



11th May 2020

Neighbourhood Watch and COVID-19

Neighbourhood Watch and COVID-19 Neighbourhood Watch supporters across England and Wales continue to respond rapidly to the coronavirus COVID-19 crisis making a positive impact within their local communities. The Central Support Team at Neighbourhood Watch Network has published many positive stories as well as receiving requests for support and guidance. This is a challenging time for all of us - health, safety and wellbeing must be our top priorities and at the heart of every decision we make as the Governments plans and approach flex to respond to the changing crisis It's critical to do our part to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and we are diligently following guidance and best practices from the NHS and PHE. Many of our volunteers and supporters are in the age groups at higher risk from Covid-19 and may also have other conditions that increase their vulnerability. The most important actions we can all take is to do everything we can to avoid becoming ill and placing further pressure on the NHS and other emergency services.

We are working alongside other community organisations to coordinate a Community Action Response, led by the Eden Project, because of the unprecedented challenge that coronavirus presents for people in every neighbourhood in the UK. The Community Action Response asks for everyone to think of others; consider your actions and be kind; connect and reach out to your neighbours; support vulnerable or isolated people; and only share accurate information or advice. [Find out more here.](#)

We are also concerned about scams and fraud that may arise as people take advantage of the crisis and will continue to gather insights into coronavirus COVID-19 scams and crimes. Find out more details on our [dedicated COVID-19 scams](#) page on our website.

Advice and guidance are continually being updated and while we will do our best to keep you informed, it is important to check official websites for the latest information.

Our enquiries line remains open between 10am – 4pm Monday to Friday and you can contact individual members of the team via email and mobile phones.

Key Points:

1. Follow government advice on protection <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>.
2. If you or anyone in your household are displaying symptoms, please follow NHS guidelines <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
3. Be mindful – with all good intentions – that if you are in the high risk category you will not be able to participate in outdoor volunteering roles in the community, however you could be proactive in other ways, by communicating with people via social media, email or on the phone.
4. Why not set up a [calling tree](#) in your area, to ensure the vulnerable and isolate are contacted – this will be important as the days and weeks go on to maintain social contact.
5. Engage with your local authority to offer your help with their community resilience plan.

Local Action

Neighbourhood Watch groups are doing some great things such as partnering with other organisations in their community and getting in touch with their neighbours through a variety of methods to identify those at risk and those that can offer support. There are working parents sharing childcare to enable each other to continue with shift work and groups looking at setting up exercise classes in their streets whilst following social distancing guidance. Neighbourhood Watch groups have also been printing leaflets and posting these through their neighbours' doors offering support or friendly chats. Associations have even been looking at creating a rapid response booklet for situations such as these. [Have a look at our website](#) to see some of these positive stories and ways communities are adapting to this new world.

'Whilst we encourage actions which support your community wherever it is safe to do so, we must stress the most valuable action that everyone can take is to follow Government advice and do everything you can to avoid becoming ill and passing the virus onto your close family or other community members – particularly those who are at higher risk from Covid-19. Where possible use technology or other methods that do not involve direct contact to support and engage with vulnerable and isolated members of your community.' **Ian Bretman, Acting Chair Neighbourhood Watch Network**

We will be continuing to share information over the coming weeks and months. The best way you can follow us is via our website and social media:

Website: www.ourwatch.org.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ourwatch>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/N_watch

Instagram: [neighbourhood.watch](https://www.instagram.com/neighbourhood.watch)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/neighbourhood-watch/>

To report crimes and scams please follow the following guidance:

- Call Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or report incidents of fraud online and offline at www.actionfraud.police.uk
- Call 101 to report non-emergency incidents to your local police
- Call 999 if you're reporting a crime that's in progress or someone is in immediate danger
- Call Crimestoppers on 0800 555111 to report crime completely anonymously.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you to continue to direct people in your community to the latest accurate advice from Public Health England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england> and NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/>.

Existing crimes will continue to occur whilst coronavirus COVID-19 new crimes are emerging. Issues such as burglary, domestic violence and modern slavery are all still prevalent. You can find toolkits with useful resources and information on these on our website. <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/help-and-advice/toolkits>

Please take care,

Central Support Team, Neighbourhood Watch Network