

**Minutes of the Sixth Annual General Meeting
of the Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches (WAN)
held on Thursday 17th July 2014 at The Annexe, Church of the Good Shepherd,
Pyrford, Woking GU22 8SP**

Present: Chairman: Mr Tony Kremer
Membership Secretary: Mr Martin Stilwell
General Secretary: Mr. Geoffrey Johnson
Committee Member: Mr Alan Taylor
Committee Member: Mrs Angela Williams
Committee Member: Mrs June Weaver
and 28 members of the Association

Guests: Mark Saunders: Crime Reduction Advisor Western Division Surrey Police
Tony Fielding Guildford Area Neighbourhood Watch and Surrey
Neighbourhood Watch Association

1. Welcome.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked those who had organised the evening and everyone for their attendance.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Approximately 40 apologies had been received from members including the Treasurer Mrs Fui Ling Bolton.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on 8th July 2013.

Acceptance of the minutes of the above meeting, copies of which had previously been circulated, was proposed by June Weaver, seconded by Maureen Thomas and accepted.

4. Chairman's Report.

Mr. Kremer thanked the Committee, the Area Coordinators and the general membership for their support during the year. He gave special mention to Fui Ling Bolton, the Association's founder membership secretary, who has had to relinquish that post due to family caring responsibilities. He also thanked Martin Stilwell for taking on this role in addition to those of IT and webmaster. He also thanked Paul Salt who was not seeking re-election to the Committee.

He appreciated the continuing support of the membership & was aware that they often encountered apathy & complacency from fellow residents. The WAN membership of over 280 coordinators represented around 10,000 residents.

As there were vacancies for Committee members he asked members present to consider joining. In his review of the year, the Chairman felt he was unable to repeat last year's positive message. This was primarily due to the effects of the deepening financial constraints imposed on the Police. He had hoped that the election of the Police & Crime Commissioner & the appointment of Deputy Jeff Harris would result in neighbourhood policing being more accountable to the ones being policed. However, despite support from the PCC's office, budget cuts have resulted in a reduction of front line Police support for (non-essential) activities including Neighbourhood Watch. This picture is also reflected at County level. Tony Kremer was appointed Deputy Chair of Surrey Neighbourhood Watch Association last year and reported that across the County, little had changed. It does however provide a forum to meet Jeff Harris who is always encouraging & supportive.

Mr Kremer was developing with Surrey NHWA a paper outlining why the Police & Neighbourhood Watch need each other. This would be discussed after the formal AGM. He would have also liked to put together a bid for funding to develop the NHW infrastructure, but now considers this unrealistic.

The Chairman gave an update on the pilot study he mentioned last year which involved a joint approach with Residents' Associations. Modest funding from the PCC's Office has allowed trials in Woking (Horsell) & Reigate & Banstead which were underway. The aim is to jointly recruit new members for Residents' Associations and Neighbourhood Watch, thus increasing the critical mass of NHW in specific areas & enable new Watches to be formed.

Following last year's AGM, quarterly meetings between WAN and Woking Borough Council have been held. Although WAN does not have an official role in the Safer Woking Partnership, which is the framework for keeping the neighbourhoods safe, discussions are ongoing as to how WAN can become involved.

It is recognised that the Police 101 phone line is often unresponsive. Annually Woking Police receive 30000 calls, 75% of which are via the 101 line. Staff cutbacks often result in these calls being unanswered, and at Mr Kremer's suggestion Woking BC are considering providing an alternative phone number for reporting antisocial behaviour etc.

During the year Surrey NHWA had conducted a survey in which all co-ordinators were invited to participate. The WAN Committee had analysed the Woking responses, understanding the messages & had communicated them to Insp. Davies. They were also discussed at the WAN Spring Co-ordinators' meeting & reported in our newsletter.

One clear outcome from the survey & the meeting was a desire for greater contact with the Neighbourhood Police Inspector Davies initially agreed that each co-ordinator be contacted either by phone or face to face, but with pressure on staff this now seems less certain.

Mr Kremer saw the following as potential future developments for NHW:

- Closer relationship with Residents Associations.

- Enhanced role for specific co-ordinators & closer relationship with the Police & the Council, although legal constraints mean this is unlikely.

5. Treasurer's Report.

In Mrs. Bolton's absence the Chairman presented the accounts for the year to the end of March 2014, copies of which had been circulated to members.

The accounts had been independently examined. Whilst total expenditure had further reduced to £94, income had also reduced to £99. This had the modest effect of increasing the Association's Balance Sheet to £1123.

The Association did not receive a grant from the Woking Safer Partnership Fund this year leaving donations as the principal source of income. These were mainly through Easyfundraising.org.uk, an internet purchasing route. This rebates a small percentage of members' internet purchases back to the Association. The identity of the purchaser is not revealed.

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by June Weaver and seconded by Alan Taylor. The accounts were duly accepted.

6. Election of Officers.

The following members current committee:

Mr Tony Kremer : Chairman

Mrs Fui Ling Bolton : Treasurer

Mr Martin Stilwell : Membership Secretary
Mr Alan Taylor
Mrs June Weaver
Mrs Angela Williams
Mr Geoffrey Johnson: General Secretary

were offering themselves for re-election .

In the absence of any additional nominations having been received by the General Secretary prior to the Meeting or from the members present, the election of all of the above names was proposed by Derek Bartholomew and seconded by Geoff Lane.

All the above officers were duly elected.

Mr Mark Wilson had also agreed to continue as Independent Examiner. His re-appointment was proposed by Martin Stilwell and seconded by June Weaver. He was duly re-appointed.

7. Area Co-ordinators.

The Chairman appealed for members to act as Area Co-ordinators for several of the Woking Police areas including St Johns, Hook Heath, Knaphill, Mayford and Brookwood.

The role involves acting as the main WAN contact point for the area, developing relationships with the Neighbourhood Police and the WAN members.

8. Any Other Business.

Police Panels. Concern was raised from the floor that Neighbourhood Police Teams were under pressure to reduce the frequency or eliminate them altogether. The Chairman was asked to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner with a strong recommendation that Panels were continued on a quarterly basis. If necessary two adjoining areas could have a joint meeting.

Residents Associations. A member felt that differing interests could inhibit closer relations

The Chairman closed the formal AGM.

9. Crime Summits.

WAN had obtained from the office of the Police & Crime Commissioner a summary of ideas raised at the March meeting in Woking. These primarily concerned social issues, alcohol & drugs.

However, under the heading Burglary & Crime there was a clear wish to encourage & even broaden the role of NHW & for more communication with & quality information from the Police.

10. Exploring the Web.

Martin Stilwell gave a live demonstration on how to access useful and interesting information on various websites. These included:

- Surrey Police
 - Woking Police
 - Woking Police – Facebook
 - Woking Police – Twitter
 - Ourwatch
 - Police.uk

The demonstration has been condensed into a set of slides and loaded onto the WAN website.
<http://www.windowonwoking.org.uk/sites/wan/Newsletter/usefulwebsites.pdf>

11. Surrey Police – Community Engagement System.

Resulting from Surrey & Sussex Police merging their IT systems by which Surrey Police send messages to Co-ordinators is changing, with the replacement later this year of Active Citizens' System (ACS) with Community Engagement System (CES) Phase 1.

Based upon information passed to the Chairman by the Deputy PCC it would appear that a vital quality will no longer be available, namely the identification of the role of the individual. In other words messages will no longer be able to be targeted at Co-ordinators (this being a role).

Final details were not available, but Surrey NHTA will continue to monitor the situation.

This will not affect WAN as we have our own distribution list, but it is not clear how for example Crime Alerts will be distributed under CES.

12. Surrey Police and Neighbourhood Watch - Why we need each other

The Chairman circulated a draft version of a document being prepared at Surrey NHTA Association level which sought to define more clearly how each Borough NHTA related to their local Neighbourhood Police Team. (See below.)

This indicated which activities are able to carry out without Police input, but equally sought to make clear where Police input is needed.

Most importantly it emphasized the benefits the NHTA movement can make to the work of the Police, even though these opportunities are not used very often. How can we be the eyes and ears within the community if we don't have more detail about what we are watching out for?

13. Closure of Meeting.

Mr Kremer thanked the members for their attendance and contributions. The meeting was closed at 9.30pm.