



OUR NEWS

> THE E-NEWSLETTER FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SUPPORTERS

Neighbours are supporting communities across England and Wales

Dear supporters,

As we enter our 6th week of lockdown to respond to the Covid-19 crisis, the work of Neighbourhood Watch groups across England and Wales has been and continues to be incredible.

It is with deepest sadness that we recently learned of the passing, due to Covid-19, of a devoted and passionate supporter of Neighbourhood Watch, Mr Patrick Hooper who served his community in Hounslow as Secretary of Hounslow Borough Neighbourhood Watch Association for many years. To his colleagues, both from his Neighbourhood Watch family and from policing partners, his loss is greatly felt and his legacy will be in the hearts of his family, his friends and his community for many years to come. On behalf of Neighbourhood Watch we would like to thank Patrick for his hard work and commitment over the years. May you rest in peace.

We are all aware of the huge surge in people volunteering to support others, particularly the vulnerable, during the crisis and Neighbourhood Watch groups have responded to the needs of their communities. In this issue we are highlighting the work of some groups and how they are supporting their communities.

It is critical we continue to follow the clear guidance from the Government on staying in, ensuring any trips outside our homes are essential and observing social distancing while out.

The Home Office have requested our help in gaining feedback from Associations on what is affecting communities on the ground in terms of crime which may not be visible to the police or in crime data. We are collecting this 'soft' information from Association leads and reporting on what Neighbourhood Watch is doing on the ground to support communities. Please ensure you share with us what you are doing locally during the crisis.

As always, thank you for your support and hard work and please keep safe and well.

John Hayward-Cripps

CEO | Neighbourhood Watch Network

Government measures leads to surge in neighbourliness

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 study released today by [Co-op Insurance](#).

Almost three quarters (72%) of UK adults can now identify which of their neighbours are vulnerable and over a quarter (26%) have checked in on those whom they know are in the last two weeks. [Find out more here...](#)

New website launched

After what felt like a long wait, we are proud to announce our new website is launched.

We would like to thank all those supporters who helped get us to launch day including our funders, our staff, our members, our partners, and Oyster Design.

'Our new website boasts inspiring advice and resources to strengthen communities and reduce crime. It contains burglary prevention advice, domestic violence support, cybercrime advice, links to a crime map in your area and much more.'

Crucially the website also contains relevant advice and information in response to COVID-19 on looking after yourself and others, supporting communities and being aware of COVID-19 scams and related crimes.

But don't take our word for it... have a look for yourself...
www.ourwatch.org.uk

INSIDE: The Calling Card reduces isolation and loneliness **p2**

Youth isolation and loneliness toolkit launched **p3**

How communities united to respond to floods **p6**



THE CALLING TREE

Call 3 people today to ask how they are doing. If they all call 3 people, the phone tree builds, and we can all help reduce isolation and loneliness.



The CALLING TREE reduces isolation and loneliness

“Growing” a Calling Tree in Cornwall

Carol (below), from Cornwall, has lived alone since the death of her husband of 40 years. She does not post on social media but she does like to check tweets and Facebook posts of lovely, positive people which is how she came across Neighbourhood Watch’s Calling Card campaign.

The idea of The Calling Tree really appealed to Carol – mainly because many years ago, she was paid to make phone calls ! Immediately after leaving school in 1970, she trained as a Post Office telephonist, and she still loves making and receiving phone calls at home.



‘There must be many people who have a landline, but no online method of contacting others – such as Skype or Facebook, etc. – so “growing” a Calling Tree is perfect. **The idea is simple and anyone can join in. This is how I “planted” my tree**

I rang my friend Sue in Cornwall (I’ve known her for over 20 years); then I rang Candy in Kent (we went to the same grammar school); and then I rang Debbie in Lincolnshire (she is my step daughter and although I would normally see her when she and her husband come down to Cornwall, we are making the most of phone calls and emails at the moment) All three promised to continue to grow the tree via their own friends.

Debbie celebrates her birthday on 27th April – as does her own daughter, Kelly – a very special coincidence! Both ladies would normally enjoy their celebrations together - but that won’t be possible this year.’

In these extraordinary times, so many people cannot see family and friends as they would normally do. Having a landline can be a lifeline to keep in touch with others.

Let’s hope there will be countless Calling Trees growing throughout the UK. Find out more on Neighbourhood Watch’s website or social media channels.

Building a stronger, safer, caring community

Park Hall Area Neighbourhood Watch (PHANW) did not know this pandemic was going to happen, nor how great the impact would be on people’s lives, but as with all Neighbourhood Watch organisations with a strong structure and leadership, it is always there for its members and community - ready to deal with problems and evolve to solve them.

We hear from PHANW in how they have responded to COVID-19...

We are learning every day; we are using our personal life and work skills to make our organisation efficient and effective. On 13th March 2020, PHANW went into action and set up its own Covid-19 Support Group.

The aim of the group was to provide support for anyone in our community who was self-isolating, sick, elderly, or vulnerable and would need essential shopping.

There are 3,000 households in our area and over a third of our community is over the age of 65 so we felt it was critical that we stepped in and provided reassurance to all and that as a group we could help each other.

Our Covid-19 Support WhatsApp group was created with over 60 volunteers recruited within hours: the logistics and planning had begun.

In less than 72 hours we created our own flyer, had it printed, and then delivered it to every household in the area.

The flyer explained that we had set up a dedicated mobile number and that residents in our community could call and leave a voice message or send us a text message requesting assistance which we would respond to. Immediately we began getting requests asking us to collect prescriptions and shop for groceries and essentials. At the time of writing we have completed 130 deliveries to our community and continue to receive regular requests every day.



Park Hall Covid-19 Admin Team, Barry Morse, Amit Verma, Bally Sohal and Kiran Bilkhu, out of picture Shin Ark, Tarne Singh and Perdeep Singh

Happy birthday Debbie and Kelly



Building a stronger, safer, caring community cont..

We have expanded our operation, thanks to qualified professionals from within our community who have volunteered their services, to include telephone calls to deal personal and wellbeing issues. We are also working in partnership with our local Coop store and pharmacy to provide deliveries on their behalf to their customers.

At the same time we launched our GoFundMe page <https://www.gofundme.com/f/covid19-support-parkhall-walsall> to raise funds to support our PHANW Covid-19 Support Group and assist our community where anyone has problems with essential shopping because of financial difficulties.



So, who are we? Well, for more information come and visit us on www.phanw.com.

This is a million miles away from the stereotypical

image of curtain-twitching busy bodies. This is Neighbourhood Watch in action helping to strengthen its community by making it safer and caring for its residents.

Above: Kiran Bilkhu delivering shopping from Co-Op Liskeard Road, Walsall with Stacey the Manager in the background

**“We love what we do,
and we are proud of what we do.”**

Neighbourhood Watch logo usage

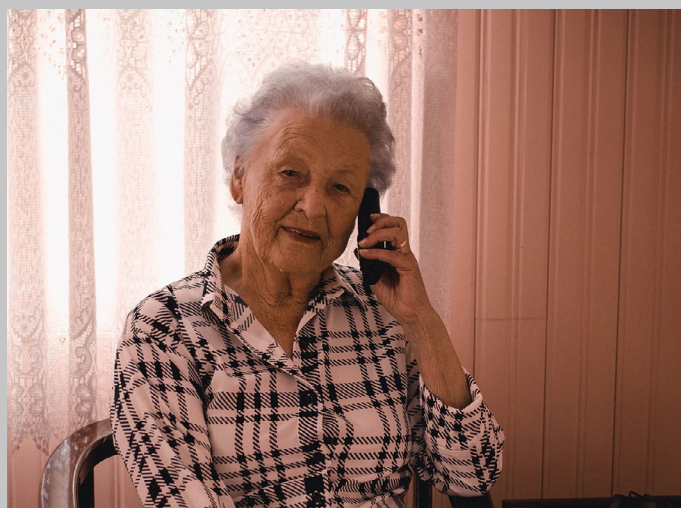
Our current Neighbourhood Watch logos were launched in 2017. In 2019 with the support of a working group, we considered whether our logo needed further adjustments.

In consultation we discovered that a vast number of Neighbourhood Watch members love our logo. It is recognised by all our supporters and many members of the general public.

We concluded our logo will remain as it is with the yellow roundel and central image. However, we agreed use of a logo with no central image to be used in certain circumstances: each circumstance to be approved by the Central Support Team.

If you would like to use a logo with no central image, please contact us to discuss this further. or [visit our website](#).

Wales you are not alone



We're here for you and we can help and support you.

Members of the newly-established action group (1) are working together to make sure that older people at risk of harm have the information they need about where they can go for help, and are aware that support services are still available despite the current disruption.

They are also working to raise awareness amongst the wider public about the role we can all play in helping to protect older people.

The group has come together as the coronavirus and subsequent lockdown has resulted in some older people in Wales potentially being at greater risk of domestic (or other forms of) abuse, neglect or of being targeted by criminals.

‘Whilst we’ve seen the very best of our communities over the past few weeks, with so much action underway to help and support older people, it’s crucial that we recognise that for many the past few weeks will have been incredibly difficult. Many older people will have felt frightened and alone.

“That’s why we’ve come together – to let older people know that they are not alone, that we’re here and we can help and support them.”

Older People’s Commissioner for Wales, Heléna Herklots CBE

[Read the full article on our website...](#)

Neighbourhood Watch Awareness Week

7th - 13th June

We have changed the theme of this year's Neighbourhood Watch Awareness Week to recognise and celebrate all acts of kindness and neighbourliness, no matter how large or small they are.

Throughout the flooding and the coronavirus crisis Neighbours across the UK have shown compassion and resilience and are doing incredible work to help everyone in their communities cope with challenges presented to them. We invite our members and supporters, partners, charities, organisations and all members of public to celebrate neighbourly kindness, whether it was a coordinated community response or a simple friendly chat over the fence.

Through the course of the Awareness Week we will be shining a spotlight on the amazing COVID-19 response, to make sure that the huge community effort does not go unnoticed. We also want to give neighbours opportunities to come together, both online and through collective action. There's a range of things you can do to take part. We will publish on our website engagement ideas and resources, so keep your eye out for it.



We would love to hear more of your community response stories
[submit your story here](#)

Toolkit launched to tackle loneliness and isolation among young people

The new youth isolation toolkit gathers together various pieces of evidence about the shocking scale of the problem of loneliness among young people in the UK, and the impact that it can have on the young people affected and on society generally.

While many people are aware of the problem of loneliness amongst older people, fewer are aware that the problem is hugely prevalent among younger people too – in fact, studies show that young adults are the most likely group in the UK to experience feelings of loneliness.

The information pack also explores which young people are most at risk of experiencing feelings of isolation and loneliness, and why feelings of loneliness are not generally associated with people's personalities, but with their circumstances and situations – often their health and economic status, or their identities. It is helpful for people to be aware of these so that they can identify who might be most at risk in their community.

Neighbourhood Watch is keen to raise awareness of the problem of loneliness and isolation among young people

because young people who experience these can be more vulnerable to becoming victims of crime – particularly high-harm crimes such as child sexual exploitation or county lines drugs gangs. This is of particular concern at this time when physical distancing due to COVID-19 means young people are not able to physically meet up with their friends and socialise, and may feel even more isolated.

The toolkit signposts people to a host of online services and guidance that can help young people who may be suffering from loneliness and isolation, and to resources that they can use to help spread the word about the problem locally, so that other members of the community, family members, friends or neighbours of young people can help too. It also gives guidance for parents on how to talk to young people about their feelings – at a time when families have more time to do so.

The youth isolation information pack and toolkit is the latest in a series of such resources that Neighbourhood Watch has created to help the public become aware of new types of crime that are happening in the UK, and of risks that can create fertile ground for criminal activity to flourish. [See the Youth Isolation Toolkit on our website.](#)

Central Support Team is here for you

After a fond farewell to Robin Newman and Mike McClure, we are thrilled to welcome new members to the Central Support Team:

- Cheryl Spruce as Head of Membership and Community Engagement. Cheryl has a passion for Neighbourhood Watch which shows in her role as Chair of Greenwich Neighbourhood Watch. Find out more about Cheryl and her role below.
- Aga Korfel joined us in February 2020 as a Development Manager to project manage the 'Our Neighbourhood' initiative. Aga is truly passionate about community-led action, she enjoys working with local people and helping them regain their voice, become more active citizens, take charge and lead the change they want to see happen.
- Julie Woodhouse, as Finance Manager, who is getting to grips with her role working remotely and meeting her colleagues through the magic of Zoom technology.



SPOTLIGHT ON CHERYL SPRUCE, HEAD OF MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

'We have seen communities come together during times of need. Resilience and compassion, when needed and offered, are what makes communities special.'

What attracted you to work for the Central Support Team?

Being a recipient of the support that the Central Support Team has to offer, from my work as a coordinator to the guidance and encouragement I received as a chair of a newly formed Association, I knew the Central Support Team were a fantastic group of people, each with a wealth of knowledge to share.

Last year, I was asked to speak at a few events, including the strategy meeting in the spring and the London summer seminars in August, about the work that the Association in my area does. In late 2019, Robin announced that he was leaving and that there would be a vacancy for his role. I am delighted that I applied and was asked to step into the role, joining this great team of people and being on hand to help and develop Neighbourhood Watch in line with our strategy.

How does your position support groups across England and Wales?

My position is very hands on, in the sense that I support the current membership and supporters of Neighbourhood Watch, whilst also exploring new ways to engage with our communities to increase our reach and sharing that learning. I listen to the amazing stories about the work that Associations, coordinators, members and supporters do in

their communities, which is uplifting, and then share those stories on our Inspiration pages on our website.

During the most violent of floods groups, supported by Neighbourhood Watch, came together to help their community. These groups have also proved invaluable during COVID-19. Using their local knowledge and community resilience group structure they were best placed to call the residents to action, organising food shopping, collection of medication and ensuring the most vulnerable were safe and not isolated. These are great examples of real community spirit at its best and is resonate with so many across the country.

Over the last few weeks, we have all been adapting to working from home and I thought about what we could do to engage with our membership and support their knowledge base. So we launched our online workshops, covering various subjects, supporting coordinators and Associations and these were so popular, they were overbooked within 10 minutes of advertising them.

What you enjoy most about being part of Neighbourhood Watch?

Neighbourhood Watch is all about our communities and talking to each other. If you know me, you will know that I love to talk! I enjoy the engagement with everyone and look forward to meeting with more of you in the future, albeit via technology or indeed, when we are able, in the flesh.

Neighbourhood Watch supports communities through floods

In February we invited you to send us stories on how Neighbourhood Watch is supporting communities affected by the recent floods. We received a heart-warming positive response from you. Thank you! We hope you understand that we are unable to thank you all individually for your replies, and we are unable to include all your replies in this newsletter. Below is a selection which represents the good work Neighbourhood Watch is doing in our communities.

This is what you said...

Hawthorn Neighbourhood Watch Responds

'Our watch area borders part of the river Taff. We had some flooding in the Hawthorn Neighbourhood Watch area on the 15th and 16th January, but this was nothing to the scale of flooding experienced by Pontypridd Town itself. In our watch area, about 12 houses were affected with a greater or lesser degree of flooding from the main river and lesser tributaries.

The floodline alert came through at 4am and by 5am we were out on the streets in high-vis, talking to local residents keeping an eye on the water levels outside of their houses. It was miserable; cold, raining and dark, but everyone that we met was in good spirits. We then visited some of the houses that had already been flooded and checked on them. As daylight broke we started street patrols, warned people about flooded roads and how to get out of our area to visit relatives who had been more badly affected further towards Pontypridd town. The river Taff reached 5.49m, that's over four times it's typical level at this time of year.

We also posted regular updates on our Facebook page about flood risk, flooded roads etc. These messages were well received and widely shared.

Since then we have kept an eye on those most affected, checked that they have everything that they need. We have also shared flood alerts via our Facebook page and Nextdoor and advertised things such as grants available, as well as suspicious door knockers and other scams post flood (calls re making donations etc).

One Watch member joined in the clean-up at one house in the area where an uninsured resident had a basement and garden flooded. When more flood alerts were issued, we have again checked on residents, and asked the Police to inspect on a local culvert water level which is close to several homes. This they duly reported to the council as they felt it was dangerously high.

The community in Pontypridd area pulled together marvelously, and much support has been available including community centres opening to provide hot drinks, food, cleaning supplies and many donations of clothes and food from the community. This support will need to go on for some considerable time, over 500 homes have been flooded and much infrastructure is affected including seven bridges over the river, a taxi and two shipping containers made their way down the Taff during the height of the storm - hitting some of the bridges on the way.

This summer, we will be organising a Big Lunch, and will be making a point of inviting all those affected by the floods in our Watch area.

Going the extra mile in the community

Working in domiciliary care can sometimes be a challenge, but when the weather decides to work against you it can be even more challenging.

Clients depend on their carers for many things from assisting with personal care to cooking a warm and nutritious meal and ensuring important medication is taken, sometimes the only person some will see that day is their carer.

The recent floods saw roads closed and diversions in place putting extra pressure on carers to get to their calls on time.

One of our carers arrived at her client's house to discover the property was isolated by flooding and there was no way her car could go through the water. She decided there was only one thing to do... she took off her shoes and socks rolled her trousers up and bravely faced the icy water.

"It is good to learn that Neighbourhood Watch members are doing their bit. As always it takes a dramatic situation to stir people to giving of themselves. But their help is invaluable. Unsurprisingly it's often the same people who volunteer for other good causes of which Neighbourhood Watch is but one."

Mike Coe, Northamptonshire



TIPS AND ADVICE FROM OUR MEMBERS

- Use cling film: surprising what gaps you can cover and what it will seal.
- Place a balloon in downstairs toilets to block flush hole. Place further balloons to compress against pressure. Tape down the lid to secure it.
- Knowledge prior to floods can save a big clean up. Data taken from sensors via the environment agency is available in real time.
- Follow the governments advice on floods: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/environment-countryside/flooding-extreme-weather>
- Never drive through flood water and if you cannot see hardstanding ground don't drive through it. Not only can it cause damage to your vehicle through water being sucked in the air intake but it can also cause you to lose control and the vehicle could float away. You are putting yourselves and others at risk. If you see flood water turn around.
- Avoid walking in flood water. Urban flood water can typically be carrying 20-30 diseases, especially if drains have backwashed. In rural areas there is likely to be contamination from agricultural producers as well as animal and vermin excrement.

A PERSONAL NOTE

I would like you to acknowledge the sterling work my husband Paul McMahon did on the afternoon of 15th February. We had returned from a month away to be greeted by this weather system.

At 3pmish that afternoon, (the eye of the storm) my husband was out clearing drains and clearing other debris from both ends of the village. This enable vehicles to at least pass through the village with comparative ease. His efforts also stopped any potential flooding to properties, which has been a common occurrence in such weather events. Paul is retired but serves the community as a parish councillor and is also the flood officer for the parish.

His efforts were way beyond his remit. An unsung hero!!!

Regards

Cat McMahon

CRISIS SUPPORT AGENCIES

Thank you to members who made us aware of the following agencies and the ways they are supporting communities in a crisis

The British Red Cross offer emergency response volunteer training

Interested in becoming an emergency response volunteer? You don't need any experience to be an emergency response volunteer. They will give you all the training and protective clothing you need to do your role. You will be part of an on-call rota, working alongside other organisations and local authorities. You need to be willing to respond to a call-out at unsocial hours. <https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/volunteer-in-emergencies#Emergency>

North West Blood Bikes Lancs & Lakes transport urgent and emergency items

We are closely linked to all the Emergency Services, particularly the Ambulance and Police. Our main aims are to help our 5 NHS Trusts (Morecambe Bay Hospitals - Furness, Westmorland and Lancaster, Royal Preston & Chorley, Blackpool, Blackburn & Burnley & Southport & Ormskirk), to save money by transporting urgent & emergency items out of normal working hours, i.e. through the night during the week and 24 hours a day at weekends and Bank Holidays totally free of charge. We use motorcycles mainly but cars when the weather is like it has been of late. We not only transport these items between our Trusts but we also arrange relays up, down and across the whole of the UK linking up with other Blood Bike Groups to transport samples for specialist analysis.

<https://nwbb-lancs.org/>



No excuse for domestic abuse

Domestic abuse, sexual violence, and other forms of gender-based violence will increase during the COVID 19 crisis.

Home is not a safe place for everyone, and our vital services are under pressure. As neighbours and community members, we can be a vital lifeline for survivors. We must let survivors know they are not alone and send out a clear message that there is no excuse for abuse. We have already seen the power of communities coming together during this crisis, and we know many of you want to do more to support survivors.

To support you to do this a group of leading domestic abuse and women sector organisations have produced some basic guidance for community members – available here <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/covid-19-coronavirus-safety-and-support-resources/>. This guidance will also be provided in different languages and accessible formats in the coming weeks. You can access the [government guidance on domestic abuse and COVID 19 here](#).

Are you Cyber-Aware?



The last few weeks have changed the way we use technology in ways we probably never

imagined. Very quickly we've had to adapt to having our children at home 24/7, to home schooling, managing the time they spend online, using video conferencing software to keep in touch with family and friends, and more online shopping.

With any change in the way we use technology, it is vital we make sure that you are doing it securely. To help you do this we want to highlight the key things you can do to improve how secure your family is when online.

The [National Cyber Security Centre's \(NCSC\) Cyber Aware campaign](#) encourages the public to take 6 simple, but important steps to stay secure online. The steps focus on using passwords to keep your accounts and information secure; updating your devices (phone, laptop, tablet) to make sure they have the latest security information; and backing up your important information so you can recover it if you get hacked. Following these steps will help protect you against the most common types of attacks.

Alongside these steps that everyone should follow, the NCSC have also provided advice on using video conferencing apps securely and staying secure while playing online games.

Whilst there hasn't been a noticeable increase in the number of phishing or scam emails over the last few weeks, cyber criminals are using the fears of COVID and the health of our families as a hook to reel us in. Perhaps you have received an email that offers new information about access to a vaccine if you follow 'this link'?

If you receive an email that you think looks at all suspicious you can forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk. If anything is found to be malicious the NCSC will take it down and you can help protect others from falling victim to scams.

Every Mind Matters



every mind
matters

Now, more than ever

For simple steps to look
after your mental wellbeing
search **Every Mind Matters**

STAY HOME ▶ PROTECT THE NHS ▶ SAVE LIVES

• Visit <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>



Coronavirus

Find out
how to help
others safely at
gov.uk/safehelp

