



fighting crime  
protecting communities

# Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator Information Guide

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# Welcome

Welcome to Merseyside Police Neighbourhood Watch and thank you for your interest in becoming a Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator.

It is volunteers such as you, dedicating your time and effort that has enabled Neighbourhood Watch to turn into one of the UK's largest voluntary movements, covering

approximately 3.8 million households nationwide.

We hope that you find this information guide useful and informative and that together, we can continue to bring neighbours together to create strong, and active communities where crime and anti-social behaviour are less likely to happen.

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## Introduction



**Neighbourhood Watch is a partnership where people come together to make their communities safer.**

It aims to help people protect themselves and their properties and to reduce the fear of crime by means of improved home security, greater vigilance, accurate reporting of suspicious incidents to the police and by fostering a community spirit.

Merseyside Police have a long-standing partnership with local Neighbourhood Watch Schemes with almost 2000 schemes across the region. We recognise that these schemes play a vital role in detecting and preventing crime, increasing community safety and enhancing communication between the police and the communities of Merseyside.

Merseyside Police supports the Neighbourhood movement, actively engaging with scheme leaders and committees. Each scheme has a nominated police point of contact within their neighbourhood, who has responsibility for engaging with scheme leaders, sharing information and crime prevention advice. We also support those wishing to set up new schemes, providing regular, structured help and guidance to help them become established and provide a specific corporate point of contact for advice and support.





## Objectives

Merseyside's Neighbourhood Watch has 4 main objectives:

- **Cut crime and the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour by improving security, increasing vigilance and increasing crime prevention awareness.**
- **Provide reassurance to local residents and reduce the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour by empowering and encouraging communities to take ownership of local issues.**
- **To help detect crime by promoting prompt reporting of suspicious and criminal activity and encourage effective communication.**
- **Encourage neighbourliness and closer communities by helping to establish Community Spirit and improve police/community liaison.**



## Why start a **Neighbourhood Watch** scheme?

**Statistics show that belonging to Neighbourhood Watch scheme significantly reduces the possibility of becoming a victim of crime. Empowering and encouraging people to be prompt in reporting suspicious activity will help reduce vulnerability and decrease the opportunities for crime and demonstrate to potential criminals that they are in a security conscious area.**

All members will have the opportunity to attend local neighbourhood and area meetings to discuss local issues with neighbourhood police officers and other Neighbourhood Watch members. This allows for both members and the

police to express their concerns and exchange information freely. These meetings will also provide access to up to date crime prevention information to protect you and your family and your community.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes bring community spirit back into neighbourhoods by creating and maintaining a caring community. It gives people the opportunity to get to know and help each other and helps provide a strong voice when action is necessary to solve a local problem.

Finally some insurance companies offer premium reductions to Scheme members.



## What is the role of a **Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator?**

**Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators are volunteers who wish to make a difference in their local area by helping to take steps to reduce crime and improve resident's safety.**

The traditional role of a Watch coordinator is to set up and maintain a scheme within a specific neighbourhood. They provide a key link between Merseyside Police and their local Neighbourhood Watch scheme making communication and the exchange of information easier and more effective.

Once the scheme is identified, each coordinator can then develop their own way to run the scheme which suits them and their members.



**The main responsibilities of a Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator are listed below:**

- Start or maintain a Neighbourhood Scheme within a specific neighbourhood / area and organise meetings as and when necessary.
- Maintain an up to date master list of all members and inform Merseyside Police if there are any changes to the Scheme such as additional members.
- Take an active role in distributing crime information and crime prevention material to scheme members including circular newsletters.
- Encourage neighbourliness, vigilance amongst scheme members and actively encourage the early reporting of suspicious incidents to the Police or Crimestoppers.
- Encourage scheme members to be aware of and put into practice, crime prevention measures, such as property marking and security devices.
- Keep a check on vulnerable households and provide advice to members about dealing with callers at the door.
- Welcome newcomers to the neighbourhood /area and invite them to be part of the scheme.
- Report any intelligence received from Scheme members.
- Attend local quarterly Neighbourhood meetings.
- Network with adjacent schemes to enhance the network and assist in making the wider community a safer place.

## **Are there any costs involved in setting up a new scheme?**

**Merseyside Police aim to provide the majority of resources to promote your scheme and further promotional resources can be found on the National Website under the 'Members section'.**

It is up to the individual Neighbourhood Watch scheme as to any planned activity that may require additional funding but it is encouraged to seek 'In-Kind' support from local businesses to keep the costs to individual members to a minimum.

## How do I promote a **new scheme?**

One of the best ways of publicising a Neighbourhood Watch scheme within your area is to speak with your neighbours face to face. You can do this by knocking on your neighbours' doors, or to try and catch them on the street to ask them. You will often find that quite a few people will be interested on joining Neighbourhood Watch and a lot of people state that they feel it is a good way to get to know people in the area.

Good publicity material will also get people interested in your scheme. You may wish to sign up as a member of the national Neighbourhood Watch website where you'll find lots of useful materials to support members and coordinators with everything from ideas for initiatives to designing, customising and printing posters. They have designed to be easy to use, professional and friendly. Please visit the 'Resources' section of the website:

<http://www.ourwatch.org.uk/>



## What help will I receive from **Merseyside Police?**



**All Neighbourhood Watch coordinators will be able to contact a Merseyside Police dedicated Neighbourhood Watch Policing**

**Coordinator who they will be able to liaise regularly with to share intelligence, report concerns and seek advice.**

**The main responsibilities of the Neighbourhood Watch Policing Coordinator are listed below:**

- Provide scheme leaders with a welcome pack that contains useful information and crime prevention advice.
- Check suitability of leaders for police approved schemes (vetting).
- Provide regular crime updates, prevention information and feedback, including crime alerts when necessary.
- Circulate seasonal information, crime prevention advice and trends in the form of a newsletter.
- Hold a Neighbourhood / Home Watch meeting every 3 months in each area to discuss progress, developments, issues and potential funding.
- Provide stickers and any other Neighbourhood watch promotional literature to all schemes.
- Maintain accurate records of schemes and contact numbers.

## Are there any restrictions in becoming a **Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator**?

There are no restrictions to becoming a Neighbourhood Watch member except that you must be over 18 years old. You do not need to be in employment, or need any formal qualifications but you will need to have good communication and interpersonal skills.

You will also need to be flexible to be able to give up some of your free time for this voluntary work and have the enthusiasm that is required for making practical contributions toward the overall improvement in the community's safety.



## How can I measure the success of my **Neighbourhood Watch scheme**?

To help focus the activity of your Neighbourhood Watch scheme, you may wish to look at the reasons the scheme was originally established

to identify the biggest issues in your local area. This will help you to form scheme objectives. Some example objectives may include:

- Reduce doorstep crime
- Prevent vehicle crime
- Improve community spirit



Each year you should review your scheme to ensure that it is achieving its objectives. Start by looking at your original expectations, the activities and benefits you decided on, and what you were prepared to give in order to achieve what you wanted. Then ask...

Depending on the result of your review, you could change your activities and their emphasis to ensure that your scheme remains responsive to the needs of its members.

It's important that you don't treat your original plans as set in stone, because you should be able to react to changes in your area. You can decide to change both your expectations of the scheme and your activities, if necessary.

**“Have we achieved what we set out to do, have we done even better or are we just standing still?”**



## How do I get in contact?

To find out more information about  
Neighbourhood Watch, please get in touch:

Email: [contact@southporthomewatch.org.uk](mailto:contact@southporthomewatch.org.uk)

Tel: **0151 777 4019** (answerphone)

Post: Southport Homewatch Association  
Southport Police Station  
Albert Rd, Southport, PR9 0LL

Web: [southporthomewatch.org.uk](http://southporthomewatch.org.uk)