



Neighbourhood Watch Members Meeting and AGM

1st July 2026 at 7pm

On-line meeting



Minutes

(1) Welcome and apologies

Nick King (NK) welcomed attendees to the meeting which was held on-line this year.

Apologies were received from: Louise Abbot, Michael Bradshaw, Kevin Graham, Loraine Cuzner, Guy Ainsworth, Brian Sivyer.

(2) Speaker1:

Inspector Tim Scott

An insight into the Clear, Hold, Build initiative to tackle serious and organised crime, and the role and challenges of community policing

Inspector Tim Scott provided an overview of current policing activity in the Forest Heath area. He introduced himself as the locality inspector, with 18–19 years of policing experience, including 15 years in Essex, and now responsible for areas including Brandon, Newmarket, Lakenheath and Mildenhall.

He outlined Suffolk Police's operating model, noting that the county is divided into ten locality policing areas, each with Community Policing Teams and response officers. Community Policing Teams are ring-fenced to focus on high-visibility patrols, public engagement, long-term problem solving, youth crime, retail crime and hate crime. Response Investigation Teams operate 24/7 and manage lower-level crime investigations alongside emergency calls. Specialist units such as Town Teams, Rural & Wildlife Policing, CID/Safeguarding and the Sentinel ANPR team also support local policing.

Inspector Scott summarised the Force Control Strategy, which sets priorities around violence against women and girls, serious violence, serious and organised crime, neighbourhood policing and emergency response. He noted that neighbourhood issues such as anti-social behaviour and drug use remain high-impact for residents and are risk-assessed accordingly.

He highlighted current policing challenges, including demand exceeding available resources, cost-of-living pressures contributing to acquisitive crime (particularly shoplifting), and the increasing prevalence of serious and organised crime. He emphasised the importance of community intelligence, stating that small pieces of information often play a crucial role in wider investigations.

The main focus of his presentation was the Clear, Hold, Build initiative in Newmarket. He explained that Newmarket was selected due to significant drug supply activity involving County Lines, Albanian/Western Balkan organised crime groups and two local drug-dealing groups. The initiative began in September 2024 and is progressing through its three phases: Clear (Sept 2024–Feb 2025), Hold (Feb–Sept 2025) and Build (from Sept 2025 onward, now led by West Suffolk Council).

Key outcomes from the Clear phase included 50 arrests for drug supply, 59 years of custodial sentences, closure orders on three vape shops (two permanently closed), multi-agency

operations targeting taxis and food delivery drivers linked to drug supply, increased stop-search activity and reductions in violent crime. The serious and organised crime threat score for the area reduced from 131 to 26.

Community surveys conducted during the initiative indicated that residents were generally not fearful of crime and many had not been recent victims. Drug supply activity was largely hidden from public view. Environmental surveys identified neglected areas contributing to a “broken window” effect.

Inspector Scott reported that the Build phase now involves regeneration work led by West Suffolk Council, particularly around the Rowley Drive/Icewell Hill area, where problematic blocks are planned for demolition and redevelopment. Police continue to monitor criminal activity and intervene where necessary.

During questions, Inspector Scott confirmed that housing associations, particularly Flagship Housing, are key partners in tackling anti-social behaviour. He noted that Neighbourhood Watch can support all stages of Clear, Hold, Build by encouraging reporting and sharing information. He also explained that facial recognition technology is used on suitable CCTV images for retail crime investigations and that the “Shop Safe” system is used in Newmarket and Bury St Edmunds to share offender images among retailers. Town Teams currently operate in two county sectors (West and South) and rotate across major towns.

(2) Speaker 2:

Phil Breckon

Crimestoppers; how we work, how we keep you anonymous

Phil Bracken, Eastern Regional Manager for Crime Stoppers, delivered a presentation outlining the role and operation of the charity. Phil covers Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent, and his role focuses on promoting the service to increase anonymous intelligence reporting. He emphasised that Crime Stoppers is entirely independent from the police and operates as a charity founded in 1988.

Phil provided an overview of national reporting trends, explaining that Crime Stoppers receives approximately 260,000 reports annually, with steady increases over the past decade due to improved campaigns, frustrations with the 101 service, and enhancements to online reporting. He described the types of information commonly received, including drug crime, driving offences, weapons, and an increasing number of reports relating to hidden harm such as domestic abuse, modern slavery and human trafficking.

He outlined the wide range of partner agencies Crime Stoppers works with, including Immigration Enforcement, HM Prison Service, HMRC and the National Crime Agency. This allows intelligence to be shared across multiple organisations when relevant. He noted that Crime Stoppers surveys callers periodically, with anonymity and independence from the police consistently cited as the main reasons people choose to report through the service.

Phil described the Crime Stoppers “Most Wanted” platform, which is widely used and has contributed to over 4,500 arrests since 2005. He encouraged Suffolk Police to make greater use of the system. He reported that nearly 3,000 pieces of intelligence were passed to Suffolk Constabulary in the last financial year. He explained that arrest numbers attributed directly to Crime Stoppers may appear low because police only credit arrests where the Crime Stoppers report was the primary cause of investigation.

Phil explained the difference between telephone reporting, one-way online reporting and the two-way anonymous reporting system. He described how the two-way system allows police to ask follow-up questions while maintaining full anonymity for the source. He clarified that Crime Stoppers never asks members of the public to investigate or put themselves at risk, and that only factual information is passed on to the police.

He provided reassurance about the technical measures used to protect anonymity, including BT stripping caller ID, no call recording, and the use of a secure reporting environment that does not track IP addresses or cookies. He noted that cookies appearing on the main website relate only to campaign analytics and not to the reporting system.

Phil also outlined the Fearless youth programme, aimed at 11–16 year olds, which provides crime-related resources for young people and professionals. He explained that Fearless has its own website and social media presence, and that a dedicated youth worker can support local engagement where needed.

He concluded by explaining that Crime Stoppers Zones—targeted leaflet drops in specific areas—are used to increase reporting in locations with particular crime concerns. These zones are coordinated with police and sometimes supported by cadets. He noted that the long-term aim is for such areas to develop into Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

Nick King thanked both speakers for their excellent input.

(2) Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association Annual General Meeting

- i. **Apologies for absence:**
Louise Abbot, Michael Bradshaw, Kevin Graham, Loraine Cuzner, Guy Ainsworth, Brian Sivyer.
- ii. **Review of draft minutes to 2025 AGM and matters arising:** as published on our website.
No matters were raised and so the draft 2025 minutes were approved.
- iii. **Committee's Annual Report:** as on website.
No questions were raised.
- iv. **Treasurer's Annual Report & Accounts:** as on website.
No questions were raised.
- v. **Election of officers and committee:** the existing committee members were all standing to be re-elected to their posts. The following role holders were nominated by Anthea Boast and seconded by Henry Hopking with no other nominations from the attendees:
 - Chair: no one elected to this role.
 - Funding: Nick King
 - Comms: Tony Spall
 - Treasurer: Angie Barnetson
 - Police Liaison: Mark Smith
 - Database: Graham Holmes
 - Secretary: Paul Garner
- vi. **AoB**
Nick King noted that SNWA have a stock of street signs available for replacement of worn signs and for new schemes.
- vii. **Date of next meeting**
Wednesday 7th July 2027

The meeting closed at 20:30