

BRAINTREE DISTRICT NW ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY 14TH JUNE 2022

Attendees:

Clive Stewart Chairman & Treasurer, Celia Shute, Vice Chairman, Louise Smith Secretary ,
Judy Hill & Mike Smith (Judy Hill) Mandy Marshall (Coggeshall) Steve Blows (Halstead) Barbara Martin
(Gosfield) Terry Fowles (EWLO) PC James Draper , Nigel Oldacre (Braintree) Shelia Steer & Simon Tibetts
(Rayne) Robin Norton (Witham) Al Jackson (Robin Hood End) Jenny Wright & Jan Aries (Bures)
Bill Piper (Little Maplestead) Vicky & Mick Dowling (Stambourne) Steve Last (Braintree)

Apologies:

Pauline Dixon , Sue & Chris Trott , Moia Thorogood, Graham Brine, Debbie & Richard Leathlean, Richard van
Dulken, Dawn Jones, Diane Smith (Clerk of Belchamp Parish Council)

CHAIRMANS REPORT

Chairman's report at AGM's are all about thanking people for the past year and looking forward to next twelve months, well there will not be any change today.

It has been a challenging year for everyone not only Neighbourhood Watch.

We have slowly been increasing our members and local

Co-ordinators thanks to Essex Police supporting us and also the sponsorship from Braintree District Council.

Yes we have had a few people who have stood down after quite a few years and we have very much appreciated their involvement and I have thanked them for their dedication

There are many who I will be thanking later in the presentation of Awards in the past few years as I have so much appreciated their actions and support..well that a little later on..

But to start I would like to thank my Vice Chairman Celia Shute (who covers a part of Braintree) and Secretary Louise Smith (Gosfield) for their support as always being there for me over the past twelve months ..also the Committee members Judy Hill (Silver End) Mandy Marshall (Coggeshall) Jean Hastings (Greenstead Green) Bill Piper (Little Maplestead) Steve Blows (Halstead) and Diane Passfield (Essex Fire & Rescue Service) and Brian Farren (Halsted) .

We meet every three months and this venue has been the most suitable as parking is easy and we have a nice large room to spread out .

We are looking for more to join us please on the Committee!

Also we have very much appreciated Terry Fowles (Essex Watch Liaison Officer) and PC James Draper attending our meetings too . It is really great to have Essex Police represented at all times.

May I thank PC James Draper for the regular weekly crime reports which are summarised in the weekly newsletter .

The newsletter is in its 12th year by the way and is distributed to more than 250 people each week (including Essex Police and Essex Fire & Rescue Service too) and I have been advised , from the information I receive, is that it is then distributed to many more people...which is great to know!

Only this past week two more people and a Parish Council has been added to the bcc distribution list!!

Before I report on anything else I am delighted to say that this year we awarded Neighbourhood Watch Member of the Year to Bill Piper . We shall be presenting him with an award to day and he will represent Braintree District Neighbourhood Watch at the Essex County Neighbourhood Watch Association Conference and AGM in July at which he will also receive an award .

“Round of applause”

I cannot ignore the funding we have received from various sources as it is most welcome and I shall cover that in the Treasurer's report.

National Neighbourhood Watch.

Let me say that I thank them for their 10,000 window stickers every so often (for Essex) and also the cover under the Public Liability Insurance when out and about on Neighbourhood Watch matters.

One thing I feel I should mention is that often people do register with National Neighbourhood Watch directly , which they are fully entitled to do, of course, .and they will then receive a National NW newsletter and that is it but the newsletter covers what National NW do in the UK.

National Neighbourhood Watch never advise anyone information on local crimes or crime prevention advice from your local Police..... they do not even send anyone a window sticker!

We do in Braintree District Neighbourhood Watch that and even a lot more !!!

However when I see people who have registered on the National NW database and then I write to them with a welcoming email and introduce them to what we, in Braintree, do for Neighbourhood Watch..

Sadly though , very rarely, do I receive any response and as I have said on many occasions, what has NOT helped is that National NW refuse to tell anyone that if they are living in Essex (eg Braintree) and anyone wants to be part of their local NW schemes then their registration must be approved by the District Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator..

BUT National NW leave it to us to see the details on the database and then we must write to them.

Of course this “refusal” by National NW is not very helpful and it really surprises me that they do not see that without their stating those “facts” that we may lose a little credibility.

So what happens next is that if I do not have any replies to my very nice emails then the person is left in cloud nine and probably thinks that Neighbourhood Watch is not very useful.

They then may decide to create a local scheme and want to be a Co-ordinator and that’s when the trouble starts again as they have to be approved by ourselves here in Braintree.

These unapproved schemes never receive any funding or acceptance by Essex Police...so their “members” again do not think much of Neighbourhood Watch and this may affect the way people may think about when you discuss with them Neighbourhood Watch.

Well I have mentioned this so many times and I don’t think that National NW really want to understand what it is like at grass roots level.

You may not remember but they did agree to say to those who register with them that they must make contact with ourselves some years ago but within months National NW changed their minds..so at times it is an uphill task.

One last thing on National Neighbourhood Watch ..as Chairman of ECNWA I have full access to the entire National NW database covering Essex and I can see database reports that it shows that only 3.4% of NW members registered on the ECNWA databases (of which I have the numbers) actually have registered with National NW .. that must prove something?

One last thing ..hot off the presses as you would say..National Neighbourhood Watch have created a Lottery as they need to raise funds and I have sent to many of you their email ..I have responded to National NW by saying that we in Essex do not think it is the best time as it will encourage gambling when many people finding their own money for day to day needs in these difficult . The reply I received was that that was their decision.

So please I need your help to mention to anyone who could be interested in being part of Neighbourhood Watch where you live..what YOU can provide and support them...

Advise them that we only distribute information from reliable sources eg Essex Police and those persons contact details on the local Neighbourhood Watch databases are private and only receive NW information.

Advise them that we do NOT promote businesses or services or even people’s own personal activities eg raising funds for a charity.... as their contact details are covered under the Neighbourhood Watch Code of Ethics and of course The Data Protection Act.

Do say that being part of Neighbourhood Watch in Braintree District is FREE there are no subscriptions at any time!

We have funding to purchase many items to help raise the profile of Neighbourhood Watch as you will see later..many are new to you and they are FREE.

What I so much appreciate is the way everyone can spare time to manage any Neighbourhood Watch activities, even if it is only five minutes a week, it really helps to reduce the opportunity of crime so please let all your members know that I thank each and everyone who are able to give some of their time to Neighbourhood Watch especially in their busy lives.

For instance Sheila Steer and Mandy Marshall managed a table and attended the Rayne Parish Council Open Day meeting which was a very long evening and I thanked them so much.

Celia Shute and I managed a table at the Braintree Town Hall in May from 09:00hrs to 14:00hrs and met a few people..and we hope to hear from them again as we gave out various information.

You may like to know that Braintree District Council are having a few more events coming up and then next one is 6th July in Halstead Library 09:30 to 14:00hrs including lunch I am looking for volunteers please.

Sadly I am not available as I am a Presiding Officer in an Polling Station in Little Cornard for the Thursday and I have to keep clear the day before should there be an emergency.

In the next month or so I know that Jenny Wright is managing a Neighbourhood Watch table at a local event and I have packed up a few items for her to display and even give away.

You may like to know that in the past year I have been interviewed by The Daily Mail and also regularly by BBC Radio Essex.

Only the other day BBC Radio Essex asked me if I was available to be interviewed for the next day as they wanted to know what Neighbourhood Watch in Essex was doing to celebrate Neighbourhood Watch's 40th Anniversary in the Neighbourhood Watch week. I advised them that in Essex we were not promoting any Neighbourhood Watch in that week as in fact it was the same week as The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and I informed BBC Radio Essex that in January I wrote to National Neighbourhood Watch and requested them that they brought the Neighbourhood Watch week forward or put it back a week but they refused.. BBC Radio Essex said "Wellwe will be in touch".

So finally today is an Annual General Meeting and as we know we are supported by Essex Police, The Office of Police Fire & Crime Commissioner, Essex Fire & Rescue Service , Victim Support and may other organisations and this is very much appreciated by us all!!!

We have a big challenge ahead for 2022 to 2023 and as most of you will know my proposal to Essex County Neighbourhood Watch Association was approved in that we should reach out to more people to be part of Neighbourhood Watch .

YES to everyone whether they may be hard of hearing, visually impaired or deaf/blind and to those who may find communication difficult we are here to give them Neighbourhood Watch information in a format that is helpful to them so that they can know what we do to keep our communities safe.

A good example is an App called Transcribe Live which is brilliant (it is free) and I can show this to you all later..

May I thank Louise for organising the refreshments for today

So thank you for your time today ...and I look forward to discussing the items on the table later!!

Treasurer's report

Audited accounts were distributed on the day and Clive Stewart said that his main objective was always to ensure that income exceeded expenditure in the year which was achieved. We are very grateful to all those organisations who made contributions.

Presentation of Awards

Bill Piper received a special award as Braintree District NW Member of the Year and will represent Braintree District at The Essex County NW AGM & Conference on Wednesday 13th July .

There were many surprises for those who received Certificates of Appreciation not only for the past twelve months but over many years as follows:-

One was PC James Draper who he said "He was shocked !"

They were Nigel Oldacre , Al Jackson, Robin Norton ,Jenny Wright, Jean Hastings, Vicky Dowling, Steve Blows, Mike Smith. Due to not being available for the AGM a Certificate was presented to Kathie & Colin Hoye the next day and Alan Rigg and Pauline Dixon will receive their awards very soon

Election of Officers.

(a) Chairman Clive Stewart

(b) Vice Chairman Celia Shute

(c) Secretary Louise Smith

(d) Treasurer Clive Stewart

Braintree District Steering Group members re-elected as Committee members .

Judy Hill (Silver End) Mandy Marshall (Coggeshall) Jean Hastings (Greenstead Green), Bill Piper (Little Maplestead) Steve Blows ((part of Halstead) and Diane Passfield (Essex Fire & Rescue Service) .

Guest Speakers (who were very well received)

(a) Terry Fowles Essex Watch Liaison Officer

(b) PC James Draper Essex Police

There were refreshments served and also many spoke to Diane Passfield Essex Fire & Rescue Service at her exhibition table.