

# OUR NEWS



FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SUPPORTERS ACROSS ENGLAND & WALES

**We have launched a national Community Safety Charter enabling local businesses and individuals to stand up against crimes such as antisocial behaviour, hate crime, intimidation and harassment.**

**Why have we done this?** Over the past 12 months more women have reported feeling unsafe in parks or other open spaces after dark than in the previous year (84% vs 81%), disabled adults repeatedly report feeling less safe than non-disabled adults in all public spaces, and despite a 9% rise in police recorded hate crimes, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency reports 9 out of 10 hate crimes still go unreported.

A third (33%) of people believe antisocial behaviour has increased in the past three years, with half (50%) of people feel it most likely to happen in their local town or city centre. More than half (57%) of those who have experienced or witnessed it did not report it to anyone.

By signing up to our Community Safety Charter, people, businesses, and organisations pledge to do four actions: promote a culture that does not tolerate those harmful behaviours, enable others to take an active stance against them, encourage reporting and support those affected by the crimes.

*John Hayward-Cripps, our CEO said, "With the cost-of-living crisis upon us, we believe we can expect to see an even greater rise in community-based crimes such as violence against women and girls, disability hate crime, antisocial behaviour, and harassment."*

*John continues, "Our Community Safety Charter enables us all – schools, libraries, bus companies, faith groups, local shops and even your local postie - to play a key part in creating an environment in which crimes such as these in public spaces are not tolerated."*

Through the Community Safety Charter we provide a greater understanding of how to



recognise and deal with community safety issues. Bystanders can safely intervene and support victims in accessing where to get help, how and who to report to. The Charter enables everyone to take a positive and proactive approach when witnessing or experiencing confrontation, hostility, or harassment.

**Signing up to the Charter is quick and easy, visit [ourwatch.org.uk/charter](https://ourwatch.org.uk/charter).**

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## Being an active bystander

**On March 13 1964, 28-year-old Kitty Genovese was stabbed in New York outside an apartment building across the street from her home. After her death, it was claimed that 38 witnesses watched her murder and failed to intervene or even contact the police until after the attacker fled.**

**This case led to research which coined the term 'bystander' and identified 'the bystander effect' (Darley, J. M., Latané, B. (1968). It also motivated a community response, and the first Neighbourhood Watch scheme was set up.**

### **What is the bystander effect?**

The bystander effect occurs when the presence of others discourages an individual from intervening in an emergency, against a bully, or during an assault or other crime. The greater the number of bystanders, the less likely it is for any one of them to initiate help for a person in distress. People are more likely to act in a crisis when there are few or no other witnesses present.

### **Why is it important for bystanders to take some action?**

Crimes and harmful behaviours such as public sexual harassment and hate crime are significantly under-reported by the victims. There are a number of reasons for this, but a key factor is the everyday nature of these incidents and the fact that they are 'deeply ingrained in our culture' [Sexual harassment of women and girls in public places](#) (parliament.uk) means that victims experiencing sexual harassment or hate crime regularly often see them as insufficiently serious to report.

However, sexual harassment and hate crime, no matter how 'serious' individual incidents might be, pervade the lives of those who experience it relentlessly and these sorts of incidents are often likely to escalate if not addressed.

The pyramid of hate identifies how attitudes and behaviours motivated by hate or bias can escalate from words and exclusion to discrimination, crime, violence and, in some

extreme cases, to extermination. It shows how hate can become 'normalised' if not challenged or addressed.

Disrupting the escalation early on makes it more difficult for discrimination and hate to flourish and we can dismantle the whole pyramid.

### **Barriers to being an active bystander**

There are several reasons why people don't act to help when they witness crimes or incidents involving violence, intimidation, harassment or hostility:

- They fail to notice the crime or incident – they may be distracted or see things on such a regular basis that they become immune to the incidents happening around them
- They fail to recognise the seriousness of the event
- They fail to take any personal responsibility - assuming that someone else has already called for help or is helping so they don't need to do anything
- They lack the knowledge or competence to offer appropriate help and worry about being judged on their actions
- They are concerned that if they intervene, they could put themselves in danger
- They fear legal consequences
- They lack empathy - it's not happening to them or anyone they care about. This may also be due to unconscious bias - which can make people less likely to help when those in need are perceived as different from them
- They question whether they have the authority to get involved

To read more on how to be an active bystander visit the [Being an Active Bystander](#) page on our website.

## **What do we mean by 'active bystander'?**

**An active bystander (or upstander) means being aware of when someone's behaviour is inappropriate or threatening and choosing to intervene and offer assistance.**

# Creating an inclusive community

**Having a strong relationship with all members of your community not only helps to improve public safety and recruit new members, it also makes people feel welcome and included, especially if they are new to the area.**

People feel included when they are part of a community that makes everyone feel respected, valued, accepted and encouraged to freely participate. Where they can be their authentic selves and everyone is heard, valued and understood in order to meet their needs.

For Neighbourhood Watch to effectively represent a diverse community and play a part in building safer, connected, cohesive communities, we need to engage with the full range of people in our local areas and understand the different needs, experiences, skills and perspectives that people have.

## Types of Diversity

You may not feel that you live in an area that is particularly diverse – but diversity is often present in a number of ways that may not be immediately obvious.

Diversity is not limited to race and gender, it constitutes the entire spectrum of the differences that exist among people. For example, cultural, racial, religious, age, sex / gender, sexual orientation, disability, neurodiversity - hidden neurological condition, socio economic background / class diversity, education, privilege or life experience, personality or general worldwide views, or mental health.

## Why is it important to be aware of and embrace diversity within your community?

Sometimes people with different cultural identities, backgrounds and experiences fail to understand each other and misunderstanding can lead to fear.

Fear can cause prejudice, stereotyping, political, religious or cultural conflict, racism or homophobia.

If people from different communities do not, or cannot, integrate with one another they may feel excluded and isolated and these challenges can lead to conflict in a community if they are not properly addressed.

## Engagement Techniques

Here are some ways you can start to engage different groups within a diverse community and make connections that lead to inclusion.

- **Offer to meet a need** – if you live in an area of high deprivation and immigration, it is not hard to imagine that there are plenty of needs to be met. Many first generation and new immigrants may have real and immediate language needs. You could offer to help with form filling or other tasks that people may find difficult if their first language isn't English.
- **Simply being a good neighbour** to those around you is a good place to start. Offer to babysit, help with shopping and other sorts of different practical help.
- **Get out and meet people from different community groups.** Strike up conversations at the local park, on the bus, at the school gate, in local shops, and or in the places where you happen to go. Find out if you have residents who are elderly or who have special needs and may require extra help.
- If you assist with a food bank, try **provide a space** for people to sit and chat together.
- **Participate in community events** - staff a table at a community fair. Make Neighbourhood Watch visible to different sections of your community. The more people see you, the more familiar they will become with Neighbourhood Watch.
- Take the time to **learn about your local community.** Take steps to identify community groups that represent or provide services to diverse community members.
- **Set up meetings with the community or group leaders** to learn more about their members and to talk about Neighbourhood Watch and what you do. Talk about ways you can collaborate.
- Once you have reached out to different community groups, ask if you can present at a meeting. **Learn about what they are doing and how you can partner with them.**

Read the full article [here](#).

## Keep your home secure while on holiday

This year more than ever we finally deserve a holiday. But as the sun comes out, so do burglars and break-ins are on the rise. According to a study by Statista on average, **home burglaries spike 10% between June and August**. Fortunately, there are a few simple steps you can follow to protect your home and guarantee yourself a stress-free holiday.

### Don't make it obvious

Most burglars will target properties which are clearly unattended or have no obvious security. **Before leaving for holiday make arrangements with friends or trusted neighbours.** Ask them to collect parcels and letters, to make sure they're not building up on the doorstep. You could also invest in a smart video doorbell, which will allow you to not only monitor your home while you're away, but see and speak to the person at your door. Allowing you to direct the delivery person where to securely leave your parcel.

If you're already using a smart home security system, share your spare remote control with a friend and ask them to visit your home while you're away, walk around and switch on the lights in different rooms. **Making the house look occupied is one of the most effective ways of deterring opportunists.**

### 67% of burglars break through the front door

It may be easy to forget about the simplest security measures in the holiday rush. Make a checklist and be sure to action it before leaving. Ensure that front doors and windows are locked and double-check the rear entrance. **Make sure that your door lock meets the latest security standards and has a British Standard Kitemark accreditation.** If you can afford it, it's worth investing in a 3 Star Cylinder for maximum protection. These cylinders offer excellent resistance to forced entry and if attacked, a security pin automatically triggers blocking the door lock preventing unlawful entry.

Don't leave valuables in visible or obvious places. Hide smaller items and if possible move bigger items away from the windows.



### Keep an eye on the garden

Garden valuables are one of the most common targets of domestic burglaries. It's vital to treat garden security seriously. Make sure to put away all the outdoor furniture and bikes. If you own a garden shed or garage, apply additional security measures. **Make sure it's securely locked and add an extra padlock where needed.**

Consider installing security cameras to keep an eye on the outbuildings. The integrated smart home alarm will immediately alert you when any motion is detected. You can check what's happening around your home in real-time and take any necessary action. You can even hear and speak to potential trespassers through selected cameras thanks to a built-in two-way talk. A floodlight camera will additionally trigger the spotlight when any movement is detected, deterring any intruders.

### Consider investing in professional monitoring with a smart alarm

If you're looking for ultimate peace of mind while on holiday and need something more than a standard alarm system, then professional monitoring can prove invaluable. Regardless of where you are in the world, professional monitoring will look after your home, for added reassurance that your house will be protected while you're away. If the alarm triggers, the security professionals will take a look at your security cameras and alarm system to assess if there is a genuine intruder. They will determine an appropriate course of action and notify the authorities if needed. Your home is completely covered, while you relax and enjoy your holiday without worry.

**15%**

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## WHATSAPP PHISHING SCAM

The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) is warning the public about the continued increase in reports about scams where victims are targeted on WhatsApp by criminals pretending to be someone they know – typically their children.

Criminals will usually begin the conversation with “Hello Mum” or “Hello Dad” and will say that they are texting from a new mobile number as their phone was lost or damaged. They will then ask for money to purchase a new one, or claim that they need money urgently to pay a bill

The criminal will provide bank details for the payment to be made to, with some coming back with further demands for money.

Between 3rd February 2022 and 21st June 2022, there have been a total of 1235 reports made to Action Fraud linked to this scam, with total reported losses exceeding £1.5mn.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

- **STOP. THINK. CALL.** If a family member or friend makes an unusual request on WhatsApp, always call the person to confirm their identity.
- You can **report spam messages** or block a sender within WhatsApp. Press and hold on the message bubble, select ‘Report’ and then follow the instructions.
- **Never share** your account’s activation code (that’s the 6 digit code you receive via SMS)

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and search for: **Neighbourhood Watch**



Supporters must be 16 years of age or older. See website for T&Cs. Closing date for entries: 27<sup>th</sup> Aug 2022

Did you know... our [Knowledge Hub](#) provides Coordinators, Associations and other Neighbourhood Watch volunteers with specific role support, the opportunity to connect with others, a range of resources, access to training, early access to events and unique volunteer offers?

[Click here to join the Knowledge Hub](#)

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