

**The First Annual General Meeting
of the Wandsworth Neighbourhood Watch Association
was held at Wandsworth Town Hall
on Wednesday 4th November 2023 starting at 6.30pm**

Attended By (*= online)

NW Scheme Representative		Ward
Barbara	Adolph	Tooting Broadway
Sylvie	Chrzanowska	Thamesfield
Barbara	Clay	
Victoria	Diamond*	Thamesfield
Christopher	Downing	East Putney
Mary	Findlay	Trinity
Jan	Forbes	Battersea Park
Beatriz	Garcia-Martinez*	East Putney
Monica	Goward*	Thamesfield
Trevor	Hutton	Furzedown
Jill	Johnson*	East Putney
Laurent	Ksis	Lavender
Justin	Kulpa*	Northcote
Katherine	Orrell	East Putney
Ian	Reid	Southfields
Nilou	Sanii	West Putney
Caroline	Short*	Tooting Bec
Carol	Smith	West Putney
Michael	Stone	Thamesfield
Karen	Ward	West Putney
James	Murray	Nine Elms

In attendance:

Lee Spear – Manager, Community Safety Team, WBC
Abbie Ball – Neighbourhood Support Officer, WBC

Discussion Groups

1. The meeting was prefaced by informal discussion groups during which information and opinions were sought from those attending both in person and on line. A separate summary of the output from the discussions is [Appendix A](#).

Election of Officers

2. Lee Spear welcomed everyone to the meeting and explain that the Wandsworth Community Safety Team were delighted with the reinvigoration of Neighbourhood Watch in the Borough and were fully supportive of the aims of the organisation. His team of Community Safety Officers was due to be expanded by 50% which would give them the capacity to work more closely at Ward level and they, as well as the local policing teams, would be supporting NW schemes fully.

3. Lee confirmed the written nominations that had been received for Association Officers. These were:

Chair: Jan Forbes. Nominated by: Sylvie Chrzanowska, Seconded: Leslie McDonnell

Deputy Chair: Sylvie Chrzanowska. Nominated by: Jan Forbes, Seconded: Leslie McDonnell

Treasurer: Leslie McDonnell. Nominated by: Sylvie Chrzanowska, Seconded: Jan Forbes

4. No further nominations had been received and there were no objections from the meeting to the appointment of the Officers. Lee handed the meeting over to the now elected Chair for the remainder of the Agenda.

Association Constitution

5. One amendment to the draft constitution was proposed and approved - to reduce the threshold for a quorum from one third to one quarter of qualifying representatives (para 8.1). In response to a question, the Chair clarified that there would always be sufficient notice of an Annual General Meeting to allow for Coordinators who could not attend to recruit a member to send a representative in their place. It was confirmed that AGM attendees must all be registered on ourwatch.org.uk. Concern about the size of an AGM was expressed should our number of registered schemes ever approach the historic level of 400 under previous NW arrangements.

Finances

6. The Treasurer was unable to attend this evening but a short financial statement had been prepared and was distributed (attached to the minutes as **Appendix B**). The Chair explained that Wandsworth Council has generously made funds available to kick start the Association and she was very grateful that this meant we had not needed to fundraise in order to get established.

7. The Treasurer was in the process of opening a bank account to receive those funds. In summary, of the £7,000 granted to the end of the 2023/24 financial year, £668.90 had been spent leaving a balance of £6,331.10

8. A question was asked about how the maintenance of the website and database was funded and it was confirmed that this was a National NW Network expense and not passed onto the Association. Abbie noted that the Council's own website was a little out of date with regard to Neighbourhood Watch and that would be addressed now but again is not an Association expense.

Engagement Framework between Local Police and Neighbourhood Watch

9. The Chair explained that the document which had been circulated had been approved by the National Police Chiefs Council for use throughout England and Wales. For the first time this has given NW a firm and consistent basis upon which to build their relationship with local policing teams.

10. The key point for coordinators is the undertaking to “*contact your local policing team to let them know about your scheme and your contact details*”. This has to be done on an individual basis as the Association cannot release your contact details without permission. (SNT contact sheet for all wards is [Appendix C.](#))

11. The Association’s role in this Framework will be to ensure that we have identified the Strategic Lead and the Police single point of contact for NW liaison as specified in the framework – the Community Safety Team is working with us to ensure this happens. The aim is to get the Framework formally signed off by the local Police and the Association. We will then work to ensure that the Framework is embedded throughout the Borough so that watch coordinators are supported appropriately by their local policing teams.

12. There was some discussion around the differing experiences coordinators currently have both between wards and when compared with historical relationships. It was acknowledged that different areas might require a different degree of police contact and that it was important for that to develop organically in response to local circumstances but that they key would always be to establish personal contact with the DWOs and PCSOs and to work at relationship building. It is unrealistic to expect the SNTs to have regular meetings with each and every one of our local schemes, they do not have the resources to do that now and we have not yet started any real campaigning to increase the number of schemes.

13. Confusion still remained around Ward Panels and the standardisation on quarterly meetings. Some areas had an overlapping relationship between NW and Panels, others kept them completely separate. The Chair explained that Quarterly Panel meetings were a chance to reflect and review on progress at regular intervals and to set priorities for the next quarter. Panels look at the situation across the entire Ward. It wasn’t necessary for all coordinators to be members of a Ward Panel but input from them should always be sought. The strength of NW is in their hyper-local organisation and the fact it ‘operates’ 24/7. Two different roles but complementary to each other.

Discussion Groups

14. Abbie Ball gave a brief summary of the headline output from the discussion groups to aid the next item on the Agenda. (full details in [Appendix A](#))

Priorities for the Association

15. While there was a broad discussion on a number of varied topics they consolidated around some key issues:

- a. Improving contact between coordinators, SNTs and the Community Safety Team – including setting up coordinator to coordinator contact mechanisms (the potential to use the WhatsApp ‘communities’ feature will be investigated)
- b. Providing better help to coordinators on using the alert system
- c. Providing guidance on where crime statistics can be found at Ward Level on a self help basis rather than expecting local police teams to present it
- d. Promoting NW as a means of building community relationships, not just crime prevention
- e. Forming and developing our Association Committee

Admin Arrangements – Signage

16 The meeting was shown an image of the approved design for road signage which would now be ordered, held in stock and made available to schemes as they asked for them. The initial number of replies to a circular asking if signs were wanted had been low. This would be repeated.

17 Existing metal signage was still valid but may have the older logo and many have faded in sunlight. Although stick on signs can be ordered they come in different sizes and there is no guarantee they would adhere to the heavily indented older metal signs. For these reasons it is proposed that we consolidate on one new sign type and style. These can be fastened to lampposts using the large cable ties that come with the signs. (post meeting – the regulations are that they must be positioned at least 2.1 metres high or, if above a cycle lane, 2.3 metres. They must not obstruct any street furniture). If local schemes cannot put them up then the Council will be able to arrange it but they will need to be given the lamp post reference number to use.

Any Other Business

18 A question was raised about whether evidence was available to demonstrate what works well for NW – proof that setting up formal schemes is effective or is it just that when everyone knows their neighbours they naturally look out for each other and crime reduces. The Chair commented that the National NW network commissioned quite a bit of research and were currently looking to respond to the findings, one of which was the need for “perception change” aiming to overcome a somewhat dated image. The Deputy Chair had recently attended the NW National Conference and the statistics provided there were relevant. (the stats that were displayed on the noticeboards in the meeting room are [Appendix D](#))

19 Moving ourwatch.org.uk onto an app would be welcomed by many of the coordinators and they asked if we could find out if this was in the pipeline.

20 Wandsworth specific window stickers were requested (this was an online chat contribution)

21 The Chair asked anyone interested in assisting the development of the Association to consider joining the Committee. A question was asked about number of Committee Meetings and where they would be held. The Chair responded they could be online meetings or on Council premises and frequency would very much depend on what activities were being undertaken. Three attendees provisionally expressed interest.

22 The meeting was reminded that the next Safer Neighbourhood Board meeting was open to the public – details can be found here <https://democracy.wandsworth.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=570&MId=8545&Ver=4> and have also been circulated to all NW members in Wandsworth.

23. There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm with thanks for all contributions especially to those who had battled through very poor transport and heavy traffic on a rail strike day.