

# West Hinckley Area Neighbourhood Watch



April 2012

During the last financial year, in the role of Neighbourhood Watch Development Officer for the West Hinckley Area, I have continued to produce a monthly Newsletter, which is currently distributed to 5700 households by 60 Co-ordinators. Circulation had increased to 5950, but unfortunately, due to ill health and personal circumstances a number of Co-ordinators have had to resign. I am however, confident that replacements will be enlisted in the near future.

National Grid has continued with their invaluable support by printing the NHW Newsletters. An excellent rapport has been built up with key individuals at National Grid and it is hoped that they will continue with this support for the foreseeable future.

Throughout the year I have attended Meetings with the following:-

- NHW Development Officers from Burbage, Earl Shilton, Barwell, Peckleton and Thornton.
- Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland NHW
- Neighbourhood Action Team.
- Hinckley Community Forum
- Community Action, Hinckley & Bosworth AGM

Events attended:-

- Beat Surgeries.
- Leicestershire Neighbourhood Watch AGM at Police Headquarters – with the West Hinckley Area NHW awarded 1<sup>st</sup> prize for the “Best” NHW Scheme for the year
- National Grid Open Day
- “Policing the Future” Event at Police Headquarters
- Community Speed Watch Training
- Regularly attend the weekly Swan Group Coffee Morning at the Wykin Club
- Gwendoline Community House Open Day – which I assisted to organise and help out on the day
- Hinckley Neighbourhood Action Team
- Wykin Community Action “Planning for Real” Event which took place over 5 days
- St John’s Church Coffee Morning
- Trinity Vicarage Residents Association Meeting

I have recently completed training to be an Administrator on the Neighbourhood Alert System, for the West Hinckley Area. This is the new computer system that replaced VC Relay.

I also had the opportunity to visit a Resident, with one of the local Beat Officers, regarding diversity issues. I organised an event for the NHW Co-ordinators, which was held at the Gwendoline Community House to thank the Co-ordinators for their invaluable support to the NHW scheme. This event coincided with the Community House Christmas Event, with this being the ideal opportunity for the NHW Co-ordinators to not only visit the Community House but also see what activities they have taking place. This Event was paid for by myself. As I am classed as being self-employed I am able to claim this back, together with other costs incurred in connection with Neighbourhood Watch, through my Tax.

I have built up a fantastic rapport with many of the Co-ordinators and if they are ill or have a “special” birthday, then I arrange for a card to be sent, signed by myself and the Beat Team. I consider myself a very

caring and compassionate individual who is prepared to go the “extra mile” to make a difference. A couple of examples, when one of the Co-ordinators was diagnosed with inoperable Cancer I continued to pop in to visit her. When I heard she had been taken into Sunnyside Hospital, I visited her on a couple of occasions, together with PC Barry Miller. She was so pleased that we had gone to visit her, particularly as she had no family and only one very close friend. Sadly, she recently passed away. With her friend, who is disabled, having to deal with the funeral arrangements and also emptying the property, I have been in almost daily contact to give my support and help her through a very sad and difficult time. Another example, is concerning a couple who had problems with their neighbours for many years, with these neighbours being well known to both the Police and previous Housing Officer. Basically, this couple, who must be approximately 70-75, who I got to know through the local NHW Co-ordinator, had complained numerous times in the past but had lost all confidence in the Police and Council. They felt that their neighbours just got away with everything – playing loud music, disturbances and drug dealing and nothing was ever done. Whilst a “patch walk” has been carried out in the Area, none of the other Residents make any comment about the “problem family”, which I feel sure is because they are afraid of the repercussions. After visiting the couple at their house on a couple of occasions, I gained their trust and also that I wanted to help them I persuaded them to meet up with the new Housing Officer, Mel Hanson, which I also attended. Following the meeting, the couple could not thank me enough for not only listening to their problems but also believing them. Subsequently, a date has been arranged for PC Barry Miller, Mel Hanson and John Cornell to visit the “problem residents”.

A payment of £4000 was received from Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012. This funding has been used to pay me, in line with other Development Officers, at the rate of £7-50 per hour for 10 hours per week. Over the past year I have received £300 every 4 weeks, with the exception of September when I was on holiday, making a total of £3600. The Council funding has also been utilised to pay for the NHW Mobile Phone charges, which has cost £132-70 for the year. Whilst this leaves a balance of £267-30 remaining from the Council funding, I have been advised that I should have been paid for my Annual Leave.

No doubt you will have recently read in the Hinckley Times that Crime across the Borough has fallen by 9.6% leading to 554 fewer victims of crime for the year. Also that crime figures in Hinckley have dropped for the second year in a row. Inspector Ward thanking the local community for their ongoing support and stated that the information provided and the calls made really do make a huge difference and have lead to countless arrests. I strongly believe that having a NHW Scheme in the West Hinckley Area has had an invaluable contribution in these figures being achieved. The motto adopted by the West Hinckley NHW Scheme is, “Crime cannot flourish in a Community that Cares”. Due to the changes that are taking place within the Police Force, NHW is going to be a main asset for assisting the police in the future.

I trust the above report is sufficient information for the Council to agree to their continued financial support for the forthcoming year and grant funding of £4000. This figure being required to pay for my role, £3900 and to cover the cost of the NHW Mobile phone. Whilst Sanjiv Kohli will have on record the Bank details, for your information they are: HSBC Bank plc, sort code 40-24-19, West Hinckley Neighbourhood Watch, account number 01732331.

Should you require any further information, or still wish for me to give the Councillors a more in depth report, then please let me know so that a mutual appointment can be arranged.

Finally, I am conscious that we are already in the new financial year and I will shortly be putting together the May Newsletter, which if no further funding is granted will be the last one. Therefore, if this is the case then I would wish to advise the Co-ordinators and Residents of the situation.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Jackie Saunt

Neighbourhood Watch Development Officer, West Hinckley