



Neighbourhood Watch SCOTLAND

# newsletter

Summer | 2021

NEIGHBOURHOOD  
WATCH IN  
PITLOCHRY - P3

## Changes to Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Board

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland are delighted to announce the appointment of five new Board members from across Scotland over the last 6 month period.

### Our new members are:

- Jack Birrell
- Kathryn Shanks
- Easton Millar
- Ron McKail
- Derek Hart

Guided by the Board we also hope that current Coordinators and members see more helpful advice and guidance, as well as feeling more supported in their role over the coming period.

Nip over to the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland website to read a little about all our Board members: [www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk/about-us/neighbourhood-watch-scotland-board/](http://www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk/about-us/neighbourhood-watch-scotland-board/)

Bill Gray, Trustee of the NWS Board, sadly stepped down recently. NWS were deeply sorry to lose our friend Bill from the Board and as Coordinator of Denny and District Community Council Neighbourhood Watch.

Bill had been involved in Neighbourhood Watch since 2013 and has dedicated so much time and enthusiasm to drive his area, and Neighbourhood Watch Scotland forward. We hope as lockdown restrictions ease the NWS Team can meet with Bill for a bite to eat and a catch up as gratitude for all his hard work. We thank Bill for his service to Neighbourhood Watch and his Community and wish him well in the future.

### Chairman's comments

There's a lot packed into this season's newsletter, but I want to focus my comments around people, the very centre of what we're about.

The AGM late last year reassured me that there was a real appetite and passion out there for how we adapt and strengthen our contribution to community safety. To do this we need to provide national support for local activity, and having strong membership representation at board level helps us better understand what's wanted. So it's been a huge pleasure to welcome new board members Jack, Kathryn, Easton, Ron and Derek, who are already contributing well, and I look forward to eventually actually meeting them in person!

At the same time, a grateful goodbye to Bill Gray, who leaves us after many years of service. Bill made me extremely welcome from the outset, stayed on longer to maintain membership representation and gave me great advice on the way, for which I thank him sincerely.

And finally, my thanks to the NWS staff team, who through these ongoing difficult times have continued to support each other and all of our membership so well. As we gradually move out of lockdown we'll all be able to see more of each other out there, and regain some of the contact most of us so sorely miss. But as you can see from this newsletter, they and you have ensured that Neighbourhood Watch remains a growing and valuable part of Scottish community life.



Stewart Prodger,  
Chairman, Neighbourhood  
Watch Scotland.

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**CALL  
BLOCKING**



[www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk](http://www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk)



@nwatchscotland



@neighbourhoodwatchscotland



Neighbourhood  
Watch SCOTLAND

# A summary of the local results of the national Neighbourhood Alert annual member survey March 2020 (Scotland)

(Note: All figures shown in brackets represent the equivalent national figure)



**4,664**  
Respondents  
(104,321)

**20.4%**  
Response rate  
(17.6%)

## FEEDBACK

Percentage that agreed (or strongly agreed) that messages in the last year were...



Informative  
**97.7%**  
(96.9%)



Important  
**92.9%**  
(90.5%)



Easy to understand  
**98.3%**  
(96.8%)



Relevant to what I want  
**91.5%**  
(88.1%)



Timely  
**90.7%**  
(87.1%)



Relevant to my area  
**88.0%**  
(88.4%)

## DATA SECURITY

Percentage of respondents within the area that said they felt that...



My data is safe

**75.7%**  
(77.3%)

The Alert System Is Secure



**75.7%**  
(80%)

**75%**

Don't trust social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor and WhatsApp

## IMPACT

Evaluating the effect of the messages over 12 months

Have changed their behaviour



**64.7%**  
(64.4%)

My confidence in the police has increased



**55.4%**  
(61.7%)

Find it easier to spot a scam



**81.2%**  
(79.2%)

## REACH

Total average reach of a message sent in Scotland

**22,864**

Members

**18.23**

Average shares

**416,811**

Total average reach per message

## AVERTED CRIME

Total value of prevented crime in Scotland as a result of awareness raised and action taken by message recipients, over 12 months

**£3.8  
MILLION  
SAVED**

**1,834**

Scotland respondents stated:  
"the information contained within the messages has helped prevent me from becoming a victim of crime"





# Neighbourhood Watch in Pitlochry

Article by Cath Marshall, Secretary of Pitlochry Neighbourhood Watch Association

The more people know about scams and what to look out for, the better chance we have of thwarting the criminals and keeping our residents safe. Sadly, it is generally the more elderly and more vulnerable residents who tend to fall foul of the scammers but as they and their families become more aware of the tactics, the safer they will be.



In Pitlochry, we have a number of ways in which we try to keep our residents informed about scams etc. These comprise of a network of street coordinators; our own Facebook Page; articles in local monthly publications which are delivered free to all

households in the town; and features on our local community radio station, Heartland FM (which also posts these on their links). In addition, we encourage recipients of information on scams etc. to pass it on to family and friends who may not be in a Watch.

We also encourage residents who receive suspicious phone calls, emails or texts or encounter any suspicious activity to let us know so that others can be warned.

## Street Coordinators

Our network of street coordinators covers some 32 streets in the town. Not every street is covered and we are currently looking for more coordinators. All new coordinators receive a briefing and a pack to help them get started. Each coordinator is registered with Neighbourhood Watch Scotland to receive information by email about scams, safety issues, local crime etc. and is responsible for passing on relevant information to their members, mostly by email but for those members not on email, relevant items are passed on by phone, note through the letterbox or face to face, depending on circumstances. In addition, our Secretary issues local alerts to coordinators to pass on to their members.

We encourage residents who have email, to register with Neighbourhood Watch Scotland to receive alerts directly.

## Sub-committee

We have a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer plus 2 other coordinators, who form a sub-committee to run the local arrangements. Under normal circumstances, we have a gathering of coordinators twice a year to share information and plans.

## Local Collaboration

In addition to ongoing support from local publications and Heartland FM, we work with the local Police, and a local Councillor and have had financial support from local organisations e.g. to purchase new signs (see photo below).

There has been a Neighbourhood Watch in Pitlochry going back some 30 years. We hope that our activities help keep the people of Pitlochry safe from scammers and bogus workers and that information and alerts are shared as widely as possible.



Photo showing one of our new Neighbourhood Watch signs, erected in summer '17, thanks to donations from Andie Millar Trust, Enchanted Forest and Rotary Club of Pitlochry.

# Concern around enforced inactivity leading to increase in falls incidence



At RoSPA Scotland, we are concerned about the impact that many months of enforced lockdown will have on the older members of our society. Lack of activity will have inevitably led to muscle weakening and deconditioning, which are contributory factors to someone in later life having a fall – or suffering more severe consequences due to that fall.

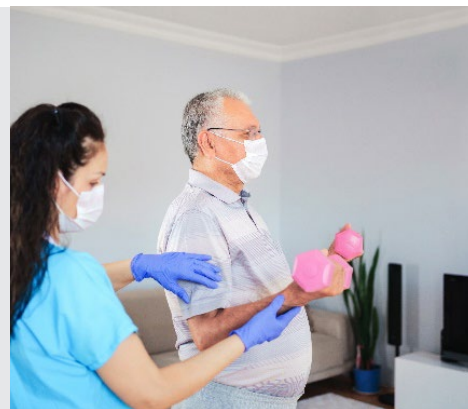
The effects on the person themselves can range from having the minor inconvenience of a bruise through to more severe consequences of having broken bones and even developing a lack of confidence, reduced mobility and a fear of falling again. This will also have an immense effect on millions of people and our NHS as the repercussions are felt. The COVID-19 shielding policy was aimed at over-70s but we know that the older you are, the more activity you need to keep you on your feet. To keep millions of our most vulnerable citizens safe from contracting the virus, they were told to stay at home but unless they were already being seen by health or social care, they weren't given any motivation to maintain—or indeed increase fitness—while at home. We know that falls

are already a very significant cause of hospital admissions and fatality in the over-65s. The most recent data published by Public Health Scotland shows that 83 of those aged 65-74, and 878 of those aged 75+, died as result of a fall in 2019/20. In the same period, 5822 65-74-year olds and an alarmingly high 17,772 people over the age of 75 were admitted to hospital because of a fall. RoSPA predicts that the COVID-19 pandemic will be followed by a deconditioning pandemic, and a reconditioning programme needs to be implemented to support and facilitate a significant increase in physical, cognitive, and emotional activity particularly among older people living alone.

There are many things you can do to help yourself - or a family member or friend who is in later life – to reduce the risk of falls.

If you visit RoSPA's website you will find information on how to have conversations about falls prevention with someone you know about how they can prevent themselves from falling.

If you are an older person, the website includes easy-to-follow videos and pictures showing simple exercises to boost your own strength and balance. It also includes a series of checklists covering other home safety issues.



[www.rospace.com](http://www.rospace.com)





# Upgrading of doors and windows

**Secured by Design (SBD)** is the official police security initiative, owned by the UK Police Service and supported by the Home Office. Since being set up in 1989 SBD have built up a wealth of experience promoting crime prevention and security, constantly adapting the advice to keep pace with changing patterns of criminal behaviour.

**Kenny McHugh, National SBD Manager, looks at what to look for when you are upgrading your doors and windows to ensure you keep your home safe.**

When it comes to the ten principles of crime prevention the very first one is 'target hardening the home', which focuses on the traditional crime prevention approach of locks and bolts and fitting better doors and windows, thus making it harder for an offender to gain access.

Interviews that have been conducted with criminals suggest that they take account of security measures when deciding on a property to burgle. The 2018 study 'Burglars take on crime prevention through environmental design' consisted of interviews with 22 prolific burglars who were asked to look at 16 images of residential housing and to describe what would attract them to specific houses when selecting targets for burglary. The images were taken in a variety of locations and consisted of a mix of old and new properties, from private and social housing. In the interviews, all offenders made reference to quality of physical security being a primary determinant in deciding whether to burgle a property.

Other research, such as that cited in The Economic Journal in 2011, found that when legislation in The Netherlands enforced the use of 'burglar proof' doors and windows in all newly built homes from 1999 onwards, the burglary rate in newly-built homes reduced by 26%.

So it is clear that upgrading of doors and windows is a very worthwhile investment - but where do you find advice around the most appropriate doors and windows to use, given the wide range of security standards throughout the world?

## KNOWING THAT A PRODUCT IS FIT FOR PURPOSE IS CRITICAL.

This is where Secured by Design (SBD) comes in. SBD is the official police security initiative for the UK and have built up a wealth of expertise in this area over the past 30 years.

SBD operates an accreditation scheme on behalf of the UK Police Service for products or services that have met recognised security standards. The SBD focus is on the critical factors that combine to deliver a product's performance - design, use, quality control and the ability to deter or prevent crime - and these products or services are known as being of a 'Police Preferred Specification'.

Police Preferred Specification ensures that products have been independently tested to a relevant security standard and fully certified by an independent third-party, United Kingdom Accreditation Service

(UKAS) certification body, or tested and certified by an approved body such as Sold Secure or Thatcham. In addition Police Preferred Specification requires regular re-testing and annual inspection of the manufacturing facility to ensure quality and performance are maintained (by a UKAS body). This provides assurance that products have been produced under a controlled manufacturing environment in accordance with the specifier's aims and minimises misrepresentation of the products by unscrupulous manufacturers/suppliers.

Much research has been undertaken to look at the effectiveness of doors and windows which have achieved SBD's Police Preferred Specification. Between 2003 and 2008, 39000 Glasgow Housing Authority homes received SBD doors and 11000 homes received SBD windows. Of these, almost 8000 homes received both doors and windows. An evaluation of the impact of these changes found that total housebreaking crime decreased by 26%, attempted housebreaking by 59% and theft by housebreaking decreased by 18%.

You should therefore look to use SBD accredited products when looking to upgrade doors and windows, as SBD have undertaken the due diligence on these products on behalf of the Police Service. The SBD website [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com) lists all of the companies that have achieved the rigorous Police Preferred Specification standard for their products.



# Annual Progress Report

As part of our governance requirements we report back to the Scottish Government on a regular basis but importantly submit an end of year progress and financial report for the previous financial year. Our latest report covers the period 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021. Key performance updates are provided in alignment with the relevant work streams and outcomes contained within the NWS 2018-2021 Strategic Business Plan.



Our progress remains set against two key principles:

**“Your Watch Your Way”** and **“Getting the right information to the right people at the right time”** which provides a flexible approach to Neighbourhood Watch at a community level and focuses on building community resilience.

Here are a few of the highlights from the report :



## **1,954 COMMUNITY WATCH GROUPS**

There are currently 26,188 direct individuals and 1,954 Community Watch Groups registered on the Neighbourhood ALERT system across Scotland.

This is a 12% increase in the last year and 36% increase since April 2019.



## **14 SCOTTISH PARTNERSHIP AGAINST RURAL CRIME PARTNERSHIPS ESTABLISHED**

A key focus of work carried out over the period was through the Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC). Rural Watch Scotland is a key component of this work in the development of local Rural Crime Partnerships as indeed is the ALERT platform for localised messaging to our communities via these partnerships. There are now 14 local partnerships established across Scotland.



## **1,194 INDIVIDUAL ALERTS SENT ACROSS SCOTLAND**

73 local police and partner administrators plus the NWS staff have sent out 1194 individual ALERTS across Scotland during the period covered equating to 3.6 M individual emails to recipients. Based on average propagation rates this equates a reach of 64M people.

These ALERTS related to issues of safety, crime and resilience.

Many of these ALERTS were COVID related and allowed both national and localised information to be sent direct to communities. This included information on volunteering, accessing foodbanks, financial support, local healthcare provision changes etc and COVID related scams.



## **44 SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS A MONTH**

NWS are sending out an average of 24 posts per month on Twitter (295 per annum) and re-tweeting posts by partners and an average of 20 posts per month on Facebook (239 per annum).



## **6,723 RURAL WATCH USERS**

A specific area of growth has been within the rural and remote communities with 6723 (26%) of users having registered through the Rural Watch Scotland portal. This has been a 240% growth over the period.

During the period covered we have seen a 5% increase in overall NW membership and an additional 91 new formal schemes established. All registered community group co-ordinators / administrators have declared their combined community reach to be 217,745 households, a 10.4% increase over the period.

Using virtual technology NWS staff have maintained contact with all key partners, partnership groups and communities where available.

We have recorded a total of 20,484 users to our website over the period. 20,426 were new users. Traffic ranged from 1239 – 2529 per month.



# Communications Review

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland are currently undergoing a Communications review. The review is looking over all our social media channels and website to ensure it is as up to date as possible and information within is useful as well as being user friendly.



NWS have recruited **new Board members**, two thankfully with a Communications background. We are using this to our advantage and have created a small Communications sub group. Over the coming months we hope you will begin to see benefits and changes to content over all our social media platforms and website. The group are currently looking at member benefits and will produce a document with clear information to help Watch Coordinators, new and old, deliver clear advice on Neighbourhood Watch to anyone in their neighbourhood that is curious. We see Coordinators and Watch members as Ambassadors of Neighbourhood Watch Scotland and would like to make it easy for them to provide further information and advice when being asked "What are the benefits of setting up a Neighbourhood Watch?" We would love to see more Watches set up over the coming year.

In time the group will create a booklet covering a wide range of detail on Neighbourhood Watch". This will cover everything from "why set up a Watch" to "what does Neighbourhood Watch do". This will hopefully empower advocates, members and partners to discuss Neighbourhood Watch and have a clear understanding of what we do.

**Keep an eye on our website over the coming months** and you will see huge changes. Each webpage will be tidied up to ensure it is providing the correct, precise information. Less pages to navigate through making them more streamlined for visitors to find what they are looking for much quicker.

Our **YouTube channel** will be used for insightful video clips and interviews with partners focusing on their choice of topic to ensure communities have relevant trustworthy advice on a range of topics.

**FaceBook** and **Twitter** posts continue to focus on a wide range of topics covering everything that effects communities and how individuals can keep themselves safe.

## **Why not join us on our various Social Media channels if you haven't already?**

You may have joined the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland Cyber Security Basics webinar we held as part of Cyber Scotland Week. Police Scotland delivered the webinar on our behalf to over 240 attendees. Due to the number of questions asked during the event and afterwards, as well as the feedback and popularity, Police Scotland are looking to deliver further webinars on our behalf, focussing on the one topic at a time.

Please check out our website and social media platforms for information over the coming weeks.



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# CALL BLOCKING

For many of us nuisance calls are an irritating and annoying interruption to our daily lives. But for some people they can also cause anxiety and distress with wide ranging effect on a person's quality of life. If you're sick of cold callers interrupting your day, then you may be tempted to use a technological solution to limit this unwanted annoyance. There are a number of different options available to you.

## Blocking calls using your home phone provider

Most of the major landline phone providers now offer a free service to reduce the number of nuisance calls that you receive such as BT's Call Protect, Sky Talk Shield and Talk Talk's CallSafe. Virgin Media doesn't have anything as advanced however can provide a limited anonymous caller-rejection feature, which only blocks calls from withheld numbers for a monthly charge.

## Blocking calls using your home phone

Increasing numbers of home phones now come with some call blocking technology, although these range in sophistication. The cheapest call blocking phones often will only block specific numbers. This can be of limited value. A more useful form of blocking lets you block numbers from a specific range, for example all calls beginning 08, or calls by type, such as all calls from withheld or international numbers. But while effective, this can be quite blunt and could easily block a call from your bank or hospital if they withhold their

number. Some of the most advanced home phones use a virtual secretary to screen your calls (in the same way as Sky Talk Shield and TalkTalk's CallSafe). It's worth noting that call blocking phones and standalone devices will only work if you have caller ID.

## Blocking calls with a standalone device

If you don't want to replace your home phone and your provider can't block the nuisance calls you receive, then another option is to buy a separate call blocker and plug it in to your existing device.

These usually work in the same way as the call blockers built into phones, in that they have a 'black list' of numbers or number types, and stop any incoming calls from them. But the TrueCall call blockers are a little different, using the same technology licensed to some BT phones and embraced by Sky and TalkTalk, to screen out unwanted callers.

## Blocking calls on your smartphone

All modern smartphones let you block specific callers. If you have an Android or iPhone handset you can add numbers to a blocked list, reject unknown callers altogether or set a 'do not disturb' mode that only allows calls from certain numbers. Smartphone owners are not limited to the pre-installed call blocking options available through their Android and iPhone they can download third-party apps that offer far greater call blocking options.

## Report Nuisance Calls/Text Messages/ Email

### • Nuisance Calls

Your phone operator.

### • OFCOM (Silent /abandoned calls)

[www.ofcom.org.uk/complaints](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/complaints)

### • ICO

[ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/nuisance-calls](http://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/nuisance-calls)

### • Text Message

Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to **7726**.

### • Email

If you have received an email which you're not quite sure about, please forward the email to the NCSC's


Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS): [REPORT@PHISHING.GOV.UK](mailto:REPORT@PHISHING.GOV.UK)

**If you have been the victim of a fraud or scam you should report it to Police Scotland in person at a police station or Tel 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)**

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