“Neighbourhood Watch is about people coming together to look out for one another and making our communities safer and more pleasant places to live and work’

We also aim to promote neighbourliness and community cohesion by helping people feel safe and looking out for our neighbours’.

The above two sentences, in my view, are vitally important and reflect vital ingredients for safe communities in this day and age and representative of what we see on a daily basis in Cumbria.

This year we say goodbye to Gary Murray from Crimestoppers. Gary has now retired after a number of years with Crimestoppers covering the Northwest. He has done an excellent job of work throughout the Northwest and in particular Cumbria where he introduced us to Ring.com and a resulting partnership that enabled us to begin the Video Doorbell project that has continued to the present day. His contribution to Cumbria Neighbourhood Watch has been excellent and we wish Gary well in his retirement.

Our work involving Video Doorbells continues alongside our partnership working with Cumbria Police to provide support and an element of safety for those people who have been victims of crime, anti social behaviour etc. As I mentioned last year and will continue each year, the success of this project is dependant on funds from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners Community Funds and we are extremely grateful for his support.

I am also pleased to mention that the work we initiated relating to Crime Prevention for rural communities, in particular Farming and the Young Farmers has been recognised as good practice Neighbourhood Watch Network looking to secure funding so that they can roll out the training Country wide.

Rural Crime in Cumbria continues to be a serious issue and with this in mind we are looking to work with rural communities to establish Farm Watch Schemes that will feature an element of Crimewatch along side it. Ideally, we can persuade such communities to look out for each other while offering Crimestoppers as a useful option to provide community information while remaining 100% anonymous.

We have continued our work relating to the Digital Voice Pilot project with BT with presentations to groups around the County. It is now a few weeks away from the switchover from Fibre to Digital in January 2027 so it’s important that everyone is aware of the impact this switchover will have especially so after the recent storms and the power cuts that resulted.

Our AGM this year will be held at Bardsea Malt Kiln Village Hall on Friday 27 November at 2 pm. Our focus at the AGM focuses on the Digital Switchover and the Police Reform with local MP Michelle Scrogham, attending to speak about both these issues, both of which will invariably have an impact on Cumbria. In addition we will have a representative from Electricity North West to explain their response to the recent storms and how they intend to respond in the new year with particular emphasis on the Digital Switchover. In addition we have a Detective from Cumbria Police who will provide information and advice on Fraud and Scams.

We will also have the High Sheriff attending with her High Sheriff Cadet in attendance to announce the winner of the High Sheriff Award.

I’m sure you will find this years AGM very informative especially since the subjects covered will have a real impact of every community especially Emergency Planning Groups. I do hope that you can make it. Tea/coffee and biscuits will be made available as well.

Last but not least, Neighbourhood Watch signs and window stickers will be available at the venue if you require them.

In our Financial Report, reference is made to ‘other Creditors’ in the sum of £457 which was included at 31 March 2025. This has been reflected in every CNWA Financial Account for many years and before I started with CNWA. Unfortunately, we are unable to determine where or to whom this money is owed as no specific record apparently now exists. As such we have removed it from our accounts, however, should it be possible to establish who it is owed to we will make good the payment.

Many thanks for your patience and support and hope as many of you as possible can make to the AGM on 27 November.

Kind regards

J Murray

Joe Murray QPM
Chair and Trustee of Cumbria Neighbourhood Watch Association