

WOKING NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
AGM and CO-ORDINATOR'S MEETING 2024.
18th July 2024, Goldwater Lodge

1 WELCOME

Martin Stilwell welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly PC Jamie Ellis, representing Insp Ed Lyons who was unavailable at short notice.

2 PRESENT

Martin Stilwell, chair (MS), Alan Taylor committee member, Steve Dew registrations administrator and committee member, John Shergold committee member.

PC Jamie Ellis (JE), Surrey Police

Co-ordinators: Jill Hayes, Christine Briggs, Marilyn Adcock, Kathryn Hitchins, Crista Raynor, Elizabeth Wild, Roy Westley, Ken chapman.

APOLOGIES Geoffrey Johnson (committee member), Marc Alderman (committee member), Chris Rowsell, Paula Eddington, John Whybourn, Laura Ward-Close, Hayley Underwood, Daphne Lander, Jerney Irving, Michael Widdup, Amanda Ferguson, Bob Cowell, Angela Williams, Anna Roberts, Sheila Carroll, Maureen Thomas, Richard Petterson, James Mackay, Kate Palmer, Tony Trangmar, Linda Hemley

CHAIR'S REPORT

Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches



Woking stats

Woking has 155 Watches
Some are large facebook-based groups
1241 Members registered
~9000 members of NhW facebook groups
Woking still a safe place to live

Message in a Bottle

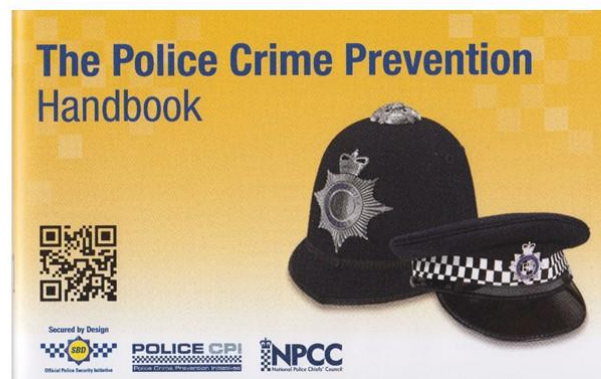
Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches



Should be available at the doctor's surgeries, but
If they know nothing about them contact me and NhW will supply one

Excellent idea. Plastic tub ALWAYS goes in the fridge so that emergency service and care staff know where to look. Inside is a form with everything needed about the resident. Two stickers – one on inside of front door and other on the fridge.
Those present at the meeting took all the remaining stock away with them. We will order some more.

Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches



We have it electronically, but some older people would prefer the book

Really excellent book. Available online at: <https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/crime-prevention-advice/the-police-crime-prevention-handbook>

Again, the remaining stock of these printed books were taken away by those present at the meeting. It is expected that Surrey NhW will print another batch, but this will not be soon.

Please continue to litter pick. If you see a lot of litter it creates a bad impression on your area. We all know places in Woking where litter seems endemic and this reflects on that community.

Litter picking

Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches



Woking Litter Warriors do monthly picks where Woking BC collect the sacks the following day. Contact Lauren if you are interested and wish to go on the contact list. wokinglitterwarriors@gmail.com

https://www.facebook.com/groups/700573597982197/?locale=en_GB

The 2 credit cards, NHS card and £10 note in the picture above were found down a short stretch of verge in Egley Road south of The Bird in Hand pub. The £10 was donated to charity.

3 POLICE REPORT – PC JAMIE ELLIS

The text below is from a voice recording and transcription by some clever software (it even removed the “um’s” and “ah’s”). Some text has been condensed where deemed suitable. No picture of Jamie Ellis – sorry.

So things that will matter, so obviously neighbourhoods, residential burglaries are down 54.5% so that's from the three month period between April and July that we're currently in compared to December to March. Now we'd love to take the credit for all of that but obviously part of that is the fact that it's now lighter outside and there's fewer opportunities to sneak around in the dark and try and break into houses but nonetheless we have seen over the last year or so a decrease in residential burglaries and I'd like to think that's down to some of the hot spot policing that we do so we do target a lot of patrols on neighbourhoods. We have a look at where the burglaries are happening, what sort of offenders might be committing them and we target those offenders and areas to deter that.

Business burglary is also down by 12.5%, not sure if any of you are business owners or have any involvement there but again potentially because of the season but again we'll take the credit for it. Violent crime, that's down 56.3% and I'd like to think that a lot of the reason that that's down is we've really been cracking down on drugs, money laundering and those two crimes come hand in hand with violence. So recently we've done three warrants in relation to a group of young people who've been dealing drugs, committing violent crimes and money laundering. Across under those warrants we've seized multiple offensive weapons, over £100,000 in cash and lots of drugs as well so that's something that we're really proud of at the moment. It is also stopping young people from getting caught up in a life of crime as well. Violent crime in public places is also down as well.

In terms of theft we've got a reduction in keyless car thefts, that's down by 44.4% and again that would be down to us targeting those organised crime groups. We conduct a lot of traffic stops, submit a lot of intelligence on vehicles that we know are linked to these sorts of crimes and as a result when we're out and about we can see those vehicles, pull them over, get into those vehicles and arrest the individuals involved. Robberies, that's also down to again, robberies of violent crime, that's also down. Sexual offences is down by 44.6% and that's especially good because one of the things we're sort of worried about in the summer

time, people out for longer walking through parks is exposure and that's something that we have really cracked down on this year. We've had operations where we've walked up and down the canal, especially Basingstoke Canal, to really deter that sort of crime. Violence against women and girls is a big priority for us.

And again, as I mentioned with the warrants, any drug related crime, that's down by 28.1%.

So that's just to start us off, a few statistics, I know they can be twisted here and there but it does show that we're turning in the right direction.

Now I'll go into our enforced priorities. So for us, crime prevention is key. A big part of that is our problem solving approaches. So as I said, we like to look at hotspot policing and targeting our policing. So every area in Woking has got a neighbourhood officer on my team, I work on Safer Neighbourhood Team. We come into the office, we review all of the reports that have come in on the previous day and we're just constantly looking for trends. Where are the areas that crimes are being committed? Who are the offenders? We get to know all of our top offenders in the area so we can link them to certain types of crimes. We really just build that big picture and when there's a persistent problem that we can target, we look at getting out on foot in those areas and doing things to deter those offenders.

What we can do with problem solving is we log everything we do and it helps us learn what works. Then going forward, obviously a lot of crime is seasonal so it might then tail off over the winter. If it comes back in the summer we can then look back at our problem solving approach, look at what worked and look to do the same things again. Ultimately we just want to prevent crime going forward, we don't want to be as reactive.

As I said with organised crime, that's one of our top priorities. Rogue trading, as was mentioned with the cold calling that Sergeant Ryan Scott is running an initiative for, you'll get a talk on that later. We've really been cracking down on that.

Being neighbourhood watches, you're all connected, look out for those vulnerable people in your neighbourhoods. If you see people going door to door, dodgy looking vehicles that you haven't seen, flag it, have a look at the registration, make a little note of it and if it is suspicious report it. Also be wary of door to door salesmen or builders trying to get your custom because it's not really what you intend to do.

Again with organised crime, drugs, I've already mentioned that. We've had some really good results with warrants and that's especially rewarding because it's young people that are getting involved in these and we want to prevent that going forward. Those are our key priorities and how we go about that.

I can take any questions from anyone.

Q1: Can I just quickly mention, you mentioned about the analysis and looking for trends. I've always been surprised that you haven't been doing it for the last 20 years. The police have always been reactive in the past. Obviously detectives at the top level do it, but it now goes right up to Surrey Police, this analysis. They've got a whole team in Mount Browne who just do nothing but look at the trends.

A1: Especially now on a local level. Obviously you've got the big analysis at the very top, but on a local level we've now got more neighbourhood officers. So those are officers that aren't doing response, we're looking at the overall crime trends of an area. We're now staffed to a level where we can all take responsibility for an area. That just allows us to really focus on one particular area and that means that everyone's got the time to go and look at those trends in their area and react to it. Obviously that means that reporting is paramount because we do see all the reports and if an issue's not being reported, we're not going to see it. So rest assured, I understand the frustration that people sometimes have if you see, for example, people using cannabis outside your house and you call it in. You might not get a response that evening because obviously there may be some important crimes that people need to go out and manage the risk for. But rest assured it will be on that computer system and if it's in my area I'll come in the next day and I'll see, okay, there's a report of that. And if I see it again, okay, this is a persistent thing. I can go down there in the evenings, go door to door, look to stop and search individuals in the area. So definitely keep reporting. I understand it can be frustrating if you want an immediate response but sometimes that's not possible with the risk posed by some crimes.

Q2: Do you work with schools and Surrey County Council?

A2: Yes, certainly. Working Borough Council are very helpful with anti-social behaviour. I don't know if you have any issues with residents in your area but a lot of those things would be council issues and we'll have to work hand in hand. Obviously there's things the police can do but we work a lot with the council. Schools as well. We've really started to crack down on how much involvement we have with schools. So my team have a whiteboard that we have to write down the last time we did a school visit and we need to make sure we keep on top of that. So we'll tend to target pick-up times and drop-off times and try and engage with as many people as we can when we go there. So yes, we work a lot with schools.

Q3: You've got a youth-engaged YEO?

A3: Yes, we have three YEOs - one of them I think just had their last day today, so two. But do they go into schools as a policy. So I think usually it will be an officer on the ground will go and do that and then flag it up to the YEOs and they'll pick it up afterwards. So it's sort of how we deal with a young person we've dealt with, we'll refer them to the YEOs who can then give more tailored support. And with antisocial behaviour we take a stepped approach so we're never there to try and straight away criminalise a young person. It will always be a warning letter followed by a behavioural contract we call it, and if they're not abiding by that then they start to get their community protection warnings. And then in the worst case scenario we upgrade that to a community protection notice and then that's an arrestable process going forward.

Q4: What is the number that you phone for the initial report of the problem?

A4: If it's an emergency it's 999. If it's maybe suspicious activity that you just want to flag and it's not necessarily urgent, that's 101. Alternatively you can report on the Police website. There is a "suspicious activity portal" link on the front page of Surrey Police website now. You can put videos in there. But you won't get a response whereas a 101 if you're on the phone you'll talk to somebody which always has the advantage. 101 is about 5-6 minutes response time now I think. For 999 it should be within 40 seconds or less.

Q5: Is 101 a national number or does it go to Surrey?

A5: For us it will go to Surrey. So if you ring in Feltham it should pick up the fact you're in Feltham and go to the Met. But if you ring 101 it goes to Surrey. So wherever you ring it goes to that call centre.

Q6: We've had egg-throwing in Knaphill.

A6: Yes so I am hoping to talk to someone about that; someone who's reported it. Coincides with the start of school holidays. It's on Knaphill High Street around Tesco.

Q7a: A question that's been raised since then is "is the CCTV in Knaphill still operational?" It's owned by Woking Borough Council.

A7a: I'm not entirely sure what coverage Woking Borough Council have on the CCTV. Where when we get help from Woking Borough Council with CCTV it tends to be for live incidents. So if you've got something going on we've got eyes on it. I'm not entirely sure what they can see and which cameras they can see.

Q7b: What it used to be was when your previous squad was taken around the control room. The ones in Woking Town Centre are being monitored for a long time. The ones in Knaphill are being recorded. So you contact the control room, they can go to the recorder. I'm just wondering is the cutbacks about Woking Borough Council, is that still the case?

A7b: That is a good thing for me to look up. Because I think that would be very useful for me to actually know where the cameras are pointing. So I'll send off an email, I'll go and visit the CCTV room and find that out. Because for inquiries that would be much easier.

Tesco and Co-op are very helpful. The jewellers are very very helpful with CCTV on the high street as well. But I'll get in contact with them.

[MS] I asked Camilla Edmondson (Woking BC) about canal cameras some months ago. She came back with a definite 'yes': they are operational.

Q8: You mentioned that a lot of these crimes are coming down. Are there any particular types of crime that are not coming down?

A8: Not according to our statistics. However, it's coming into the summer. We will get antisocial behaviour. And antisocial behaviour isn't necessarily always recorded as a crime. It could be noise disturbance and things like that. So that's one area where the statistics won't necessarily tell the whole story. But that's something that with our hotspot policing and looking at the reports we'll always try and crack down on. Because ultimately if you stop antisocial behaviour, you stop kids congregating in one area which can breed other crimes as well. One place to watch.

Q9: Another problem now. The Crown Public House (Knaphill High Street). They lost their licence. They got their licence back. They put a manager in. It's turned around. It's back on the market. Wants to make a profit; to sell a lot of beer; to reduce the price. Other activities. I'm worried we're going to go back to square one.

A9: Always flag it up. Well we have a licensing manager who I work with quite closely on a few things. I sat in on the licensing committee when they were asking for their licence back.

Q & A session regarding the crimes reported by Steve Dew (Police volunteer) who creates the weekly crime report. Steve does not report ALL crimes but selects those of interest. There is no regional bias unless the crime report says so – the crimes are those in Woking and are aimed at making people aware of them and to take precautions. There is usually a theme each week – house burglary, keyless car theft, etc etc. Catalytic Converter theft not happened for a while (gang gone somewhere else?).

[MS] You can look at historical data for crimes (2-3 months old) by going onto the police.UK website: www.Police.uk Police.uk. Try it.

Q10: ANPRs (Auto Number Plate recognition). Does it record every single number plate that it tracks? So you can actually go in, put any of our number plates in and see where we've come from.

A10: I'm not trained in ANPR. But my understanding is that people that have access to a system. The police can basically track any car number plate. Any time. You can see where that number plate was last added provided it went past an ANPR camera.

Q11a: I know shoplifting is considered to be a massive.

A11a: Shoplifting is always a priority for us to tackle. It's gone down 54%. It tends to be repeat offenders. That's what I find. In my area it's repeat offenders. So we deal with them by issuing them warnings and orders, and then they get a big case file sent off to CPS. But it also depends how it's recorded. It won't be recorded as a shoplift. If they've been banned from the shop that will become a burglary because they're a trespasser in the shop when they take something from it. Usually the persistent shoplifters, when they shoplift, it goes on as a burglary. And business burglary has gone down.

Q11b: Some months back when there was quite a lot of reporting of really serious shoplifting with people going in and coming out with their arms full of stuff, and effectively strolling their way in and out. Do you see any of that? Is there any worry?

A11b: Usually it's very brazen. They walk in. Take what they want. And the shop staff aren't going to get involved because they shouldn't have to. And they walk out. And usually the shop staff go "I know that person" and report it to the police. And that's what we see. Sometimes you get lesser known people like kids do it for example. They're not necessarily going to be known. So we'll get a report on that. But yes. I haven't necessarily come across serious shoplifting.

Q12: [MS] I think the chief constable clamped down on that with a big operation in December, and it was 'no tolerance'. I think you arrested all the people. It was the same people doing it. Well of course that doesn't mean it won't come back.

A11: Quite often we're aware of them. There are multiple offences that they're outstanding for. And then it's just a case of we catch up with them and arrest them for the lot at once. The issue is that the store needs to get CCTV images and report the theft using long processes, and understandably, managers are reluctant and they are told to ring HQ first. The Chief Constable wants ALL shoplifting reported before the management report up to HQ. Things are much better now and Police in plain clothes patrol hot-spots.

MS thanked JE for all his and Woking Police's efforts and he received a well-deserved round of applause

4 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

4.1 Committee

Chair: Martin Stilwell (stepping down)

Treasurer/Sec: Geoffrey Johnson

Administrator: Steve Dew

Members: Alan Taylor & Marc Alderman

MS is moving away from Surrey and the only nomination for Chair was John Shergold. He was nominated and seconded. John Shergold becomes Chair of Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches. MS will continue as a committee member until he moves.

John Shergold introduced himself and thanked MS for his work as chair.

4.2 Treasurer's report (Geoffrey Johnson was unable to make the meeting)

WOKING ASSOCIATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCHES (WAN)			
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR YEAR TO 31st MARCH 2024			
2022/23			2023/2024
£			£
	INCOME		
	Donations Received		
	Interest Income		
NIL	Total Income		NIL
	less EXPENDITURE		
	AGM Expenses		
	Message in a Bottle Kits		25.00
	Coordinator Events		
105.58	NhW Display Items		
101.40	Web site /IT		
206.98	Total Expenditure		25.00
-206.98	SURPLUS / -DEFICIT FOR YEAR		-25.00
	CURRENT ASSETS		
	Cash on deposit		
308.78	Cash in current account		283.78
	Cash in hand		
308.78	TOTAL NET WORTH		283.78
	Represented by:		
	ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
515.76	Funds from prior years		308.78
-206.98	Surplus/-Deficit for current year		-25.00
308.78	TOTAL FUNDS		283.78

Only expenditure in 2023/4 was for the Message in a Bottle kits. The majority of spend in NhW is covered by Surrey NhW which obtains funds from the Police & Crime Commissioner, and Surrey CC councillors.

Woking NhW needs new blood and more committee members. If you would like to know more about what goes on in Woking, especially with regards to Police and WokingBC, please volunteer to become a committee member. The committee meet once a month at a café and there are 3-4 meetings a year. It takes little of your time, but is very rewarding. Email Chair@wanw.org.uk if you would like more details.

5 ROGUE TRADING AND COLD CALLING

Woking NhW

Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches



Rogue Trading and Cold Calling - 1

Initiative by Sgt Ryan Scott
Operation Canteen
This type of crime is on the increase
Long term project

Woking NhW

Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches



Rogue Trading and Cold Calling - 2

Target the vulnerable: single, elderly, usually women
Knock on door (may be a phone call) and claim to have seen a problem, or offering simple tasks (clean gutters, etc)
Often say they are working at a neighbours or nearby property
Often extortionate rates
Want cash – may even offer to accompany the victim to the bank
Say they have seen another problem and offer to come back and do that too
Usually shoddy or non-existent work
Costs real money to get experts to rectify
Victims can end up traumatised

Some of these tradespeople may be genuine but most are not, and where are the guarantees?



Rogue Trading and Cold Calling - 3

Getting a trader – the proper way

- Get 3 quotes

- Get quotes in writing

- Make sure quotes include contact details and timescales

Quotes are fixed price, estimates can vary

Always keep back money (or all payment) until job satisfactorily completed

If threatened or intimidated on doorstep – 999

If clearly a suspicious cold caller – 101 (ditto for “Nottingham Knockers”)

Put stickers on door – Packs available here

The committee have plenty of leaflets with stickers (see below). These were available at the meeting and most were taken away. If you require some for your members please contact Chair@wanw.org.uk



6 DIGITAL SWITCHOVER

Woking NhW

Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches



Digital Switchover

Telecomms companies moving from analogue to digital

Copper cables under the road being replaced by fibre

But usually still a cable from pole to house ("twisted pair")

Fibre is faster and more reliable

Known as "Voice over IP" (VoIP) – telephone conversation over broadband

But the new digital service doesn't have the small voltage down the wires

Happening across country now and due for completion by 2027

Woking NhW

Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches



Digital Switchover

So what's the problem?

For the majority of us, there will be no problem

Move the plug from wall socket to broadband hub or another (supplied) socket

But will your Service provider have the right hub or socket?

Openreach do the "wires" and BT, Virgin, Plusnet, NTL, etc etc provide the service

You may lose your land-line

Can the old phone/device plug into the new digital socket?

Have you an older care-line device?

Does your burglar alarm contact a call centre?





Take it out of here

and plug into here

Telecoms provider (BT, etc) may need to provide a new socket or a new broadband hub that has a socket

BUT THESE WILL NOT WORK IN THE EVENT OF A POWER CUT



Care-lines!

Example analogue base units



These may still be able to be plugged into new phone line

But if they need the small voltage down the old telephone line they will not work during a power cut

Care-line companies should replace these with SIM-based devices

BT and UK NhW running events around Surrey in September

Watch out for notices on email

Older burglar alarm systems may have the same problem

Old Fax machines will no longer work

<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/cyber-digital-and-technology/digital-switchover>

7 e-SCOOTERS AND e-BIKES

Woking NhW

Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches



E-scooters and e-bikes - THE LAW

e-scooters are “powered transporters”

Therefore e-scooters must be insured

Only hire companies offer this service

No e-scooter hire service anywhere in Surrey

Therefore you know EVERYONE riding an e-scooter in a public area in Surrey (road, path, park, etc) is committing an offence

Max propelled speed 15.5mph (25 kph)

If it can be electrically propelled faster it automatically becomes a motorcycle (= needs licence, tax, insurance, helmet, lights)

E-bikes do not need insurance

Must be able to be pedalled (if not, it is a “powered transporter”)

Some are just pedal assisted, some just twist-grip, some are both

Max propelled speed 15.5mph (25 kph) – via twist-grip

If it can be electrically propelled faster it automatically becomes a moped (= needs licence, tax, insurance, helmet, lights)

If it can be electrically propelled faster than 28 mph it automatically becomes a motorbike (= ditto)

FULL STOP!

8 CLOSE OF MEETING

MS thanked everyone for their attendance and support for NhW.

MS closed the meeting at 9:10pm.

The turnout was very disappointing. This was an excellent meeting with some very good interaction with PC Ellis. We had 18 people say they would attend (a disappointing number itself) but only 9 co-ordinators attended on the day. NhW needs to show more support for the Police by attending these meetings.