

NOTES FOR NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEMES

1. NW set up in the UK in 1982, in Mollington Cheshire, as a result of residents responding to a high crime rate, especially house burglaries. It is now one of the largest groups of volunteers in the United Kingdom.
 2. Neighbourhood Watch schemes are run by members and belong to members. The police does not run them, but the police and your local association are there to help you and give advice, not to **tell** you what to do.
 3. Statistics show that the risk of burglary is considerably less in areas where there are active NW schemes than elsewhere, to the extent that some insurance companies offer discounts for properties in such areas.
 4. **Neighbourhood Watch exists to:**
 - Cut crime and the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.
 - Provide reassurance to local residents and reduce the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.
 - Encourage neighbourliness and closer communities.
 - Improve the quality of life for local residents and tenants.
 5. **It will do this by:**
 - Being a community based organisation, involving residents and tenants who are working together.
 - Working in partnership with the police, local authorities and other agencies to reduce crime and disorder.
 - Sharing information and advice with the police and other agencies concerning crime and other incidents.
 6. **What does a co-ordinator do?**
 - A co-ordinator is the focal point of the scheme, who keeps the members informed of police and relevant Trading Standards alerts, received by telephone, e-mail or fax (the co-ordinator's choice of method).
 - He/she maintains close contact with local police, police community support officers and with local community organisations.
- General Information**
7. Ideally each street would have a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, with co-ordinators or scheme members, looking after whatever number of houses they feel able to cover. It may be just their house and the neighbours either side, or better still those opposite, which are often easier to see.
 8. You don't need anything, apart from a telephone or email to be a co-ordinator. You can of course be a member of a scheme without being a co-ordinator.
 9. It is important to look out for any activity that is unusual or suspicious and report it to the police.
 10. Let the police decide the outcome, however trivial it may seem to you. If incidents are not reported then the police may have no idea what may be going on in your locality.
 11. **If a crime is in progress or life at risk dial 999**, otherwise ring 01926 415000 and ask for the Communications Centre. Always mention you are a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator or scheme member.
 12. Make sure your own property is secure; there are plenty of leaflets giving important advice.
 13. Mark all valuables using SmartWater. This offers a better chance of getting any property back if unfortunately you happen to be burgled. Neighbourhood watch members can obtain SmartWater at a reduced price.
 14. The police operate a Community Alert Programme Scheme, which is a computerised telephone message, fax or e-mail service.
 15. With your consent and having signed the necessary data protection form, the police will notify you, at a time selected by yourself, to alert you to house burglaries or suspicious activity in your area, and occasionally may ask you to watch out for a particular vehicle.
 16. You would be expected to pass on most messages to your scheme members, but use your discretion as to what alerts do need passing on to your scheme.
 17. Don't expect messages every week; but further crime related information is also available on these web sites:-
 - National Neighbourhood Watch: www.mynhw.co.uk
 - Warwickshire Police: www.warwickshire.police.uk
 - Warwickshire Police Online News: www.onlinenews.warwickshire.police.uk
 - Crime Mapping: www.warwickshire.crimemapper.co.uk/map/warwickshire
 18. Safer Neighbourhoods gives Neighbourhood Watch an important input, through community forums, into borough, district and county council, Warwickshire Police and Police Authority strategies. The forums will prioritise what **the public** wants and develop action plans to address subjects of concern. Visit www.safer-neighbourhoods.co.uk to find out more.

Be vigilant

As residents you know whom your neighbours are, who lives in your community and what vehicles are normally parked in your road. This could be called regular patterns of behaviour.

You will often know what the life patterns are of your neighbours. For example "I know what the man looks like who parks his van opposite my house and I know he is a builder. He usually goes out at about 8am, often taking his child to school. So I would notice when someone different is by the back doors of his van unloading tools".

- You are being vigilant if you are aware of these types of behaviour and then spot something out of routine or pattern.

What can you do?

If you see such an incident then call the police. This may be a crime in progress. Write down a description of the person/s and any vehicle involved.

- You are being vigilant if you keep a look out for a suspicious vehicle circulated by the police.

If you see the vehicle, write down a description of the occupants and the vehicle and then call the police.

- Before every crime there is a suspicious incident. What does this mean? Criminals like to feel secure when they commit crime so they are likely to come to an area to carry out a reconnaissance. A vigilant person will often spot this person or his vehicle.

Write down a description of the occupants and the vehicle and make a note of the registration number. This can then be passed to your Safer Neighbourhood Team. If there is then a crime make sure the victim has the information as well, so they can tell the police.

Will the police take notice?

Yes – they are looking to increase the confidence of the public and being receptive to such contact is important to improve confidence in policing. If you contact the police then ask for an incident number so you can solicit feedback at a later date.

Feedback

The Watch Office will circulate good news stories on our messaging system. Email watch@warwickshire.police.uk for more information.

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR NEW SCHEMES

Neighbourhood Watch

