

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Contents**

Why invest in a new website? .....3

What has happened to the www.mynhw.co.uk website?.....3

What is the correlation between the new website and Neighbourhood Alert? .....3

Do I have to register to use the website? .....4

Why is there a need for a national NHW database? .....4

Why should I sign up to the Our Watch Website and Neighbourhood Alert? .....4

Our police force already uses a communication system. How is Neighbourhood Alert different?.....4

I am already registered on my local police communication system; do I need to register with Neighbourhood Alert as well?.....5

My police force is not planning to purchase a license to use Neighbourhood Alert. Can my local police officer / police member of staff still use Alert to send messages? .....5

Does that mean that if I’m signed up to both systems I’ll receive the same messages twice? ..5

Will I be able to send out messages through Neighbourhood Alert? Who will I be able to send messages to?.....6

Will I be expected to communicate messages from Neighbourhood Alert to other members? 6

Who will I get messages from if I register?.....6

I am a coordinator. Do I have to register my scheme and map my scheme? .....6

Do I have to register all the members of my scheme? ..... 7

What if some of my members have already registered? ..... 7

I do not have access to the internet but wish to register my scheme; what should I do? ..... 7

Who are the Neighbourhood Alert system administrators? .....8

If I do not have the internet why should I bother registering?.....8

I am thinking about starting a scheme – can I do this through registering online? .....8

Will I have access to people’s data? Who will have access to my information? .....9



# NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Will my data be secure? .....9

What if I want to add a news item, event or link onto the website? .....9

Can I opt out of Neighbourhood Alert? ..... 10

What if people abuse the system?..... 10

I am still having difficulties with the registration process. What should I do? ..... 10



## Why invest in a new website?

To help engage with new members and to provide tools and resources for existing members.

Previous research has shown that some non-members and organisations hold pre-conceived ideas about the movement.

Consultation with members has also shown that communication, sharing information and keeping in contact with members were equally important.

The website was designed for three main groups of users with tools including:

- *Members of the public* – Scheme search, useful local contacts, reliable safety advice, local news and events and how to start up a scheme (and other toolkits).
- *Scheme members* – Local crime alerts, news and events, communication tools, branded resources and toolkits.
- *Coordinators* – Scheme mapping and database, send messages, scheme crime statistics and reporting.

## What has happened to the [www.mynhw.co.uk](http://www.mynhw.co.uk) website?

If you go to the old address of [www.mynhw.co.uk](http://www.mynhw.co.uk) it will transfer you to the new site where all relevant information has been transferred. Please ensure that all old links to the 'myNHW' website are amended to reflect the new website details. ([www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk))

## What is the correlation between the new website and Neighbourhood Alert?

The website and Alert are two separate systems, but they are linked in the following ways:

- **Postcode search.** The postcode search is a feature of the website. However, the data used by the search is taken from Alert. If a scheme is not registered on Neighbourhood Alert, it will not show up on the postcode search. People searching by postcode will not see any of the coordinator's personal data – they will just see pins on the map and a list of their nearest schemes by scheme name.
- **Branded materials.** Neighbourhood and Home Watch materials are available for registered members to download from the website. These are only accessible to those who have registered on Neighbourhood Alert via any of its portals. You can see a full list of sites where you can register here: [https://www.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/pages/170/1/Service\\_Areas.html](https://www.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/pages/170/1/Service_Areas.html)

# NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

- **Sign in.** Once registered, sign in to Alert by going to the relevant site (see link above) and clicking the ‘Sign in’ link at the top right-hand corner. Enter a username and password which takes you to ‘Your admin area’.

## Do I have to register to use the website?

No, you can browse the website without being registered. However, if you are not registered you will not be able to access the branded materials such as poster, letter and flyer templates which can be customised for your scheme and downloaded for free.

## Why is there a need for a national NHW database?

Neighbourhood and Home Watch is a unique organisation as it is one of the largest voluntary movements in the UK but currently has no central database of its members. The most commonly-asked question by people contacting the NHWN office is: “Is there a scheme in my area?” In a changing political and financial environment, it is important to have an understanding of who and where members are. This allows NHWN to target available support and resources along with identifying funding for any potential gaps in membership.

## Why should I sign up to the Our Watch Website and Neighbourhood Alert?

Please see the leaflets entitled ‘Have you signed up yet?’ ‘Put your scheme on the map’ and ‘Do you manage multiple schemes?’ for more details.

## Our police force already uses a communication system. How is Neighbourhood Alert different?

Each force area varies in how they communicate with members and partners using existing systems. Neighbourhood Alert is not trying to be a ‘single national communication system’ but rather a system which the movement can use to send out messages independently.

Our license agreement allows all our coordinators to use the system free of charge to send and receive messages.

Police colleagues can have access to the system and send messages for free on behalf of Neighbourhood Watch and Home Watch but only after seeking permission from their local Neighbourhood or Home Watch Association. Messages will be branded with the Neighbourhood / Home Watch branding, not with police branding / logos. For more information about how the police can work with Neighbourhood Alert, and the difference between free use and a purchased ‘portal’, please see our joint working document:

[http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource\\_centre/document\\_library/joint\\_working\\_with\\_the\\_police/?cat\\_id=36](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource_centre/document_library/joint_working_with_the_police/?cat_id=36)

## **I am already registered on my local police communication system; do I need to register with Neighbourhood Alert as well?**

If your force area uses Neighbourhood Alert then you will not have to register, even if you have joined through the police portal or microsite. You can see the full list of portals and microsites here:

[https://www.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/pages/170/1/Service\\_Areas.html](https://www.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/pages/170/1/Service_Areas.html)

In other force areas that do not use Neighbourhood Alert it is recommended that you register as you will be able to benefit from the resources and tools available through Neighbourhood Alert and choose which messages you wish to receive.

## **My police force is not planning to purchase a license to use Neighbourhood Alert. Can my local police officer / police member of staff still use Alert to send messages?**

Yes, individual police officers and members of staff can use Alert to send and receive messages. It will be up to Neighbourhood and Home Watch in each region, force area or county who they assign as administrators on Neighbourhood Alert. However, messages will be branded as Neighbourhood or Home Watch if your police force does not have a license agreement for Neighbourhood Alert.

Police forces which purchase a license have access to a much wider range of tools and functions, which are customised to the exact requirements of the force. Please see the following document for more details:

[http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource\\_centre/document\\_library/joint\\_working\\_with\\_the\\_police/?cat\\_id=36](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource_centre/document_library/joint_working_with_the_police/?cat_id=36)

## **Does that mean that if I'm signed up to both systems I'll receive the same messages twice?**

There is a possibility that members signed up to both Alert and their local police messaging system might receive some duplicate messages if the same message is sent to both systems.

Messages via Alert will reach members who do not have access to police messaging systems, and members may also receive messages from other partners. However, who they receive messages from is under their control and can be changed at any time.

## Will I be able to send out messages through Neighbourhood Alert? Who will I be able to send messages to?

If you have registered as a coordinator you will be able to send messages to members of your scheme.

If you are a local NHWN Communications Administrator you will be able to send messages to all registered members within your local area.

## Will I be expected to communicate messages from Neighbourhood Alert to other members?

If you are a scheme coordinator and some of your members are not registered on Alert or do not have access to the internet, they might still want to receive relevant information. You can use other communication channels as normal between your members, e.g. telephone\*, text messaging\* (\*available at additional cost via Alert) and post. Messages can be printed off for further circulation or forwarded on via email, Facebook or Twitter by using the buttons at the bottom of each message.

## Who will I get messages from if I register?

You will be able to receive and send messages to and from your coordinator. You will also receive messages from NHWN (England & Wales) and from other Neighbourhood and Home Watch administrators.

When new partners come on board, you will be able to opt out of receiving messages from them.

You can also choose how you would like to receive your messages (by email, or by telephone or text message in areas where this service is available), how frequently and at what time of day.

## I am a coordinator. Do I have to register my scheme and map my scheme?

All coordinators are encouraged to register their scheme online. We hope this will make your scheme easier to find and help you attract new members. If your scheme is not registered, it will not show up when people do a postcode search on the website.

It is also important that your scheme can be seen by NHWN so that services such as Public Liability Insurance and window stickers can be managed and allocated.

If you *do not* want your scheme to show up on the postcode search, that's fine – you can choose to make your scheme 'invisible'. It won't show up on the postcode search but you can still use Alert to communicate with your members and get access to other member benefits.

If you want to map your scheme to show on the postcode search but you don't want to receive messages, then during the registration process you can opt out of receiving messages. (Please bear in mind that important information is circulated via the Alert communication system and it may mean that you are not kept up-to-date on matters such as window stickers, Public Liability Insurance and funding opportunities.)

## **Do I have to register all the members of my scheme?**

If members register their own details online, they have control of what information is entered, and it means that the coordinator doesn't have the task of registering everybody. If you are a coordinator, please encourage your members to register – it only takes a few minutes.

However, some people may not have access to the internet or might not be able to register themselves for another reason. In that case, someone else (e.g. their coordinator or a friend or family member) can register them, provided they have their permission. Even if some members don't have email, coordinators can still use Alert as a database of other details to help manage their scheme.

## **What if some of my members have already registered?**

Members who have registered should have their details on the system already. If they try to register again with the same email address the system will flag up an error.

Your member may not have joined your scheme online yet though. They can do this themselves after logging into their account – please see the videos at [http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource\\_centre/training/your\\_user\\_account/](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource_centre/training/your_user_account/) for instructions. Once they have applied to join, you can accept your members into your scheme within the 'Member admin' area of your account.

You can also send invitations to your members to invite them to join.

## **I do not have access to the internet but wish to register my scheme; what should I do?**

If a friend or family member has access to the internet they may register your scheme for you. If you are part of an Association, ask if any other coordinators can help register your scheme. You may know of a local Communications Administrator who will be trained to map your scheme. However, if none of these are available please call 0116 229 3118 or email [enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk) for a member of staff to register your details on your behalf.

You can also use the template registration form to collect details of members who do not have access to the internet. The form can be downloaded from the website at

[http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource\\_centre/document\\_library/join\\_our\\_community\\_sign\\_up\\_form\\_word\\_version/?page=8&sort=alpha-a](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource_centre/document_library/join_our_community_sign_up_form_word_version/?page=8&sort=alpha-a)

## Who are the Neighbourhood Alert system administrators?

There are central paid system administrators based at NHWN Head Office and VISAV who have overall management of the website and communication system across England and Wales.

Each region is requested to assign a regional administrator who is trained to use the system and security checked in line with data protection and data sharing protocols. The region then identifies and manages Communications Administrators at a force area/county level.

Administrators help send messages so that members receive accurate and timely information. They also provide support for members who may have difficulties or need advice regarding registering or mapping their scheme.

## If I do not have the internet why should I bother registering?

Your scheme coordinator can use Alert as a secure database to store your details. They can use this information to communicate with you in the usual way, as they currently do. It is more efficient for the coordinator to have all members' details in the same place, and it is more secure than using an Excel spreadsheet.

In addition, the facility to receive telephone messages or text messages may become available in your area, and Alert can also be used to send out those kinds of messages, saving the coordinator a lot of time and resources.

Finally, a more accurate estimate of our total number of members will be useful to everyone involved in Neighbourhood Watch or Home Watch. It will enable NHWN to gain further funding to support schemes, publicise where things are going well and address areas where there may be gaps or barriers to membership. Resources such as Public Liability Insurance and window stickers can be managed better if we know where schemes are.

## I am thinking about starting a scheme – can I do this through registering online?

This service is currently not available due to the complexity of how various force areas manage new schemes. However, toolkits on how to start up a new scheme are available on the website. To see the toolkit for starting a scheme, please go here: [http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource\\_centre/toolkits/getting\\_involved/](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/resource_centre/toolkits/getting_involved/)

## Will my details be made available to the public?

No personal details of coordinators or members will be made public at any point. Only the location (by means of a pin on a map) and name of your scheme is public if you choose. New members or interested parties who send messages via the website

# NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

to find out about joining your scheme will not be able to make direct contact with you and they will not know your email address, name, postal address or telephone number.

## **Will I have access to people's data? Who will have access to my information?**

If you are a scheme member, your scheme coordinator will be able to see your information.

The only other people who will be able to see your information are the system administrator (a member of NHWN staff), and the technical team at VISAV. Neighbourhood and Home Watch regional, force area, county and local Communications Administrators can also see your data but these have signed an Access Agreement and have received training and vetting in line with local policy and procedures.

VISAV owns the Intellectual Property Rights for the Neighbourhood Alert communication system. You are in control of your own personal information. Neither VISAV nor NHWN administrators will divulge any personal details without your permission unless it is essential to do so for the purpose of detecting or preventing crime, or in the interests of public safety. (Additional access to data may be granted to police staff in exceptional circumstances.) Each organisation has signed an Information Provider Licence and has a nominated Data Controller registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.

## **Will my data be secure?**

Your information is stored in a highly secure data centre which complies with rigorous levels of information security protection. The website is hosted by UK Fast, a renowned hosting company which has won awards for data security. Regular tests are run to ensure optimum levels of security against hacking are in place. The system and everything we do comply fully with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Full terms and conditions and our privacy policy are available to view on the website:

[http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/terms\\_conditions/](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/terms_conditions/)

[http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/privacy\\_policy/](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/privacy_policy/)

## **What if I want to add a news item, event or link onto the website?**

In some regions we have voluntary webmasters who will put your item onto the website for you. In the East Midlands, East of England, South West and West Midlands you can contact your webmaster directly as follows:

East Midlands – Marion Lewis, [nhwn.1@btinternet.com](mailto:nhwn.1@btinternet.com)

South West – Wendy Hull, [wendy@bristol9.plus.com](mailto:wendy@bristol9.plus.com)

# NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

West Midlands – Colin Clarke, [colin.clarke11@virginmedia.com](mailto:colin.clarke11@virginmedia.com)

If your item refers to the East of England, North West, North East, South East, Wales, Yorkshire & Humberside or London, or if it is a national item, please contact [enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk)

## Can I opt out of Neighbourhood Alert?

Yes; you are in control of the information you receive and whether you wish to opt out of the system altogether. You can opt out of the system at any point. You just need to go to 'Your account' and then 'Unsubscribe options'.

## What if people abuse the system?

System administrators will be able to disable accounts of any individuals reported to be abusing the system in their area.

## I am still having difficulties with the registration process. What should I do?

If you are having difficulties with the registration process please contact NHWN by emailing [enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ourwatch.org.uk) or telephoning the Enquiry Line on 0116 229 3118, detailing your problem. We will do our best to guide you through the process and also inform the technical team who may be able to make necessary adjustments.