



Cambridgeshire Neighbourhood Watch

Chairman's Report 2016

I welcome this opportunity to report to you on behalf of the Cambridgeshire Executive Group who you elect annually and who are responsible and accountable to the national Neighbourhood and Homewatch Network for running NHW in Cambridgeshire.

As one of 1600+ NHW Co-ordinators in Cambridgeshire representing some 40,000 members you are part of one of the largest voluntary organisations in the county and indeed, the country. What many of you do largely goes unnoticed. You do not seek publicity but the contribution you make in supporting local communities is I know, greatly appreciated by statutory authorities, our policing partners and communities alike.

National Issues Affecting Cambridgeshire

Last year we heard about the changes that were being made at a national level and how these might affect us in Cambridgeshire. Most of this work is now complete and I am pleased to report we have been instrumental in shaping outcomes to ensure together we can continue to promote NHW across the county.

New national standards require 'Partnership Agreements' to be adopted and signed by associations covering police force areas. These apply governance and enable the continued use by members of branded materials which are subject to copyright. Currently we are set up to take on this new governance and meet its requirements. It does though mean that we must continue to have the support of members to ensure we have a constituted and representative committee to represent you all.

County Update

Here is a plea! You are represented in Cambridgeshire by 2 constituted associations operating at a sub county level namely, East Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Unitary districts and members from other districts who have volunteered their support and who form your representative group. Currently, there are gaps in our representation covering Huntingdon and St. Neots in Huntingdonshire, March and Chatteris in Fenland and the Histon and Cambourne policing areas in South Cambs.

Why is it important we fill these gaps? To put it simply, NHW works best when there are key points of contact to ensure members are supported locally. Someone who can provide local support when establishing new schemes and act as conduit for dialogue with their local policing commanders and other agencies. Someone able to put their views forward to maintain effective engagement and development. It is not onerous and can be managed on your terms so please consider and contact me if you can help. Plea over!

Since I reported last year there is a new police chief officer team in place and a new police and crime commissioner. Local policing has continued to evolve and I know it's difficult to keep up with all the changes. Local policing delivery and engagement varies at a district level and communication continues to challenge us all.

Being part of a well known and valued national body we now stand on our feet. Gone are the days when the police ran NHW but that is not to say their continued support and help remains critical to our success. Sharing what is going on and being able to communicate effectively remain key challenges to us both.

New appointments though create new opportunities and will continue to raise and explore issues on your behalf. I am delighted that Chief Superintendent Vicky Skeels, the new head of local policing, and our new Police and Crime Commissioner Jason Ablewhite will address us at our annual conference.

ALERT is our main communication and administrative system and used by the constabulary to manage their E-cops messaging service. For our purposes, it holds all our Co-ordinator and scheme records and is linked to the national website www.ourwatch.org.uk

Do please visit your on-line accounts and update as required. We will be required to ensure schemes are displayed accurately and mapped to ensure our membership is properly reflected across the county. To help us the constabulary has recruited a 'police service volunteer' (Jess Sadek) who has recently started to help with ALERT issues which is greatly appreciated.

New 'Members' Guides and Window Stickers have now been received. Provided through national sponsorship, these can be obtained from your county representatives and will also be available at the Conference/AGM.

Similarly, there is also a new 'WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE' county leaflet to help create schemes. This is again available from your local representatives. .

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to all my colleagues on the county group, our police liaison officers and Police and Crime Commissioner and his staff and you, the Co-ordinators, for your continued support to Neighbourhood Watch in Cambridgeshire.

John Fuller

October 2016