



**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

**MERTON BOROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION**

## **Merton Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) Annual General Meeting**

**12<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026 commencing at 19.00hrs at Merton Civic Centre.

Attendance: 46

Committee members: Hugh Ind (Chair), Roger Steele (Treasurer), Mark Robinson (NHW Lead), Peter Treagust (Committee Member) Martin Vickery (Committee Member) Emma Loader (Committee Member)

### **1) Introductions and welcome**

The NHW Chair welcomed attendees and outlined the agenda for the meeting.

### **2) Annual Report from the Chairperson**

The Neighbourhood Watch Chair took the attendees through the Chairs report for 2025/26. The report covered membership, community events, communication and Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) funding.

#### ***Membership***

- We continue to work with the Police Partnerships team on targeting wards in the borough with lowest coverage.
- Exploring and working with Met Engage.
- Work continues to update our database to comply with GDPR and ensure we have the most up to date contact details for our coordinators.
- Ongoing conversations with neighboring boroughs and National Neighbourhood Watch regarding their working practices and systems used to store the data.

- We are making efforts to facilitate communication between NW leaders in the borough
- Some key Committee Members have left but we have added new Committee Members.

### ***Community Events***

- We search for events to promote Neighbourhood Watch to Merton residents, and this will continue in 2026.
- We attended Mitcham Carnival in 2025.
- Days of visibility across the borough on a quarterly basis promoting Neighbourhood Watch.
- Safer neighbourhood police bike marking events at different locations.
- Residents' meetings/coffee mornings.
- Junior Neighbourhood Watch – opportunity to engage with hundreds of primary school age pupils.

### ***Communication***

- We have started to rely on NW Alert System (allied to Met Engage) for sharing key information within Merton. Local crime figures are readily available via Met Engage.
- Most of our communication is via Alert or email with fortnightly updates.
- Newsletter produced quarterly.
- NHW sits on Merton's Safer Neighbourhood Board and is a member of the Community Safety Partnership, with the Chair sitting on the Community Safety Partnership Board – to aid communication.
- We aim for more vibrant communication amongst NW leads in Merton.

### ***MOPAC funding***

- We obtained funding 2025-2026 for Bike and Tool marking kits.
- We held monthly events in various bike and tool hotspots across Merton to mark bikes and tools and help deter theft.
- We also attended at Merton Council's Days of Visibility and Mitcham Carnival.
- This was a successful initiative that supported Police when dealing with stolen property, and we may look to run it again in the future.

The Chair introduced the current committee. There are a few new people and happy to talk to new volunteers.

It was requested that it would be good to have information about the committee prior to the AGM to allow the board to be approved into their roles. This was noted for the future and as a point to improve communication.

An attendee asked if anyone has ever been turned down from joining the committee. To date no one has been.

The wards that Committee Members were from was added to the slide. It was raised that it would be good to have wider representation from across the borough. This was acknowledged with the caveat that a representation from every ward might make the committee too big.

It was suggested that the website would be a good way of improving communication. This is something that MR is working on.

*\*Elected the committee\**

### ***Future Plans***

- Continue to strengthen our relationship and share best practice with the National Neighbourhood Watch Association. Adapt to their new Strategy.
- Support our coordinators and members during 2026. We continue to signpost our members to relevant agencies for assistance. If you have a suggestion or need, please let us know.
- Obtain sufficient funding to continue with our plans. We have applied for two 2026/27 MOPAC projects – security equipment and DIY project. Waiting for MOPAC to agree – which will likely be towards the end of May.
- Improve communication with volunteers.

### ***The National Neighbourhood Watch Strategy***

The Chair briefly mention the Neighbourhood Watch National Strategy. The strategy incorporates

1. Neighbourhood Watch – Standard NHW.
2. Neighbourhood Act - Empowering people to do practical things in their local community.
3. Neighbourhood Connect – helping people to connect with neighbours and others.

## ***Thankyous***

The Chair wanted to express his thanks to Amanda Knight, who had worked on behalf of NHW, but left her role last year. The Chair also wanted to thank Steve who recently stepped down from the committee.

The chair also welcomed Mark Robinson, Community Resilience Lead, to NHW.

The chair also thanked the Community Safety Team, Police and other partners for supporting NHW. Also the co-ordinators and committee for the work they do to help keep residents safe.

## **3) Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer explained that we are in a good position and able to pay out for our projects at the start of the year despite the main income coming from MOPAC in two instalments throughout the year. The MOPAC funding is the only source of income. The current balance at the 31sts of March 2026 was £11,313.65.

## ***Questions***

**What is the remit of the committee?**

We have a NHW constitution which the committee is hoping to look at. Objects are:

1. To promote good citizenship and greater public participation in the prevention of crime, and the fear of crime, so that effective liaison between the police, other community safety groups and the public can be achieved in order to reduce crime in the London Borough of Merton.
2. To facilitate consultation arrangements with watches in the borough that may be initiated by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to discharge its responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and its 2007 review.
3. To be non-party in politics, non-sectarian in religion and to operate an equal opportunities policy.

## **4) Guest Speaker: Merton Neighbourhood Warden Service**

The Team Leader from the Neighbourhood Warden Service provided an overview on the service including their remit, coverage and how they can be contacted.

***The Neighbourhood Wardens are...***

- There to reassure, engage, and protect the quality of life for everyone in Merton

- Visible, approachable team working across Merton
- Role is proactive and preventative - we aim to stop issues before they escalate
- Act as a bridge between the community and the council, helping residents feel heard and supported
- Trained in community safety, enforcement, and support services, ensuring a balanced approach to problem-solving
- Work closely with partners such as the police, housing teams, and local organisations to provide joined-up solutions

There are 8 wardens currently (2 wardens focusing on untidy land) and will be expanding to 10 shortly.

Provide reassurance with a strong presence from 7am–10pm, supported by joint patrols with police, housing teams, waste, and VIA.

Flexibility to move to where the need is. Use of vehicles to travel where needed, but keen to remain visible.

#### ***The remit of the wardens is...***

- Identify and report individuals for environmental and anti-social behaviour offences
- Issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for offences such as littering, or breaches of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs)
- Support the community through educational advice and diversionary tools
- Submit formal evidence to support legal or enforcement action.
- Raise safeguarding concerns and make timely referrals to appropriate services

#### ***Outcomes***

The Wardens have had many positive outcomes across the borough and have worked with the Police on operations.

#### ***How to report***

- Merton Council website – [www.merton.gov.uk](http://www.merton.gov.uk)
- Email - ASBunit@merton.gov.uk
- Telephone - 020 8274 4901
- Approach wardens on the street

#### ***Questions***

**Do you go to ward panel meetings?** The team are trying to get out to ward panels to meet communities and explain their remit.

**Do the big retailers contribute to the funding of this work?** Not directly, but some are providing extra security. Not always the big stores being targeted. Have put in town link radio in Wimbledon to get the businesses to communicate better. Has helped and communicated to CCTV to collect evidence. They are working to connect all of Merton with town link Radio but starting with Morden.

**Do Sainsburys have the power to arrest?** No just to detain.

**Do you deal with dangerous dogs?** No, this would be the Police, but if it is ASB they would be able to collate evidence or if there is a welfare issue, then it would be the RSPCA.

**Can the wardens issue FPN's** Yes, there is legislation that the wardens can work under and there are multiple things they can issue FPN's for.

**How do you patrol?** Predominantly patrol on foot but if we have some days where the vehicle is needed when there are a number of taskings across the borough.

**Do you work with the Clarion Wardens?** The wardens are trying to do some joint patrols but do work different shift patrols. Wardens are also trying to work with MOAT and other Housing Associations.

There was a short discussion on the untidy land remit. One resident said if a garden is to the extent where it is causing hazard this can be reported.

## **5) Guest Speaker: Trading Standards**

Principle Trading Standards Officer came to talk to the AGM about phone and internet scams. They outlined that there is an open invite for them to come and talk to any community groups.

Scams have become more prominent. Particularly due to the developments in technology. You don't even have to leave the house. They are targeting everybody. They are after information about people to put together pieces of a jigsaw puzzle about you.

If you pick up the telephone and say hello and then there is a pause or automated message this may be a fishing call and the scammers are trying their luck. They make a lot of money. Don't keep them on the phone as they may be building up their information about you. It is best not to pick up any calls from numbers you don't recognise.

They are becoming more sophisticated and may know information about you, making it more difficult to spot. They can often say they are from the bank. Best advice is to hang up your phone, call another number to a friend or family member to ensure the call has discontinued and then call your bank via the number from back of your card.

If a call is urgent and asking for money – give yourself thinking time and just hang up.

In news it has been reported that a number of companies have had cyber-attacks and held to ransom for customer details.

- Think about accounts you need and who you are giving your data to.
- Do not store your card.
- Make sure you use good passwords. Think of three words and in-between put a number or a digit as it makes it difficult to hack.

Phone theft is a problem. It's the information and not the phone that people are looking for. Be aware of the security features. When you get notifications don't have the whole message appearing on your locked screen.

Shop online use a credit card as there is more protection. If details get stolen, bank money they are spending.

## **6) Metropolitan Police Update**

Officers from Merton's Neighbourhood Policing Team were in attendance.

### ***Met Engage***

Residents can sign up for Met Engage which is a good way to email and communicate with the local teams and receive invites for "Cuppa with a Copper". You do have to provide contact number so Police can contact you. Police are trying to get out and about for those who don't have internet and try to post details on notice boards. Each ward does have officers.

A resident said the "Cuppa with a Copper" are good but could be advertised better.

Met engage Website - [Sign Up - Met Engage](#)

### ***Police Station Closures.***

Closure of the Police Stations front offices. Charring Cross and Lewisham are the only 24hr desks.

### ***Operations***

Frost Watch – illegal e-bikes and scooters, 37 were seized and arrests made and led to weapons being recovered. Possible due to intelligence from the community.

Mitcham and Morden day of action – properties targeted at the same time, suspects arrested as well as weapons, drugs and cash recovered. Aim to stop gangs. People communicating info to Police. Not always quick but helps to build intelligence picture.

### **Questions**

**What is being done to deal with grooming gangs?** If reported, the Police will do a visit and pass information to specialist teams. The Police work with Safeguarding Teams at the Council. If you are concerned, then report via 101 but don't put yourself in danger.

**What is the reason for all the questions when you call 101?** Call staff have a script and are trying to gather as much information as possible to put onto a potential crime report.

**Where do we find out about Ward panels?** Met Engage is a good place to find out more.

**Meeting Concluded**