

Essex County Neighbourhood Watch Association
Minutes of the 130th Executive Committee Meeting
held on Tuesday 2nd August 2016
in the Tower Room, Millennium Community Centre, Great Baddow
Special thanks to Clive Woodward for taking the minutes.

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Present:

Clive Stewart (Chairman & Braintree), Grahame Stehle (Colchester), Alan Marshall (Tendring), John Wright (Tendring), Alan Johnson (Uttlesford), Jeff Appleby (ECM – Essex Police), Colin Dobinson (Crimestoppers), Mike Hooper (Treasurer and Rochford), Clive Woodward (Basildon), Roger Passfield (Vice Chairman & Thurrock), Gillian Andrews (Office of PCC), Colin Freeman (Essex Police EWLO) Mike Rees (Maldon).

2. Apologies for Absence:

Sally-Ann Judd (Chelmsford) , Mike Roucco (Harlow) , Peter Fisk, (Website Manager) Steve Leverett (Chelmsford) , Geoff Ireland (President) and Tracey Graham (Epping).

3. Police Report:

No report received but Jeff Appleby advised that he will give a report for future meetings.

4. PCC Report:

Clive Stewart (CBS) ,Chairman, welcomed Gillian Andrews who is the Police and Crime Plan Engagement Lead to the PCC. GA said she supports the PCC on work with various partners and set out the priorities from the recent election manifesto plus better support for victims and improving road safety. A public survey is being launched (August/September) which can be found on the PCC website which NhW members are encouraged to complete. In terms of PCC staffing Jan Gardiner is the new Deputy PCC, otherwise the same staff that worked under Nick Alston are in place so your regular contacts should remain the same.

CBS reminded the meeting that we have a Partnership Agreement (which is expected to be re-signed on 13th September) with BOTH Essex Police and OPCC that they should attend every meeting and hoped this will occur.

5. Minutes of the last meeting:

CBS advised the minutes of 129th Executive Committee meeting held Tuesday 10th May 2016, were on the ECNWA website with no issues notified.

6. Chairman's Report (Clive Stewart):

The report had already been distributed to all ECNWA members and it will also be placed on the ECNWA website with any updates.

7. County Co-ordinators Report (Roger Passfield).

(a) South Woodham Ferrers NW Group in Chelmsford District.

RP reported that sadly the South Woodham Ferrers NW Group had closed down and the bank funds of £1400, which are to be sent to ECNWA, will be paid to Chelmsford District NW.

(b) Regional NW Partnership.

RP advised that the Partnership is no longer a formal structure one reason is (as we all know from previous minutes) that The National NW Association will not financially support them. The last formal regional meeting was in July and Alan Johnston (AJ) who was their Secretary commented that he hoped they would continue on an informal basis. RP to attend if thought necessary.

(c) Attendance of NW District meetings:

RP intends to attend as many District Steering Committee meetings as possible to get a flavour of the topics discussed. CW has invited him to the next Basildon meeting on 22nd August.

8. District Co-ordinators Reports:

These to be sent by all Districts within the next 7 days to Sally-Ann Judd for inclusion in the minutes.

Basildon District – Clive Woodward:

Much time has been spent over the past few months encouraging our Co-ordinators to assist Essex Police with their dwelling burglary cocooning activity. Around 130 Co-ordinators were asked to take part (those that I had email details for) and 65 replies were received with 43 agreeing to assist and 22 declining. This is part of EP's Active Citizen Initiative which should be formalised soon. Some extra names have been recently added. We have lost our Wickford Area Co-ordinator through resignation due to health issues and are looking for a replacement which is no easy task. It took 15 months to get this volunteer so it is back to square one. To add to our difficulties two Ward Co-ordinators have also recently stood down so we are now even thinner on the ground than we were.

Despite this we continue to recruit new Co-ordinators for new Watches albeit at a slower pace than we would have liked.

Brentwood District Report - Peter Salmon : No report.

Braintree District- Clive Stewart

It has been amazing the response from the community to have information on NW in the District in the past few months. Sadly this is due to many burglaries in Braintree, Witham and Halstead many of which were due to home owners not locking their Upvc doors correctly. However they do not secure their rear gates to their gardens either and the burglaries have also occurred through entry via patio doors sometimes smashing them with items in garden sheds. In my last report I said we had purchased another 1000 promotional pens and that I had only 200 left well they have gone and I have ordered another 1000-they are really well received and have our email address and the wording "Together we can reduce the opportunity of crime".

The next batch will be bright yellow as the previous two were red and then blue!

I have just purchased 20 more street signs and the previous thirty I bought have all been distributed. (Thank you Roger). Also I have also bought another 100 purple bells (thank you Roger) as the previous 100 went out like hot cakes.

In the past weeks I have visited many homes of those who want to set up NW groups and met many young families some live in cul de sacs where they can see any suspicious people walking about.

Also I attended many public meetings form which has been an increase of almost 20% in NW membership in Braintree District.

ECM: This is really going well as I found a dedicated person who receives the crime reports each week from Essex Police and she sends out the ECM messages (under direction of Jeff Appleby or Tom Bastendorp) . This lady loves it and gave a full report to our Braintree District NW meeting recently.

Everyone has been so pleased that we have made progress and that the messages are being better communicated throughout the Braintree District. Brilliant!

Active Citizens: I am delighted to say that Essex Police have started this already with over a dozen people walking around hot spots in the District distributing information under the guidance of a PCSO or Police Officer. Indeed I received an email from the PCSO to say thanks to so many who are now making themselves available to action any requests from Essex Police.

I am delighted, as Chairman that our District has been organised so well and very grateful to not only Essex Police but to all volunteers to whom I have acknowledged and thanked for the time.

NOMINATED NEIGHBOUR CARD.

This card is very successful in Braintree as it assist anyone who has unexpected callers and they do not have to speak to them. Braintree have them printed by local School .Roger Passfield can have them printed cheaper so anyone interested to contact him

SUSPICIOUS PERSON. During the summer, a man living in a village in this District offered a "homeless woman" a room in his house. He met her in a church car park in Braintree, during a conversation involving the Vicar. When the man was away for a few days the woman moved in a lot of her own items and threw out some of his own. The excuse for this had been to impart a "feminine touch". During that time, some stolen goods were moved into the property, and there were a number of strangers coming and going. The property is a private rental and the agents were alerted by concerned neighbours. Notice was then given that the woman should leave by a certain date. The woman set about "befriending" a number of villagers, and once into their homes commented on their possessions, offering to "value" them, saying she was knowledgeable about antiques. She also admired jewellery that people were wearing, which often was only costume jewellery and suspicions were

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soon aroused. After some of her visits items were found to have been removed. It was very obvious to some people that the "woman" was a man dressed in woman's clothes. She told different stories to different people – sometimes she had 7 children, sometimes only 3. She claimed she was suffering from cancer, and was obviously trying to invoke people's sympathy in order to steal from them. She also played one neighbour against another, causing a deal of bad feeling. Things came to a head when the Police were called following what was originally thought to be a "domestic" situation. It transpired that the Police were aware of this person's past, and that he had various aliases. The Police agreed to be present when he removed his belongings from the property; it took 3 visits for that to happen. The person took advantage of the man's kindness, and has probably now moved on to another unsuspecting locality!

Castle Point District – Margaret Tuddenham No report.

Rochford District: Mike Hooper No report.

Chelmsford District – Steve Leverett No report.

Colchester District – Grahame Stehle

Although we are now very much into the holiday season, I'm pleased to report that we now have 4 new schemes up and running with a further 7 being set up or re-launched. Some of these are ones that we have only just identified through the efforts of one local councillor. I'm sorry to say that the University of Essex project has stalled through lack of resources although I would have thought that the safety of students and the security of their property would have a high and continuing priority. I have emailed all of our coordinators and asked for latest numbers of members as requested by County. In July, the Great Horkesley scheme, of which am the coordinator, has experienced a record 645 visits of which 537 were unique: a 90% increase over the month before and more than double the number of members.

Epping Forest District – Tracey Graham No report

Essex Police Liaison Officer – Colin Freeman : Nothing to report for the minutes.

Harlow District – Mike Ruocco No report.

Maldon & District – Mike Rees.

Watches in and Tollesbury and Tolleshunt D'Arcy continue to grow and hopefully, new Watches will shortly be starting in Althorne and Southminster.

We have negotiated for space in the foyer of Maldon District Council Offices to start a 'Pop-up Shop'. In this we will hope to sell the kind of security devices previously promoted by Roger Passfield and to promote Neighbourhood Watch in the Maldon Area. This will initially be a monthly event, but if it proves popular and staffing can be assured, it is hoped to move to fortnightly.

Our AGM/OGM will be held on the 31st of August, 2016 at the Council Offices.

Tendring District – John Wright

Since May it has been a very busy time in Tendring. We have now established a firm partnership with our District Commander and his deputies with two way communication and meetings taking place. We also have been out and about in the community spreading the word and I find I am being asked more and more to attend meetings and give NHW presentations. In order to publicise NHW I wrote a letter which was published in the local press in Tendring and also a letter to every District Councillor, Parish Councillor and Essex County Councillors in Tendring. I did this in response to a phone call from a lady who had been a coordinator in Walton on the Naze for many years but in the last four years she had received no communication from NHW and was under the impression this has folded. Her details did not appear on any list of coordinators handed over to me. I am glad to say I have met her and brought her up to date and she is back in the fold. The result of my letters has also had a positive response with enquiries from an Essex CC Councillor who wishes to be a coordinator, a Parish Council who want a NHW presentation and the Harwich and Dovercourt Crime Prevention Panel who I have seen and hopefully things will progress in that area. Also two other persons who considered themselves coordinators and were unknown to me have also contacted me and they have also been brought up to speed.

Meetings attended: The Big Lunch an event held at the Community Volunteer Services Tendring where we had a stall and gave out lots of crime prevention advice. The P.C.C's open meeting at Brightlingsea which was well attended. The Independent Action Group (Colchester & Tendring) at which I gave a well-received presentation. A quarterly Tendring NHW meeting with two excellent presentations from Essex Fire & Rescue and Inspector Finch, Tendring District Deputy Commander. A NHW presentation to Kirby Cross Residents Ass, at least one person is considering becoming a coordinator. An ECM training day at Clacton Police Station where five coordinators were trained. Many Thanks to Jeff Appleby for this.

Holland Village Fete where we had a stall and promoted NHW as well as adding to our funds with a Tombola, book and bric a brac sale.

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In the Pipeline

3rd August we have a stall at an event in Jaywick to promote NHW.

10th August a NHW presentation to Great Bromley Parish Council.

13th August, the start of Clacton Carnival Week where NHW provide street marshals for the Carnival Procession and cover stalls at various events during the week.

25th August we have a stall at Clacton Air Show along with other voluntary organisations.

We have also recruited and trained three new coordinators and are monitoring them to ensure they get off to a good start.

Thurrock – Roger Passfield. No report

Uttlesford – Alan Johnson

- We continue to attend the fortnightly meetings of the Braintree and Uttlesford Tasking. These are becoming increasingly useful and we have given intelligence information on drug selling in Saffron Walden and identified a possible website support task for our local Specials.
- The BBC Antiques Road show was televised at Audley End House near Saffron Walden on Thursday 26th May and will be broadcast later in the summer or early autumn. There was interest in our NhW stand and we have forwarded enquiries received on the day to the appropriate NhW contact in Essex and neighbouring Force Associations.
- We have launched our recruitment campaign aimed at the new build housing sector. We have a grant of £1,000 from funds managed by Essex Community Foundation and will use this to purchase Street Signs and supporting literature as the campaign gathers momentum.
- We are maintaining contact with established schemes, and where we encounter those which need support, we meet with Parish Councils and Residents Associations to revive interest. To extend membership, we continue to attend summer events, including the Open Day at Carver Barracks near Wimbish and will be attending the two day Countess of Warwick Show at Great Easton over the August Bank Holiday weekend.
- We have support material to help Co-ordinators to promote the Community Agents Essex initiative, but until we are clear that the service has sufficient resources to handle more enquiries, we are holding back on distribution.
- We attended an ECM Training session in Brentwood and are now exploring the possibility of using ECM as the messaging system for our weekly NhW Bulletin service which is circulated to around 400 coordinators and members.
- We held the Steering Group AGM on 17th May at the Day Centre in Thaxted. We have re-appointed the same officers as last year, with the exception of the Minute Secretary. James Briggs will be replaced by Rebecca King, and James is the District nomination for the County Member of the Year Awards

9. Treasurer's Report:

MH has sent this to all districts and hard copies were also handed out at the meeting.

10.AGM/Conference 27th July:

All attendees thought the AGM/Conference was well run and enjoyable.

It was kept tight time wise with sufficient comfort breaks and Colin Freeman was congratulated on the job he did as Event Organiser.

Despite advising each District that they could bring five people to the event the turnout was relatively low it was only a few less than last year and some did not sign the registration sheets.

We had two very good guest speakers in Roger Hirst PCC and ACC Maurice Mason of Essex Police.

Some commented that some extra time for Q &A would have been useful.

CBS also congratulated the winners of the bronze, silver and gold awards which were well deserved.

The cost of catering/photography was kept within the £500 (provided by OPCC) as opposed to £900 for catering and much higher other costs at the 2015 conference which had a loss of over £300 in 2015.

The photographer did a great job and they are available from Roger Passfield.

UPDATE: CBS will email any of the photographs to those who want them so please contact him.

11. ECM: Jeff Appleby:

JA continues to provide training for NhW Co-ordinators and is willing to travel to districts to do so, provided a suitable venue can be found preferably with wi-fi so that attendees can have hands on training on the live system. Registrations for ECM hover around the 10,000 mark and an earlier report that around 70% of registrations were NhW Co-ordinators/Members has been revisited resulting in a revision downwards to around 11%. It is still not clear how this 70% figure materialised but the system now has a mandatory box for NhW during the signing up process which forces you to complete it before progressing.

12. ECNWA to register as a Charity:

PS not present but CBS commented that we should have a registration number soon.

13. Crimestoppers and ECNWA report:

Colin Dobinson said that the elder abuse programme has now finished. Statistics for this year have shown that arrests have doubled through Crimestoppers information

14. Any other Business .

(a) Clive Woodward has received over 300 books re Community Agents Essex and will distribute them at the next meeting. It was noted that CAE seem to be very busy and the demand is stretching their resources.

(b) SPEEDWATCH:

Clive Stewart had advised that he was informed that Essex County Fire & Rescue Service would be taking on the responsibility of Speedwatch from Essex Police.

A few other members of ECNWA had also heard that information..

Action: CBS to ask Essex Police for update which he sent the next day..

UPDATE ON THE ISSUE:

Since the meeting on Wednesday 10th August Clive Stewart received an email from Essex Police which said that Adam Pipe (Casualty Reduction Manager) is in charge of Speedwatch . There are discussions with Essex County Fire & Rescue with Essex Police working in partnership regarding Speedwatch but as yet nothing has been finalised.

15. Dates of next ECNWA meetings in 2016:

Tuesday 4th October 2016, Tuesday 6th December 2016.

These dates have already been booked for the Tower Room, Millennium Centre from 10:00 – 12:30 hrs.

MEETING CLOSED AT 11:55 hrs.