



# OUR NEWS

> THE E-NEWSLETTER FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SUPPORTERS

## Let's stay connected across England and Wales

Dear supporters,

With the lockdown measures easing and England and Wales opening up we are entering a new phase of the Covid-19 crisis. Local Neighbourhood Watch groups are becoming more active in their communities again not just online. As always we will continue to support individuals and their communities to adapt, stay safe and manage the situation.

Neighbourhood Watch Week took place in early June and was very successful, especially so given the current circumstances. The postcards and cartoons were popular and widely used with Associations sending them to Coordinators, supporters and people they wanted to thank and ensure that the message of 'Lets Stay Connected' was widely broadcast, and used to ensure that neighbours stay connected and look out for each other. The activity on our social media channel peaked with supporters posting messages and videos, and many fantastic messages of thanks and support posted from police forces and organisations.

We have been continuing to post inspirational stories on [www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk) to inspire others and celebrate the great work groups are doing in your communities. This work is having a positive impact with more people than ever before visiting our website (over 100,000 users in May). Feedback on our new website has been extremely positive but we want to improve it further and make it even easier to use and so we will be reviewing usage and feedback in the summer.

Please ensure you continue to share with us what you are doing locally and 'let's stay connected'. Thank you for your ongoing support as we build, move forward and continue to develop Neighbourhood Watch into an even more effective, inclusive and active movement.

  
John Hayward-Cripps

CEO | Neighbourhood Watch Network

## Vibrant volunteers help keep communities safe



The West Midlands Police have said they are grateful for the support of vibrant volunteers who are helping to combat crime and look out for their community through Neighbourhood Watch' in an article published on their website on the 17th June 2020.

They go on to say they appreciate the commitment and dedication of groups across the region, such as Sandwell Valley Neighbourhood Watch, who play a vital role and assist them in keeping people safe and preventing crime.

Sandwell Valley Neighbourhood Watch is one of the active groups on their patch with more than 40% of the households (200) that actively participate.

Sandwell Valley Neighbourhood Watch's diverse members range from teenagers to those aged in their 90s, all of whom get involved in a range of activities from clean up events to acting as 'eyes and ears' of the neighbourhood.

They've also taken action by improving security measures after identifying hotspot times and locations following a spate of vehicle crime, burglary and anti-social behaviour. Their activities, and the information fed into the West Midlands Police has

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# Vibrant volunteers help keep communities safe

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enabled them to make arrests and prosecute offenders to drastically reduce the crime trend.

The scheme was launched three years ago and crime prevention advice and community issues are regularly shared and discussed at meetings, door-to-door or via mobile phone group chats - which have been more prevalent during Covid-19 lockdown.

The members have further made a difference in their community by looking out for the vulnerable and paying tribute to health staff in the Borough. This saw them organise regular food packages, essentials and accommodation with the help of local partners, stakeholders and other community groups.

Kardaya Rooprai, chairman of the West Midlands Neighbourhood Watch Force Area Association and one of the founding co-ordinators of the Sandwell Valley Neighbourhood Watch, said: "It's all about people helping each other.

"We're playing our part in the community to improve the area and lives, by helping to prevent and reduce crime whilst also keeping people safe.

"It only works if you all work together, and we have made the investment to build strong relationships with the police and other partners. It's a really satisfying feeling to be involved in making a difference to people's lives and the community as a whole."

Sandwell Police Superintendent and force volunteer lead, Martin Hurcomb, said: "We really appreciate and value the work of Neighbourhood Watch groups who play a vital role within their communities.

"Groups like Sandwell Valley NHW are an active part of their community. They work together to prevent and reduce crime, the fear of crime, and look out for each other."

The West Midlands Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Waheed Saleem added: "Our Neighbourhood Watch teams are a real asset to keeping communities safe, and supporting their neighbours and those around them.

"They support the police by informing officers of crime and anti-social behaviour happening in neighbourhoods and ensuring that police can take action.

"I would like to thank the members of Sandwell Valley Neighbourhood Watch, and indeed all our Neighbourhood Watch teams for all of their work. In these difficult times it is even more important that local communities can feel connected."

## Harnessing the power of volunteers post lockdown

Lockdown has been a journey of communities looking after communities, making them more resilient together. The stories that you have shared with us have inspired us to do more! As we start to come out of the lockdown, Neighbourhood Watch has become more relevant than ever before. Actively supporting our neighbours and building community resilience will enable us to work more closely together to achieve more.

We must look at how we can connect with the army of volunteers that the pandemic has activated and the role Neighbourhood Watch can play within communities going forward in the 'new normal'. The ways in which we maintain and develop our communities has changed, as has the ways in which we communicate with each other. During lockdown we have seen an increase in the use of virtual conferencing platforms, such as Zoom, Skype and Microsoft Teams. Many of our members, and the Central Support Team have found these to be more efficient, inclusive cost-effective way of holding meetings. We are likely to see these ways of communicating continuing, while not replacing face to face contact.

We mustn't forget the connections we have made in our communities and the many that put themselves forward to protect others. There are many people who joined local groups to look after the vulnerable, elderly, and isolated residents, who want to continue the work they

started. We encourage you to look at how we can support that swelling sense of community and enhance it through Neighbourhood Watch.

We will shortly be launching a campaign to engage and encourage Covid-19 volunteers to use their skill set and enthusiasm to continue supporting their communities in other ways. Engaging with existing activities such as the Calling Tree campaign, which reduces isolation and loneliness, is an ideal way to continue to help the vulnerable.

## Thank you

for **volunteering** in your community during COVID-19



**Wellbeing**

We are thankful that you have looked after the **wellbeing** of people within your own **communities**, making a real difference to people's lives.



**Community**

Thank you for your **sense of purpose** to do something **proactive** and **meaningful** for those in your **community**.



**Sense of purpose**

Neighbourhood Watch celebrates the fantastic work people do to boost the wellbeing of their communities, supporting each other and giving them purpose, whilst proactively making us safer. We do this by sharing and acting on crime prevention advice to our communities and strengthening them from within.  
[www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk)



Neighbourhood Watch Network is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered in England and Wales, no: 1175349

## Perception of crime during lockdown

Throughout lockdown we have been circulating a short survey to our Associations across England and Wales every two weeks, asking them whether people in their area perceive that crime had gone up, down or stayed the same over the previous 2 weeks and what crimes people feel have increased or are more concerned about. We would like to thank all those who have taken time to complete the survey – in particular, those who have stayed with us and completed it for each of the time periods.

The results of each of the surveys have been collated and sent to the Home Office to add a community perspective to the police recorded crime data they receive from police forces. They tell an interesting story...

Initially most respondents (53%) reported that crime in their area had decreased since lockdown started. With people being at home the majority of the time there was a reduction in burglaries and in personal crime on the streets. Being at home meant increased vigilance so potential criminals who were on the streets to commit crime were more likely to be noticed. However, the types of crime that people felt were rising – and they feel have continued to rise throughout lockdown – are fraud, car crime and thefts outside of homes. More people at home meant more people on their computers, available to answer the door and take phone calls. This made fraudsters lives easier. Crime increased on driveways, in gardens and sheds, with thefts from and of motor vehicles and of garden furniture. Empty roads led to more road racing and speeding and with recycling centres closed, fly-tipping started to increase.

As time went on, antisocial behaviour was reported as a growing problem - some relating to breaches of lockdown rules and some because of sheer boredom, with young people unable to attend school and adults unable to work. Drug-taking and dealing became more obvious as drug dealers and those buying from them were more noticeable, especially as they had to go to where people lived rather than somewhere further afield. Shockingly, people reported how food parcels were being stolen from doorways. Burglaries were taking place at the homes of key workers and their vehicles were targeted in car parks whilst they were at work.

As some of the lockdown restrictions were relaxed, concerns about antisocial behaviour started to rise further - litter and fires from barbecues at beauty spots, noise nuisance from neighbours and more people breaching lockdown rules. Concern also rose around domestic and child abuse within homes, with people being shut inside for so long. As more people took to riding bikes for environmental and exercise reasons, bike theft was reported as on the increase. With people able to meet up in small groups outside, antisocial behaviour started to include issues related to drinking, including urinating in public as public toilets remained closed.

The most recent survey covered the period 31st May – 13th June. Perceptions of crime rates have now changed, with 41% of respondents feeling that crime had gone up and 59% that it had stayed the same over the past couple of weeks. No one felt that it had gone down.

## Neighbourhood Watch Week: a connection success

Neighbourhood Watch Week which ran from 7th to 13th June, exceeding our expectations!

The Week was promoted via social media with ways people could engage both online and offline. The theme was on celebrating the connections we have made with our neighbours before and during lockdown and let's stay connected.

Our posters and postcards to share with neighbours were downloaded over 22,000 times from our website! We appeared in 18 local media articles, we ran a successful cartoon drawing competition (see page 3 for the winners), and ran a very enjoyable Facebook Live Quiz to conclude the week.

We were overjoyed with the messages and videos of support which we received from individuals, Coordinators, Mayors and the Police.

**David Hodgson, Mayor of Bedford Borough, said 'This week sees the celebration of 35 years of Neighbourhood Watch Week in Bedford. I want to thank all the people involved - the volunteers, the Coordinators, the Trustees - for supporting Neighbourhood Watch here in Bedford. And as we know its not just about crime prevention, its also about keeping safe and living in a nice environment. And importantly, and particularly in the pandemic, its also about neighbourliness and about volunteering.... Lets stay connected.'**

## Neighbourhood Watch Week: a connection success

Kathryn Holloway, Bedford Police and Crime Commissioner said *'The most enormous 35th happy birthday to our members of the neighbourhood watches across the county. You were the first and the original. It's because of you that we also have street watch, and horse watch and dog watch. So it's a massive thank you for all you do and all the intelligence you pass on to Bedfordshire Police. You are truly working in partnership with us. Happy birthday!'*

Chief Inspector Mick Chatterton from South East Command Unit said *'A big thank you to all our Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators and all our Neighbourhood Watch members. I cannot say how crucial the work you do is... to keep victims of crime safe (and) the information intelligence you provide to us is really key. And all I would ask is that you continue to do that for us. We have had some really good results recently where the information intelligence you have supplied to us, we have acted upon and been able to bring offenders to justice. So keep doing it, keep safe and keep well.'*

Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Hardaya Dhindsa, said *'I'm proud to say that we work very closely with Neighbourhood Watch and they are [a] key partner in my Police and Crime Plan. That's why I established a Neighbourhood Watch Innovation Fund last year in support of local community initiatives run by Neighbourhood Watch groups across the county. I have committed to running this scheme again this year due to the many successes it delivered.'*

Caron Meikle, Coordinator, Shooters Hill *'I became a Coordinator because I was a victim of crime. At that point there were quite a few burglaries going on in the road. We attend workshops and we attend meetings. What I would like to see is more [people from an] ethnic minority background attending or joining the scheme. It brings a community spirit and it brings safety to the area. It would be nice to see people joining the scheme of a younger age as well.'*

## Our competition winners...

We asked you to get your creative juices flowing and draw a cartoon depicting what being a good neighbour in lockdown means to you? And you did! We loved seeing the competition entries and can now announce our 4 winners...

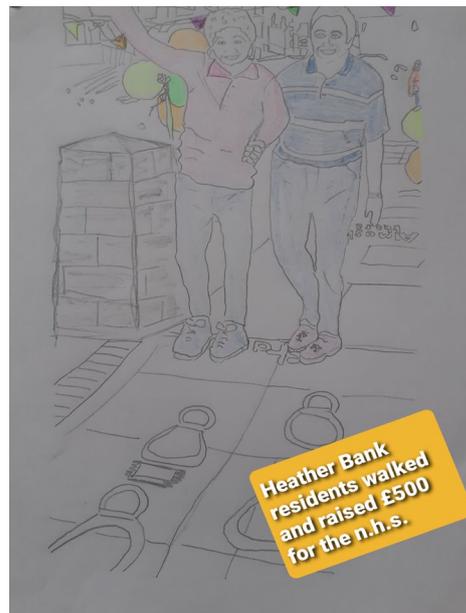


**Dr Tony Cross,**  
Kent, adult (left)

**Beryl Formston,**  
Merseyside, adult  
(right)

**Bryony Marianne Usher,**  
Windsor, adult  
(bottom left)

**Scott Aslett,**  
Kent, age 5  
(bottom right)





## SPOTLIGHT ON AMY MAWBY

HEAD OF FUNDRAISING

‘Crime prevention is our mission, but community is at our core.’

### What attracted you to work for Neighbourhood Watch?

I'd been working in the charity sector across fundraising, marketing, communications and community events for almost 10 years and was looking for my next challenge after being in my previous role at a family support charity for 6 years. Like most people I knew Neighbourhood Watch well – or thought I did! The job looked great and when I got to the interview I found out even more about the great, innovative team I'd be working with, all the varied interesting work the volunteers across England and Wales do, and the opportunity to make difference in communities. I was thrilled to be offered the role.

### How does your position support Neighbourhood Watch groups across England and Wales?

My role is to support the wider regional network to access and develop skills around fundraising. I maintain the fundraising area on the website, updating it with guidance, resources, tips and funding routes for local groups; deliver workshops on fundraising during our annual seminars and more recently over Zoom; and also offer support and advice on an ad-hoc basis reviewing funding applications or answering any questions via email relating to anything to do with fundraising.

On a wider basis, I am responsible for gaining new national sponsors that align with our vision, mission and values, who can offer investment in the development and project work of Neighbourhood Watch Network as well as offering discounts or benefits to members in some cases. I am also the lead on the member offer, looking at how we shape our journey for supporters, from the time a member of the public first views one of our campaigns or local projects up to keeping connected with our highly engaged Coordinators and Association leads.

### What do you enjoy most about being part of Neighbourhood Watch?

I most enjoy the possibilities for the future. Neighbourhood Watch's legacy, trustworthiness and unwavering volunteer base are all a dream to be working with. I am so proud of this organisation and what it has achieved, but I'm equally very excited about the role it can play in society in the future. That has never been more apparent to me than during the current Covid-19 crisis. People looked to us, to our volunteers and groups at this time for support, connection and opportunities to help others in their communities. Crime prevention is our mission, but community is at our core. As a big-city girl born and raised, it is heartening to know that we can play a huge role in ensuring everyone feels included, encouraged and like they belong where they live.

## Diversity in Neighbourhood Watch

**How diverse we are within Neighbourhood Watch is always a topic we are exploring but for some groups, it remains harder to achieve.**

What is diversity and what does it mean for Neighbourhood Watch?

Diversity is understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising our individual differences. This can include race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. What this means for Neighbourhood Watch is that our reach and representation in communities needs to be inclusive and reflective of the community that we represent.

Traditionally our membership hasn't always reflected the demographics of communities but we are pleased to say that during the lockdown our membership rose and this was from all walks of life and continues to grow. Is this enough? We can do more... We need to find out what barriers there are to engaging with Neighbourhood Watch and find out ways that we can overcome them.

Why is this important? As our communities have grown in size and diversity, so must we in how we support the community. We are an inclusive, grassroots, community-led organisation that works with individuals and groups to build safer, connected and resilient places to live.

**That can only be achieved by listening, representing and embracing individuality.**

## Summer seminars planned for 10th, 11th & 12th August



As we will not be able to hold the usual Summer Seminars in various venues across the country, this year we are planning on holding them virtually via Zoom.

The seminars will be not be all day sessions as in previous years but instead Zoom sessions that last an hour and 45 minutes.

The seminars will be for Association leads and representatives, Coordinators and members of Neighbourhood Watch.

The outline of the seminars is:

- The planned dates for the sessions are August 10th, 11th, 12th
- There will be 2 seminars each day: 10am – 11.45am and 2pm – 3.45pm
- The majority of the Central Support Team will attend each seminar
- There will be a maximum of 45 participants for each session

We will soon put out invitations to book onto the seminars on Eventbrite linked to from our website.

Bookings will operate on a first-come-first-served basis.

The seminars will all follow the same format so anyone wanting to take part should only sign up for one seminar.

The focus of the sessions will be to:

1. Introduce aspects of the refreshed strategy and gain feedback from members and supporters on this
2. Deliver presentations from partner organisations on the joint work being undertaken
3. Deliver presentations on the work of some innovative local Neighbourhood Watch groups
4. Share stories and ideas of how we move on post lockdown and embrace the surge of community volunteering that we have all witnessed during the crisis.

We hope the seminars, whilst run differently to previous years, will be just as informative, lively and inspiring.

## National burglary campaign to be launched end of July

We are currently planning a burglary prevention campaign to be launched nationally at the end of July into early August.

The campaign will be delivered via social media focusing on simple steps the general public can take to prevent burglaries from happening to them. As lockdown continues to be lifted, more people are leaving the comfort of their own homes to return to work and leisure activities. We know that most burglaries are opportunistic.

Our campaign will focus on reminding the general public as they leave their houses to take simple steps to keep their home safe as highlighted by the acronym WIDE:

- **Windows:** Window locks
- **Interior:** Interior lights on timer
- **Doors:** Double or deadbolts fitted to doors
- **Exterior:** Exterior lights on a sensor

Obviously, at the moment with extended daylight the most important thing is to lock doors and windows but if you are out when it is dark, keep some lights on or on a timer and try to install external sensor lights.

Resources and guidance will be given to coordinators and local groups prior to the campaign launch to help them share and amplify the messages within their area.

## Did you know...

- To keep children safe and protected from harm, new guidance from the government for parents and carers about the increased risks to children during the coronavirus pandemic is [available here](#).
- Survivors of domestic abuse and their children will receive greater protections after the government announced an overhaul of how the family courts deal with this crime. More information about the key changes can be found in the [press notice](#).
- The [SafeToNet Foundation](#) is providing one million free-for-life licenses of the SafeToNet mobile safety app for UK families in order to help keep the nation's children safe online. The app uses artificial intelligence to safeguard children as they use their mobile device, while protecting privacy, by detecting threats such as bullying and sexting as they happen. Parents and carers can register their details through the GOV.UK online safety page before 1 August, and they must activate the app before the end of August. Further details can be found on the [SafeToNet website](#).
- [Surviving Economic Abuse](#) has launched a survey for victims / survivors and front-line professionals who work with them to explore the experiences and needs of those actively experiencing economic abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey can be found [here](#) and will close on Friday 31 July.
- The [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#) has launched a new online platform for victims of stalking to access support. The tool will be developed to incorporate more detail on local services across the UK and will be available in multiple languages to ensure language is not a barrier to access stalking support.

## Call blocker

As you may already know the National Trading Standards Scams Team received government funding to supply and install call blocking technology in consumers' homes.

The project re-launched at the beginning of March and received hundreds of applications. Due to Covid-19 they had to make the very difficult decision to close applications as it wasn't safe under government guidelines to continue posting and installing units. Since then the team has been working with trueCall, to provide a safe application process. The team and trueCall are now in a position to re-open applications and post units out to consumers who can self-install only. We will only be able to send units directly to the consumers and people won't be able to apply on behalf of others, units will be supplied on a first come first served basis. Unfortunately the team are not allowing applications from partners or local authorities or anyone who cannot self-install the unit. There won't be the option for an engineer to visit the user to install the unit. The team understands that some people may be disappointed with these restrictions, however the team concluded this was the only safe way to supply the units.

Direct applicants will be able to apply online on the Friends Against Scams website from the 8th July, via:  
[www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/callblocker](http://www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/callblocker).

**SAY NO TO SCAM AND NUISANCE CALLS.**

Apply for a free call blocker from the Friends Against Scams website today.

[www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/callblocker](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/callblocker)

**NATIONAL TRADING STANDARDS**  
Scams Team

Friends Against SCAMS

**#ScamAware**

## Stop. Challenge. Protect.



**STOP. CHALLENGE. PROTECT.**

Criminals are using "spoofing" to trick you into thinking you're being contacted by Amazon. Be suspicious of fake emails offering you a free gift card as links contained can lead to your device being infected with malware.

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is! You can also help by using the new Suspicious Email Reporting Service, which allows people to forward potential scam emails to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk).

## A word from our sponsors

### AVAST discovers 47 malicious apps disguised as games on Goog Play Store

If you have an Android smartphone, you should pay attention to this new report from our Cyberhood Watch partners, Avast.

Researchers from Avast have issued a warning about 47 dangerous apps that are disguised as games on the Google Play Store.

The apps, dubbed as 'HiddenAds', appear as innocent gaming apps, but actually include adware technology that can bombard your smartphone with intrusive ads.

Adware is a type of malicious software that inundates you with incessant pop-ups and messages, such as "CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'VE BEEN SELECTED FOR A FREE SAMSUNG GALAXY S20! CLICK HERE!". Besides annoying you, adware can also gather your personal information, track the websites you visit, and even record everything you type.

These apps have already been downloaded more than 15 million times, and 17 of the apps are still available on the Google Play Store. Details of the malicious apps can be [found here](#).

In addition, Avast has provided some tips to help you spot malicious apps and prevent your Android device from being infected with them:

- Carefully check the permissions the app requests before installing it. See what the app is asking to access. If it's asking for data it does not need, consider this a red flag
- Read the privacy policy and the terms and conditions
- Read the user reviews. If there's a large number of negative reviews, you might want to reconsider downloading the app
- Install a strong antivirus app like Avast Mobile Security on your so that adware and other malicious apps are identified and blocked.

## Co-op encourages continued neighbourliness

Government measures to stay at home have led to a surge in neighbourliness as people look out for the vulnerable and talk to those next door more than ever before, according to a new online study released today by Co-op Insurance. The study is the Co-op's third to investigate the changing nature of neighbourhoods and what it means to be a good neighbour, something that Nilesch Chohan from Headingley, Leeds, knows all about after being crowned Neighbour of the Year in 2019.

**Nilesch Chohan, Co-op Insurance's Neighbour of the Year 2019, said:** "We all play an important role to make sure that those who are on their own and lonely, especially the most vulnerable, are safe in their homes. Little things like saying hello over a garden fence, waving at a neighbour through a window or getting in touch to see if they need any essential food dropping off outside, may not seem like a lot but will make the world of difference to those who may be struggling during the pandemic."

With restrictions easing for some, how do we ensure this neighbourliness does not leave with lockdown?

- **Keep in touch:** Picking up the phone or popping round for a social distanced brew could mean the world to someone. With social distancing looking to be in place for the foreseeable, make sure you keep a safe distance from your neighbour.
- **Give a wave:** The simple act of waving to a neighbour can help you both to feel more socially connected. While a wave may not seem like a lot, it could make a big difference to someone who is feeling alone. A little wave shows that you care.
- **Lend a helping hand:** Though many of the lockdown restrictions are reducing, with more shops starting to open; the vulnerable may continue to feel uncertain for quite some time and may not be comfortable leaving their house. Why not reach out to your neighbours and see if they need anything?

At Co-op, we've been providing insurance for over 150 years. During that time, we've helped people protect the things what matters most to them and also encouraged communities to become more helpful to each other through our partnership with Neighbourhood Watch.



**Join the local library**

Your local library is free to join and many have online hubs, offering downloadable resources, activities and online community events.





UK Government

# Welcome Back

TO BLOOMING BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS

**ENJOY**  
*Summer*  
**SAFELY**

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