



Policing & Community
Safety Partnerships

making our community safer



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH MANUAL

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH,
SAFER AND STRONGER
COMMUNITIES**

HISTORY OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH	2
INTRODUCTION	3
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	4
DEVELOPING A NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME	10
NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR AND CRIME PREVENTION	16
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	23
GLOSSARY OF TERMS and CONTACTS	24
Appendices:	
Appendix 1 Neighbourhood Watch Operational Principles	26
Appendix 2 Neighbourhood Watch Declaration of Good Principles	27
Appendix 3 Neighbourhood Watch Application Form	28
Appendix 4 Neighbourhood Watch Reaccreditation Form	31
Appendix 5 Neighbourhood Watch Meeting Invitation	34
Appendix 6 Neighbourhood Watch Canvassing Letter	35
Appendix 7 Neighbourhood Watch Expression of Interest	36
Appendix 8 Examples of Press Releases Documents	38

HISTORY OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Neighbourhood Watch originated in the United States of America and in the early 1980's came to the UK to assist with combating crime and also to assist with making communities safer and friendlier places to live and work.

The first Neighbourhood Watch scheme was set up in the village of Mollington in Cheshire, in response to a prevalent outbreak of burglaries and was an immediate success.

Surrounding areas became aware of this success and copied the Neighbourhood Watch scheme, which led to the rapid growth of Neighbourhood Watch schemes throughout the UK.

Neighbourhood Watch has proved to be a very effective example of communities working in partnership to prevent crime and vandalism, reduce the fear of crime and generally improve the quality of life.



INTRODUCTION

Neighbourhood Watch, which was launched in Northern Ireland in June 2004, continues to grow from strength to strength.

The continued success of Neighbourhood Watch is dependent on Neighbourhood Watch coordinators who give up their time voluntarily to work with the police and to assist their neighbourhoods in tackling crime.

Neighbourhood Watch is promoted, supported and endorsed at a strategic level by the Community Safety Division (CSD) of the Department of Justice, the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) and the Police Service of Northern Ireland and at a local council level through Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) and local policing areas.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes are widely considered to be an excellent way to reduce crime, the fear of crime and address anti-social behaviour. By working together, neighbours can help to reduce all sorts of crimes, for example burglary. Neighbourhood Watch schemes can help improve the local environment and may help reduce levels of anti-social behaviour.

Whilst this manual has been developed to provide guidance to Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators in supporting Neighbourhood Watch schemes please note that local arrangements may vary. Roles and responsibilities of each of the partners involved in Neighbourhood Watch are outlined, guidance is provided on how to establish a new Neighbourhood Watch scheme and some pointers are provided on assisting Neighbourhood Watch coordinators in carrying out their role within Neighbourhood Watch schemes. Neighbourhood Watch schemes are community driven and supported by police and other relevant agencies.

Glossary of Terms

Please note the Neighbourhood Watch documentation was produced in accordance with legislation governing such information i.e. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act, Freedom of Information Act, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and Human Rights legislation, based on the understanding that all information gathered would be obtained and shared openly to build trust and understanding within the community at large.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section is a guide to the roles and responsibilities of each of the key partners and agencies involved in Neighbourhood Watch.

Please note that local arrangements may vary. Please note that appendices to this manual provide further information including flow charts for the application process, application forms, templates for meetings and press releases and so on.

Local Community

The responsibility for establishing and maintaining a Neighbourhood Watch scheme lies primarily with the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator(s) in partnership with the two local agencies Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSP) but the active support of the local community is also essential. The establishment of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme is often easier if there is already an active resident or community group, but this is not essential.

The roles and responsibilities of the community are as follows:

- To help identify the need for a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in their area.
- To designate and agree an area for the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme with the local Police.
- To nominate a trusted representative(s) of the community to be the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator(s).
- To actively participate in the consultation of local residents on the proposal for a Neighbourhood Watch scheme by carrying out leaflet drops/hosting public meetings etc.
- To liaise with the local PCSP Manager and Police, as required.
- To work with the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator(s) to ensure that the documentation is completed and issued to the appropriate agencies.
- To liaise with the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator(s) in relation to issues of concern regarding policing, crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour in the area.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators are the key people in each Neighbourhood Watch scheme and are central to the effective operation of Neighbourhood Watch. They are nominated by others involved in a particular scheme. It is their responsibility to voluntarily manage its activities, to work in partnership with the three local agencies and to make the Neighbourhood Watch scheme as effective as possible. It is important that the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators have time to commit to the Neighbourhood Watch scheme, are able to listen to the concerns of the community and can act as a two-way channel of information between the community and the police. The relationships between the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators and the police will be of critical importance to the long-term success of each Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

All Neighbourhood Watch coordinators are subject to a Police Service check for the benefit and protection of the individual, community and all other associated agencies. It is important that all residents are made fully aware of the Police Service check procedure in order to build confidence in this process and to ensure that they have the confidence of the community and the Police to undertake their role effectively. When a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is approved and the Neighbourhood Watch scheme is accredited, they are issued with a Neighbourhood Watch ID card.

If a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator commits an offence or demonstrates behaviour that impacts on their ability to hold the position of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, the Police will rescind their approval.

The Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator will then cease to hold the position and will return his /her ID card to the local PCSP Manager.

The Role of the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is to:

- Canvas local residents with a view to securing their support for the scheme in the area.
- Encourage local residents to join the scheme.
- Communicate with police on an on-going basis, and exchange information on crime and related issues affecting the quality of life in that area.
- Act as first point of contact for local residents and the wider community for receiving and distributing information.
- Liaise with other local Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators to share experiences and good practice.
- Notify the police of suspicious and criminal incidents, and community concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour generally.
- Attend regular meetings with the police to discuss local community safety issues.
- Assist in the maintenance of the scheme in terms of the allocation of leaflets, signage, newsletters, property marking etc.
- Identify local environmental problems and inform the relevant agencies.
- Ensure the appropriate positioning and maintenance of Neighbourhood Watch signage in the area.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Some additional tasks may include:

- Regularly contacting all residents within the Neighbourhood Watch scheme by appropriate methods, for example, telephone call, calling door to door, or meetings.
- Managing and distributing relevant information in respect of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme in an appropriate way.
- Acting as a contact between residents and the police and notifying the police of community concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Communicating with the Police on an ongoing basis and providing a two-way exchange of information on crime and anti-social behaviour issues.
- Ensuring appropriate positioning of signage in the local area and notifying the agencies if replacement/additional signage is required.
- Welcoming new residents to the Neighbourhood Watch scheme area.
- Maintaining the interest of Neighbourhood Watch scheme members.
- Distributing relevant crime prevention material as appropriate.
- Acting in an honest and law-abiding manner.
- It is your Neighbourhood Watch scheme – you run it for the benefit of your community, your neighbours, family and friends.
- The police and other organisations are there to support you.
- Don't be afraid to ask for support when you need it. By working together we can continue to keep our communities, towns and villages safe and attractive places to live and work.
- No-one in the Neighbourhood Watch scheme, whether Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator or member, is expected to put themselves at any risk whatsoever.
- As a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, don't let yourself become a one-person security service for your area. Encourage members to support each other.
- The whole Neighbourhood Watch scheme is operated by private individuals.
- No member or Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator has any special powers, or any additional responsibilities, above those of an ordinary citizen.

It is also recommended that the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator(s) is supported by additional Neighbourhood Watch coordinators or willing individuals within the community to carry out some of the above tasks if the Neighbourhood Watch scheme involves a large number of households.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs)

Local PCSPs support and endorse the establishment of Neighbourhood Watch schemes. On behalf of the PCSP, the PCSP managers will:

- Facilitate the establishment of supported Neighbourhood Watch schemes within their local council area.
- Ensure the timely processing of application forms and maintain records of same.
- Monitor progress of Neighbourhood Watch schemes within their area.
- Create opportunities to promote and publicise local Neighbourhood Watch schemes.
- The PCSP is responsible for the administration associated with accrediting new Neighbourhood Watch schemes and also the re- accreditation of the schemes every four years.
- The PCSP issues the scheme accreditation certificate to the lead Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and individual ID cards to all approved Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators.
- Liaise with the local Council or Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) office to facilitate the erection and replacement of signage (they will also arrange for any signage to be removed for schemes that cease to exist).
- Agree how partners at local level will work together to maintain Neighbourhood Watch.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Neighbourhood Watch schemes are initiatives supported by the police, not run by them. Therefore, given the relationship between a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and local police it is not appropriate for a serving police officer (full time or part time) to undertake the role of a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator.

Local Police support and endorse the establishment of Neighbourhood Watch schemes throughout the district and are responsible for:

- The timely processing of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator/s application forms and completion of Police Service checks and maintain records of same.
- Reassessing the ability of an individual to continue as a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator if he/she loses the confidence of the community or has demonstrated behaviour that is not appropriate for the position.

- Liaising with the community in relation to the establishment of Neighbourhood Watch schemes.
- Issuing Neighbourhood Watch signs to the local Council/NIHE for erection as agreed.
- Liaising with Neighbourhood Watch coordinators on (an agreed) regular basis – the need for meetings will vary between areas depending on the level of crime or type of issues.
- Providing a point of contact with local police – ideally this will be a named contact with a direct phone line.
- Providing feedback and response to the concerns raised by Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators.
- Monitoring progress of Neighbourhood Watch schemes.
- Creating opportunities to promote and publicise local Neighbourhood Watch schemes in consultation with other partners and Neighbourhood Watch schemes.
- Agree how partners at local level will work together to maintain Neighbourhood Watch.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department of Justice, Northern Ireland Policing Board and Police Service of Northern Ireland at a strategic level the Department of Justice, the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) and Police Service of Northern Ireland:

Known as the Neighbourhood Watch Steering Group they support the delivery and operation of Neighbourhood Watch at a local level and provide funding for Neighbourhood Watch Liability Insurance Neighbourhood Watch Signage and when available other materials for Neighbourhood Watch schemes.



Strategic Level Contacts

Community Safety Division,
(Department of Justice)

Tel: (028) 9052 3780

www.nidirect.gov.uk/community-safety

E-mail: csupdb@justiceni.x.gsi.gov.uk

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Tel: 101

E-mail: Policingwiththecommunity@psni.pnn.police.uk

www.psnipolice.uk

Northern Ireland Policing Board

Tel: (028) 9040 8500

E-mail: information@nipolicingboard.org.uk

www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

DEVELOPING A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME

There are a number of stages which must be Progressed in sequence when establishing a new Neighbourhood Watch scheme.



How do I get documentation on Neighbourhood Watch?

You can get the relevant documents at the back of this manual (appendices 1-11) or from your local PCSPs and local police; you can download them from the Police: www.pnn.police.uk or information@nippoliceboard.org.uk or you can contact the Policing with the Community Branch, call: 101 or e-mail: Policingwiththecommunity@pnn.police.uk

How is the need for a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme established?

Some of the questions that a community should address when considering the establishment of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme are:

- Is crime in the area causing concern?
- Is there a fear of crime in the area?
- Are there volunteers in the area with the resources, time, commitment and dedication to work with the police and the community on an ongoing, voluntary basis?

Community representatives should contact either the PCSP Manager or the local police to set up an initial community meeting to get an overview of Neighbourhood Watch and clarify any issues. When community support for the establishment of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme has been identified, the community should identify at least one Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator for the area to be covered by the Neighbourhood Watch scheme. The Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator should be a well-known, respected and trusted resident of the area.

DEVELOPING A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME

What area should a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme cover?

The proposed area for the Neighbourhood Watch scheme should be clearly defined. The size of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme can vary from a cul-de-sac to a small village.

Neighbourhood Watch in a rural setting will also differ significantly from that in an urban location. Consideration must again be given to the size of any scheme and the ability of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators to communicate effectively with the wider community. This may be through local meetings, leaflet/letter drops, the Internet, mobile texting or even house-to-house contact if appropriate.

What level of community consultation is needed?

Raising awareness and consulting with all residents is essential. This can be done in the following ways:

- Leaflet drop/letters to all properties in the designated areas
- Articles in local Community Newsletter
- Public Meeting – inviting all residents to register their interest

Volunteers calling door-to-door

If going door-to-door, it is important that volunteers adhere to the legislative requirements outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), GDPR provides safeguards as to how personal information is used.

When the community consultation is completed, it should be possible to identify the level of community support for the initiative.

This can be broadly defined as:

High: At least 75% of all households within the designated area wish to participate

Medium: 40-74% of all households within the designated area wish to participate

Low: 0 – 39% of all households in the designated area wish to participate

Examples of consultation can be found at (appendices 5-8)

DEVELOPING A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME

It is essential that there is a strong level of support for the initiative across the designated area.

At least 60% of households in the proposed Scheme area should be willing to participate to make it viable.

Applications for Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators should only be progressed following endorsement from the community in the area to be covered by the proposed Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

How is a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator appointed?

The proposed Neighbourhood Watch scheme Co-ordinator should complete the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator application form (Appendix3).

The Neighbourhood Watch scheme Co-ordinator application form should be sent with a recent colour passport style photograph via post/email to the local PCSP. A copy of photographic ID (Drivers licence /Passport /electoral card) should accompany the application to authenticate the person making the application and signed and dated by one of the referees.

What happens if a replacement Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is needed?

If a replacement Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is required, the local PCSP Manager and police officer will liaise with the local community to seek to identify a suitable replacement.

If a replacement is identified they will have to complete the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator application form, Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator agreement and ID card declaration form. The ID card of the former Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator must also be returned to the PCSP Manager. If a replacement Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is not identified, the accreditation for the Neighbourhood Watch scheme will cease and the PCSP Manager will make arrangements for any Neighbourhood Watch signage to be removed.

DEVELOPING A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME

The Neighbourhood Watch scheme application form should be endorsed by the local police and the PCSP chairperson or vice chairperson.

The PCSP will issue a four year accreditation notice for the Neighbourhood Watch scheme to the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator. The local PCSP Manager will notify local police of the four year accreditation notice for a Neighbourhood Watch scheme and progress accordingly.

When are ID Cards issued Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators?

ID cards for Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators will be endorsed with a four year expiry date and are provided to give reassurance to local residents when the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator is making personal contact with the community. The cards will be issued by the PCSP with the accreditation notice. The Declaration, signed by the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator commits them to proper management and use of their ID card which is in line with the operational principles (Appendix1) and Declaration of good principles (Appendix2)

If a Neighbourhood Watch scheme has lapsed or there is a need to retrieve the ID card, this will be the responsibility of the PCSP Manager. If the card is not forthcoming, the local police officer will be advised and will be responsible for ensuring return of the card. The Police may rescind the approval of a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, if satisfied that the person is unable or unfit to discharge their functions as a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator.

How do we get Neighbourhood Watch signs erected?

The current agreement for editing and maintaining of Neighbourhood Watch signs is as follows:

- The Department of Infrastructure has confirmed that the current design of the Neighbourhood Watch signs conforms to regulations. These regulations limit the maximum size of the sign and how they can be displayed, in that the sign must be parallel to the road.
- The Department of Infrastructure has agreed that their 'street furniture' i.e. street lighting columns can be used to erect Neighbourhood Watch signs.
- If an accredited Neighbourhood Watch scheme covers an area of NIHE properties, the NIHE have agreed to erect Neighbourhood Watch signs.
- If an accredited Neighbourhood Watch scheme covers an area of private housing, most Councils have agreed to assist with erecting Neighbourhood Watch signs.
- Due to insurance issues Neighbourhood Watch schemes should not erect their own signage.
- The PCSP will arrange with Council to erect Neighbourhood Watch Signage

Additional signs can be obtained by contacting your local PCSP Manager. If you ask for additional signs, please ensure adequate time is given as it takes about a month before they are dispatched.

DEVELOPING A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME

How can we publicise and maintain interest in our scheme?

It is important to fully utilise local papers to promote and highlight the work of your Neighbourhood Watch scheme is doing. Neighbourhood Watch schemes are most successful when they are run by members for members. One of the most important messages to get across is that everyone has something to contribute to their local Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

A Neighbourhood Watch scheme is more likely to be effective in helping to address local incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour if good networks are established and maintained with its members.

Remember that although crime is a serious problem, people will be happier doing something about it if they are making a valuable contribution and enjoy doing it. Effective communication is essential and it may help if meetings are held regularly with the dates, times and venues agreed in advance. A newsletter and a varied programme of events run by the Neighbourhood Watch scheme through the year are also excellent ways of maintaining momentum.

Aim for activities that will both protect your community as well as make it stronger and more caring. Include some fun and social events in your programme to sustain interest and attract young people. Consider combining the activities of Neighbourhood Watch schemes that are within a similar geographical area.

How does the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme start working in practice?

The Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator(s) and the local police officer should meet to agree methods of contact and agree times and locations for regular meetings to ensure methods for effective two-way communication are identified and maintained. It is important that the Co-ordinators are aware of how they can contact the officers who deal with Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

The Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator(s) should then contact each household within the designated area to inform residents that the establishment of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme has been approved and to confirm arrangements for liaising with the local police. The PCSP Manager will also keep in contact with the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators as the need arises.

Re-accreditation of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes

The original policy for the establishment of Neighbourhood Watch in Northern Ireland indicated that schemes would be recredited every four years the Reaccreditation Form is at (Appendix4) and the process is outlined below.

DEVELOPING A NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME

Objective for re-accreditation of Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes must be re-accredited for the following reasons:

- To ensure that the Neighbourhood Watch schemes are still operational
- To confirm that the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator involved in the establishment of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme is still acting as the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator
- To validate information held on the Neighbourhood Watch schemes

The process for re-accreditation of Neighbourhood Watch schemes is that Police Service checks will be carried out for existing Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators and local police must confirm that they are content that the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator can continue to undertake that role.

If for any reason local police are not content to re-endorse the existing Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, they should advise the applicant and PCSP as soon as possible

The PCSP Manager and local police will liaise to identify a suitable replacement Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator. If a suitable replacement is not identified within a reasonable time frame then accreditation for the Neighbourhood Watch scheme will cease.

All relevant partners will be informed, arrangements will be made to remove the signage and the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator will be asked to return their ID card to PCSP.



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR AND CRIME PREVENTION

Being a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator.

There are no strict regulations around how a Neighbourhood Watch scheme should function, but central to the effectiveness and success of any Neighbourhood Watch scheme is the input from the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator(s). This section outlines some pointers around the different activities a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator might wish to organise such as production of a newsletter or organising meetings.

It is important to note that these activities are not essential to the operation of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme and some schemes operate differently depending on local circumstances. If there is more than one Neighbourhood Watch coordinator they should aim to meet on a regular basis to progress ideas and events which will help maintain the momentum of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

How to make local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme meetings work.

When meetings are organised as part of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme they can be formal or informal. The priority, however, is to keep Neighbourhood Watch scheme members interested and motivated. This section outlines some guidance in how meetings can be organised.

Before the meeting:

- Make sure everyone knows where and when the meeting is to be held and whether they are expected to prepare or contribute anything. Use flyers, notice boards and newsletters to publicise it.

- Choose an accessible meeting place. For example, a small group could meet in someone's house whilst for more than ten people, a larger venue may be required.
- The room should have enough comfortable chairs, as well as any other items that might be needed such as paper, pens etc.
- Think how best to set out the room as this can affect the contributions that people make. People should be able to see and hear each other. Chairs arranged in a circle are more likely to make people feel part of a group than straight rows facing a platform.
- Prepare an agenda to cover necessary business and structure discussion. Do not forget to ask other people what they would like to see included on the agenda and, if possible, publicise it before the meeting.
- Agree who will chair the meeting, take notes, organise refreshments, etc.

Running the meeting:

- Begin by welcoming everyone, especially new members.
- Run through the main agenda items for the meeting.
- Review the notes of the previous meeting. Check that people have carried out any agreed actions.
- Guide the discussion through the agenda with a firm but fair manner. If you have a large group, you may want to ask people to indicate if they want to speak. Encourage people to keep to the point and be aware of the time.
- Give everyone the chance to express their opinion without interruption. Avoid the discussion being dominated by a few people and encourage an environment of mutual respect in which agreement can be reached.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR AND CRIME PREVENTION

- Try to reach agreement on any aims or actions that groups have identified.
- Make sure that someone keeps a record of the meeting (the 'minutes'). This should list those present, where and when the meeting was held. Above all, the notes should clearly record any decisions taken and the names of those responsible for carrying out the agreed actions.

After the meeting:

- Prepare and distribute the minutes as quickly as possible.
- Keep in touch with anyone who agreed to carry out an action to check if they need any support and to try and ensure that actions are carried out before the next meeting.

How to mark and record property

Property marking is about putting your postcode and your house number on valuable items that you own from laptops/tablets and bicycles to mobile phones. It discourages thieves because marked property is less easy to sell on. If stolen or lost property is recovered, this marking system helps the police to return item(s) to their original owner.

Property marking can be promoted in several ways:

- The PCSP or Police may provide property marking equipment free of charge.
- The property marking kit could be passed around to members with advice on how to mark different types of property.
- Hold property marking days for Neighbourhood Watch scheme members to work together.
- Take photographs of valuable property for members and provide a form for them to record serial numbers and other details.

Property marking is not a one-off activity – a few moments each year will help protect your possessions. Local Police can provide advice on practical steps that can be taken to protect your property.



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR AND CRIME PREVENTION

Crimestoppers

The Crimestoppers Trust is an independent charity that is not affiliated to the Police. It was set up in 1988 and operates across the UK to help identify, prevent, solve and reduce crime by use of a free phone number. It can be used by anyone who can provide information about crime but wishes to remain anonymous.

It offers the opportunity for a person who may have information about a crime, such as details about the offender, to report it without that person giving their own details to the police.

In these circumstances information can be passed anonymously to CRIMESTOPPERS by ringing 0800 555 111.

This number is not suitable for an emergency that requires immediate police attention.

How to help detect offenders

There are three main ways members of Neighbourhood Watch schemes can help to detect offenders:

- By being vigilant
- By recording descriptions of individuals and vehicles
- By reporting suspicious activity

Here is some advice that can be passed on:

Being vigilant

Everyone in the Neighbourhood Watch scheme area, including children, should be aware of anything unusual and should all know what to do about it. Information can be circulated at meetings, through a newsletter or "checklist" etc. It is important to advise people that they should not put themselves at risk when trying to observe a crime, or by trying to prevent a crime.



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR AND CRIME PREVENTION

Taking descriptions

Make people in the Neighbourhood Watch scheme area aware that the more detailed information they can provide, the more useful it will be to the Police.

Here are some tips on what to look for when observing people, or vehicles:

- Person: Gender, age, skin colour, build, height, dress.
- Hair: Colour, length, curly/straight, receding.
- Face: Shape, complexion, beard/moustache
- Mouth: Shape, teeth.
- Eyes: Glasses, colour.
- Marks: Scars, tattoos.
- Vehicle Type: Car / Van / Lorry / Bike.
- Vehicle Details: Make, model, colour, registration number or distinguishing details (e.g. company name, damage, decoration).

Make sure that all members of the scheme have copies of the Neighbourhood Watch Information Card, which should be kept in a convenient location and used as prompts to record information. (Copies may be downloaded from the Police website) Information should be recorded as quickly as possible rather than relying on memory.

Reporting Suspicious Activity

An essential part of the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator's role is to encourage people in the Neighbourhood Watch scheme area to report crime and suspicious activity promptly and efficiently. In an emergency when there is danger to life, or a crime is in progress, people should dial 999 at once, ask for the police and provide clear details about themselves and the incident.

In a non-emergency situation call 101 to contact the police. Your local police officer may also have an assigned mobile phone

and their number may also be used to report incidents or suspicious activity.

How to be safe on the street, in a car or on public transport.

Neighbourhood Watch is not just concerned with being safe in the home.

The following advice is for members when they are out and about:

On the Streets

- Avoid short cuts through dark areas, or waste ground.
- Walk facing the traffic. A car cannot easily pull up behind you unnoticed.
- Walk on the street side of the pavement to be furthest from dark entrances.
- Run in the opposite direction from anyone in a car who is threatening you. If you can, note the number and type of car.
- Do not accept lifts from strangers, or hitchhike.
- Always have enough money with you to book a taxi if it is late, or arrange a lift home.
- Carry a personal alarm in your hand at night, or in areas where there are few people.
- Test the alarm every couple of months to make sure it still works.
- Cover up expensive jewellery when you are outside.
- Keep house keys in your pocket, not your bag.
- If you are followed, run to the nearest place where there are other people and call the police.
- Vary your route, if you go out regularly at night.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR AND CRIME PREVENTION



In a car

- Keep car doors locked and valuables out of sight.
- Make sure the car is in good condition before going on a long journey.
- Make sure there is sufficient fuel for the journey.
- Plan your route using main roads as much as possible.
- Take change in case you have to make a call. Also if you own a mobile phone ensure that it is charged.
- Be wary of hitchhikers and anyone who flags you down.
- If you break down on the motorway do not accept lifts from strangers. Wait for the police, or breakdown services.

On Public Transport

- Keep away from isolated bus stops after dark.
- If it is late sit near the driver and conductor on buses.
- On platforms, stand where there are several others waiting.
- On trains, sit in compartments with several other people.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR AND CRIME PREVENTION

How to be safe at home

Improving property security

- Fit good security hardware, including locks and bolts on doors and windows, door security chains and viewers, better lighting and possibly an alarm.
- Consider replacing doors and windows, if they are weak.
- Keep external doors locked. Always lock doors and windows properly even when popping out for a few minutes.
- Never leave keys under the doormat, or on a string in the letterbox. Give a spare key to a trusted neighbour to keep safely.
- Change door and window locks when moving to a new home.

Encourage your Neighbourhood Watch scheme members to visit the website

Keeping your home secure at
www.nidirect.gov.uk

Improving personal safety

- Do not give personal information to strangers on the phone.
- Never let strangers into your home when you are alone.
- If you receive abusive calls put the phone down immediately and, if they continue tell the telephone company.

Call 101 Quickcheck to check those claiming to be from utility companies.

- Have a telephone extension in the bedroom for emergencies.

- Do not go outside to investigate prowlers – dial 999 at once.
- If you find signs of a break in when you return home, do not go inside or shout out. Go to a neighbour and dial 999.

How to protect empty homes

Whether a house is empty for just a few minutes or while the owner is on holiday, it is vulnerable. Neighbourhood Watch scheme members should take the simple precautions listed below.

These precautions should be emphasised each year as the summer holiday season approaches and the checklist could be circulated to members.

Do not keep a list of members' holidays, as this could cause problems if it fell into the wrong hands.

It is safer for members to let a neighbour or the local police know when they are away and how they can be contacted in an emergency.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR AND CRIME PREVENTION

For short periods

- Always lock doors and windows.
- Consider leaving a radio playing.
- Consider switching on lights in some rooms.
- Lamps and radios can be plugged into a timer which makes them come on and off which can make it look as if someone is home.
- Draw curtains in the evening.
- Tell neighbours if the house is unoccupied at regular times.

For long periods

- Make sure properties are secure when unoccupied.
- Cancel deliveries of milk and papers.
- Tell neighbours, local police and alarm companies when the house is unoccupied.
- Consider using a time switch to turn on lights.
- Ask someone to open and close curtains.
- Make sure post is removed each day.
- Mow the grass before leaving for holidays.

- Lock away ladders and secure sheds and garages.
- Do not put your home address on luggage labels.

Doorstep Callers

Be aware of bogus doorstep callers. Most callers are probably genuine, but some are not. The advice is:

- Keep the door locked.
- Identify the caller through a window/spy hole.
- Be cautious.
- Use the safety chain before opening the door.
- Ask for an identity card and check it thoroughly – don't be rushed.
- If unsure telephone the company concerned and enquire about the caller or phone Quick Check on 101.
- If still unsure do not let them in - ask them to write and make an appointment.
- If you have any concerns telephone a friend, neighbour, family member and/or the police.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What are the merits of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme?

Crime statistics show that crime in Northern Ireland is low; however the fear of crime, particularly amongst the elderly is high. Involvement in this scheme can reassure elderly residents and provide additional support to those persons in fear.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes enable communities to look after each other. They will hopefully lead to greater public support for local police and a greater chance of people reporting incidents that might have previously gone unreported to police.

Can others join a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme?

Any area which wishes to join a Neighbourhood Watch scheme can do so at any time. They will be asked to complete a survey which basically determines the public support for a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the area. Any person who wishes to be a Neighbourhood Watch coordinator must go through police service checking to determine their suitability.

What about areas that are already involved in a Neighbourhood Watch scheme?

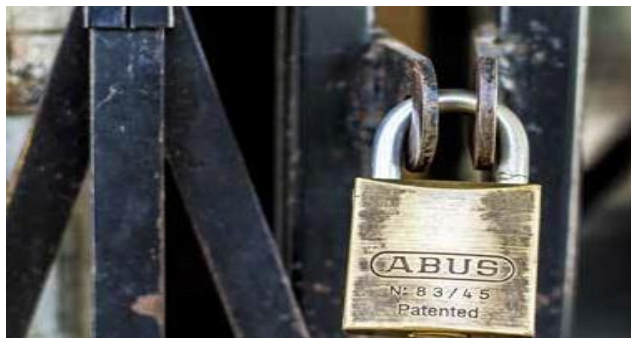
Whilst some areas are affiliated with Community Associations or other “watch” schemes some have developed their remit to include Neighbourhood Watch along with their current work. Other Housing Associations such as Radius Housing Association, Apex Housing for example, are now also involved with Neighbourhood Watch.

How much does it cost to become involved in the Neighbourhood Watch scheme?

Absolutely nothing only a little time and effort. Statutory supporting agencies such as the police and other non-statutory supporting organisations will assist.

What should I do if anyone asks about Neighbourhood Watch schemes?

Refer them to the local police or PCSP Manager. Alternatively information may be found on the Police Service of Northern Ireland website: www.psnl.police.uk, or www.nipolicingboard.org.uk



GLOSSARY OF TERMS and Contacts

A number of the terms used in this handbook are described below.

CSD

Community Safety Division

Community Safety Division of the Department of Justice has overall responsibility for community safety within Government

www.nidirect.gov.uk

PCSP

Policing and Community Safety Partnership

Policing and Community Safety Partnerships are statutory bodies established under the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 and bring together the functions and responsibilities of Policing Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs). PCSPs strive to make communities in Northern Ireland safer by focusing on the policing and community safety issues that matter most in each local area.

Department of Justice

The Department of Justice (DOJ) is a Northern Ireland Department which came into existence on 12 April 2010 and was established by the Department of Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2010. It has a range of devolved policing and justice functions, set out in the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010

Department of Infrastructure

Main responsibilities include strategic planning, transportation strategy, Ports and Public Transport, roads and water policy, providing and maintaining roads and providing and maintaining water and sewage services www.infastructure-ni.gov.uk

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

Please check your local Council website for GDPR Guidelines

NIHE

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

A comprehensive regional housing authority www.nihe.gov.uk

NIPB

Northern Ireland Policing Board

The Policing Board is an independent public body made up of 19 Political and Independent Members established to ensure for all the people of Northern Ireland an effective, efficient, impartial, representative and accountable police service which will secure the confidence of the whole community, by reducing crime and the fear of crime. The Board has a range of legislative duties to meet. Through meetings of the Policing Board and the work of its committees, it holds the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of the policing service.

The Police

Police Service of Northern Ireland

'Policing with the Community' is the style of policing delivered in Northern Ireland to meet the policing requirements of all members of the community and is delivered in furtherance of the statutory general duties of police officers www.psni.police.uk
Contacts

Local Police
101

Northern Ireland Housing Executive
0 3448 920 900

Crimestoppers
0800 555 111

Quick Check
101

Appendices:

Appendix 1	Neighbourhood Watch Operational Principles
Appendix 2	Neighbourhood Watch Declaration of Good Principles
Appendix 3	Neighbourhood Watch Application Form
Appendix 4	Neighbourhood Watch Reaccreditation Form
Appendix 5	Neighbourhood Watch Meeting Invitation
Appendix 6	Neighbourhood Watch Canvassing Letter
Appendix 7	Neighbourhood Watch Expression of Interest
Appendix 8	Examples of Press Releases Documents

Neighbourhood Watch Operational Principles

As Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators

- ☒ We will maintain responsible association within the community.
- ☒ We will use our knowledge and professional associations for the benefit of our neighbours and not to secure unfair advantage.
- ☒ We will make only realistic and founded statements regarding our neighbours.
- ☒ We will show sensitive regard for the moral, social, cultural and religious standards of others.
- ☒ We will refrain from imposing our beliefs or opinions on others, although we reserve the right to express them when appropriate and in a manner compliant with our commitment.
- ☒ We will not engage in harassment, abusive words or actions, or exploitative coercion in our neighbourhood or in relation to work of Neighbourhood Watch.
- ☒ We will treat all communications in relation to Neighbourhood Watch with professional confidence.

All records kept of Neighbourhood watch business will be stored or disposed of in a manner that assures security and confidentiality and in line with council GDPR requirements

Neighbourhood Watch Declaration of Good Principles

As Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators

- ☒ we commit ourselves to the principles of Equity, Respect for Differences and Relationship-Building across and within the communities living in xxxxxx.
- ☒ We accept that everyone has the right to expect to work and live free from any form of intimidation due to religious, political, cultural or national differences.
- ☒ Representation and promotion of our own cultural, political and religious identities should be achieved in a manner that shows respect for each other, promotes diversity and can lead to creating mutual respect and understanding.
- ☒ As Co-ordinators we are committed to ensuring that our behaviour can in no way make any person feel uncomfortable or victimised because of their religious, political, cultural, or national identity.
- ☒ As Co-ordinators we will endeavour to use language and conduct ourselves in a manner that makes no other member or community feel belittled or degraded.

Neighbourhood Watch Application Form

**Neighbourhood Watch Scheme Co-ordinator Application Form**

Name	
Previous names	
Date Of Birth	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone no(s)	
Email address	
Previous addresses in last 5 years	

Proposed scheme Area		
Proposed scheme name		
Postcodes included in scheme		
Number of houses in scheme		
Community Consultation carried out? (How)	e.g. Public meeting, Opt out letter drop, social media etc.	Level of Community Support? (Please Circle) LOW MEDIUM HIGH

REFERENCES: Please give details of two people (not family members) who have known you for at least 2 years who could provide a reference.

Name	
Address	
Telephone No	
How this person knows you?	

Name	
Address	
Telephone No	
How this person knows you?	

PSNI Approved: Date _____ Name: _____ _____ Badge: _____ _____ *Copy of this form to be retained by Local PSNI and PCSP.	ID Produced Driving Licence <input type="checkbox"/> Passport <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Person ID seen by PCSP/PSNI _____ _____ Date: _____ _____ _____	PCSP Approved: Date _____ Date ID card Posted: _____ _____ Date Signage ordered: _____ Issuing Officer: _____ _____
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Applicant declaration:

I agree that the PSNI may carry out a Police Service Check and that they can advise the PCSP, in confidence, as to my suitability for appointment as NHW co-ordinator. I further agree to my personal details above being held by the local PCSP and PSNI.

I agree to:

- Conduct myself professionally, with truth, accuracy, fairness, and responsibility within the work of NHW and to the public.
- To improve my competence and advance the aims and objectives of NHW through attendance and input to its meetings and training.
- Adhere to the operations and good relations principles (NHWS manual) to enable the achievement of NHW objectives and the development of positive public relations.
- Upon receipt of my NHW Identity card, I will ensure it is kept safe and inform local PSNI if it is lost or stolen. I will not permit anyone else to use my ID card.
- I understand in my role as NHW co-ordinator I will wear my ID card visibly and show it to any households I visit within my scheme.
- I will not engage in any activity or behaviour which is likely to impact on my ability to retain the confidence of the local community and the PSNI.
- If requested, I agree to return the ID card to PCSP.

Please tick this box to confirm that you are over 18 years of age and that you have read the NHW information brochure. The ticked box confirms that you understand how your contact information will be retained and used by your local PCSP and the PSNI, in full compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 & The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018. ☒

I, the undersigned, give permission to my local PCSP to place my details on a computerised database system, accessible by the local PCSP and PSNI for use only in Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. I agree that the Police Service of Northern

Ireland will carry out a Police Service Check as to my suitability to become a NHW co-ordinator and to receive information via this scheme. PCSP/PSNI reserves the right to remove an individual from the NHW scheme if it becomes known that the individual has been involved in criminal activity or for any other reason which is deemed unacceptable to the purpose of this scheme.

Privacy Notice can be found on your Local Council website:

Signed _____

Date _____

Neighbourhood Watch Reaccreditation Form



Re-accreditation of Neighbourhood Watch Scheme Co-ordinator Application Form

Scheme

Name: _____

Co-ordinator Details:

Name:

Address:

Telephone Number (s):

Email Address:

Applicant declaration:

I confirm the above details to be correct and submit the application for re-accreditation of the above scheme and I have included a new verified photograph which will be used on the Neighbourhood watch ID card.

I agree that the PSNI may carry out a Police Service Check and that they can advise the PCSP, in confidence, as to my suitability for appointment as NHW co-ordinator. I further agree to my personal details above being held by PCSP and the local PSNI.

I agree to:

- Conduct myself professionally, with truth, accuracy, fairness, and responsibility within the work of NHW and to the public.

- To improve my competence and advance the aims and objectives of NHW through attendance and input to its meetings and training.
- Adhere to the operations and good relations principles (NHW manual) to enable the achievement of NHW objectives and the development of positive public relations.
- Upon receipt of my NHW Identity card, I will ensure it is kept safe and inform local PSNI if it is lost or stolen. I will not permit anyone else to use my ID card.
- I understand in my role as NHW co-ordinator I will wear my ID card visibly and show it to any households I visit within my scheme.
- I will not engage in any activity or behaviour which is likely to impact on my ability to retain the confidence of the local community and the PSNI.
- If requested, I agree to return the ID card to PCSP.

Please tick this box to confirm that you are over 18 years of age and that you have read the NHW manual. The ticked box confirms that you understand how your contact information will be retained and used by your local PCSP and the PSNI, in full compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 & The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018. ☐

I, the undersigned, give permission to the local PCSP to place my details on a computerised database system, accessible by the local PCSP and the local PSNI for use only in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. I agree that the Police Service of Northern Ireland will carry out a Police Service Check as to my suitability to become a NHW co-ordinator and to receive information via this scheme. PCSP/PSNI reserves the right to remove an individual from the NHW scheme if it becomes known that the individual has been involved in criminal activity or for any other reason which is deemed unacceptable to the purpose of this scheme.

Privacy Notices can be found on your local Council website.

Signed: _____

Print: _____

Date: _____

Official use only: Endorsement of Re-accreditation of above scheme:

Police Service Northern Ireland	
I endorse the above Co-ordinator and re-accreditation of the scheme for a further four years.	
Signed: _____	Rank & No: _____
Print: _____	Date: _____

Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)

I endorse re-accreditation of the scheme for a further four years.

Signed: _____ Position: _____

Print: _____ Date: _____

Date Letter, ID card and certificate posted: _____
by _____

**IF YOU NO LONGER WISH TO ACT AS A COORDINATOR/CLOSURE OF A
NW SCHEME**

I no longer wish to be a co-ordinator for this NHW Scheme

(Please remove my personal details from the NHW system).

Signed: _____ Date: _____

NW Scheme

Neighbourhood Watch Meeting Form



Are you concerned about crime, the fear of crime and/or anti social behaviour in
xxxxxx?

A public meeting will be held on **xx/xx/xxxx**

in **xxxxxx**

at **xxxxxx**

The meeting is to find out whether residents wish to establish a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in the area. Neighbourhood Watch means that no one is alone. Neighbours look out for each other and keep a check on vulnerable people and places. A Neighbourhood Watch Scheme will work to reduce crime and to ensure that **xxxxxx** remains a safe and peaceful place to live.

Everyone is Welcome.

Neighbourhood Watch Canvassing Letter



CANVASSING LETTER - DELETE IF REQUIRED

Date xx/xx/xxxx

Dear Resident,

Residents within your area have suggested that they would like to set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme where you live. Neighbourhood Watch involves neighbours looking after each other – keeping ‘an eye’ on each other’s houses while neighbours are on holidays, watching out for suspicious activity, reducing burglaries, vandalism and helping older people and the community feel safe in their homes.

Being a part of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme is easy and there is little work for you to do. It just means if you need someone to keep an eye on your house when you are away, see something that is suspicious and you do not want to call the police – you can contact the Co-ordinator. The Co-ordinator will also keep you informed, through leaflet drops for example, if there are crimes in the area so that you can protect your house and property.

The xxxxxx community, xxxxxx Policing and Community Safety Partnership, and the Police support Neighbourhood Watch. Residents living in your area have come forward and have volunteered to co-ordinate the scheme. One will call with you soon to introduce themselves and give you their contact details. **If you do not want to take part in the scheme, please telephone xxxxxx.**

Together we can work to make sure that xxxxxx remains a safe and peaceful Place to live

Kind Regards,

Neighbourhood Watch Expression of Interest



Neighbourhood Watch Expression of Interest

We would appreciate your views on the proposal to set up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in the **xxxxxx** area.

I think that the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme should be introduced in **xx/xx/xxxx**

Yes ☐ No ☐

I would like to get involved in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Yes ☐ No ☐

I would like to be a co-ordinator within the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in **XXXX**

Yes ☐ No ☐

Any other comments:

.....

.....

Name:

Address:

.....

Post Code: Tel. No:

Neighbourhood Watch Canvassing Letter



CANVASSING LETTER - DELETE IF REQUIRED

Date xx/xx/xxxx

Dear Resident,

Residents within your area have suggested that they would like to set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme where you live. Neighbourhood Watch involves neighbours looking after each other – keeping ‘an eye’ on each other’s houses while neighbours are on holidays, watching out for suspicious activity, reducing burglaries, vandalism and helping older people and the community feel safe in their homes.

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The xxxxxx community, xxxxxx Policing and Community Safety Partnership, and the Police support Neighbourhood Watch. Residents living in your area have come forward and have volunteered to co-ordinate the scheme. One will call with you soon to introduce themselves and give you their contact details.

If you do not want to take part in the scheme, please telephone xxxxxx.

Together we can work to make sure that xxxxxx remains a safe and peaceful Place to live.

Kind Regards,

Press Release Examples



Neighbourhood Watch News Releases/Statements

Notes for Neighbourhood Watch News releases and statements.

- Sending out releases and statements is one way of communicating with the wider public and letting them know what you are doing.
- You will find 3 versions of news releases giving you examples of the kind of things you may want to highlight. These are templates to give you some guidance – you can use this template and fill in the details or you may prefer to try and word it yourself so it is particular to your area and not the same as another neighbourhood.
- You may want to submit a story about how you have successfully dealt with anti-social behaviour; to promote how the scheme is growing or to run a notice in the paper to promote a forthcoming meeting geared towards attracting new members.
- You will need contact details for your local papers – an email is best. Local papers are always keen to run stories about local areas. Find out when their print date is so you can make sure you get your notice in on time, particularly if it is to highlight a meeting. Some papers might try and encourage you to take out an advertisement instead but if you give them enough detail, they will run a story.
- You may want to widen this to include local radio stations – but be prepared for them to want to interview you about the subject you're raising.
- Keep releases succinct and factual – you can add additional information in the 'notes to editors' section, such as how long you have been running and how many members you have.
- Make sure you provide some sort of contact so that people who want to take part in or join your scheme can get in touch. Think about what details you want to be out in the public – you may not want to give out your home number or name but refer to yourself as the co-ordinator. This very much depends on what you are comfortable with.
- The person quoted in the releases should always be the co-ordinator but you should make sure you have agreement with the other scheme members that this will be one of your actions. Everyone will have different skills to bring to schemes so you might want to allocate someone to take responsibility for publicity.
- Always brand releases with the Neighbourhood Watch logo – this is included in the templates.



Neighbourhood Watch News Release

The xxxxxx Neighbourhood Watch Scheme will be holding a meeting on **01/01/2014** at xxxxxx (time) in xxxxxx (place)

The Scheme co-ordinator xxxxxx said about the meeting: **“We would urge everyone in this area who wants to contribute to keeping our area a safe and peaceful one to live in.**

What we do is very straightforward – we work with the police and other bodies to make sure we’re doing all we can to make our area safe. It doesn’t take up a lot of time or resources so if you live in the xxxxxx area and are interested in playing a part, please come along to our next meeting in xxxxxx on 01/01/2014.”

For further information, please contact xxxxxx (name) on xxxxxx (contact details)

Notes to editors:

1. Neighbourhood Watch is a partnership between the police and local communities supported by the local communities and Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP). Its aim is to help people protect themselves and their property, and to reduce the fear of crime.
2. The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme has been running in the xxx area for xxxxxx years/months. The Scheme has xxxxxx members.

Notes to editors ends.



Neighbourhood Watch News Release

The xxxxxx Neighbourhood Watch Scheme has just celebrated its first birthday.

Scheme co-ordinator xxxxxx said: "We're really pleased that our scheme has been such a success in the xxxxxx area. We set up the scheme in xxxxxx because we were having a lot of difficulty with anti social behaviour.

The work we have done has significantly helped to improve the local environment and to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour and I would like to thank everyone who has taken part and helped us in our work over the past year."

For further information, please contact xxxxxx (name) on xxxxxx (contact details).

Notes to editors:



Neighbourhood Watch News Release

The xxxxxx Neighbourhood Watch Scheme co-ordinator has highlighted the increase of burglaries in the area and held a recent meeting to discuss ways of dealing with this rise and how to keep homes safer.

The Scheme co-ordinator xxxxxx said: "We work quite closely with our local Neighbourhood Officer who highlighted the recent spate of burglaries in our area.

We are obviously concerned about this and will play our part in making our community safer. Many burglaries can be prevented if houses are that little bit more secure. I would urge everyone to make sure they keep their homes well secured and if they need any information on how best to do this, please get in touch and we can pass on some advice from the PSNI."

For further information, please contact xxxxxx (name) on xxxxxx (contact details)

Notes to editors:

1. Neighbourhood Watch is a partnership between the police and local communities supported by the local communities and Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP). Its aim is to help people protect themselves and their property, and to reduce the fear of crime.
2. The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme has been running in the xxx area for xxxxxx years/months. The Scheme has xxxxxx members.

Notes to editors ends.