



## Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 14 March 2015, 2.30pm at Stowmarket Community Centre, Hillside, Stowmarket

### Attendance

Gary Gascoyne – Chairman, SNWA	Brian Sivyver – Vice Chairman, SNWA
Bob Gooch – Treasurer, SNWA	Tony Spall – Webmaster, SNWA
Sue Leigh – Secretary, SNWA	Alan Osborne – Community Safety Manager
Nick Ray – CWLO, Waveney	David Page, Stowmarket
Christine Harrop, Cedars Park	Tony Allen, Trimley
Mike Coombes, Stowmarket	Raffe Fulcher, Stowmarket
John Sones, Elmsett	Robert Chick, Felixstowe
Peter Wright, Barking	Colin Stapleton, Stowmarket
David Southgate, Ipswich	Peter Newlands, Hesselton
Mike Thomas, Long Thurlow	Anne Cole, Stowmarket

### Apologies for Absence

Chris Trussell	Carole Brason
Peter H Beck	Shirley Barnes
Diane Sivyver	Claude Brand
Julie Dennis	Trevor Gibbons

#### 1. Chairman's Welcome

Gary Gascoyne welcomed all those present to the meeting and thanked them for making the effort to attend and invited Alan Osborne to address the meeting.

Alan Osborne focussed on crime analysis involving the three key areas of offender/location and target saying how important neighbourhood watch was in assisting the police to keep the community a safer place to live.

Many areas of crime in Suffolk such as vehicle crime, burglaries and property damage were showing a significant decrease from previous years, however domestic violence and sexual offences did show an increase, quite possibly due to the fact the victims, nowadays, had more confidence in reporting such crimes.

Information relating to telephone and IT scams is regularly available via the Community Watch and Police Direct newsletters and it was hoped that anyone aware of these crimes report such to the police.

Alan stated that Neighbourhood Watch Week to be held in June 2015 would centre on cyber crime and details would be available on the Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch website in due course.

Alan concluded by emphasising how important communication is and again reiterated the Police' perceived value of Neighbourhood Watch throughout the County.

#### 2. Minutes of last AGM – 30 April 2014 were read. Brian Sivyver proposed the Minutes were a true record of events with Sue Leigh seconding the motion – Minutes approved with no matters arising.

#### 3. Chairman's Report

3.1 Gary Gascoyne praised the work of the Executive Committee

3.2 The current Committee had restored the reputation of the Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association which previously had appeared dysfunctional with very low morale.

3.3 The teamwork displayed by the current Committee had led to a more participatory structure and Gary invited anyone at the meeting to join the Committee to further enhance and extend its abilities.

3.4 The first day Conference had been held in November 2014 and had proved an extremely successful Event.

- 3.5 The working partnership with the Police and Crime Commissioner and police in general has been much improved as has the communication with the Community Safety Division
- 3.6 The Website is a great success, thanks to Tony Spall, the Webmaster. It is easy to navigate and it is clear that members are visiting it. It is important that any feedback, good news stories, neighbourhood watch events are posted on the website and Gary urged everyone to pass their information on to the Communications Team.
- 3.7 The new Constitution would be discussed later in the meeting.
- 3.8 £3000 had been spent on Signs for Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch registered new schemes and replacement signs for schemes where signs had been damaged or faded. Brian Sivyer reported that the signs had been purchased plus some additional fixings. However, the contractor for Suffolk County Council had announced an increase in installation fees. The matter was being taken up via Suffolk County Council. Any scheme where new/replacement signs had been approved would not be subject to increased costs. Brian reported that Julie Dennis had co-ordinated all requests and the signs would be issued very soon.

Some schemes had opted to install replacement signs themselves and as long as they are positioned in the same place as the original sign, this is acceptable and those persons will be covered by the national Public Liability Insurance as is any neighbourhood watch member covered when exhibiting on behalf of NW at Fetes or other public Events.

The question of recycling the 'old signs' was raised and Gary reported this was being investigated.

- 3.9 Gary stated that from 2015 onwards he and the Committee would be striving for further improvements in communication, publicity, the encouragement of new watches and supporting existing watches. Additionally, the Committee would be looking at ways to obtain Grants to allow increased monies to be available for say a presence at the Suffolk Show. Such a presence was unlikely this year due to the fact that the Suffolk Police would be sharing a stand with the County Council but it is an aim to have a Neighbourhood Watch Stand for 2016.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

Bob Gooch reported that the SNWA current account at HSBC bank stood at £2 894.93p as at 9 March 2015 with a couple of uncleared cheques amounting to £98.99p. A point was raised regarding an audit of the Association's funds since the last Annual General Meeting. The Treasurer stated all expenses claimed during the year were recorded and invited anyone present to view the documents. An audit had not been carried out due to the cost of such and a point was made that it may be possible to have this exercise carried out free of charge. The Chairman confirmed that the accounts would be audited for the next Annual General Meeting.

#### **5. Constitution**

The Chairman explained that National would be moving to a new Constitution later this year, using the Sussex NWA document as a basis and the SNWA Constitution had also been based on that Constitution. It had been on the SNWA website longer than the required 21 days and Gary asked if anyone present had any comments.

- 5.1 A point was raised with regard to 7.2 – Finance – in respect of the 'reasonable out-of-pocket expenses necessarily and properly incurred' and an amendment was moved to place a cap on such expenses. It was agreed that the words 'as agreed by the Chairman' be added to 7.2. The Secretary made the point that this Committee had voted unanimously to lower the mileage allowance which was now well below the allowable sum.
- 5.2 On the basis of 7.2 requiring to be altered a point was raised as to the number of persons present but it was agreed that the wording - require the assent of not less than 60% of the majority of votes of those present – would cover this point.
- 5.3 Tony Allen proposed the Constitution with the amendment stated in 5.1 be adopted and Mike Fulcher seconded the proposal – a unanimous show of hands was received to the proposal.

#### **6. Election of Officers**

- 6.1 Gary Gascoyne offered to remain as Chairman and Tony Spall nominated him which was seconded by Brian Sivyer.
- 6.2 The Vice Chairman stood down after serving on the current Committee and previous Committee saying he was sorry to do so but he is Chairman of the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Watch Association and with the challenging time for neighbourhood watch he needed to focus on this role. Brian added that it was very important to channel efforts into all elements of the Suffolk NWA in regard to the support received from the Suffolk PCC and cited Norfolk as not supporting NW at all. There were no nominations for the Vice Chair role.

- 6.3 The Secretary stood down saying she was sorry to do so but pressure of work with full time employment was the reason but would be pleased to offer guidance in the initial stages to a successor. There were no nominations for the Secretary role.
- 6.4 Bob Gooch offered to remain as Treasurer and he was duly nominated and seconded.
- 6.5 Tony Spall offered to remain as Webmaster and Mike Coombes nominated him with Mike Thomas seconding.
- 6.6 Trevor Gibbons had been co-opted to the current Committee and had offered to remain as a co-opted member.
- 6.7 It was agreed that the two vacant posts of Vice Chair and Secretary be noted on the Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association website and it was sincerely hoped people would come forward to fill these roles.

## **7. Any Other Business**

- 7.1 Tony Spall raised the question of a presence at the Suffolk Show following the comments made by the Chairman at 3.9. Gary said David Kane (Alan Osborne's Deputy) had been very keen for such a presence but due to his incapacitation it was very unlikely this would happen in 2015. However it was hoped that different areas of neighbourhood watch participate in the various fetes around the County.
- 7.2 It was suggested neighbourhood watch became closer to horse watch and farm watch and it was suggested contact be made with Julie Dennis in an effort to co-ordinate with other agencies around the County. Also it was asked that such a suggestion be made on the SNWA website which would be passed on to Julie Dennis.
- 7.3 A criticism was made with regard to Police Connect and Gary explained it is an American system and needed to be customised slightly.
- 7.4 Gary offered those present to take away Stay Safe Neighbourhood Watch books and NW stickers.

## **8. Dates of future Events**

- 8.1 The website would detail the Neighbourhood Watch Week to be held in June 2015.
- 8.2 There would be a day Conference in the Autumn, quite possibly at Police HQ.
- 8.3 The date of the next Annual General Meeting would be posted on the website – location yet to be decided. It was likely to be in another area of Suffolk to provide opportunities for all to attend.
- 8.4 Meeting closed at 4.10pm.