



# LOOK OUT

Helping to protect over 18,000 households

October 2012



**From The Chairman,  
Keith Roberts**

## **Annual General Meeting**

**In this edition of our newsletter, we formally give notice of our AGM. It will be held on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2012, commencing at 7 pm and concluded by 9 pm at a new venue – the Harrogate Grammar School 6<sup>th</sup> Form Lecture Theatre on Arthurs Avenue Harrogate.** Reminders will be issued via Ringmaster and the press but in the meantime please put the date in your diary. We are currently arranging guest speakers but more important is your presence on the evening. However if you are unable to attend there is time for you to raise issues or comments in advance for inclusion in discussion on the night. Your committee sincerely wish for your contribution and this is your opportunity to have your 'say'. Could co-ordinators please encourage their members to come along? We often hear that some co-ordinators 'use their discretion' and do not always forward messages to neighbours, so please ensure that LOOK OUT is quickly circulated to all scheme members.

## **Senior Harrogate Police Changes**

It has recently been announced that Supt. Barry Smith, the Safer Neighbourhoods Area Commander for Harrogate, has decided to retire from the NYP Service after thirty two years of dedicated police roles and functions, mostly in North Yorkshire.

Barry retires this month and deserves a well-earned change of life style. We all wish him well in his future activities.

We welcome Supt. Aubrey Smith as the successor to Barry Smith. Aubrey has worked his way through the ranks mostly in North Yorkshire and is well known to longer serving NHW co-ordinators and he has expressed his pleasure at returning to interact with the local community.

There has been one further change to the Harrogate NYP management team, and that is the new appointment of Chief Inspector Sarah Sanderson, who is on a six month assignment commencing 1<sup>st</sup> Oct. Welcome to you too Sarah; the H&D NHW committee and co-ordinators look forward to meeting you.

## **Police and Crime Commissioner**

It is very close to the election and appointment of the very first Police and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire. Voting will take place on 15<sup>th</sup> November. It is not expected to see dramatic changes in the NYP Service in the short term but NHW can continue to make a valuable contribution. The PCC will be responsible for the formulation of key areas such as ensuring value for money, setting budgets, funding and appointing the Chief Constable. The likes of NHW volunteers are the face of the community and can help in identifying the public needs and expectations. So far there has been limited information on how the new system

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will work but we shall invite the candidates to speak at our AGM and answer questions from the floor.

### **H&D NHW Committee**

The election of officers and committee will take place at the AGM when existing members can elect to stand again or any other member can be nominated for any position. (A nominee for Chairman must have served on the committee for at least one year - as per the constitution). Because of other commitments our current Secretary, David Siddans, has decided that he must relinquish his responsibility and therefore will not be seeking re-election. David has been a keen and active member, duly supported by his wife Margaret at galas and Members' Support Meetings and will remain a pro-active co-ordinator. So, specifically we need nominations for Secretary and for committee members for non-specific roles. In the past, we must admit to being overly ambitious with the expansion and other plans for NHW and because of work and family commitments it has been the same few who have carried the burden. Please come and join us even if it is only for a trial period. There is nothing compulsory about attendance at meetings, which are held on the first Tuesday of alternate months commencing in January. We have an extensive programme of set-up meetings for new schemes and you may wish to take part to inform 'newcomers' of the co-ordinator role and emphasise that it is not too onerous. Nominations for committee members require that the nominee is a member of a NHW scheme and has a proposer and seconder. The committee nomination form can be downloaded from the website and sent to me, Keith Roberts, Apt 3, No. 4 The Oval, Harrogate HG2 9BA. Should you wish to

discuss beforehand please call me on 01423 562743 or send your questions to [info@nwatchharrogate.org.uk](mailto:info@nwatchharrogate.org.uk) and I will reply to you.

### **Crime Statistics**

In the last LOOK OUT we reported on the substantial reduction in the level of crime in all categories within Harrogate & District area. This was particularly encouraging because of the current climate when perhaps more crime could have been expected. The latest figures show that the successful crime reduction figures outlined previously have continued with a 20% reduction in all crime year-to-date.

Theft of and from vehicles is still a problem and in rural areas there is growing theft of diesel fuel from machinery and vehicles. Please remember, with the colder mornings, not to leave your car unattended with the engine running. Every year we are hear of opportunist thieves driving off in such cars. Vehicle insurance companies will not pay out for these losses and the police have better things to do than chase self-inflicted crime.

Many will remember the STOP Burglaries, STOP Theft, STOP Metal Theft campaigns and the focussed attention to troublesome areas, which all contributed to the aforementioned crime reduction; well, a new campaign under the banner of 'BILLY the BURGLAR' is currently being planned, ready for launch shortly, in order to combat an anticipated increase during the darker winter months. The project is being led by the Community Safety Partnership and we shall play our part.

**Finally, I offer our sincere apologies to the lady who receives unsolicited calls because of the incorrect telephone number given for calling Environmental Health to report incidents of**

**dog fouling. The number on the front page of the last LOOK OUT should have been 01423 556633. This correct number is also shown on our website article.**



## News from Tina Oates

As you read this it will be just a few weeks to Christmas with all the commercial razzmatazz it brings: unfortunately it also brings out the villains who prefer to do their Christmas shopping at our expense! So the usual precautions are needed for purses, wallets, bank cards, phones etc. when out and about, plus, on arrival at home, store presents and parcels away from prying eyes. The darker late afternoons and evenings are cosy for relaxing by the fire, but - combined with the currently much reduced street lighting - they require you to be aware of who is around as you arrive home from your spending spree and unload your goodies.

Those of you with computers will be aware of the many on-line scams which are around these days. Many sound very plausible and can catch people off guard. Even H&D NHWA's email was targeted recently! The perpetrator had hacked someone's email and address book, and pretended to have been stranded penniless in Spain after having been mugged! It pays to be suspicious and it's always worth taking the extra time to check a message with one of the scam reporting sites. One such site is Action Fraud – this and others such as Hoax-Slayer and Safe Scams can be accessed from our website [www.nwatchharrogate.org.uk](http://www.nwatchharrogate.org.uk) under LINKS at the top of the page. National Neighbourhood Watch have launched 'Get Safe on Line week' from 22nd - 29th October which you can find at [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org). More details are available on National NHW website

[www.ourwatch.co.uk](http://www.ourwatch.co.uk) Any email messages appearing to be from banks or HMRC are usually fraudulent even if they look authentic, most banks have a fraud reporting site such as this: [security@hbosplc.com](mailto:security@hbosplc.com). It is best to check with your bank first before complying with any banking request made by email.

Cold Callers are still a problem in some areas, despite NCCZs having been set up, though the overall number of callers has lessened since the introduction of these zones. Some callers are over-zealous and insistent and they need to be made aware of the legislation which will see them charged with committing a criminal offence if they continue to pester residents. The new Trading Standards door/window stickers, which clearly state this, are now available. We at H&D NHW have a stock of them which you can obtain by emailing us on:

[info@nwatchharrogate.org.uk](mailto:info@nwatchharrogate.org.uk) or you can collect at the AGM.

All co-ordinators and members are reminded that they are protected by Public Liability Insurance (PLI) when out and about delivering messages, holding meetings, recruiting or doing any work connected with Neighbourhood Watch. PLI is provided free of charge to all registered watch schemes by Towergate Insurance – who also provide our free NHW roundel window stickers. Another reminder is that any member of a registered and active NHW scheme will most likely qualify for reduced premiums for their household insurance. So do check with your insurance company.

As mentioned earlier the AGM is almost upon us and we shall be actively seeking additional members for the committee this year. It is not an arduous task – only 6 meetings a year – but the more of us there are then the more people there are to share what few tasks need to

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be done. New people also bring new ideas, but no-one is asked to give up all of their free time – usually it is just a couple of hours when required. So please think seriously about it. 'Your association needs you.'

And finally to all my fellow dog walkers and others who are on the streets early and late, such as milk, post, newspaper deliverers and joggers: the police consider your presence out and about to be invaluable. You can be very much their eyes and ears, especially in some of the less frequented areas. Anything suspicious, any unusual activities/incidents are worth reporting by calling 101. So please be alert! Most criminals will not commit a crime if there are other people around, so you also act as a crime deterrent by enjoying your activities or doing your job.

**Members' Support Meeting 11 Sep at Ripon Police Station.** The committee and Ripon police were very disappointed with the poor attendance at this meeting after a special effort was made purely for the benefit of Ripon members.



**From the Treasurer,  
Katy Piazza**

**Will you be doing any online shopping for Christmas this year?** Did you know that with 'a few clicks' you can help raise funds for us at no cost to yourself? Hundreds of popular online retailers will donate up to 5% of your spend to us if you first register on the this website:

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hdnw](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hdnw).

For more details please visit our website <http://www.nwatchharrogate.org.uk> and click on Donations and Funding.

Our financial year ended on 31 August 2012 and our accounts are currently being audited ready for presentation at the AGM on 6 November. Our end-of-year

administrative expenses totalled approximately £120.

Thank you very much to the members of Woodlands Close NHW and Mr Scruton for your recent donations. These were the only donations received this quarter which is quite disappointing when there are over 1,300 registered NHW schemes in Harrogate & District. We are grateful that we have quite a few schemes that make regular annual donations but there are many more schemes across the District that have never made a donation. Donations can be sent to Katy Piazza, 8 Woods Court, Harrogate, HG2 9QP. (Cheques made payable to Harrogate & District Neighbourhood Watch Association.) Please remember to include your Gift Aid Declaration (available on our website) if you are eligible.

### Rural Watch Report

Here is a summary of crimes that are currently occurring in rural areas.

Vehicles: Increased theft of Land Rover Discoveries and Quad bikes; contents of parked vehicles were stolen; diesel stolen from vehicles and storage tanks; cycles stolen from 'secure' sheds and garages. (Keep vehicle keys out of sight)

Log splitters stolen- please secure them and security mark (e.g. SmartWater).

Domestic Burglaries - usually rear entry through open/broken windows.

Poaching - on several evenings at Cowthorpe. Be vigilant but cautious - do NOT approach - aim to get vehicle registration numbers and report immediately to police indicating if they are armed so that police can respond accordingly.

In spite of all these goings on, crime levels are still relatively low but with dark nights ahead and pressure on urban locations, rural areas are becoming 'easy pickings' for crime. Please ask your PC or PCSO for advice on improving security.