



RNWA Autumn Congress and AGM –Wed 28th September, 2011

The Congress was opened by our Chair – John Koenigsberger at 7pm.

Chairman's Introduction

John discussed the growth of NHW in Rushmoor. Two years ago there were 153 watches with 3000 members; we now have 350 watches with over 7,000 members.

John talked about the “perception” of NHW and the fact that we are quite often perceived as an “older persons” organisation, with the emphasis on watch rather than neighbourhood. John reminded us that we need to have a wider reach than we do currently and that we need a mix of ages and a mix of communities. Particularly regarding the growth of the Nepalese community within the Rushmoor area we have an opportunity and RNWA can lead on the issue of integration in the community. John asked coordinators to think about this important aspect of our work and to come up with ideas during the Q&A session.

John also discussed opportunities we have for mentoring. We have a mixture of people within our communities; old/young, English/immigrant and we need to make the most of our differences. John suggested that we identified those in our communities who need help and then we work with the police, other agencies and other local community groups to help improve things. He suggested that perhaps councillors can identify leaders within their own communities who can help us make the most of our differences.

AGM

John asked if there were any questions re the last minutes (available on the website) – none were asked.

Finance Report

John reported that RNWA finances were relatively static. Our regular outgoings are only £7 a month (for website hosting). The rest of our work is subsidised in kind by Hampshire Police and Rushmoor Borough Council.

It was noted that NHW stickers are now available through Towergate Insurance as they are no longer produced by the Home Office. Until 31st December 2011 Towergate are offering a 15% discount on house insurance to any members of registered NHW schemes. For details visit <http://www.towergatehomeinsurance.co.uk/>

Election of Committee

No nominations had been received for new committee members. Therefore John suggested that the existing committee remain “en-bloc” as they were all willing to stand for re-election. A show of hands carried this motion.



Police Report – given by Sgt Kevin Futers

Sgt Futers gave a very interesting presentation.

He made the congress aware that on Tuesday 27th September the Hampshire Crime Reports website had finally been 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. He suggests all coordinators go and look at this valuable new resource.

Sgt Futers also focussed on some successes that have been achieved purely 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 share buildings, sell buildings etc. 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.

He also confirmed the merger of Rushmoor and Hart districts had been completed on the 5th September. Some crimes previously dealt with by the beat officers (e.g.) shop lifting, were 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.

Questions raised from the floor –

Bicycle Thefts

As bicycle thefts were an issue and the police had trouble returning them to owners it was suggested each cycle shop kept a note of the frame number and the buyer. Sgt Futers said this was not a workable idea as thousands of bikes were sold. When they were stolen they were often recovered in areas miles away from where they had been purchased so the system would be too manual 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

Sgt Futers was asked about Speedwatch. Some coordinators felt it had connotations of vigilantism. Kimberly Soane (RBC) reminded everyone that all those taking part in Speedwatch have been vetted and trained and always operate in areas agreed in advance with the police.

Speedwatch is operated by the local beat office and is separate to the Traffic Division.

Sgt Futers advised anyone who wanted Speedwatch in their area to contact PC Chris Thoday at Farnborough police station and he would discuss it with them. However he also warned us that 90% of the people caught so far have been local residents.

Councillor Brian Parker said that people feel they have been complaining but nothing has happened. Sgt Futers reminded us that Speedwatch was only launched a few months ago and so only recently have the beat teams been able to make a difference. He hopes we should see the improvements soon.

Speeding in Fleet Road

Young men racing late at night in Fleet Road – this coordinator was advised to contact the Farnborough traffic division to discuss this specific issue.

Monitoring traffic data

It was raised that when the data is captured, it concentrates on “averages”. It was felt this misses out the extreme 10% of speeders who cause the real problems. Sgt Futers did confirm the data is captured in time slots and this is the way the system works.

Domestic Violence Presentation by Sue Gibson, Force Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator – Hampshire Police

Sue gave a very interesting and thought provoking presentation. She explained she presents this subject to NHW groups to give us an idea of how prevalent domestic violence is, to tell us how to do something about it and to remind us if we hear/see something that is not right to 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.

She also pointed out that on the new Crime Reports website “Assaults” will be a category – these are not all street assaults as this category also includes domestic assaults, so please do not think there has been a huge increase in street violence/crime.



Sue also took this opportunity to thank the NHW coordinators for their support and their calls to the police. In the last year calls re suspicious activity have risen 3x. We are playing our part in helping the police target their resources effectively.

Open Forum

1. John had asked at the beginning of the meeting for thoughts on integration of different groups and mentoring. In general people thought it was a good idea to get younger people involved in NHW. It was agreed it would be a good idea to get the SNT (Safer Neighbourhood Team) and the coordinators to get community leaders involved.
 2. Mike Holmden asked if coordinators could have ID cards. This issue has been raised before and the idea rejected.
 3. It was requested we start the next Congress a little later – the committee will discuss - we are sure this can be accommodated.
 4. It was pointed out that NCMA (north Camp Matters Association) were holding a parking meeting on the same night as our Congress and AGM. It was requested we held meetings on different nights as those coordinators in Knellwood and St Marks needed to attend both meetings. Gill Tremeer (RNWA Secretary) will raise this with the Chairman of NCMA.
 5. A microphone was requested at the next Congress as during Q&As some people find it hard to hear the questions and answers. This will be sorted for our next meeting.
 6. Newsletters – a coordinator asked when the next RNWA newsletter was due. John reminded coordinators we now only publish two editions a year – both after our Congresses (held March and September) so we can include the issues raised at Congress.
 7. Good Neighbour Award – John was pleased to announce that Mike Stroud our 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 20. Congratulations Mike!
- The link below gives further details-
- <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hantswebnewslist?id=494021&stdate=&relatedlinks=no&pagetitle=Good%20Neighbour%20Awards%202011>



John closed the meeting at 8:30 and thanked all for attending. The next Congress will be held in March 2012.