



**HERTFORDSHIRE
CONSTABULARY**



Hertsmere Borough Neighbourhood Watch
Minutes Radlett Association Social Meeting
Vision Hall : Thursday 12 May 2010

Present:

Angela Saunders	Chairman Borough Watch
Derrick Sweeney	Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer
Suzanne Foster	Older Persons Liaison Officer
Sgt Kate Chambers	
PC Phil Tuck	
PCSO Ian Boyd	
PCSO Rob McWilliams	

Hertsmere Borough Watch Committee Members

Dennis Sandor	Vice Chairman
Andrea Sherriff	Secretary
Rodney Saunders	Committee Member
Ian Smith	Committee Member
Richard Jarvis	Ward Coord.Cowley Hill
Peter Sherriff	Committee Member
Angela Thomson	Ward Coord.Aldenham East
Jo Kay	Treasurer
Geoff Kay	Committee Member

Plus 30 NHW Members

WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Neighbourhood Watch / Community Safety Unit
Borehamwood Police Station, Elstree Way, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 1JP
Tel. 01707 806650 Fax. 01727 796609
Contact: Derrick Sweeney (Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer)

Contact **Borough Watch** - email: boroughwatch@rsa-advertising.com
www.hertsmereboroughwatch.org.uk

WELCOME

The Chairman, Angela Saunders, opened the meeting at 7.35 p.m. and welcomed all NHW members attending the meeting. She had invited the local councillors but they were unable to attend.

ACCOUNTS

The current financial position is good with £2,629 and £1,550 in security equipment at cost. There is no longer funding for sign fixing but this is to be done in future by the Pay Back Scheme run by the Probation Service using people on community service orders. The CSP have confirmed that we will receive funding for this year.

The Chairman encouraged coordinators to use the OWL system – “Fix My Street” – for any problems they have such as street lighting etc as she has had a quick response from the council when using it.

POLICE REPORT

Sgt Chalmers, who had had 20 years experience as a police officer in various roles, told the meeting that her work with neighbourhood policing was both enjoyable and valuable. The Hertfordshire Constabulary area is being rationalised but the Safer Neighbourhood teams have not been altered. She introduced her team and valued their experience in the community and how much benefit was gained by the PCSOs input. There is a team of 20 in the surrounding areas which can be called on, if necessary, to help with emergencies in Radlett. There is a new Chief Inspector, Sue Jameson, who supports the work of NHW.

She reminded the meeting of a “Ridealong” scheme where members of the public go with the police in their response cars to see the type of work they do. Friday and Saturday nights are the most interesting and a form needs to be completed if anyone wishes to take part.

PC Phil Tuck informed the meeting that in future instead of a newsletter being produced for Aldenham East only it will be distributed to Aldenham West as well. He is concerned that the public have a fear of crime but pointed out that Hertsmeres is a low crime area and that Radlett is even safer. In fact, in all areas the crime figures are progressively going down. Intelligence from the local people together with information given in the newsletter helps the police to improve the figures. Priorities change throughout the year as, for instance domestic burglary, increases during the Christmas period whereas vehicle crime does not. The PCSOs do crime prevention surveys to help the public protect themselves. They will be dealing with anti-social behaviour problems. This increases during the summer holiday period and takes place mostly at the Philimore recreation ground. They also engage with the public by having police surgeries and consulting with the public at railway stations and at Tesco to ascertain any public concerns.

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Questions:

There was a discussion concerning whether police respond to ringing house alarms. The police respond to those that are linked into call centres. Otherwise, it does depend if they are available. It was pointed out the 99% of the time they are false alarms. If an alarm is causing a nuisance, the local authority department dealing with noise pollution is probably the best contact. The police cannot recommend a particular company to fix alarms. However, Trading Standards or Trust Mark who vet the various companies are invaluable. Glass guard alarms are useful to fit on windows and patio doors which will alert residents if someone is trying to enter the property.

A problem with a narrow road causing a safety hazard was raised and it was recommended to use "Fix My Street" on OWL

The non-emergency number for the police is 0845 3300222

There was a discussion as to whether too many messages come through from OWL. It was generally thought that too many was better than too few and the coordinator could vet those not considered relevant to their area. Brenda Griffith, Lead Member for Hertsmere Police Authority and NHW, said that there are 10 areas in Hertfordshire that all use OWL to a greater or lesser extent and that on balance it was better for coordinators to have the information. PC Tuck said that if there are several similar crimes they would probably only send out one OWL message. Derrick Sweeney pointed out that coordinators should not depend only on OWL but should have a good relationship with their coordinator and with their neighbours to let them know about any incident in their road.

SUZANNE FOSTER : Older Persons Liaison Officer and her role in Operation Manhunt.

Suzanne gave an informative talk about her work with the over 70s who are victims of burglary, especially distraction burglary to which they are particularly vulnerable. She will work with both the victim and their families if relevant. This section of our society is in need of particular help. Often they are isolated, suffer from dementia, are disabled or have learning difficulties and are too trusting. These criminals are very plausible and pose as workmen or can be women with young children. Suzanne is in contact with several groups who can help them such as adult care services or befriending agencies. This group need to be educated as to how to handle the situation and can be embarrassed by the fact that they have fallen for the scam and

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may not even tell their families. There are various items available that can help, especially victims whose memories are not good, such as memo minders that have tape of a family member reminded them not to open the door etc. There are also alarms that can be fitted to doors and handles that will go off if someone tries to gain entry without permission helping the victim to feel more secure in their own home.

DERRICK SWEENEY NHW Liaison Officer

Figures for the area are:

Aldenham West has 81 roads of which 45 are covered by NHW (56%)

Aldenham East has 64 roads of which 51 are covered by NHW (80%)

He encouraged everyone to log on the OWL. Angela and he have created a leaflet to help those who have difficulty using the system. As a coordinator you can enter the email addresses of your watch (if they agree) and they will automatically receive OWL messages so that you do not need to distribute them. To this end he has a template you can use. The system can accommodate up to 250,000 entries. The latest watch to be formed is HorseWatch and soon CareWatch will come on stream.

ANGELA SAUNDERS – Chairman

The Chairman displayed the new equipment available. These included “fake” television lights (£22), a remote car alarm (£15), a redesigned bag to carry money etc under a coat/sweater (£1.50), driveway alarm (£25), a handbag alarm to fit to a purse (£2.50) as well as some of the other equipment available for sale at the end of the meeting.

DENNIS SANDOR – Vice Chairman

He had two matters he wanted to mention. He introduced the new ward coordinator – Angela Thomson. He then went on to discuss the OWL system. He felt that it led to people not communicating face-to-face with neighbours but understood that this was the way forward.

Dennis gave a vote of thanks to Police for their hard work in the area and for keeping crime levels low. He also thanked Suzanne Foster for her informative talk, Derrick for expanding NHW and OWL in Hertsmere and Angela for her work arranging meetings etc. and organising the purchase and sale of the security equipment. He gave a special thanks to all the volunteers for coming and hoped they would encourage more people to be involved in NHW.

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The meeting was brought to a close at 9.10 p.m. and the raffle drawn. Refreshments were then served.

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