WINSLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Report to Winsley Annual Parish Meeting -- 28th April 2015

1. How it works

Neighbourhood Watch (NW) has existed in the village for many years. I took over the role of Village Co-ordinator from the late Bob Owens in 2006.

The three objectives are A. To keep residents informed of any criminal activity in Winsley and the surrounding area; B. To encourage them to be vigilant about security and so prevent crime (in an area which is never going to have a strong Police presence); and C. To encourage people to support each other in the prevention of crime. These aims are, of course interlinked.

With respect to A above, I receive information from the Police (our link officer, Andrew MacLachlan does an excellent job), and occasionally from residents, which I then disseminate through the village via the 'scheme co-ordinators'. Each scheme co-ordinator looks after a street, or an otherwise defined area of the village (ie 'Church side of Old Village').
I send the information by email to the scheme co-ordinators, who, in turn, disseminate it to their neighbours via email, 'phone or 'round robin'. I use the last of these in Dane Close as not everyone has email. The serious weakness is that I only have 13 scheme co-ordinators, including myself, so that only about1/2, at most, of the village is covered. (Both Turleigh and Winsley Hill are covered.) More co-ordinators are urgently needed; the work is NOT arduous!

When I communicate with scheme co-ordinators I also issue reminders relating to objectives B and C.

2. Local criminal activity

Fortunately, crime is not a great problem in our area. This is partly because people ARE vigilant.

During the past year there have been some burglaries from houses, sheds and garages. Another problem has been unauthorised door-step selling (the Nottingham knockers); the Police believe that, in some cases, this has been a means of assessing the vulnerability of a property. In the past car crime and fraudulent 'phone calls have been a problem.

3. Mutual support

Vigilance on behalf of ourselves and fellow residents is paramount. This is particularly true of holiday times, when people are away. I always encourage residents to support each other in the following ways:

1. Be willing to have a neighbour's key and a note of contact details.
2. Do keep a careful watch on the empty property.
3. Put out and take in dustbins.
4. Take in deliveries, eg if left on doorstep or around the side of the house.
5. Push any circulars, etc, through the door and collect up post.

We can then leave for our holidays with far greater peace of mind.

THIS, I FEEL, IS THE VERY ESSENCE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.

4. The future

Technology is constantly bringing about changes in communications. John Barnes kindly posts NW information on the village website. The Police have introduced a community messaging service so that all can have access to information that was once only available to me as co-ordinator. This has led to some wondering about the future of NW.

May I make two important points:

1. The more means of communications we have, the more chance there is of people 'getting the message'!
2. NW is only partly about communications. It is also about the kind of vigilance and mutual support I have outlined above.

Roy Ludlow
Winsley NW Co-ordinator
April 2015