

ESSEX COUNTY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION
CHAIRMAN'S NOTES OF MEETING AND CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 10th November 2020

1. Attendees: Clive Stewart (Chairman & Secretary), Peter Salmon (Vice Chairman & Brentwood) Mike Hooper (Treasurer & Rochford), Colin Freeman (Event Co-ordinator and Executive) Clive Woodward (Basildon) Celia Shute (Vice Chairman Braintree) Peter Fisk (Website Manager) John Scott (Castlepoint) Steve Leverett (Chelmsford) Mandy Chapman (Maldon) Grahame Stehle and Peter Rudlin (Colchester) Mike Compton (Epping Forest), Alan Norman (Southend), Jeff Appleby (Essex Police) Darren Horsman (The Office of Police Fire & Crime Commissioner) Stuart Rawlins (Crimestoppers).
2. Apologies for absence: Dave Sexton, Tracey Graham, Roger Passfield, Derrick Giffin, Janine Dunn
3. Clive Stewart (CBS (Chairman welcomed everyone and also those who have not attended our meetings before Stuart Rawlins and Peter Rudlin.
4. **Report from each member of ECNWA These will be sent to Peter Fisk for the website . CBS proposed that in future we should start with this item on the Agenda as this way everyone can hear what each District has to say and even give any help.**
5. **Treasurer's Report:** Mike Hooper
6. **Crimestoppers Report:** Stuart Rawlins gave a report it was also emailed to CBS who distributed the next day.
7. **Essex Police report:** Jeff Appleby gave a report and will hopefully do his best to email it in the next week.
8. **The Office of Police Fire & Crime Commissioner report:** Darren Horsman gave a report and will also email it to CBS to distribute in the week ahead.
9. **Chairman's report:**

Clive Stewart (I read out the updates of the report which had been distributed to all) and this his full report:- I need you advise you that both Trisha Stearck and Brenda Cross (and I have sent an email from Brenda to you all) have retired from Essex Police and we have wished them both well via Jenny Brouard. I am never sure how many of you actually read my report as I never seem to have any comments but that's up to each of you and I do offer time to discuss any issues at the meeting. This is a lengthy report (four pages) for which I will not apologise ..thankfully you don't have me reading it out at meetings!! As regards timings of meetings I am delighted that this meeting can last as long as we feel it is appropriate but I have actually booked Zoom for three hours from 09:00hrs. The early booking gives time to everyone to "log in" by clicking the link in my email and I can "welcome" you to attend and then we can start on time at 09:30hrs. When we have been at The Millennium Centre we normally finish at midday! We have paid for a Zoom licence for a year and within the next 8 months we can decide if we can go back to The Millennium Centre Great Baddow if it is acceptable to do so with the coronavirus being "controlled" we hope so we shall wait and see. I do advise The Millennium Centre our plans for the future meetings month by month. I booked the entire 2021 as we may have lost our slot for Tuesdays and I shall do the same for 2022 soon. To acknowledge those who can make this Zoom meeting I have changed the format of the Agenda (you may have noticed) by basically "turning it on its head" so after my "Welcome and ack those who are with us", I shall ask each District Co-ordinator (in alphabetical order) see the ECNWA list and ask for a report. Normally Jenny Brouard & Jeff Appleby, Essex Police, and Darren Horsman, The Office of Police Fire & Crime Commissioner, travel to the meetings and they give their reports first and then leave the meetings if they wish, however as they have no travelling to do I have decided for them to hear what we are actioning all over Essex first. If they cannot stay with us for the duration of the meeting I can distribute their reports. I would like you to welcome Stuart Rawlins Crimestoppers, I believe a few of you have met him over the years and he will now attend our meetings as Colin Dobinson has a new role in Crimestoppers as you all know.

Awards for Neighbourhood Watch Member or Team of the Year 2019-2020 .

I did appreciate Colin Freeman advising us of the decisions of the Executives as to the Award winners at the last meeting. The information was placed by myself on Twitter and I am hoping that each District has notified the results to their members by email, facebook or other social media Apps.

The actual Awards and Certificates of Appreciation are to be presented to each of the persons at next years AGM/Conference on 14th July 2021. However one District requested that they could have their award so that the person may receive it early. I was not against that request of course. However I did say that usually the person is photographed receiving it from an Assistant Chief Constable of Essex (next year Mrs. Rachel Nolan) and I am waiting to have a reply.

Election of Officers 2020-2021

Thank you for agreeing to for "roll-over" the Executives to 2020-2021 and we are there to continue in our responsibilities until July 2021. I have distributed their "jobs" a few weeks ago but if you want another copy let me know.

Funding report to Jane Gardner Deputy Police Fire & Crime Commissioner

Well I managed to receive every Districts reports (apart from Castlepoint and Maldon as their funding is ringfenced in our accounts until they have appointed a Treasurer or sorted out their formalities regarding their Committees). My report to Jane Gardner will be available (on request) after I have concluded our meeting on 6th November.

UPDATE: I had an excellent meeting with Jane Gardner and Darren Horsman we discussed many topics and they did appreciate the report. I feel that receiving such funding deserves a comprehensive report (was almost five pages) and I was delighted that it highlighted so many Districts who use the funds in many different ways to raise the profile of Neighbourhood Watch. Can I say that I ONLY ask for the summary of your use of their funds ONCE a year and do remind you early in the new year too. I did finish my report/discussions with the question about the funding for 2021/2022 and was advised that due to Elections in May I should apply for the funding early January via Darren Horsman and then we can complete the formalities during early April rather than May.

Also due to the coronavirus issues this year maybe we can consider if we need more funding to cover unusual expenditure for 2020/2021..I said I would put this to ECNWA members and see what they may come up with for any extra funds that may be needed.

Our partners update

I have been in regular contact with Victim Support, Essex Fire & Rescue Services and Crimestoppers as we distribute any of their information to you all to reduce the opportunity of crime and keeping our communities as safe as we can.

Neighbourhood Watch membership in Essex

Membership is slowly increasing in Essex which also includes Neighbourhood Watch Facebook Groups and there is a total of almost 140,000 members although as you know National Neighbourhood Watch do not include any Social media App members (Twitter, Whats App etc) in the "registered numbers" in each County unless we have the members full contact details that is why I show them separately on my list. However I do make the point to National Neighbourhood Watch that the "total numbers" do receive all Neighbourhood Watch information (which is agreeable to National Neighbourhood Watch).

BBC Radio Essex

In the past year I have "appeared" on BBC Radio Essex a few times and a few weeks ago with Dave Monk, whom we all know is a charming man but has a clever way of having "guests" say things that he can "turn round" to make his programme more "interesting".

You may wonder why I was called at 08:15 hrs one morning and asked to be on his live programme that day? Well, a day or two earlier, (as you will all remember) The Sun newspaper depicted the Neighbourhood Watch logo on the front page with "Snitchers" written across it (I still have the image on my computer) and this was brought to my attention by National Neighbourhood Watch.

National Neighbourhood Watch complained to the Sun and also to the UK Ombudsman and within hours the item was deleted from the online version of The Sun newspaper however the "damage" had been done and I (and I am sure you did as well) received many emails from Neighbourhood Watch members on the issue.

Within a few days National Neighbourhood Watch issued a press release "from The Sun" and although there was not an apology (as the Sun thought it was amusing) the press release did mention what Neighbourhood Watch activities are in the UK! This must have taken a lot of your time to contact all your members trying to combat any negative remarks and reminded everyone that we must continue to do what we do best at all times.

So BBC Radio Essex wanted me to be "live" on Dave Monks' show but I declined being "unavailable" and within ten minutes Dave Monk telephoned me to have a "chat" . He said after five minutes or so "Clive I have been recording this since we started" which did not surprise me.

His main question was what should Neighbourhood Watch members do if they saw people not wearing masks also not abiding by the two metre rule when out and about and also if it is your next door neighbour! *I did NOT say "Call the Police" as I know that's what he wanted me to say!!*

Instead I told him what Neighbourhood Watch members actually do and how well we work with The Office of Police Fire & Crime Commissioner , Essex Police, Crimestoppers, and Victim Support to reduce the opportunity of crime by distributing information. I did say that it was difficult for anyone of any age to actually say anything to any person on such issues. As they should first protect themselves and their family against the coronavirus and I did say that I am speaking as an individual! This seemed to knock him off track. Well we finished after 15 minutes or so and I was told later that day from quite a few people who had heard the programme that they thought that I was able to "fend off " Dave Monks' questions well. By the way I did send him a letter thanking him for the time on his show and enclosed a Members Guide and a NEW BIG Members badge! Never had a response....

General enquiries

Since the last meeting we continue to have enquiries from those who either contact us through our website, Essex Police or via National Neighbourhood Watch . Most, if not all, are genuine and each of you have been superb in making contact. Occasionally I have been asked how often we patrol streets/roads and what uniform we wear!

We have had calls from various people on issues which are not Neighbourhood Watch and have tried to help them the best I can. Only a few weeks ago a lady from Hutton rang to say the District Council's trees are getting bigger at the end of her garden which over laps her fence and could be a danger to her home plus those walking by on the foot path. The District Council's Surveyor said that although they were District Council's trees they were there before her house was built!! What an answer!!!

She really needed someone to help her and called me but could not remember how she obtained my telephone number. So I arranged for Peter Salmon Brentwood District NW Co-ordinator to make contact and he did give her information to assist her with the "difficult" District Council Officials.

ESSEX POLICE

Jenny Brouard and her team

We continue to have a great working relationship with Jenny Brouard, Local Policing Support Unit, who as you know is our main contact with Essex Police are excellent at all times.

It is so important for Neighbourhood Watch to have regular means of communications with Essex Police Headquarters, especially as we are not now involved with any local or HQ Force Tasking meetings.

Police Districts re-organisation

As we all know Essex Police re-organise themselves to meet the variable demands on their resources and we do our best to keep up to date with these changes and ensure that we always receive notification of any new District Commanders and their teams.

Community Safety and Engagement Officers.

You have been given a list of each of these PC's who have this new role. Some of them (myself included in Braintree) have already been contacted by them and I can say from experience that PC James Draper (Braintree & Uttlesford CS&EO) is excellent.

Crime reports

I believe that every Neighbourhood Watch District receives crime reports and partnership documents from their local Policing teams as I have not been advised that you do not.

These reports are essential in keeping our members updated of crime incidents and crime prevention advice too and this is appreciated.

However many Neighbourhood Watch Districts have the crime reports sent to their members directly by the Police Liaison Officers (exactly in the format created by Essex Police).

At times I am asked by Essex Police "Who receives the crime reports?" as they are concerned as to whom sees the information and what they do with it and this is fair comment .

My reply is that if Essex Police send out the reports directly it is their responsibility to "qualify" the recipients eg Parish Councils. However if we (ECNWA District Co-ordinators) sent the reports or in a summarised version in a newsletter we know to whom they are sent and that we are very careful how the information is distributed to Neighbourhood Watch Facebook groups as well as the local Neighbourhood Watch members.

Police Partnership Document updated.

It must be noted that most Police Districts partnership document (which is very much welcomed by Neighbourhood Watch members) has ceased to give contact telephone numbers of any Policing Team members. So any member of the community may have to telephone 101 to speak to a local Police Officer/PCSO on any general concerns although 101 it is used to report non urgent crime.

At least the email addresses of the District Commanders and local Inspectors are on the current list of District Commanders and Inspectors (yes the list is a little out of date and Jenny Brouard has been advised).

Twitter

I have often said that Twitter is important to know what Essex Police have achieved whilst on patrols (despite that many Police Officers/PCSO's have not their own Twitter account now) and on occasions I actually, on behalf of Neighbourhood Watch, comment that we appreciated their actions.

Also, every so often, I write a few comments in general terms and recently I wrote:

"Essex Neighbourhood Watch 140,000 members work very hard in these difficult times. As we continue to distribute crime prevention advice so thank Essex Police, Essex Fire & Rescue Services, The Office of Police Fire & Crime Commissioner and Crimestoppers for their support".

Within minutes I had many complimentary comments one in particular was from Deputy Chief Constable Pippa Mills who said "Thank you for all your efforts Clive you're a force of 140,000 to be reckoned with".

This was re-Tweeted many times by the following: Chief Inspector Lilly Benbow, Joanne Beavis, Chelmsford & Maldon Community Policing Team, Inspector Nick Elliot. Superintendent Claire Talbot, Epping Forest Neighbourhood Watch and many more.

This helps to raise the profile of Neighbourhood Watch and whenever you advise what we do you can also show the support we receive from Essex Police.

As I have mentioned above there are now very few , if at all, individual Police Officers/PCSO's Twitter accounts and this is an Essex Police policy as it covers the County and not just Braintree and certainly not the individual. So your keeping in touch with your local Policing Team is important whenever you feel it is appropriate and the only way is telephone 101 as on the District Commander's updated list it only has the email addresses of the District Commander and local Inspectors.

NATIONAL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

On Monday 19th October I joined a Zoom meeting which in fact was well supported as over twenty people.

I found the meeting very interesting and these are my general notes:-

1. National NW were very impressed with how each Neighbourhood Watch Groups/members have helped in their communities in respect of the coronavirus.
2. National NW have a FIVE year strategy plan and many of their plans are forward looking and want Neighbourhood Watch to raise its profile more in the UK .
3. They are very keen for Neighbourhood Watch to work with all voluntary organisations but are keen not to “step on their toes” of these organisations. My reply was in Essex we do not do that but we work with any organisations and if we at times we overlap then we see no objections as we are in the business of “crime prevention” and this is not necessarily a role of “Residents Associations” but we are willing to have their members join Neighbourhood Watch.
4. We must all try and find ways to seek regular income (I did not mention our funding from The OPFCC) but this should be a plan by each of our Districts don't you think?
5. One comment from a Chairman of an Association is that maybe we should have NW Co-ordinators who specialise in specific crimes.

In the Zoom meeting, by the way, both the Chairman and the Chief Executive accept that each Neighbourhood Watch Association in the UK have different ways (on occasions) to manage Neighbourhood Watch and this is acceptable, as every area can be different in many ways.

We have had a number of issues with them but never too serious and I have a main contact to discuss anything (Cheryl Spruce) and in general we do have a good working relationship.

In fact John Haywood-Cripps (Chief Executive) will be attending our AGM/Conference in 2021.

In recent months they sent to all County Associations an email in which they advised that a London Borough Neighbourhood Watch stated that they (with the approval of their local Policing Team) can state that due to Neighbourhood Watch specific crimes had reduced by over 30 % and we were asked if we could make a similar statement. I replied that we do not make such statements in Essex as I feel this would be a benchmark against future years but would ask Essex Police to “make a statement” as to how Neighbourhood Watch works with Essex Police and helps to reduce the opportunity of crime .

I contacted Jenny Brouard and within days I received an email from ACC Mrs. Rachel Nolan (which you have seen) and I sent it to National Neighbourhood Watch. I am sure that this gives everyone a lift knowing that all our actions are appreciated by Essex Police.

By the way I never did have an acknowledgement from National Neighbourhood Watch!

Use of National Neighbourhood Watch logo

Due to the article and image in The Sun newspaper National Neighbourhood Watch sent out an email on September 21st stating very clearly the copyright rules for the use of their logo and promoting Neighbourhood Watch. This was very useful as it confirms that we (ECNWA) and each of our Neighbourhood Watch District Co-ordinators have the authority to approve any group or Facebook Groups to use the logo and title of “Neighbourhood Watch”. MSA (Multi Scheme Administrators) .

As I have said in recent emails I appreciate the six District Co-ordinators who have agreed to be MSA's for their District and I now cover now only eight Districts (including Braintree).

The responsibilities of the MSA's are to look at the National Neighbourhood Watch Alert database (every so often) and then contact those people who have registered directly as “members or even as local Co-ordinators” with National Neighbourhood Watch but are NOT on the local District's database.

How often each MSA actions this is up to them but as a guideline it is best to look at least once a fortnight and then there is no backlog to sort out.

Those who are NOT on the local District's database when MSA's contacting they are to be asked how we can be of support . We provide the local crime reports, window stickers, wheelie bin stickers, members guides etc..as you know not National Neighbourhood Watch.

So our email/letter needs to be friendly and to the point as if we do not hear from them say in two weeks we can and may delete them from the database (and we would rather not do that!).

This is the responsibility of each MSA and I know that those of you who are MSA's do exactly that.

For the Districts of whom I am “acting MSA” I shall send you a list every so often by email and inform you of people who are registered and the “self appointed Co-ordinators” too (these need approval). I ask you to please

as to your actions. IF anyone is not acceptable the MSA may delete that person from the database-it is their decision- or the decision of their District's Committee.

I strongly recommend that if you delete anyone you must have a genuine reason eg "moved away", "you have been advised that they are no longer interested", "did not know they were registered" (yes sadly many years ago one District Co-ordinator sadly no longer with us... did register many people using the local Council's Council Tax list to register many residents – this has caused a of work for the current District Co-ordinator to sort out) . Very occasionally a person may object to being deleted and the decision could be challenged by that person so please ensure that your decisions to have the person deleted is fair and accurate at all times and if required backed up with evidence. On Tuesday 27th October I organised an ECNWA MSA Zoom meeting and invited Cheryl Spruce National Neighbourhood Watch and this was a success on two fronts, firstly I managed to organise my third Zoom meeting and only one hiccup but this was resolved by the person logging in to Zoom again.

Only one MSA could not attend ..but it was good to see those who are MSA's and in fact I have managed to include a new MSA on the day too!!! I believe that every MSA have booked or will be booked with Cheryl Spruce on an Alert database training course..perfect!!

Finally CBS advised that Janine Dunn (Harlow District) has volunteered to be ECNWA MSA Co-ordinator and this was advised to all and agreed. CBS will email the details next day!

Funding from National Neighbourhood Watch.

I sent out an email to each of you in which it gave details on how to apply for funding for specific projects for your Districts. Can any of you advise me if you have applied? Braintree District have for £125..the minimum was £100 to maximum £500.

National Neighbourhood Watch Strategy Plan 2020-2025

I have been sent their strategy plan and asked for my comments and I said that it is fine especially as it is flexible that it can be changed for any reasons eg coronavirus ..and I shall send it to you when I tis approved for distribution.

Email regarding magazines.

Just want to clarify that it is your choice if you want to receive any online magazine and also if YOU want to mention any statistics in your District...I need not remind you of our Code of Ethics or the Data Protection Act.

Essex County Neighbourhood Watch Website.

I still look at the website and some of you really should give time to update the information and send it to Peter Fisk please.

10.Any other business.

(a) Epping Forest District / National Neighbourhood Watch .

CBS updated everyone regarding the ongoing issue since early October. As he had kept the Executive informed at all times. This was discussed and it was agreed to leave it to Clive Stewart (Chairman) to keep everyone informed of any developments .Within a few days a letter form national Neighbourhood Watch was received by CBS and this was distributed to all who attended the meeting.

(b) The next meeting will be as scheduled at Tuesday 12th January 2021 and it will be a Zoom meeting.

CBS has been in touch with The Millennium Centre Great Baddow and advised them our booking for The Tower Room is cancelled and they have acknowledged it. CBS will book new dates in 2022.

Meeting ended 11:30 hrs