



# Bexley Borough Neighbourhood Watch Association Autumn Newsletter

BexleyWatch

[www.bexleywatch.org.uk](http://www.bexleywatch.org.uk)

Autumn 2009

## Neighbourhood Watch Update

### National picture...

Having been in existence for over twenty-five years Neighbourhood Watch is the largest completely voluntary organisation in the country. Nationally it has the full support of the Police, but many people are totally unaware that it does not receive any national funding.

### Local action...

In Bexley we are fortunate to have the full support of the Borough Police Commander and the Local Council. The Police provide office accommodation and back-up supplies and the Local Council fund a part-time office administrator together with financial support for specific projects.

To enable us to grow in line with Government/Home Office ideas on Neighbourhood Watch we are looking to recruit a full-time paid Borough Co-ordinator and update our current I.T. equipment. Further financial help from grant agencies is now being sought to allow us to do this which will lead to the expansion of our work through consolidation of current projects and development of new initiatives.

Recently we have used the Home Office National "One off" offer to Neighbourhood Watch associations for project funding. We applied for funding to assist us in raising the profile of Neighbourhood Watch in the Borough but were unsuccessful. We are now looking at other ways of raising funds, in October a committee member will be attending a course on professional fund raising..

The Committee is also developing a Business Plan 2009 which will start to guide us through the next year or two and assist us in gaining more financial support. We continue to explore all possible opportunities to obtain further finance to enlarge the service that Neighbourhood Watch can provide to the residents of the Borough. As always we rely upon your support and hard work in all these matters.

Ray Hudson Chairman BBNWA

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### Initiatives under way

- Regular Watch meetings
- Street sign team
- Neighbourhood Link
- Proposal for upgraded computer equipment
- SmartWater, a new initiative launched in Bexley Borough

**Congratulations to the Harcourt Avenue team see -inside story**

### To contact us

Call 0208 284 5537 or email [office@bexleywatch.org.uk](mailto:office@bexleywatch.org.uk)

## **New initiative for 2009: Watch Coordinator Meetings**

In the Borough of Bexley, Neighbourhood Watch has many streets covered by volunteer Coordinators. This very important role is the link between the residents of the street, the Police and PCSOs.

As a new initiative Coordinators are being given the opportunity to meet and discuss local issues with each other and their local PCSOs and a NW Team Member at local meetings held twice a year, usually lasting up to two hours.

The street you live on may be quiet and with no obvious problems but “down the road” or “round the corner” another street could be having trouble with antisocial behaviour and/or burglaries, which, quite easily, could escalate onto your street. Being forewarned is forearmed.

The Police and PCSOs are also interested in any comments the Coordinators have, and any information gained from residents living in the area. Please remember, you are not alone out there. NW is a group of people looking out for each other, and being aware of what’s going on around you will help keep the Borough of Bexley a safer place to live. We encourage all Coordinators to attend these meetings.

Pam Bartle Membership Secretary

## **Views from a new Committee member**

Hello to all, my name is Angie, and I am a new member of the Bexley

Neighbourhood Watch Committee. I joined after the last AGM in May 2009 and have taken on the role of Watch Coordinator Liaison Secretary. This involves providing advice and resources to all members to enable them to carry out their duties. Also as a Committee member I attend regular meetings where I am able to influence decisions whilst ensuring residents’ views are represented.

However it is much more than attending meetings.

This role does involve giving time and energy, but so far I have found every moment rewarding. I now feel part of the community; actually knowing most of my neighbours have excellent relations with the PCSOs in most of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

My role is showing me that learning is life long and it allows for professional growth. Being able to keep my existing skills and learn others, not only helps my role as a member, but also helps me to keep residents informed.

I have already gained many skills, though some may still be a bit rusty, like taking minutes at meetings! I have arranged meetings and dates for local PCSOs and am due to start taking local coordinator meetings. At first when I began these new tasks I was very unsure of myself and a bit nervous (actually quite a lot), but the feeling of doing something meaningful and totally worthwhile, without any personal gain is amazing. I hope to carry on for many years to come.

Angie Butcher Watch Coordinator Liaison Secretary

## **Congratulations to all the Harcourt Avenue team**

Harcourt Avenue

Neighbourhood Watch (1984).....

Came into being following my reading an article about the first Neighbourhood Watch in the Country based in Mollington, Cheshire.

I discussed the idea – in March/April with PC Ron Underwood, our Beat Officer (yes you read it correctly), he was able to enlist the help of a Special and over a short period of time we went door-to-door – 182 houses distributing an A4 leaflet listing all the benefits of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and including a cut off section to return to me stating the interest and support, also if anyone was interested in becoming a Co-ordinator, duties to include keeping in touch with residents and neighbours near to them and to distribute newsletters plus information from the Police.

The response to our efforts was extremely rewarding – 12 Co-ordinators ‘stepped forward’ and as more and more cut-offs were returned expressing favour in having a scheme I was then able to obtain enough official Neighbourhood Watch handbooks, stickers, posters etc via the Police.

As Neighbourhood Watch were in their infancy at that time our door-to-door distribution involved not just the A4 side of things but a deliberate and necessary plan to knock and chat to everybody over a 3 / 4 week period – day time and evening.

To their credit no-one became irate or told us – individually or collectively – where to get off! There were lighter moments such as “I’m not putting a sticker in my window, somebody will throw a brick at it – anyway I always lock up so don’t need advice on security” he then returned indoors leaving a huge bunch of keys in the front door.

As we had interrupted his gardening we took delight in knocking on his door to say would he like his keys!! All taken in good part and he became a stalwart of the scheme.

A Lady who quite clearly (and loudly) stated “I don’t want that bloke across the road looking at my house, he’s just come out of prison” she too joined – eventually.

A common assumption made was that residents were expected to patrol the area, one person even showed us the baseball bat he was going to carry. Our PC had a “quiet word”!

In due course – May 1984 – the scheme was up and running, followed by street signs. During this time we were in receipt of great support from our Borough Neighbourhood Watch office and information from National Neighbourhood Watch.

We were fortunate to have received enthusiastic offers of help as Co-ordinators, and seven ‘originals’ are included in the present 12.

No scheme or organisation can survive without such help and it is pleasing to report that 25 years on Harcourt Avenue Neighbourhood Watch (1984) is still going strong.

Alan Dunmall, May 2009.

## BexleyWatch

### **Bexley Metropolitan Police:**

Non emergency 0300 123 1212 emergency 999

### **Bexley Crimes Hotline (Anonymous):**

Report crimes in confidence 0208 284 9234

### **Bexley Community Safety Partnership:**

Report anti social behaviour 0800 389 5013

### **Victim Support Bobby Van Project:**

Free service to improve home security

Victim Support 0208 303 1248

Freephone 0800 389 5013:

### **Crime Stoppers independent UK charity:**

0800 555 111

### **Nominated Neighbour Scheme :**

Call Neighbour Watch number for details

### **Police Safer Neighbourhoods Teams :**

[www.met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods](http://www.met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods)

### **Neighbourhood Watch Association :**

0208 284 5537 [www.bexleywatch.org.uk](http://www.bexleywatch.org.uk)

### **New Website :**

For Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators to communicate and exchange ideas and information

[www.groups.yahoo.com/group/bbnwcoord](http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/bbnwcoord)

## Bexley Police launch new messaging service

Bexley Police have launched a new Metropolitan Police community messaging service to provide the public with news and information from their local police.

Called Neighbourhood Link, Bexley is the first borough in London to offer this service.

Through Neighbourhood Link you can receive messages from your local Safer Neighbourhoods Policing Team, borough police, or other Met teams in the event of a major incident or event impacting on London.

Your local Safer Neighbourhoods Team will use Neighbourhood Link to keep you updated with local police activity and crime prevention advice, as well as

information on what they are doing to help keep Bexley one of the safest boroughs in London.

In order to receive messages you will need to register your details. Registration is free and easy to follow. To find out more about Neighbourhood Link and to register visit [www.neighbourhoodlink.met.police.uk](http://www.neighbourhoodlink.met.police.uk)

## Crossness Pumping Station

A triumph of Victorian engineering, Crossness Pumping Station located on an inspiring Thames site, is a unique part of our city's heritage; it includes some of the finest and largest steam engines in existence, housed in cathedral-sized buildings.

Four steam engines, situated in the Beam Engine House, remained in service until the mid 1950s when work on a new sewage treatment plant

commenced in 1956. In 1985 the Crossness

Preservation Group started the first restoration work. In 1988, the Crossness Engines Trust was created with the task of restoring and maintaining the buildings and engines. Eventually, funding for a £2.7 million project was secured to refurbish and conserve this historic pumping station. A new café, car parking, education room and archive and an updated website will also be developed.

As part of the process of developing the site, the Crossness Engines Trust will run some Focus Groups to discuss with various interest groups the plans for the exhibition. If you are interested in attending a Focus Group, please contact Mike Jones at 020 8854 0945 or e-mail: [mike@jones86.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:mike@jones86.freeserve.co.uk)

## Committee changes

Five new members joined the Committee of the Neighbourhood Watch in May 2009 at our Annual General Meeting held at Civic Offices Bexley-heath.

A big welcome to:

Pam Bartles	Membership Secretary
Angie Butcher	Watch Coordinator Liaison Secretary
Edward Pease	Media and Public Relations
Ginny Hyland	Secretary
Anthony Alcorn	Committee member

Unfortunately the AGM also saw Fred Hunt and John Woodward stand down from the committee. As with any committee at some stage even the most valiant members retire and we say a big thank you to Fred and John for all their hard work.

We are still looking to recruit new committee members especially from the Sidcup district.