



Nottinghamshire Neighbourhood Watch

NOTTSWATCH



Citizens in Policing - Neighbourhood Watch Annual Conference 21 March 2015

The theme for this year's conference is based on the police force's new directive, putting residents firmly in the heart of policing. In past years, the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC), Paddy Tipping, along with senior Police Inspectors, have agreed the police have not always given the public and Neighbourhood Watch, the respect they deserve. We have seen vast improvement in this area in the past decade and welcome an opportunity for a better working relationship.

NottsWatch Deputy Chair, Paul Macey, welcomed members and introduced each guest. He started proceedings with an anecdote from his youth, as a ski instructor at Carlton Forum. Whilst instructing a couple, they were bombarded with abuse and missiles from local youths. The man asked Paul if this was a regular occurrence. Paul replied that, unfortunately, it was. The man said that he would see what he could do. Paul was sceptical to imagine what he could possibly do until the man introduced himself as Chief Constable McLachlan. A police presence in the area, around school times, soon put a stop to the mischief! Communication and cooperation between the public and the police can make such a difference.

[Chris Cutland](#), Deputy PCC, was our first speaker. She applauded Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) volunteers' dedication and commitment and acknowledged active NHW schemes make neighbourhoods safer, increase social cohesion and reduce the fear of crime. She referred to [Mary Penford MBE](#) and [Doreen Carruthers](#), who have both recently received awards for their voluntary work for NHW. Chris spoke about the [Neighbourhood Alert system](#) being "a great tool to keep citizens informed, to seek intelligence and to enable their participation. It's reassuring to know that there is a network of 'neighbours' who will look out for us and for whom we will do the same." Read more of her presentation via the [PCC's website](#).

The PCC gave NottsWatch (NW) a grant of £25000 for 2014-15 but this year they [supported](#) other worthy volunteers and groups.

[Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle](#), County Councillor in Worksop, was next to speak. He said that he was proud to be a part of the policing in communities programme and that he highly valued volunteers. He acknowledged NHW schemes have been around for over thirty years and have been an effective way to allow local people to work well with their neighbourhood policing team (NPT). He said NHW sits at the heart of

local communities and the police and councils need to build on this. In his various roles with the Police Authority and Chairman of the Council's Community Safety Committee, he had supported NW financially and politically and was today happy to announce a Council contribution of £10,500 to enable 70 new schemes be set up. Now the Police Commissioned Review of NottsWatch is complete (to shortly be published) we can build on its findings and meet new challenges. Citizens in Policing (CiP) is an opportunity for the police to embrace and develop collaboration with volunteers; as financial budgets continue to be squeezed, we will need to share resources. He asked that we don't just rely on new technology but be good, face-to-face neighbours, as in the past.

[Mark Holland](#), Commander of County Division, then gave a thorough [presentation](#) to explain the Notts Police's "Delivering the Future" plan. He thanked NHW for our work over the years and said that more coordinators are needed, particularly in areas that are not so well represented. He spoke about the changes he had seen in his 28 years of service but how the last two/three years had changed significantly. Notts Police force have saved £42m in the last five years and more budget restraints are to come. In conjunction with the PCC and other partners, the police have a [five year plan](#) to enable them to deliver the same level of service. This level has improved substantially since 2009, when a government performance assessment declared Nottinghamshire was the third worst police division in the country.

Mark then spoke about changes to their infrastructure. Criminals don't take notice of geographical boundaries so the police need these boundaries to be blurred and work together, cross borders, more effectively. Moves have already taken place with the creation of hubs at which City Division and County Division police receive common briefings to provide better communication and action. In the past different areas even had separate radio channels.

Civilians, experienced in their relevant field, will be used more, where appropriate. Many local Police stations have closed where it was found footfall was low. E-Hubs will be introduced in certain areas to enable the public to speak to officers, via a video link. Encouragingly, the public mostly dial 101 to communicate with the police.

To enable more effective use of the valuable resource of volunteers, a new Citizens in Policing department has been established, headed up by CI Richard Stapleford, who has recently replaced CI Paul Winter in attending NottsWatch meetings. This department is now responsible for liaising with NHW, Cadets, Princes's Trust, Universities and volunteer administrative staff.

Mark assured NottsWatch members that neighbourhood policing would remain a priority. There will be a designated officer for every community.

Q & A with above panel of speakers

- A member commented that he was delighted to see Commander Mark Holland (MH) acceptance of the budget restraints. Rather than complain and make excuses, he has risen to the challenge and used it as an opportunity to improve the service they offer the public.
- David Griffin, Radcliffe-on-Trent NHW, commented on lack of promotion, by the police, of NHW. He asked that, when police attend a crime, they promote joining a scheme. He also asked that the crime statistics, published by the police, include a column reflecting if the criminals had been apprehended and charged. MH explained a satisfaction survey was given to victims and this included information re NHW but he admitted they could do more. He promised to discuss both suggestions with CI Richard Stapleford. Potential advertising on dust carts was suggested. (Trustees previously explored but, ultimately, deemed not workable.) MH said, budget allowing, a possibility was to add our logo to their outgoing correspondence (1p/envelope).
- Roger Jones, RVR Bramcote NHW, commented on the [East Midlands Police Collaboration](#) and asked how successful MH found it. Bramcote is very close to the Derbyshire border. MH said that whilst Derbyshire were involved with serious crime, they had opted out within neighbourhood policing. He observed, however, that this may change. In 2010, when Notts were forced to make significant changes Derbyshire police had large financial reserves. Now these have been used up they are looking to best practices from Notts. That said, he knows South Broxtowe's Inspector Steve Wragg does regularly meet with his counterpart from Long Eaton so at an operational level there is communication, but policy isn't in place at a macro level.
- Sam Boot, Keyworth – chairs the Priority setting Meetings (PSM) and questioned how volunteers can effectively take on roles that previously a disciplined police workforce undertook. He also commented that in the past he has found police lacked democracy when dealing with councillors and the public. MH responded that this was one of the reasons a new CiP division had been put in place. There will be identifiable people for each role and a proper management structure to ensure any problems can be dealt with.
- Dr David Rhodes (DR) commented that NHW was not representative of ethnic groups in Nottingham/Nottinghamshire. Chris Cutland (CC) said that she and Paddy Tipping had seen a shift in culture within the force. They have tried to encourage a better working partnership approach and for the police to listen to the public. There are immense problems that can only be resolved by working together. Her background is partnership working within the city and she acknowledged that it is difficult to engage certain communities – there is a lot of fear. Nottingham Citizens have recently published a [report](#) on Hate Crime and said that we need to offer a hand to these communities and not expect them to come to us. We need to build up communication and the PCC Department are happy to pass on suggestions/messages.
- Colin Mackie, Silverdale NHW, asked if a list of cyber crime (for which Action Fraud regularly issue alerts) was available. Sue Sambells, Trustee NW,

referred him to the [scam warnings](#) list on [Bramcote Today](#), a community website. MH spoke of cyber crime as another opportunity to use civilian experts, rather than DIs. We need young, computer experts – an opportunity to take cyber crime offenders and turn them around to working for, and not against, the police. Cllr Glynn Gilfole (GG) spoke of Trading Standards and John Wood, NW Trustee, asked that any developments the police/Trading Standards make be fed back to the Fraud Agency.

- Bob Vaughan Newton, Arnold NHW spoke of inconsistencies in different policing areas within the issue of alerts and the need for some quality control.
- A member commented on lack of feedback to a victim/NHW scheme following incidents. MH offered to take this up privately re the specific crimes. CC advised there is a [Victims Code](#) which spells out the police's responsibility to update victims. MH advised the police have trialled "[track my crime](#)" and there are systems in place to discipline officers who fail in their duties to update victims, under the code of practice.
- The final question came from a Social Worker, who lives in the city and works in the county. MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) was discussed. She said they didn't always receive outcomes from referrals to the police where crime was suspected to enable Social Care to close their investigations. MH advised different systems were in place in both areas.

The final speaker was John Wood, Trustee and 2015-16 Chair (subject to election at the AGM and confirmation by the Board on 25 March). He rounded off the Conference by giving a powerpoint presentation of a positive outcome from NHW working well with the police – **Woodthorpe Community Speed Watch**. This scheme has been running for almost a year and has seen a reduction in the average speed of vehicles in the area. The police are now re-engaged in the issue of speeding and are monitoring the regular offenders, known from data supplied by the volunteers. He finished with the shocking statistics from deaths and accidents from speeding vehicles including a comparison to a topical fact that whilst we are shocked by 453 soldiers, having lost their lives in the 13 year conflict in Afghanistan, (The new A453 is to be named "Remembrance Way" in memory of them.) in the same period of time, over 35,000 people were killed on roads in the UK and over 350,000 people were seriously injured.

To round off the conference, NottsWatch's Chairman, Dr David Rhodes, who is stepping down as Chair and has offered to take up the position of Treasurer, thanked the PCC for funding the recent project and the County Council for the new grant to promote NW.

At a personal level, he thanked the board for its support and all the volunteers across the City and County for their good work. He expressed particular thanks to Mary Penford MBE and Nina Douglas, who have stepped down as treasurers for the County and City, for their valued contributions.

And to Angela Peer, our paid Operations Manager, who is leaving after nearly five years, "I will miss you greatly and so will NottsWatch".

Finally, should any members of Neighbourhood Watch be interested in becoming more involved, please contact [NottsWatch](#) to find out more.

Nottinghamshire Neighbourhood Watch is a registered Charity No. 1156310