

The Harrogate & District Neighbourhood Watch Association
Minutes of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held on Tuesday 19 October 2010 at Ashville College, Harrogate.

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the attendance of so many people associated with H & D NHW and pointing out that, as a registered charity, it is incumbent on the association to prepare formal accounts and nominate and elect an executive committee at the AGM.

He then introduced Superintendent Ken McIntosh, the Harrogate Safer Neighbourhoods Commander and invited him to address the meeting.

Guest Speaker

Supt McIntosh began by describing his long service all around the county of North Yorkshire, before being appointed as the commander of the Harrogate District Safer Neighbourhoods Team. He referred to the significant reduction in crime that had taken place over recent years but suggested that trends could change as a result of the impact of spending cuts.

He described the current policing strategy in five key areas:

- **Tasking:** bringing partnership data and police data together to establish priorities and a programme of daily, weekly and monthly monitoring.
- **Community Engagement:** through neighbourhood meetings (SNG's). He wanted to see the development of this on the lines of the "Nidderdale Plus" initiative in which multiple service providers were included.
- **My Neighbourhood:** A new concept which focuses on a localised area with specifically identified problems. The first such area has been Woodfield ward and further areas throughout the district are proposed.
- **Repeat victims/locations:** Reducing the overall level of crime by focussing police resources on hot-spot locations and the most prolific criminals.
- **Volunteers:** Recognising the value of the NHW volunteer force, by increasing police support, such as the development of a map-based system showing NHW schemes and crime locations, and improvements in the messaging service.

Finally he advised the audience of the increase in burglary of dwellings and the need to secure doors and windows against opportunist burglars, who often go for jewellery and car keys.

In a lively question session he responded to the following points:

- Ward councillors involvement in neighbourhood meetings
- The high number of incidents at Asda superstore
- How to get meaningful involvement of other agencies (notably highways) at SNG meetings

- The effectiveness of community sentencing compared to imprisonment.

Peter Dallas proposed a vote of thanks to Supt McIntosh.

The Chairman then turned to the formal agenda of the Annual General Meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Maureen Asher, Brian Watkinson, Terry Wheeldon and Phillipa Holden.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 20 October 2009

Proposed by Tony Rowland and seconded by Peter Dallas that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 20 October 2009 be approved. This was carried.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. Chairman's Report

The chairman, Keith Roberts, presented the following report:

At last year's meeting I drew to your attention a few of the activities we were engaged in. Some of these issues we are still addressing, namely:

- **Schemes:** We have over 900 NHW schemes and over 1200 if you include all watches, which are shortly to be included under one umbrella.
- **Communication:** LOOK OUT and the H&D web site are now functioning well. Peter Dallas has been instrumental in widening the circulation of the newsletter. The web site failure reported last year has been resolved with a more reliable server and we are looking to update the site.
- **Ringmaster:** We still need to work with the police to log incidents for our mutual benefit. At one stage we were receiving 10% of messages bouncing back. Thanks to Martin Milburn, coordinators were traced and records updated. We still need to remind coordinators to inform us of any changes to their ISP or address. At long last, NYP NHW district committees can now access the database and should in the future be able to offer a better service.
- **Safer Neighbourhood Teams:** The introduction of PCSO's and the formation of SNT's have reached a "steady state" as it is intended to maintain this system of frontline neighbourhood policing. SNG's are a step forward but all seem to operate in different ways. Best practice will eventually be established but in the meantime, many of the problems being identified are similar.
- **Crime:** Harrogate District remains a low crime area but it is unfortunate that there recently has been a doubling of house burglaries and theft of cars, cycles and farm machinery have increased.
- **Smartwater:** The coding of your possessions is still considered important for the recovery of stolen goods and linking criminals to specific incidents. The use of Smartwater and the registering of serial numbers on the Immobilise.com database are the preferred methods.
- **Ripon:** Although we have Members Support Forums in Ripon and Harrogate, we still need to do more in Ripon rural, and east of the A1.

The chairman then turned to current activities:

- **Schemes:** We are involved in one or two set-ups or the refreshing of older schemes every week, but in spite of that we still only touch the surface.
- **No Cold Calling Zones:** We are encouraging the formation of NCCZ's. Harrogate and district are still hot spots for rogue traders who focus on the older, single and vulnerable residents. If your NHW is not a NCCZ, please give consideration to forming one.
- **Deterrents:** The use of NHW signs, Smartwater, and alarm systems are effective in diverting the criminal's activities elsewhere. However half of burglaries occur because we invite them through unsecured doors and windows.
- **Reporting:** We in NHW can assist the police by the prompt reporting of suspicious activity. Current problems include "2 in 1" burglary to steal car keys, theft of farm machinery, access through uPVC doors and theft of cycles from sheds and out-buildings.
- **Youth:** We propose to revisit the subject of a youth-based type of NHW to promote inclusiveness.
- **Can do Culture:** In these financially stringent times, we look to ways that we can assist the police, even if their numbers are reduced. Our approach has been influenced by partnership working and cultural change. We encourage a "can-do" culture.

The chairman finally thanked the H&D NHW committee for their significant contributions and the coordinators who are the link between NHW, the police and their neighbours. He specially mentioned Gwen Baines in the civilian police service and Peter Thornes who have important roles in the functioning of NHW. He commented that we must be doing something right as we have been asked to assist the establishment of NHW in Middlesbrough and Southampton.

5. Treasurer's Report 2009-10

Katy Piazza circulated copies of the Treasurer's Report and audited accounts for 2009-10.

In summary, she reported that our finances are comfortable and we ended the financial year with a balance of £4294.57 before meeting current commitments.

The report and accounts were accepted following a proposal by Tina Oates, seconded by Chris Oates.

Approval was also given to the re-appointment of Terry Harrison as independent auditor.

6. Election of Committee for 2010-11

The following persons were nominated and elected unopposed:

Chairman:	Keith Roberts
Secretary:	David Siddans
Treasurer:	Katy Piazza
Members:	Peter Dallas, Tina Oates, Chris Oates, Eric Walker, Maureen Asher, Phillipa Holden, Brian Booker.

The chairman noted that Mike Josh has expressed a wish to remain involved, but has difficulty in attending meetings. He also noted that Joyce Pearson is currently having physical difficulties in attending. He is seeking new members who would represent the area East of A1 and also the Ripon area.

7. Q and A

There was a short discussion on the feasibility of including an understanding of the role of NHW in the training of police of PCSO recruits. Supt McIntosh noted the comments and said it could be considered in the context of the voluntary sector's contribution to neighbourhood policing.

8. Any Other Business

Nothing was raised under this item.

There being no further business, the Annual General Meeting concluded at 9.00 pm.