

HOW WE WORK WITH THE POLICE

In this section

- 2 Working together
- 2 Neighbourhood policing teams
- 3 Police community support officers (PCSOs)
- 5 CDRPs (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships)
and CSPs (Community Safety Partnerships)
- 7 The policing pledge
- 10 Community payback scheme



Introduction

Neighbourhood and Home Watch groups are made up of volunteers that dedicate their time to protecting, supporting and working with their communities. The Police do not own Neighbourhood Watch, but recognise and highly value the assistance Neighbourhood Watch give in setting up and running their own schemes. Many Police forces put significant resources into initiating and supporting schemes throughout their force area.

Neighbourhood Watch is a named partner in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the government's police reform consultation paper Policing: Building Safer Communities Together. Neighbourhood Watch is specifically mentioned as one of the bodies that must be invited to participate in strategies designed to reduce crime and disorder. If the group in your area isn't being involved locally, find out why! Speak to your local PCSO, police force contact point, or if you have one, Watch Liaison Officer (WLO).

Working together

Neighbourhood policing teams

Neighbourhood Watch have the potential to be the on the ground, voluntary eyes and ears for their local Police Service. When all parties appreciate how they best fit together and the importance of good communications and information flow between them, both parties are empowered to make a change for the better in local communities.

it is natural to encourage the Neighbourhood Policing teams to work more closely with Neighbourhood Watch, in respect of crime prevention, sharing intelligence, identifying issues of local concern, being involved in community problem solving, promoting social cohesion, building community capacity, public reassurance and confidence in local policing.

The aim of a Neighbourhood Policing Team is to create safer neighbourhoods and greater feelings of safety, with the public feeling that they have a genuine involvement and a greater say in how their neighbourhood is policed and to bring about long-term and sustainable solutions to difficult and persistent local problems.

Details of what is going on in local areas can be found on the direct.gov.uk web site <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/CrimeJusticeAndTheLaw/ThePolice/index.htm>

or on the Home Office web site <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/>

Details of your local Neighbourhood Policing Team are available from <http://local.direct.gov.uk/LDGRedirect/Policing.do?ref=neighbourhood>

or via the web site of your local Police force.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

PCSOs are integral members of Safer Neighbourhood teams and their numbers have made a positive impact on policing especially for local communities. The role of a PCSO is very different from that of a police officer though. There is lots of information about the role, responsibility and development of the PCSO role here http://cfnp.npia.police.uk/files/np_monitoring_pcsa_progress_report.pdf

The role and purpose of a PCSO as part of the wider police family is one of public reassurance through highly visible patrols. They provide consistency for local communities by having staff locally employed assigned to specific geographical areas.

PCSOs are able to deal with minor crime and disorder problems. PCSOs undertake projects aimed at improving the quality of life of residents because of their contacts with different agencies. PCSOs are also able to capture community intelligence by working closer with the grass roots.

What your local PCSO does in your community, will be identified by the local community, perhaps at a police led Neighbourhood Engagement Panel meeting, or at a meeting of your local Parish Council. They may be involved in projects in housing associations, shops, health care professionals, schools, voluntary organisations or local councils.

PCSOs ultimately benefit from having good relationships with NHW Co-ordinators as they offer an opportunity to obtain up to date local intelligence and disseminate results and achievements of the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

The PCSO web site gives information about PCSO roles and powers nationally – <http://www.policecommunitysupportofficer.com/welcome.html>

PCSOs should know who their street and area co-ordinators are so make yourself known to them. Send an e-mail or make a phone call, telling them who you are, where you live, what you are responsible for and perhaps detail some issues that you would like to discuss Perhaps you could invite your local PCSO to meetings and area NHW meetings. If they don't know about them, they can't attend them.

PCSOs will have grass roots knowledge of problem areas, local crimes and incident. Work with them to plan new watches, with the support of your WLO if you have one. PCSOs will also have an excellent area overview and can introduce one group of people to another, thus sharing skills, best practice and experience.

You should be able to find out who your local PCSO is via the web site of your local Police force.

CDRPs (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships) and CSPs (Community Safety Partnerships)

Effective partnership working on community safety is key to sustainable and safer communities. Over the years, the Police Service and Neighbourhood Watch have worked together in many ways. In 1998, the Crime and Disorder Act set out details of partners that must work together, in order to improve the local environment and quality of life within communities. These have been traditionally known as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) or Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in Wales.

Responsible authorities have a statutory duty to work with local agencies and organisations to, amongst other things, tackle crime and disorder including anti-social behaviour, the misuse of drugs in their area along with other key priorities highlighted by discussion with their communities.

The responsible authorities as set out in s 5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 are :

- police
- police authorities
- local authorities
- fire and rescue authorities
- local health boards (LHBs) in Wales, and
- primary care trusts (PCTs) in England (PCTs were added on 30 April 2004).

They work jointly with probation agencies, parish councils, NHS Trusts, independent schools, and drug action teams. In some areas, The Environment Agency is also invited to participate in discussions. A CDRP/CSP has a duty to invite local private, voluntary, other public and community groups to become involved in the audit and strategies development process – and this is where Neighbourhood Watch fits in. NHW is also able to support aspects of the deliver of local strategic plans for example, around helping reduce burglary and reducing anti social behaviour.

You can see the list of organisations involved in CDRP working here <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100413151441/http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/regions/regions13.htm>

Sherwood and Mapperley Park Neighbourhood Watch (SAMPNW), Nottingham

SAMPNW has built a substantial network of partners with whom they frequently work on cross-agency solutions to local issues. Partners include Nottinghamshire Police, the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Team, Crime and Drugs Partnership, Nottingham City Council (e.g. Community Safety Partnership and Street Scene), the Highways Agency, Public Health and various housing partners, including Nottingham City Homes, Tuntum Housing Association and private landlords.

The relationship with the Safer Neighbourhood Team has been further strengthened by SAMPNW having an office base and drop in centre within the Police Station. The Council's Area Management Team is also located in the same building, which has supported joined up working between the Safer Neighbourhood Team, Neighbourhood Watch and the Area Management Team.

SAMPNW meets with the Beat Manager Sergeant once a month to discuss local issues/ seek solutions. A successful example of this was the co-ordinated campaign to address anti social behaviour in a residential road off the neighbourhood's main shopping precinct. SAMPNW responded by establishing a neighbourhood watch on the street and contacting relevant partners including the ASB Team, Nottingham City Homes, private landlords and local councillors.

CDRPs – <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100413151441/http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/regions/regions00.htm>

CSPs – <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100413151441/http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/partnerships44.htm>

The Groves Neighbourhood Watch, Hull

The Groves Neighbourhood Watch Group has established the largest No Cold Calling area in Hull. The area includes a significant number of private rented houses which have attracted many people who have behaved in an anti-social/criminal manner. The area was prone to cold calling and in one case an elderly couple had £2,500 stolen by bogus tradesmen. Since the introduction of the No Cold Calling area, cold calling has been virtually eradicated, with residents feeling empowered to challenge anyone appearing to knock on doors uninvited.

The Groves is about a mile outside Hull City centre in what is largely an industrial area, comprising 234 houses and 16 businesses.

The Policing Pledge

The policing pledge is a set of promises from the police to communities about the services they will provide. All 43 police forces in England and Wales have agreed to keep those promises so the same set of promises applies wherever you are.

Through a national policing pledge, every police force has promised to listen to the needs of the varied communities that they serve and to act on problems raised with them.

The pledge also says that if you're unhappy with the service you've received and you report that to the police, police will get in touch within 24 hours and discuss the situation with you. They will give you the opportunity to talk about it with someone from your local police, in person.

You can find out what the Policing Pledge promises and download a copy of the National Policing Pledge from the Home Office web site http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/www.direct.gov.uk/en/CrimeJusticeAndTheLaw/ThePolice/DG_181995

Hunters Gate Neighbourhood Watch, Ushaw Moor, County Durham

A £10,000 Lottery grant has funded Hunters Gate NW to undertake a village-wide needs analysis survey and develop a Community Plan. One of the main concerns of the local community was anti-social behaviour linked to the underage consumption of alcohol. So when plans for the opening of another alcohol retailer in the village were put forward the group undertook a petition to prevent planning approval. With more than 700 signatures the petition was the largest ever presented to the licensing department of Durham City Council and the application was withdrawn. The Police subsequently tested a series of premises by using teenagers to buy alcohol. As a result of this a retailer in the village had its alcohol license revoked.

Hunters Gate Neighbourhood Watch (NW) covers approximately 300 houses in Ushaw Moor, a former coal mining village approximately 6km west of the city of Durham. The group was formed in 2007 in response to significant levels of youth anti-social behaviour occurring on the estate. The group is made up of a Managing Committee (3 people) and a General Committee (approximately 10 people).

You can find out a lot more information about The Policing Pledge here <http://localcrime.direct.gov.uk/>

Berryfields Estate Neighbourhood Watch, Cornwall

Berryfields Estate NW Group started in 2005 as a result of engagement with residents by Devon and Cornwall Community Watch Association (DaCCWA) and the local Force Active Communities Co-ordinator. The Estate is a 1960s development of around 320 social housing dwellings and is tucked away, up the hill from the centre of Bodmin, which makes it feel isolated. Historically, although actual crime levels were relatively low it was considered a 'no go area'.

One of the first activities undertaken included the residents and Police working together to successfully evict a number of problem families. The Police provided extensive witness protection to residents and the ultimately successful evictions have gone some way towards the Police regaining residents' trust. Having addressed many of the longer term issues on the estate the Police take a rapid response approach to addressing issues as they are identified by residents to sustain trust in addition to reducing crime.

Partnership working is a fundamental component of the operation of the group, particularly its relationship with the local PCSO/other Police officers and the Council's Housing Officer. The increased confidence in the area resulting from the activity of the group and local partners led to the establishment of a Community Action Group which provides a focus on the wider issues affecting the estate. One of its aims is to engage with a broader range of service providers and as such raise the profile of the area to more effectively address the issues and concerns raised by residents.

Community payback schemes

Residents who may be victims of crime can have a say on how criminals pay back to their community through the Community Payback scheme run by the Probation Service. This is when criminals carry out work that benefits the communities they once sought to cause harm or distress in.

Community Payback can be given to offenders as part of a 'community sentence'. A 'community sentence' means that the offender may have to carry out up to 300 hours of unpaid work. This work benefits the community - and means the offenders pay back the community for their crimes.

Projects can include:

- removing graffiti
- picking up litter
- repairing and decorating community centres
- clearing undergrowth from paths and other public areas
- working on environmental projects

Offenders must wear bright orange high-visibility jackets, marked 'Community Payback' while they're working. The jackets mean you can see that they're paying back for their crimes.

Between April 2008 and March 2009, more than 100,000 offenders completed over eight million hours of work.

You can find out more about Community Payback at http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/CrimeJusticeAndTheLaw/PrisonAndProbation/DG_182080

You can nominate a project here <https://communitypayback.cjsonline.gov.uk/>