



Chorleywood Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch background - Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) is one of the largest voluntary bodies in the country. Although it is independent of the Police, it works very closely with them and other agencies to ensure that communities are kept safe and secure.

NHW does not mean residents being vigilantes or taking direct action against would-be criminals. Rather, it is a matter of the community showing awareness of suspicious activity and criminal behaviour and having good communications with residents and the appropriate authorities.

How NHW is structured - Under the NHW initiative, various county councils have set up their own NHW committees. The one for Hertfordshire is called Hertswatch, and its Chair is Sue Thompson, (sue.j.thompson@btopenworld.com). To be coterminous with its ten policing districts, Hertswatch has been devolved to district level, each with its own District NHW Co-ordinator. Chorleywood's District Council is Three Rivers DC, and Sue Thompson happens to be its District NHW Co-ordinator, as well as being Chair of Hertswatch.

To provide a link between the Police and NHW groups in the Three Rivers, Dacorum and Watford district, a Watch Liaison Officer (WLO), Philip Waine (wlo@herts.pnn.police.uk), has been appointed, working under the direction of the Police Crime Reduction and Community Safety Department.

Below district level sit the local NHW watches, such as Chorleywood, each of which has its own Local NHW Co-ordinator. Local NHW watches are organised according to individual volunteering circumstances. Chorleywood currently comprises a Local Co-ordinator (Chairman Brian Shipway, brian.shipway1@sky.com) and an informal support team consisting of a small number of volunteers.

Under the Chorleywood NHW support team lies an infrastructure of some 80-90 Road Co-ordinators, each having volunteered to be the link person for their particular road, to act as a point of contact for communications, the delivery of annual newsletters to residents and advisor to the support team about any new residential arrivals or departures, issuing welcome packs where necessary. The Chairman and support team liaise with various authorities to implement Hertswatch policies and initiatives, communicate with the Road Co-ordinators and carry out such activities as producing hardcopy and electronic newsletters.

Chorleywood NHW is always looking for new volunteers among residents, to become Road Co-ordinators or deputy Road Co-ordinators. If you wish to volunteer, please contact info@chorleywood-pc.gov.uk, or brian.shipway1@sky.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Safer Neighbourhood Teams, Police Community Support Officers - Herts Police has appointed district-based Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) under the leadership of Police Sergeants, to liaise with District and Local NHW Co-ordinators and ensure better protection of residents. The SNT for Chorleywood has two local Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) assigned to it, Dean Redhead and Robyn Smyth, (see photographs on this website). They report to SNT team leader, Police Sergeant Neil Canning.

In Chorleywood, we are fortunate to have the leadership of a security-minded parish council who, because of their keen desire to maintain our crime levels at very low levels, have funded an extra PCSO, giving

Chorleywood a total of two full-time PCSOs. This has been a major factor in our crime statistics remaining at low levels, year-on-year.

Three Rivers' SNT is based at our local police station, Rickmansworth Police Station, Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 1RL. In order to contact the Police, please telephone:

- 999 in an emergency where there is a danger to life, or a crime is in progress.
- 101 for non-emergencies, where police attendance is required, to report a crime or to report any other incidents. Calls to 101 have a fixed cost of 15p per call.

Our PCSOs are key figures for Chorleywood NHW. They carry out regular patrols of the parish and, among their numerous responsibilities, take a special interest in attending local senior, junior and primary schools to give talks on various aspects of policing, commensurate with the particular ages of the audience. The PCSOs provide the Chorleywood Parish Council with a monthly news report which includes our current crime figures. The latest reports are shown elsewhere on this website.

The Online Watch Link (OWL) - OWL is an online communication system operated by Herts Police since 2006. The relationship between OWL and Hertfordshire is unique because OWL grew out of an idea devised in 2004 by Herts NHW Co-ordinator Gary Fenton. It was developed over the next two years to become a county-wide database and messaging service, in conjunction with Chief Constable Frank Whiteley, who helped Herts lead the way in NHW development.

OWL is now the life-blood of Hertswatch, with about one-third of all households in the county signed up as members. As a member of Chorleywood NHW, any householder can sign up freely to OWL. The WLO, our SNT police officers and our local PCSOs all use OWL to send out regular crime prevention and safety related information direct to members' emails, or as messages to mobile telephones, if preferred. Such information includes:

- updates on criminal activity in Chorleywood, and any particular hotspots;
- advice about crime prevention, especially linked to particular times of the year;
- latest crime statistics and trends for Chorleywood;
- tips about safeguarding outbuildings and vehicles;
- appeals for missing or vulnerable persons;
- photographs, descriptions of stolen property, CCTV images for possible identification;
- up to date warnings and descriptions of scams in the county and how to avoid them;
- invitations to reply to questionnaires, attend open days, policing events, etc;
- feedback on successful police operations against crime, criminals and criminal gangs.

It is no coincidence that Chorleywood has one of the lowest reported crime rates per head of population in Three Rivers, whilst having the highest percentage of households signed up to OWL. Our current OWL membership stands at about 93% of households, compared with 58% for TRDC generally and 33% for Herts as a whole.

Joining up to OWL is easy - just visit www.OWL.co.uk to register. If you have a problem doing this, please email info@chorleywood-pc.gov.uk, or contact penncottage@talktalk.net

As well as Neighbourhood Watch schemes, there are a number of other watches people can join or set up. They include Business Watch, Rural Watch, Horse Watch, Allotment Watch, Canal Watch and Dog Watch.