

Woking Association of Neighbourhood Watches (WAN)

AGM

Thursday 16th June 2022, 7:30pm

Minutes

Martin Stilwell (MS)	Chair
Geoffrey Johnson	Treasurer and secretary
Stephen Dew	Administrator
Alan Taylor	Member
Marc Alderman	Member

MS announced the sad news that Tony Kremer had died peacefully at Woking Sam Beare Hospice the previous night. He had been ill for a long time. Tony was one of the founders of WAN and had been active in a number of organisations in Woking. Our thoughts are with Sandy and his family.

1 Apologies?

Andrew Brook, Ann Smith, Bill Pugh, Chris Rowsell, Eileen Nicholson, Gary Elson, Jeremy Irving, Lynn Cozens, Malcolm Pritchard, Mandy Fergusson, Mike Cussans, Nigel Davies, Paula Eddington, Rebecca Denby, Steve Savilar, Tony Trangmar

2 Chair's report

Being the AGM I need to cover what's been going on over the **past 12 months**. Due to coming out of Covid lockdown there has been little physical activity in NhW. This is the pattern across the whole of the UK. But a lot of work has been going on behind the scenes, especially in Surrey. The main event has been the upgrade of the Alert system to what is universally known as "v4" (version 4). This upgrade to the Surrey/Sussex data was very late, and we were trying to get a date, when everything suddenly happened one Tuesday afternoon without warning. As with any upgrade of a computer system there were a few glitches, but having been given no notice made things much worse. Many grey hairs later Surrey and Sussex are now fully working with the v4 system and we are trying to get the inevitable "crinkly bits" ironed out. Upgrades in other counties before and since have gone much better, so we seem to have been the unfortunate victims of a botched upgrade plan. The biggest legacy is that the majority of the Police have not been trained in using the new system (their fault, by the way). This is why there was quite a gap in getting Alerts from the Police, and even the Police volunteers (Steve Dew in our case) were not able to send any weekly crime reports out for quite a while. The Police still remain badly trained but have other issues with their IT systems that have put the training down the priority list. The only real effect of the new system on co-ordinators is in how they forward their Alerts on to their 'flock' if they wish to use the "Share" facility. I have produced a guide and will forward this to all co-ords in Surrey in due course.

On the wider front, **NhW is changing**, and Covid and lockdown has considerably accelerated that change. With more people working from home, the reduction in residential burglaries that was already happening became more pronounced. We have made our homes better protected by being more conscious of how to protect our property, and by fitting CCTV cameras, "Ring" type door bells, fitting descent locks – including to sheds - and so on. The result is a massive reduction in residential burglaries (a shed burglary is a 'residential burglary'). What now stresses many of us has moved on to other things. We are now much more concerned about Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). We are also concerned about the biggest crime in the UK (by quite some margin) which is fraud and cybercrime. ASB is more a community problem and fraud an individual's problem. Burglary was a "black and white" crime – you were burgled (or an attempt made) or were not. ASB is so much greyer. What some people consider ASB, others may be much more tolerant of. To complicate matters, much ASB is for Woking BC to deal with. This makes the management of ASB harder for everyone, but there is much a local community can do themselves. I keep hearing from co-ords that "nothing much happens in our street", but communities are stressed and individuals are stressed. This means that NhW is becoming

more community-centric and this is the reason why I constantly try to get co-ords to think “community” and be aware of what is happening in their area. The success of the social-media-based cover-Watches in some parts of Woking shows how right that thinking is. We are not all fans of social media, but used well it is a great way to communicate information quickly, and in both directions. Surrey Police have bought into the concept 100%. Woking Beat (facebook and Twitter) is now well used and worth keeping an eye on. On the “individual” front, fraud accounts for 53% of ALL crime in the UK – and that’s just reported crime. Please be vigilant and please take time to read all the Alerts that come from both myself (as chair of Surrey NhW) and the Police/Action Fraud. This information is coordinated in Surrey so that you are not bombarded with advice from all directions, and are made aware of what the latest scams are. The Police are poorly organized to deal with this type crime, and the government admit this, so we need to continue to be vigilant.

One issue that seems to be on the increase in Woking is **litter**. This can be: a) packaging thrown from vehicles as they drive away from a fast food joint (or thrown down as they walk away); b) sweet wrappers dropped on school walking routes by kids whose mums are not aware (or not interested) that the kids are doing it; and c) older kids congregating and leaving piles of rubbish at recreation grounds despite a bin being close by. Item c) has always been there but does seem to be better than it was before or during Covid. Woking BC do have litter-pick patrols in key areas or routes. But that leaves everywhere else. So instead of walking past some discarded litter and whinging about “the kids of today” why not pick it up and dispose of it? You don’t need permission to do this, nor any training. Why not form a litter pick in your community? Woking BC will help with providing “pickers” and rubbish bags and collecting the filled bags. Another option is to join Woking Litter Warriors

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/700573597982197>). Or simply do a litter pick at least once a week along one of your regular walks – ideally do the same route weekly and you’ll find that it will not be long before the litter problem improves noticeably. Woking BC have advice on their web page.

<https://www.woking.gov.uk/environmental-services/environmental-problems/rubbish-and-litter/street-cleaning-and-litter>

Surrey Police are changing, gradually, the model for their local Policing. Local Police teams are required to get more officers on the street and be visible. This can be difficult as they continue to be short of officers. But recent “patrol with an officer” events and “meet the police” meetings in Woking are part of that plan. These ideas are being replicated across Surrey. Some of the changes are subtle, such as instructions to “hang around for 15 mins” after attending an incident rather than rush off in the Police car. That extra time to be used to chat to locals and BE SEEN. Behind the scenes, Surrey Police are doing much more analysis of crimes to improve crime prevention. Better to stop a crime happening in the first place.

In Woking the positive effect of the **“Meet the Police”** was seen in Byfleet when local Councillor Amanda Boote contacted me about mounting issues in the village. We arranged a lunchtime meeting with the Police, and Inspector Moc and 3 officers attended. The meeting was well attended. The Police gave their side of the problems (not inconsiderable) and locals aired their grievances. It was particularly disturbing to hear how the judicial system is currently failing both the Police and the public (more on that in the Police report later in these minutes). A Dispersal Order was put in place on Monday specifically to address ASB issues in the 2 public parks in the village. This is your local Police working for you. The identification and potential resolution of issues in Byfleet, West Byfleet/Pyrford have been considerably enhanced by the excellent social-media coverage in the two areas. An object lesson in how to use social media to the benefit of every interested and honest citizen. There still remains a problem that a co-ordinator may not know a crime has been committed in their patch unless the Police tell them, which they invariably don’t. We need to get that disjoin sorted.

One bit of bad news on the Woking Police front is that we are **losing Inspector Kit Moc**. After losing the excellent Insp Dave Bentley last year due to an unexpected offer of promotion, Insp Moc joined us and was very active in getting the “patrol with an officer” and “Police on the beat” activities. But his appointment was temporary, pending other movements and appointments of officers in Surrey.

Insp Moc has decided not to apply for his own Inspector role on a permanent basis. He will be with us until another inspector is appointed. I will update you all when I know more.

3 AGM matters

3.1 Finances

Woking Assoc of Neighbourhood Watches has not spent anything in the past 12 months.

WOKING ASSOCIATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCHES (WAN)			
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR YEAR TO 31st MARCH 2022			
2020/2021			2021/2022
£			£
	INCOME		
23.92	Donations Received (Note a)		
	Interest Income		
<u>23.92</u>	Total Income		<u>Nil</u>
	less EXPENDITURE		
	AGM Expenses		
	Coordinator Events		
24.54	NhW Signs		
41.76	Web site /IT		
<u>66.30</u>	Total Expenditure (Note b)		<u>Nil</u>
<u>-42.38</u>	SURPLUS / -DEFICIT FOR YEAR		<u>Nil</u>
	CURRENT ASSETS		
	Cash on deposit		
515.76	Cash in current account		515.76
	Cash in hand		
<u>515.76</u>	TOTAL NET WORTH		<u>515.76</u>
	Represented by:		
	ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
558.14	Funds from prior years		558.14
-42.38	Surplus/-Deficit for current year		-42.38
<u>515.76</u>	TOTAL FUNDS		<u>515.76</u>

This is for 2 reasons: 1) Coming out of lockdown reduced the need for meetings etc, and 2) HSBC summarily closed our bank account at the end of last year and sent us a cheque payable to the name of the account they just closed (brilliant!). We were unable to open a new account at the time as no bank was interested in opening a new Treasurer's Account (as they are called) because of backlog of work from Covid. The current situation is that we have asked for the cheque to be re-issued (it will soon time expire) and I am awaiting a call back from Barclays as the first stage of opening a Treasurer's Account with them (our parent organisation, Surrey NhW, bank with Barclays and so this seemed to be the best option). Fingers crossed.

3.2 Committee

Martin Stilwell to remain at chairman

Geoffrey Johnson will stay as treasurer and sec

Steve Dew as administrator (he is also Woking's Police volunteer)

Alan Taylor
 Marc Alderman

We are looking for a new treasurer and a secretary (they can be separate people) as Geoffrey really would like to step down from this role – one that he has performed for some time. Please contact MS on Chair@Wanw.org.uk for more information.

4 Woking Police report

4.1 Welcome T/Sgt Emily Collier

Emily was only appointed a few weeks ago. But has spent 18 years in Surrey Police’s Western Division (Woking is in this division).

Crime	Jan		Feb	
	2021	2022	2021	2022
TNO	432	480	447	519
Serious Acquisitive	51	49	54	38
Violence with injury	43	70	47	62
Serious sexual	14	15	13	11
Criminal damage	41	42	49	37
Domestic burglary	24	13	21	19
Drug offences	16	11	27	14
Fraud and forgery	1	2	2	2
Non-domestic burglary	1	2	4	7
Other criminal offences	22	17	14	19
Violence without injury	167	195	167	234
Robbery	3	4	3	3
Other sexual offences	3	3	7	3
Theft (other than vehicle) & handling stolen goods	67	74	61	92
Vehicle interference and tampering	6	0	2	0
Vehicle crime (excluding interference)	24	32	30	16

Reduction in residential burglaries. Partly down to more people working from home. Small rise in non-domestic burglaries but that was down to metal thefts from a recycling centre. Rise in violence without injury and that was the result of coming out of lockdown. Crime stats show nothing horrendous and that is good.



As to other activities:

Licensing visits – 80 visits completed in last 3 months. Pub Watch scheme in Woking created – successful across Surrey. All pubs in Woking and not just town centre (answer to a question asked later in the meeting: The pubs run the scheme themselves and communicate between themselves and pass info between and banning certain customers from all pubs.)

15 year old youth “crime wave” – this 15 year-old is responsible for large amount of crime in the Woking area, particularly Byfleet, and is continuing his behaviour despite numerous court orders and conditions imposed by court. Was sent to Surrey Heath on a project but is back and continuing his behaviour. Thefts, burglaries, ASB. Lots of Police time spent collecting more evidence and a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) raised on him. He continued. Breached his CBO and was sentenced to court to 12 months Youth Referral Order. Didn’t stop him and he was arrested soon after for theft and assault. 12 month Youth Rehabilitation Order, electronic tag to Aug and night time curfew. Ignored all this and

was arrested and in court on Monday [13th June]. Difficult for Police and courts as nothing is deterring him. It is inevitable that a prison sentence will be needed but rest assured the Police are doing as much as they can. He is offending across Woking but Byfleet and West Byfleet is his main area. Woking Police have been forced to waste a lot of time and resources on him.

Criminal Behaviour Order: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/criminal-behaviour-orders>

Youth Referral Order:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322209/fact-sheet-youth-referral-orders.pdf

Youth Rehabilitation Order: https://consult.justice.gov.uk/sentencing-council/sentencing-youths/user_uploads/youth-rehabilitation-orders.pdf-1

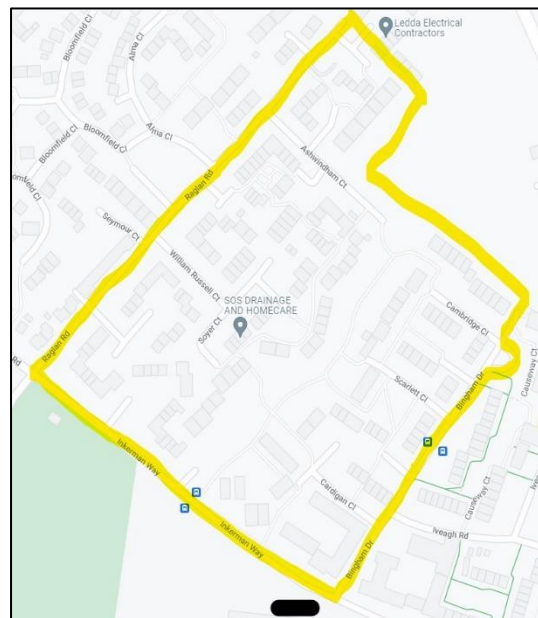
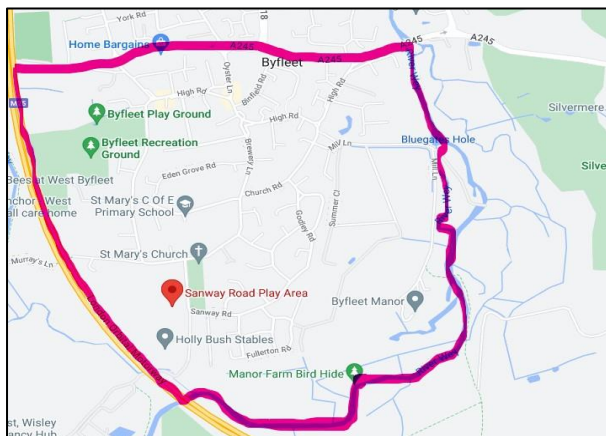
Female, who is huge drain on police and ambulance services, is continuing her behaviour despite court orders to try and deter her. Called 12 times in one day saying she was going to self-harm. Criminal Behaviour Order raised and she was arrested the previous week. Not deterred her and a PC is spending a lot of her time on the case. Very frustrating for the Police.

Canal Watch is ongoing. Patrols have been regularly conducted on the electric bikes (which are fast!) but the cameras have not been installed yet as a number of them were delivered damaged and there are delays getting them replaced.

Fraud. Big problem. A complicated crime and mainly carried out by large criminal gangs. Much instigated from overseas, thus making it harder to control. Campaign in Woking planned for July. Look out for this. Meals-on-wheels will be delivering leaflets and guides on how their customers can protect themselves [MS: what a great idea]. Stalls in town on 23rd July.

Dispersal orders

Byfleet and St Johns Causeway Court/Iveagh Road/Guinness Court/Bingham Drive/Ashwindham Ct.



Dispersal orders allow the Police to move people on and if they refuse, or return, they can be summoned to court and possible £2,500 fine.

Dispersal order: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/notes/division/5/3>

PSPO in Woking Town Centre. Public Space Protection Order. Been really effective. People can be moved on and not allowed back in. If returned, they can be summonsed. Drink can be taken off those committing ASB.

ASB in Knaphill. Sainsburys area. 6 youths responsible. Police worked with local schools. PCSOs and Youth engagement officers now dealing with the children at their home addresses. ASB warning letters. ASB reduced significantly as a result. Patrols continue and Police are prepared for a small upsurge over the summer holidays.

Bike marking scheme. Residential burglaries from sheds resulted in upsurge in bikes being recovered. Bikes have no obvious identity and so this marking system enables the Police to identify owners. Very successful and Police spent 3 hours longer than expected doing the marking. Another session planned for next month. *[MS: takes photos of your bikes, including the number usually stamped under the base of the frame, and save the images somewhere safe.]*

Theft of a £300,000 McLaren from McLaren's premises. A very conspicuous car to steal. Found the car after McLaren's checked cameras footage and other cameras in the area to check the progress of the car. Thief identified and arrested and court case awaiting.

Male arrested on Canal with knives Officer on patrol stopped man and found 2 large knives on him. Well known prolific offender and carrier of weapons. Arrested, charged, and has been in prison for a few months.

Cannabis Factory in Knaphill. Huge amount of cannabis seized and suspect arrested and remanded.

Two arrested for a burglary. A wallet stolen in residential burglary. A credit card was used. CCTV footage enabled Police to identify the suspects. One arrested that afternoon for a number of offences. Second person identified and arrested.

Junior Citizens Annual event to engage Year 6 students and educate them as to safety and avoiding crime, including fraud. Very successful and involves a number of agencies as well as the Police.

Three drugs warrants executed. Cannabis factories in Byfleet. One arrest. Charged with Class A drug supply. Drone used to identify the heat signature emanating from the premises.

4.2 Q&A session with Emily

Q: Are the Police more likely to attend an incident in the PSPO area than elsewhere?

A: Yes. Attendance every day, as it's an area of interest and that's the only way to solve the problem.

Q: PSPO. Also extends to Wheatsheaf Rec. How do we report incident?

A: Report 101 or on-line. Any reaction will depend on time of day and operational requirements. Say that the incident is in the PSPO area.

Q: Where is signage for PSPO?

A: Possibly as it's a temporary order that is renewed after review (1 yr, we believe) there are no signs. I will check about signs.

[MS: Post meeting update. Emily has checked with the PC responsible and over 20 signs have been made and put up around the perimeter of the PSPO area. No further signs will put up.]

Q: PSPO. People committing offences move into Wheatsheaf woodland. Can please move into woodland to arrest?

A: No. This is a downside of a PSPO. Police can make arrests based on normal crime rules, but not under the PSPO.

Q1: Old Avenue area has been targeted with car thefts and distraction thefts.

A: Not personally aware of these issues. Keyless car thefts? Ongoing problem in Surrey with keyless car thefts. Nice cars being stolen. Whole Surrey team working on the problem. Small criminal gang responsible for most thefts. *[MS stated that Police advise buying a simple and cheap steering wheel lock as it would take too long for thieves to remove it and so they would move on to the next keyless car to steal]*

Q2: Old Avenue again. Distraction thefts by east European gang/team, especially in supermarket car parks

A: Not a known problem in Woking but will watch out for it.

Q: Can a photo of the 15 year old be published?

A: Will check the current order to check if this is possible.

5 Close

Martin thanked Emily very much. A number of attendees gave applause [*MS well deserved*]

Next meeting is hoped to be face-to-face and probably Goldwater Lodge.