



# Hertfordshire Neighbourhood Watch Charter

*An agreement between Hertfordshire Constabulary,  
Hertfordshire Police Authority and Hertfordshire  
Neighbourhood Watch*



## Contents

### Page

2. Glossary of terms
3. Purpose of the Charter
4. Police commitments to Neighbourhood Watch at Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership area level
5. Neighbourhood Watch commitments to the Police at Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership area level
6. Police commitments to wider Neighbourhood Watch
7. Wider Neighbourhood Watch commitments to the Police
8. Police commitments to volunteers working in Police stations
9. Volunteers' commitments to the Police
10. Agreement



## Glossary of terms used:

### Area Co-ordinator (ACO):

*Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) organiser of multiple local groups/areas.  
Group from amongst whom the CCO (see below) is elected*

### Best Value Review – Preventing Crime:

*A review in 2002, which recommended, among other things, that the Constabulary should increase support for NHW to regenerate schemes in the county.*

### Community Co-ordinator (CCO):

*A representative of district/borough Neighbourhood Watch schemes; one for each of the 10 district and borough council areas in the county, attending HertsWatch and CDRP meetings.*

### Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP):

*Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, each administrative district and borough within a county is required to have a CDRP. There are ten in Hertfordshire. Each has a Responsible Authorities Group (RAG) made up of representatives of the Constabulary, Police Authority, district or borough council, county council and Primary Care Trust, which is responsible to improving community safety. A wide range of other agencies contribute to the wider Community Safety Partnership.*

### HertsWatch:

*A committee made up of one representative (Community Co-ordinator) from Neighbourhood Watch from each of districts as mentioned above*

### Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

*An officer without full Police powers, in a role designed to provide a reassuring visual presence on the streets*

### Watch Liaison Officer (WLO):

*Police employees whose role is to support, promote and facilitate new and existing Neighbourhood Watch schemes. One for each district*



The purpose of this Charter is to:

- Act as an agreement between Hertfordshire Neighbourhood Watch, Hertfordshire Police Authority and Hertfordshire Constabulary regarding the minimum standards of service each may expect.
- Commit all parties to reducing crime and the fear of crime within our communities
- Form a framework within which Neighbourhood Watch can interact with the Police and other partner agencies
- Form a framework within which Hertfordshire Constabulary can respond to recommendations made in the Police Authority's Best Value Review, "Preventing Crime" and fully support Neighbourhood Watch in its activities
- Form the basis for sharing and spreading best practice to Neighbourhood Watch schemes county-wide and working towards consistency of service and improvement of performance at all levels



## **1. Police commitments to Neighbourhood Watch at Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership area level**

- a) The Police will organise HertsWatch meetings
- b) Police Authority to attend and support HertsWatch meetings
- c) Each CDRP area to have a dedicated WLO, employed by the Constabulary
- d) WLOs to organise Area Neighbourhood Watch meetings in conjunction with the CCO
- e) Ward Constables and/or PCSOs to attend Area Neighbourhood Watch meetings whenever possible
- f) The Police will provide information/communication systems and training for Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators to facilitate the dissemination of information to and from Watches
- g) Ward Constables and PCSOs to forge and maintain links with Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators, through ACOs and, where applicable, Locality Teams/local panels
- h) The Police will provide guidance on all aspects of running NHW schemes and contacting the Constabulary with information
- i) Hold Steering Group meetings, involving local WLO, CCO and Community Inspectors, initially monthly, with a view to ultimately taking place quarterly. These Steering Groups will aim to identify local priority areas, crime hotspots and other hard-to-reach areas and groups



## **2. Neighbourhood Watch commitments to the Police at CDRP area level**

- a) Each of the 10 district or borough Neighbourhood Watches to nominate and select a Community Co-ordinator and a deputy. This will usually take place annually via ACOs unless a longer tenure is agreed
- b) Community Co-ordinators to attend quarterly HertsWatch meetings, or arrange for the nominated deputy to attend.
- c) HertsWatch to be chaired by a Community Co-ordinator elected by members of HertsWatch. Members will also elect a Vice-Chairman.
- d) HertsWatch will:
  - Hold an annual NHW conference
  - Develop best practice for schemes across the county
  - Identify funding needs and monitor budget expenditure
  - Assist Police with the development of Policy where appropriate
- e) Community Co-ordinators to forge and maintain close links with WLO, local area CDRP, and local Police Authority members.



### **3. Police commitments to wider Neighbourhood Watch**

- a) The Police will provide relevant, timely information to Co-ordinators and scheme members, using a variety of appropriate means.
- b) WLOs and other Police staff to give timely feedback in relation to information and intelligence provided by Neighbourhood Watch members
- c) WLOs to organise and attend all NHW start-up meetings.
- d) Control Room staff to recognise the value of Neighbourhood Watch and clearly identify intelligence and reports of crime as originating from NHW members; WLOs to monitor and provide feedback and/or letters of thanks to NHW members when appropriate
- e) WLOs to maintain existing NHW schemes
- f) Measures will be developed to gauge the effectiveness of NHW
- g) WLOs to be trained to a minimum standard to enable them to perform effectively



#### **4. Wider Neighbourhood Watch Commitments to the Police**

- a) Scheme members to be alert, “notice the unusual” and respond to anything considered suspicious by contacting the police or making a note of details for future reference
- b) Scheme members who wish to become involved in volunteer work on behalf of Neighbourhood Watch, such as preparing Starter Packs, delivering leaflets, undertaking administrative tasks etc. to make themselves known to their Watch Liaison Officer or Community Co-ordinator
- c) Scheme members calling the Police with information or intelligence to call using the appropriate number, e.g. 999 for emergencies, 0845 33 00 222 for non-emergencies, or direct to watch Liaison Officer, and will identify themselves as a Neighbourhood Watch member or Co-ordinator as appropriate



## **5. Police commitments to Volunteers working in Police Stations**

- a) WLOs to identify, in liaison with CCO, appropriate tasks to be undertaken by volunteers
- b) All volunteers to be treated with courtesy and respect by all police personnel
- c) WLOs to be responsible for volunteers and facilitate the recruitment of volunteers when required
- d) Volunteers to be provided with working space and facilities within Police stations whenever possible
- e) Police Community Safety Unit managers to organise vetting of and provide identity cards for volunteers



## **6. Volunteers commitment to the Police**

- a) Volunteers to agree to complete a vetting form prior to being issued with identity cards. Identity cards to be worn on display at all times while within the station
- b) During normal hours, volunteers to enter Police stations via the main entrance and make themselves known to the front desk officer
- c) Volunteers to remain, as far as possible, within agreed working areas
- d) Volunteers will not read or attempt to otherwise access materials beyond the remit of their role



## 7. Agreement

- a) All parties will endeavour to abide by the wording and spirit of this Charter
- b) Grievances over adherence to the Charter will be raised at HertsWatch meetings where timing permits, or directly to the HertsWatch Chairman.
- c) All parties may put forward suggestions for amendments to the Charter, to be discussed at the following HertsWatch meeting.
- d) Charter to be reviewed annually



Agreed and Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Chief Constable, Hertfordshire Constabulary

*Frank Whiteley*

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair, Hertfordshire Police Authority

*Ian Laidlaw-Dickson*

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair, HertsWatch

*Dennis Cooper*

Date:.....