



# The Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association



## Executive Committee Minutes

5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 – 7-8.30pm  
*Teams online*

### 1. Introductions, apologies and welcome to Area Coordinators joining us

Attendees: Nick King, Brian Sivyver, Tony Spall, Paul Garner, Angela Barnettson, Graham Holmes, Mark Smith, Trevor Gibbons

Apologies: Claude Brande

NK welcomed everyone and explained how we operate as a committee and that this is the first meeting to which all Area Coordinators (A/Cs) have been invited. The intention is to open all future committee meetings to A/Cs in order to gather new insights and local representation, and to give A/Cs a better understanding of how SNWA is operating and dealing with topical issues.

### 2. Actions from 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 Exec Mtg.

- TS to discuss next steps with Martin Shaw regarding Kesgrave area schemes – ongoing.
- PG to check attendee capacity for Teams on-line meetings - completed
- PG to draft an agenda for the meeting with Guy on 11 Dec - completed
- PG to add Speedwatch and Control Room insights to the GA agenda for 11 Dec - completed
- TS to share the links to the A/C role descriptions for all to comment - completed
- NK to draft an invitation for the A/Cs to the Exec mtgs - completed
- NK to circulate final draft of the Council funding request for review - completed
- TS to update payment details on SNWA website and provide a link - completed
- NK to attend an Awards for All information sharing call in due course with National NW and then draft a way forward for us - completed
- NK to draft a short West Command attendees survey - completed
- TS to share with NK his work on the BT Digital Voice topic - completed
- NK to pursue appropriate grant funding from National NW for the BT Digital Voice work - completed ongoing

The A/C for Kesgrave (Area S13C) is now Jane Cody (on a temporary basis). Following the recent step down from the A/C role of Area S13A, the schemes in that area are being checked by TS. The remaining Kesgrave area of S13B continues with the A/C of Jean Potter. TS has 12 schemes left to contact in S13A. The action regarding Martin Shaw is now closed.

NK and TS also gave the background on the data cleansing work, and that we now have 499 active schemes. TG commented that pre-covid his scheme coordinators were resistant to joining formally with SNWA. Now that view has changed and many schemes are officially listed with SNWA with more schemes yet to join from Needham Market area.

### 3. Command Area meetings:

#### a. West Area attendee survey

We have completed an attendee survey for the 18 people who were at the West Area Command meeting in 2024. There with 8 replies, all of which indicated that it was a useful and successful mtg.

#### b. Plans for South and East Area mtgs

No plans are in place for these meetings yet and the specifics may be dependent on acquiring funding. NK and TS reiterated that it was important to hold East Area and South Area meetings in 2025 and that they should ideally be face to face. BS noted that he could organise a meeting in Lowestoft for 15-20 likely attendees, but this may be too far out geographically for an East meeting whereas Halesworth might be a better location.

#### 4. Police engagement update

##### a. PCSO Hannah Rogers initiative in Icewell Hill (Forest Heath)

Following a poor response to email requests for help from PCSO Rogers to NW coordinators in the Icewell Hill area, NK has been working with PCSO Rogers to plan an event in Icewell Hill on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February. NK and three other NW coordinators will attend along with PC Guy Ainsworth and PCSO Rogers. The plan is to leaflet dwellings and engage with the public. This event should generate some positive publicity to promote NW.

MS commented that he has been attending parish council meetings with local police officers and police drop-in sessions/coffee mornings. NK suggested that it would be helpful to have photos of any events we attend with the police to support NW publicity. We also plan to use any future funding to get more branded/PR material including table top covers, street-signs, polo shirts, hi-vis jackets etc. TG already has 40 "Needham Market NW" hi-vis jackets for use at local events.

MS asked if we could have a NW specific email addresses. TS stated that it depends on the SNWA email software license which may limit the number of discrete addresses allowed.

**Action: TS will investigate what is possible regarding A/C specific NW email addresses with our existing software license**

##### b. Update on CPT database access and contact with coordinators

TS reported that CPT access to our database of schemes has been very low recently:

- Sept 2024 - Accessed total of 48 times by 24 individuals
- Oct 2024 - Accessed total of 17 times by 6 individuals
- Nov 2024 - Accessed total of 1 times by 1 individual
- Dec 2024 - Accessed total of 4 times by 3 individuals
- Jan 2025 - Accessed total of 7 times by 3 individuals

We need to get the bottom of why police CPTs are not making much use of the database. BS has found that in his area police will come to BS first to contact a scheme coordinator rather than using the database. We agreed that we would raise this lack of engagement with Guy Ainsworth. Equally the SNWA Coordinator Forum page now lists the relevant CPT members and their email address for each coordinator. This should be used by coordinators to contact their CPT if they have not had an initial contact from the CPT.

**Action: TS will send out a reminder email to coordinators about this facility on the coordinator forum page and encourage each coordinator to send an email!**

TG commented that police and PCCs hold their own area meetings, one was held in October 2025 and was poorly attended by NW and parish councils. We should be invited to these meetings and have a stand at the event.

#### 5. BT Digital Project update

Although the programme is rolling until end of January 2027, the agreed plan between NWN and BT was to host 8 events across Suffolk. Of those events, 4 have already taken place: Beccles (28th Nov 24), Woodbridge (5th Dec 24), Newmarket (24th Jan 25), and Hadleigh (4th Feb 25). The remaining planned events are Halesworth (17 Feb 25), Framingham (25th Feb 25), Gt Blakenham (27th Feb 25), and Stanningfield (20th Mar 25). The national organisation (through BT) have pledged a reward payment of £1000 for all the support work SNWA has provided to the project.

**Action: AB to check whether the funds have been in the SNWA account**

#### 6. National NW

##### a. Feedback from Association Lead calls 27/28 Jan

PG attended Association Leads call with National NW. Key points of note were:

- Strategy: this is the last year of current strategy. New strategy to be completed later this year, definitely before the AGM. The strategy will be informed by a survey to all members, likely to be in March, followed by multiple sessions with Association Leads and other groups. There will be opportunity to comment/feedback on the draft strategy prior to finalisation ahead of the AGM at the end of 2025.
- National will be advertising in next few weeks for new members of the Board of Trustees, including for Treasurer.
- Association Spotlight: Lynne Fairclough from Merseyside. Area of 5 councils. One of the most deprived in the country – Knowsley. Others can be quite affluent. Lynne started a few years ago as MSN and vice chair for Merseyside, now she is Chair. Initially low interest in the Association by Police. Now have a strong relationship with Police including at Chief Inspector level. Lynne checks that any new coordinators are happy to work with Police and then connects them with relevant PCSO. Last year Sefton Homewatch won award and Lynne was nominated as top Police volunteer and nominated to attend Buckingham Palace garden party in 2024. Lynne also received a BEM honour in 2024 for NW activities. Merseyside don't do big community events but focus on building effective community networks, or "mini-clusters". Key message is that perseverance can win out when try to build relationship with Police.
- Regional Meetings: Cheryl promoted the benefits of regional meetings every 6 months. This will be tried out for a year, starting in Feb 25. Association Lead and one or two others can join. Agenda has been set in advance for the first round of meetings. Expectation is that this will foster relationship between associations that might lead to combined events or combined bids for funding etc. National will provide regional meeting summaries to attendees.
- Comms plan: National run monthly campaigns plus three significant other campaigns per year. Details are in the comms plan. NW Week – National NW are working with Citizens and Policing to draft a letter to be issued by the National Police Chiefs Council to go to each Force suggesting that each Force should undertake a joint event with active associations in NW week. National will send out a copy of the letter when completed. After that we should discuss options with our own Police lead (Guy).
- Partnerships: National are using software from a company called Sopro which automatically detects organisations/businesses (not individuals) that might be interested in NW based on web browsing etc. etc. The software prioritises the potential contacts and supports introductory interaction automatically via platforms such as Linked In. Ultimately this can lead to discussions between National NW and third party businesses (e.g. insurance companies, house builders etc.) to explore options for working together or even funding NW in some way.
- Association succession planning – National have launched a toolkit. Last year 85% of associations surveyed were concerned about succession planning. National convened a focus group of volunteers who met every 2 weeks during last year. Toolkit is now complete with 22 pages of information. Role description examples are included as well as social media wording examples. Understanding why people volunteer is included and the barriers that might put volunteers off, the benefits to the individual and ideas for working together are also covered. The role description and social media templates are editable and can tailored to local needs. Toolkit has had very positive feedback from some Association Leads.

## b. Regional meeting plan

National plan to run two meetings per year with six associations in the East of England which will include: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

The first meeting is on 13<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm. NK is planning to attend, AB may also attend. The second meeting will be in August.

## c. Association Succession Planning

There are currently 499 validated schemes on the SNWA Database. Only 165 are registered on the National database. As mentioned in the January SNWA Newsletter, the remaining schemes will be sent an invitation to register on the National site, which will enable more individual people to register with Neighbourhood Watch and join as members of those schemes which will be visible at national level. This satisfies GDPR criteria, removing the need for Scheme Coordinators to keep separate lists, and provides succession plans for schemes.

## 7. Data clean update

We now have 499 validated schemes, 53 Areas but only 14 named A/Cs, 127 members of Suffolk Police have access to the database across the CPTs. Work to validate schemes is ongoing with approx. 70 schemes outstanding most of which will now be covered by TS having taken on the Kesgrave A/C role. GH has started to delete the GDPR records that are on paper. Removing digital GDPR records is more onerous and will be undertaken once all the scheme reviews have been completed.

## 8. Funding, including Treasurer update on our account

### a. Via PCC

NK has been chasing the PCC office following our request for funding submitted in 2024. The PCC will talk to chief constable about this in March 2025. NK noted that the PCC has previously agreed that NW should have stands at PCC public engagement events later in the year. NK would like the PCC to include the presence of NW in the public invitation to the events. TS gets early notice of the events and will send them on to NK when they appear.

### b. Via donations from Town/Parish Councils via SALC

SALC have issued our request for funds to their membership of councils across Suffolk. AB will check if there have been any donations into our bank account. MS has recently had 250 pounds for NW signage from local council.

### c. Awards for All Lottery bid

NK submitted a bid for £14000 in January. There is a 12 week adjudication process before we get a result. NK and TS are the named contacts for the award scheme should they have any queries.

AB confirmed that we currently have £2583 pounds in the account.

## 9. AGM Planning

The AGM venue is booked (Coddenham Centre). We have one speaker confirmed from the police Control Centre team. TS suggested that perhaps we have an alternative speaker other than PCC this year and that SNWA should tailor the speakers to our key strategy. Hot topics in this area are drug misuse and cybercrime. National NW may have a representative that could speak about cybercrime. We would expect to invite Eric Sewell again to sell crime prevention materials.

**Action: TS to consider good speakers who come with a recommendation for discussion at the April committee meeting.**

## 10. AoB

- MS asked what training we offer to new coordinators or area coordinators to enable them to be able to offer crime prevention advice and information to scheme members. TS replied that our training is limited by funding. NK commented that national have regular on-line training packages, workshops, toolkits etc. NK also noted that in theory A/Cs should be able to visit and coach new coordinators in how to run a good scheme. BS noted that new schemes are almost always borne out of a local problem/issue. Having a police background does give a benefit in advising new members. Reading info is no replacement for face to face advice from people who have experience. MS uses his police background to give advice to members via their WhatsApp group. MS also noted that in Long Melford there is a NW facebook page with 900 members but they are not official NW members.
- MS asked about Farm Watch because the police have asked Mark to contact the PCC about using Farm Watch to prevent rural crime. TS agreed that any Farm Watch initiative could be incorporated into SNWA. These schemes did use to exist in Suffolk but were stopped due to funding cuts. MS believes that CPTs can fund local issues/initiatives. MS attends monthly meetings with police in his area and is contacted every 1-2 days about something. The process to access CPT funds for specific local projects is not clear, although it's likely to be down to local inspectors to allocate budgets.
- BS has ring fenced Lowestoft as a single scheme on the National NW system. He recently had a request from an individual membership who does not want to be part of a NW scheme. TS stated that as long they sign up on national BS can include them in advice notifications but this is not a scenario that we would want to promote more widely.

- TS stated that Guy Ainsworth (SPOC) advised that a caller Tag to identify NW informants/callers into the CCR is now in place following the executive committee request. Audited numbers can be produced from the Constabulary when required. This will rely on members specifying they are affiliated to NW when they make the call.  
**ACTION: TS to underline this new aspect in a newsletter and encourage coordinators and their members to name-drop Neighbourhood Watch whenever contacting the Police via phone, online reports, etc. This will greatly help cement the value we bring to the partnership.**
- NK remembered that we agreed to send some Spring crime prevention information to SALC.  
**ACTION: TS to send crime prevention info as a pdf to NK who will send it to SALC**
- NK informed us that Suffolk Constabulary are considering the use of the Neighbourhood Alert messaging tool, possibly to replace Connect. 34 out of 43 forces in England and Wales do this already. Suffolk is in consultation about this and so NK had a conference call with Sgt Chris Williams and Guy to discuss the pros and cons of Alert and Connect. Norfolk Police have moved onto Alert, but still use Connect for now. If Suffolk move to Alert there might be implications for SNWA to ensure more scheme data is available in the National NW system.
- NK asked if we can generate a monthly report of new registered/approved schemes in SNWA and on National NW. Hopefully data can show our growth and help justify external funding. We can already monitor any new scheme that is generated via National as a start point.  
**Action: TS and GH to consider if/how we can monitor this data going forward.**