Derbyshire Constabulary

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH POLICY

POLICY REFERENCE 07/177

This policy is suitable for Public Disclosure

Owner of Doc: Head of Department, Community Safety.
Date Approved: April 2002
Last Review Date: April 2013
Next Review due: April 2015
# INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heading</th>
<th>Page No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Policy Identification Page</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Legislative Compliance</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Policy Statement</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Procedures</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Monitoring and Review</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Appeals</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Appendices</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Policy Identification Page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Policy title:</strong></th>
<th>Neighbourhood Watch Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registry Reference number:</strong></td>
<td>07/177</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy implementation date:</strong></td>
<td>April 2002</td>
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<td><strong>Department / Division responsible:</strong></td>
<td>Community Safety</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy owner:</strong></td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Last reviewed by:</strong></td>
<td>Kate Bowyer, Partnership Communications Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date last reviewed:</strong></td>
<td>April 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impacts on other policies / guidance / documents (list):</strong></td>
<td>None.</td>
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Security Classification: NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Disclosable under FOI Act: YES

Policy to be published on Intranet YES
Policy to be published on Force Website YES
Policy disclosable to public via FOI request YES
2. Legislative Compliance

This document has been drafted to comply with the principles of the Human Rights Act. Proportionality has been identified as the key to Human Rights compliance, this means striking a fair balance between the rights of the individual and those of the rest of the community. There must be a reasonable relationship between the aim to be achieved and the means used.

Equality and Diversity issues have also been considered to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and meet our legal obligation in relation to the equality duty. In addition, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Health and Safety Issues have been considered. Adherence to this policy or procedure will therefore ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and internal policies.

3. Introduction

It is recognised that Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) are identified as playing an increasingly important role in keeping communities safe. As such Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Community Safety Partnerships should seek to engage with Neighbourhood Watch and include them in local problem solving.

Neighbourhood Watch schemes are fundamentally 'community led' whereby local people together form a scheme with an appointed co-ordinator. The co-ordinator will maintain contacts between their members and the local Safer Neighbourhood Team, Community Safety Partners and other key community contacts such as local businesses in order to tackle crime, disorder and anti social behaviour. Derbyshire Constabulary Community Safety Department and Safer Neighbourhood Teams and will support the formation and development of Neighbourhood Watch schemes.

This Policy is intended to provide a framework for the development of watch schemes in conjunction with the Derbyshire Neighbourhood Watch Association, the lead organisation representing Watches in the Force area. Their committee is made up of representatives from each Divisional Association/Committee and the Derbyshire Constabulary Community Safety Department.

The Policy framework supports the aims of the Derbyshire Constabulary by seeking to:

- Increase confidence and reduce the fear of crime
- Reduce crime through Safer Neighbourhood based community problem solving
- Increase community engagement and satisfaction

This Policy also incorporates direction from the National Neighbourhood and Home Watch Association (NHWN), which represents all Home Watch & Neighbourhood Watch members across England & Wales. It is the body which engages with the Home Office and other parties on the National Strategy Group for Watch issues, at the strategic level.

It is important to expand the network and number of schemes in the Force area but also develop NHW participation and visibility locally in line with the NHWN vision, mission and values:
NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

- Supporting and developing the grassroots in keeping with their needs;
- Expanding the inclusivity of Neighbourhood and Home Watch;
- Building the profile and influence of Neighbourhood and Home Watch;
- Establishing a robust, efficient and effective structure for the network; and
- Increasing the network's financial sustainability.

The Force Community Safety Department will be responsible for the development, monitoring and evaluation of policy with regard to Neighbourhood Watch and will support and co-ordinate County wide initiatives through the Derbyshire Neighbourhood Watch Association Trust.

A Community Safety Inspector on each of the three territorial divisions will have responsibility for the co-ordination and development of Neighbourhood Watch schemes in their areas, in co-operation with the local section support group. Each Section Inspector will have the responsibility for further development of Neighbourhood Watch in their areas. The SNT’s should aim to develop NHW involvement in SNT led problem solving meetings.

In order for NHW to be successful, there must be an effective communications network. Derbyshire Constabulary will facilitate effective communication by linking with the Divisional Associations and Derbyshire NHW Association Trust.

4. Policy Statement

Derbyshire Constabulary fully supports and embraces the principle of active citizenship through participation in watch scheme activities.

Derbyshire Constabulary will not be prescriptive as to how a Neighbourhood Watch scheme is structured or operates. It is recognised that the Neighbourhood Watch movement is made up of volunteers concerned about their communities, and that these volunteers will organise their scheme to meet the needs of their local community.

Derbyshire Constabulary will only be able to maintain communication links and the provision of support to Neighbourhood Watch operations and activities within the structure outlined above. In order for a new scheme to receive such support, there will be a requirement for that scheme to affiliate with the Divisional Association or local section support group at no financial cost to that scheme.

The support provided by Derbyshire Constabulary is at no cost to Neighbourhood Watch Associations/support groups and to that end it is recommended that individual schemes will not have to pay an annual subscription to be part of a support association/group and, to have access to information. To this end associations/groups will be encouraged to look at other funding opportunities. The Constabulary will support Divisional Associations where possible regarding help with the running of their administrative offices. For example: stationery, telephone, postage etc. The Constabulary will not be responsible for any loss/damage to properties held by any Neighbourhood Watch Group in police premises.

Derbyshire Constabulary will not provide NHW personnel with access to Force information systems, equipment or infrastructure.
5. Procedures

Formation of New Schemes

Requests for new schemes usually come direct to the Beat Officer/PCSO for that area. However in certain areas, Community Safety Partnerships as well as Neighbourhood Watch Associations also have an interest in the promotion of new schemes. It is advisable to make contact with the local Neighbourhood Watch Association and Community Safety partnerships to ascertain what level of support and assistance can be offered. This will ensure that the new scheme is aware of the support network available to them. It is important that the Safer Neighbourhood supervisor is aware of any new scheme launched on their areas.

The Officer and the Divisional Association or local support group representative should do all that is possible to assist local residents in the formation of a scheme, including the identification of appropriate co-ordinators to properly administer the scheme. With the formation of larger schemes, it is recommended that one co-ordinator is appointed for every 20 houses, but it is recognised that the size and extent of the scheme is very much governed by local factors.

Derbyshire Constabulary is committed to providing policing services that meet the differing needs of the diverse communities we serve. We encourage Neighbourhood Watch to adopt a similar approach to ensure that all members of the community have the same opportunity to tackle crime and disorder and make Derbyshire an even safer place to live, work and visit. Special efforts should be made to form schemes in high crime areas and to encourage membership that is inclusive and representative of the community, for example the inclusion of young people and Black, Minority Ethnic (BME communities). To this end schemes should consider various things such as suitable access to premises with regard to meetings.

Schemes should be encouraged to have clear aims to deliver locally and where appropriate, take part in SNT led problem solving. The level of support from the Constabulary and the Neighbourhood Watch Association should be made clear prior to the launch meeting.

All new schemes will be required to affiliate to their local section group/or divisional group as appropriate. The Force Community Safety Department will continually look at funding opportunities to assist new Neighbourhood Watch schemes with their running costs, provision of signs etc.

Where local section support groups exists, they will be encouraged to work in partnership and link with their Divisional Association. They should be aware of the aims and objectives of that Association and agree to support any work or crime reduction initiatives that Association may wish to deliver in partnership with the local police.

Where there is disagreement or conflict within local groups, an appropriate Derbyshire Neighbourhood Watch representative in consultation with the Divisional Group for that area will be asked to mediate on the first instance. Where a conflict cannot be resolved, Constabulary mediation will be considered if appropriate.

Where there is disagreement or conflict between a NHW group and an individual officer or a NHW group and the Force the police complaints procedure will be followed.
Closure of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes

Should it be considered necessary to formally close an inactive scheme, this should only be done after all efforts to revive the scheme have been made, and all residents covered by the scheme have been informed of the closure. The following should be informed of any closures:

- The Local Association or Section Support Group
- The Safer Neighbourhood Sergeant
- The Divisional Community Information Officer

Communication and Sharing of Information

The Force will continue to develop ‘Derbyshire Alert’ the Community Messaging Service in line with user needs. Service optimisation and alternative media for message delivery will be continuously explored and developed by the system owners (Derbyshire Constabulary and VisaV) as part of their business plans.

The sharing of information must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Schemes and other voluntary groups receive information from the force in the following ways:

- Derbyshire Alert via designated Derbyshire Community Information Officers.
- SNT problem solving meetings including virtual surgeries.
- Derbyshire Constabulary website.

Derbyshire Constabulary will not provide NHW personnel with access to Force information systems, equipment or infrastructure.

Please refer to guidance attached on information sharing at Appendix 1 (Police) and Appendix 2 (Neighbourhood Watch).

Neighbourhood Watch Scheme Registration

A record of NHW area co-ordinators will be kept and managed by the Divisional Neighbourhood Watch Association with the support of the Divisional Community Information Officers. Upon the launch of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, Form 2920 should be completed by the officer concerned and copied to:

- The Divisional Community Information Officer
- The Divisional Association/local section group for their area
- The Partnership Communication Manager

No scheme will be recognised until Form 2920 has been completed and all copies received by the above.

Training for Co-ordinators

It is recognised that a corporate training package will facilitate and develop Neighbourhood Watch Schemes. The Learning and Development and Community Safety Departments will continue to invest in this programme for the benefit of the Co-ordinator and schemes. This involves training SNT Officers to deliver a training package locally.
6. Monitoring and Review

The Head of Department, Community Safety is responsible for monitoring the implementation and impact of this policy.

Data is monitored for disproportionate impact on minority groups, discussed at performance meetings and shared with partner agencies and community forums.

The policy will be reviewed bi-annually and the outcome of monitoring processes will inform this review.

7. Appeals Process

If a member of staff has an issue with the application of this policy, they should raise this in the first instance with their line manager. Staff may have recourse to the Dispute Resolution Procedure.

Members of the Public who take issue with the application of this policy have recourse to the Police Complaints System.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Information Sharing Guidance (Police)
Appendix 2 – Information Sharing Guidance (Neighbourhood Watch)
## Data Protection Guidance for Neighbourhood/Home Watch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Police</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What is Data Protection?</strong></td>
<td>Much information is kept by organisations about individuals on computer systems; data protection provides safeguards about how this is used. Ask the Data Protection Compliance Unit for further information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If I keep details of persons involved with Neighbourhood/Home Watch, what should I do to comply with data protection safeguards?</strong></td>
<td>Check Force Policy. If you use a computer, contact the Data Protection Compliance Unit who will advise you. Before you collect data, you should be clear about why you want it. For example, the police may want to keep Neighbourhood Watch information to assist in the prevention and detection of crime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Can you give me advice on this?</strong></td>
<td>Yes, there are three important things to remember: - 1. Tell individuals what you may do with their details. 2. Make sure you have their consent to do this. 3. Only collect the information you need.</td>
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<td><strong>Can I share this information?</strong></td>
<td>Yes, first consider why you want to share this information and what it will achieve. As part of a police investigation, you may need to identify a victim, or their address, to householders and a co-ordinator as necessary to assist in the prevention or detection of crime. For example, to identify potential witnesses and prevent further offences. You may give contact details of co-ordinators to households within the boundaries of their scheme in accordance with local arrangements. Any other disclosures check local policy or speak to the Data Protection Compliance Unit.</td>
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<td><strong>What crime information will the police disclose?</strong></td>
<td>The police may disclose details of crime patterns and trends. They may also give descriptions of suspects or vehicle registration numbers for the prevention or detection of crime. “Between 9pm Sat 5th and 10am Sun 6th January, a series of burglaries from garden sheds took place on Main Road of the Field Estate. Garden tools where stolen”. “A white Force Escort A123BCD was seen parked outside village church prior to report of burglary. Details of sightings to Stenson Police Station”. “Bogus telephone engineer, male, white 5’9”, short black hair, moustache, aged 40-45, reported in Tipton area May/June”. Details will be withheld where the information is sensitive, or where it is not in the public interest to disclose.</td>
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<td><strong>Can crime prevention information be passed to Watch members?</strong></td>
<td>Crime prevention information is available from the police and other organisations. However, if you wish to enable Watch members to receive such information, you should first have their consent to release their names and addresses to other agencies or organisations.</td>
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## Data Protection Guidance for Neighbourhood/Home Watch

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<td><strong>Local Authority/Community Safety Partnerships/Neighbourhood Watch Associations</strong></td>
<td><strong>What is Data Protection?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Much information is kept by organisations about individuals on computer systems; data protection provides safeguards about how this is used. (Further information is available from the Information Commissioner’s Office).&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>If I keep details of persons involved with Neighbourhood/Home Watch, What should I do to comply with data protection safeguards?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Check if Data Protection notification is required – the Information Commissioner’s website has full details (<a href="http://www.ico.gov.uk">www.ico.gov.uk</a>). If you are a NW organisation refer to the ‘Notification Handbook’ available from the Information Commissioner’s Office. Before you collect any data, you should be clear about what you want it for. For example, you may want to keep NW information to assist in the objectives of the charity or voluntary organisation.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Can you give me advice on this?</strong> Yes, there are three important things to remember:&lt;br&gt;1. Tell individuals what you may do with their details.&lt;br&gt;2. Make sure you have their consent to do this.&lt;br&gt;3. Only collect the information you need.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Can I share this information?</strong> You may share information, but make sure that individuals know what is to be done with their personal information, you may need their consent. Even if you do not hold details of your members on computer – you should not provide their details to other organisations without their knowledge and consent.&lt;br&gt;Either you have had to notify the Information Commissioner, you can only share it with anyone listed on the Register entry provided it is for the specified purpose.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Can crime prevention information be passed to Watch members?</strong> Crime Prevention information is available from the police and other organisations. If you wish to enable members of your scheme to receive such information, you should first have their consent to release their names and addresses to that organisation. Note: - Where Neighbourhood/Home Watch Co-ordinators/members participate in a data sharing system and have the ability to control, both the content and use of the personal data, then the association involved must notify the details to the Information Commissioner.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Crime Information:</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>What crime information will the police disclose?</strong> The police may disclose details of crime patterns and trends. They may also give descriptions of suspects or vehicle registration numbers for the prevention or detection of crime. For example:&lt;br&gt;“Between 9pm Sat 5th and 10am Sun 6th January, a series of burglaries from garden sheds took place on Main Road of the Field Estate. Garden tools where stolen”.&lt;br&gt;“A white Force Escort A123BCD was seen parked outside village church prior to report of burglary. Details of sightings to Stenson Police Station”.&lt;br&gt;“Bogus telephone engineer, male, white 5’9’, short black hair, moustache, aged 40-45, reported in Tipton area May/June”.&lt;br&gt;The police may need to supply details which identify a victim or their property to householders in the vicinity or to a co-ordinator in order to assist in the prevention or detection of crime. For example, to identify any potential witnesses. This specific information about individuals must only be passed to persons who may be able to assist the police with their enquiries.&lt;br&gt;Details will be withheld where the information is sensitive, or where it is not in the public interest to disclose.</td>
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