to use the bank or any other local shops. The team expect cashpoint theft to be significantly reduced in the area, if not eliminated, following this simple change.

Martlett Court, Covent Garden

The local Warden and Community Protection Officer found out recently that many people were parking illegally in Martlett Court which was causing an obstruction and providing hiding points for people engaged in anti-social behaviour. They arranged for a new locking system to be fitted to the access gate and restricted how many people were given a copy. The area now looks much better, safer, and anti-social behaviour has considerably reduced.

Rough sleeping, Victoria

The council, police, homeless services and the Victoria Business Improvement District have been working together to support rough sleepers in the Victoria area by helping them into permanent accommodation and enforcing against anti-social behaviour. The team have also secured vulnerable areas and cleaned up areas affected.

Begging, central Westminster

In addition to supporting rough sleepers, the council is committed to targeting those who come to the city to make money through begging and causing disruption. Four Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) have been issued against the most prolific offenders who are now banned from Westminster completely. If the orders are breached, it could result in a prison sentence.



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

- Police crime prevention advice:

www.met.police.uk/crimeprevention

For news, information and crime prevention tips you can follow the police and the council on Twitter:

@MPSWestminster

@CityWestminster

Contact us

For general enquiries about Neighbourhood Watch (please note this is a voicemail facility which is responded to once a week):

020 7641 2117

To report a non-urgent crime:

101

To report an emergency (where there is immediate threat to people or property):

999

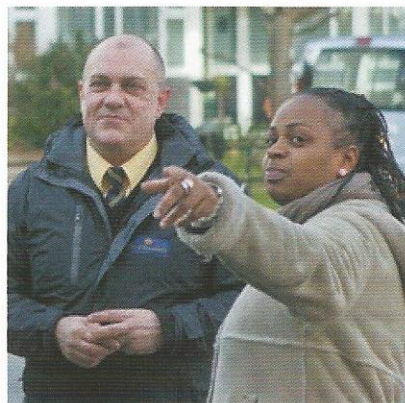
To report a crime anonymously call Crimestoppers

0800 555 111

To report an environmental problem to the council (such as noise nuisance, abandoned vehicles, litter, graffiti or damaged street furniture):

020 7641 2000

To request more copies of this newsletter or a large print version call 020 7641 2117



City of Westminster

