



RNWA Newsletter

In response to members' requests, this Newsletter is now prepared and distributed twice a year, following each of the Association's Congresses, to reflect their content. Congress notes and presentations are published on the web site www.rnwa.org.uk.

Autumn Congress 2011

Chairman's Thoughts

Two years ago there were 153 watches with 3000 members; we now have 350 watches with over 7,000 members, but we are still perceived as an "older persons" organisation, with the emphasis being on **watch** rather than **neighbourhood**. We need to have a wider reach than we do currently and we need a mix of ages and a mix of communities. The growth of the Nepalese community within the Rushmoor area gives RNWA an opportunity to take the lead on the issue of integration.

We need to use the differences within our communities to our advantage: old/young, English/immigrant, rather than regard them as a threat. We must identify those in our communities who need help and then work with the police, other agencies and other local community groups to help improve matters. Councillors can identify leaders within their own wards who can help us take the community forward as a whole.

If you have any comments about this edition, or have any questions or queries regarding RNWA please contact me at chairman@rnwa.org.uk or visit the RNWA website at <http://www.rnwa.org.uk>.

*John Koenigsberger
Chairman*

AGM

No nominations had been received for new committee members. The existing committee were all willing to stand for re-election. Congress supported this.

Police Report

Sgt Kevin Futers focussed on police successes that have been achieved through the help of Neighbourhood Watch members and coordinators. Our information has led to a number of high profile cases being solved and so he stressed the importance of the local intelligence we can provide. Please continue to provide information to the 101 number or directly to your beat officer.

Sgt Futers also spoke about the police review. Hampshire Police obviously needs to save considerable sums of money and the changes have already started. However beat officer numbers across Farnborough and Aldershot will be maintained. The police will be looking to save on buildings. Farnborough police station will be closing - although a date has not been given yet. The front counter will close sometime from November 2011 onwards, as will those at Yateley and Fleet. People will have to visit Aldershot police station.

The merger of Rushmoor and Hart Districts was completed on September 5th. Some crimes previously dealt with by the beat officers, such as shop lifting, are now being dealt with by a dedicated "District Investigation Team" based at Aldershot which has freed up time for the beat officers to spend on their beats.

On Tuesday September 27th the Hampshire Crime Reports website was launched. It is available on www.crimereports.co.uk. You can view the number of crimes in your area by type and by date ranges. You can also find out about beat forums and meetings. All residents should go and look at this valuable new resource. The system was demonstrated, live, by Kimberly Soane after the end of formal proceedings.

Questions from the floor -

Bicycle Thefts

It was suggested that each cycle shop keep a note of the frame number and the buyer. Sgt Futers said this was not a workable idea as thousands of bikes were sold. Stolen bikes were often recovered in areas miles away from where they had been purchased so the system would be too labour intensive to implement. He was able to inform us that a national register for bicycles is being set up - with the onus on the owner to register their bike on it.

Speedwatch

Some coordinators feel that Speedwatch has connotations of vigilantism. However, everyone taking part in Speedwatch has been vetted and trained. They also operate in areas agreed in advance with the police. It is operated by the local beat office and is separate from the Traffic division who operate the vans on the A325.

If you want Speedwatch in your area, you should contact PC Chris Thoday at Farnborough police

station and he will discuss it with you. However, be warned that 90% of the people caught so far have been local residents.

Domestic Violence - Sue Gibson

Domestic violence is much more prevalent than one might think. We all have a responsibility to do something about it. If we hear, or see something that is not right, we must call it in to our beat team. If you do not wish to get involved directly, then you can always call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

On the new Crime Reports website, "Assaults" will be a category - combining street assaults and also domestic assaults.

Sue thanked the NHW coordinators for their support and their calls to the police. In the last year calls referring to suspicious activity have risen 3-fold. We are playing our part in helping the police target their resources effectively.

*Sue Gibson is Force Neighbourhood Watch
Co-ordinator - Hampshire Police*

Open Forum

1. In general people thought it was a good idea to get younger people involved in NHW. Encourage your Safer Neighbourhood Team and the coordinators to get community leaders involved.

2. Good Neighbour Award -Mike Stroud, area coordinator for RF4 had been awarded a "Good Neighbour" award. The Leader of Hampshire County Council, Councillor Ken Thornber, hosted the special ceremony and presented the awards in the Great Hall, Winchester, on Tuesday September 20th. Congratulations Mike!