



Neighbourhood Watch SCOTLAND

newsletter

Winter | 2019



Further Changes at NWS

NWS would like to thank and wish all our members, stakeholders, partners and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Safe New Year.

Sadly, at the end of September we had to bid a fond farewell to two of our longest serving Board members, James Watson and Bill Campbell.

As well as Board members, both Jim and Bill have served as members of their local Neighbourhood Watch Schemes since the Association of Scottish Neighbourhood Watches came to fruition in Scotland many years ago. They joined the Board roughly 25 years ago and have seen it go through many changes in that time. We wish them well in the future and thank them for their support and long service to Neighbourhood Watch Scotland.

We also said goodbye to Brian Connel, our Manager for the past 4 years, in October. Brian has, as planned, now retired but will

remain on the Board for the foreseeable future. Brian has left a strong legacy and has been instrumental in the recent growth, direction and ongoing recognition of NWS as a significant organisation working to keep communities safe.

We are delighted to welcome Mark Armstrong to the NWS Team as Community Support Officer. Mark brings with him a wealth of experience within the crime prevention / community safety world and was latterly the training co-ordinator for safer communities training at the Scottish Police College.



Mark pictured with Willie and Varrie



Inside this issue

Community Survey Results	P.2
ELPARC and ALERT update	P.3
Festive Security Advice	P.4
Scottish Gas Network Winter Support	P.6
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Festive Fire Safety Advice	P.7
SEPA Advice flooding	P.8
Ready Scotland	P.8

Community Survey Results

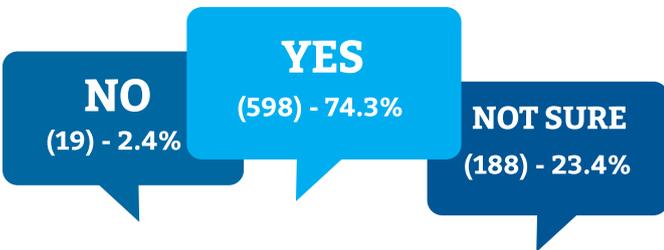


NWS recently carried out a community survey using our Neighbourhood ALERT platform survey tool. This was a first attempt at using this new tool and a first attempt at a targeted survey to seek feedback and views from our NWS co-ordinators and members.

The survey started on 29.08.19 with a completion date of 16.09.19 and was circulated to 5627 individuals as above. We asked 2 Questions:

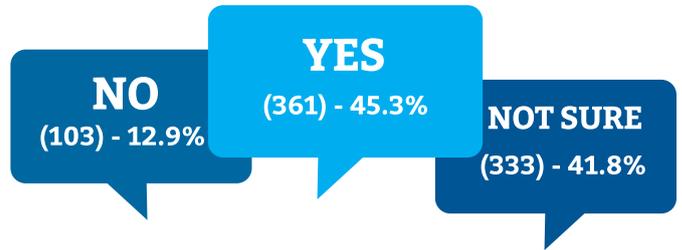
Question 1.

Being a member of a local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme or similar community group brings personal and community benefits?



Question 2.

We know local community groups can be very resilient and with the right support can take steps to improve the security, safety and well-being of their communities. We are interested to hear about the level of local support you receive. STATEMENT – My group receives good support from local, police and other service providers.



We received 805 additional comments to Question 1 and 797 additional comments to Question 2. Here are some of the comments:

Q1.

- “ In the 2 years since we set up we have regular contact with Glasgow City Councillors, Community Councillors and the Police. They have now been acting on our concerns although as individuals we have been ignored for decades ”
- “ It has the potential, if required, to be a ‘go-between’ between vulnerable people who may not be able or wish to contact those who can help them such as the police or local council. The more confident people within the NW Scheme can do this for them. ”
- “ Being made aware of problems and passing them on so that they can be resolved, if necessary, by the community. This in turn helps the older generation especially to feel included and not alone (if no family near which is often the case nowadays). ”
- “ neighbours are more inclined to talk to one another and share information ”

Q2.

- “ When the local Neighbourhood Watch scheme was started many years ago we had regular meetings with the local police and each area had a dedicated officer who kept in touch with the group co-ordinator. Unfortunately, due to reduced staffing levels and funding this ceased a long time ago. I take it on myself to continue to be vigilant and report any suspicious or antisocial behaviour in my area ”
- “ lack of community police doesn’t give good personal contact ”
- “ Only from the Council’s Community Safety Section and Neighbourhood Watch. Local Police Scotland who, where and what are they? ”
- “ When asked for police to come along to a local group meeting to explain a few things told they no longer do that sort of thing! (they did so when group first set up and were a great help then, why stop!) ”

ELPARC article / ALERT Update

A local rural crime partnership has demonstrated the benefits of a joined up approach to the prevention and detection of crime.

East Lothian Partnership Against Rural Crime (ELPARC) was launched on 23rd January 2019 at MacMerry to address and tackle rural crime and the fear of crime across East Lothian. Part of this work is to engage with rural communities to enable them to become more resilient and to ensure an effective, and where appropriate, coordinated response to reports. The partnership is also concerned with the occurrence and fear of all crime affecting rural communities. This includes wildlife, heritage, marine and other crimes including anti-social behaviour which impact on individuals, a community, property, businesses, environment and / or quality of life in rural communities.

ELPARC have developed and actioned a local Action Plan based around the Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC) Rural Crime Strategy 2019-2022

Since the launch of ELPARC, East Lothian has seen a growth of 51% in direct registrations to the Rural Watch Scotland / Alert communication platform, which has allowed the partnership to put out targeted ALERTS relevant to rural crime across the area.

Following an incident of males allegedly hare coursing in the Whitekirk area of East Lothian, reported to the Police on the morning of 12th September, 4 males were arrested and subsequently charged in connection with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and other offences.

The ELPARC model is being promoted as good practice and is now being replicated across Scotland.



Neighbourhood Alert Update

“ Getting the right information, to the right people, at the right time ”

We continue to build community resilience across Scotland by encouraging neighbours and relatives to look out for each other and registering to receive Neighbourhood Alert messages. By receiving Alert messages you can help take the relevant steps to prevent yourself and community from being effected by crime, safety and resilience issues.

VISAV are currently looking into the creation of an app that lets you get real time messages wherever you are in the Country. Watch this space!

- 18% growth in the last year (3419 new registrations in the last year)
- 1851 registered community groups/schemes (89 in the last year)
- 102 registered administrators (those who can send Alerts)
- 96% satisfaction levels on content / relevance and quality of Alerts

- Over the last year 851 have been sent out across Scotland to over 756,000 recipients. This was shared directly with 2.2M (not including social media sharing via various apps)
- We continue to engage with key community safety partners including local authorities so that we can send you more local, targeted, relevant Alerts

Reminder – If you have registered to receive **ALERTS** please ensure that you keep your account and information updated, as required, with any changes. If you have any issues then please contact the Team at NWS.



If you are not yet registered to receive Neighbourhood Alert messages, please visit our website to sign up – its easy and its free! www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk or www.ruralwatchscotland.co.uk

Festive Security Advice

The festive season is a time for giving - but for criminals, it's quite the opposite. The longer dark nights during winter months allow criminals to use the extended cover of darkness to their advantage making it easy to spot homes that are obviously unoccupied.

Top 10 Festive Security Tips

Keep gifts out of view whether wrapped or unwrapped, don't store any gifts in places where they can be easily seen or found. We understand Christmas is all about tradition, but it's very wise to avoid leaving gifts under the tree. Keeping them out of sight removes the temptation for a criminal to try their luck.

Make your home look occupied even if you are only popping out for a couple of minutes, taking simple measures such as leaving a light or radio on will help create the illusion someone is home. Timer switches are great tools for showing activity within the home by switching lights on and off.



Lock all of your windows and doors. It's surprisingly easy to forget, especially around Christmas time when there's so much to think about! Remember to double-check that all your doors and windows are secure before leaving home. If you're displaying Christmas lights, avoid leaving windows or doors ajar to run cables outside.

Avoid sharing too much information on social media about where you are, when you're going, or what you've got. Don't 'check-in' and be careful when posting pictures. Criminals are increasingly using sites such as Facebook and Twitter to identify potential targets.



If you're expecting a delivery, make sure someone is there to receive it. Don't give permission for packages to be left on the door step where an opportunist thief could quickly grab an early present of their own.

Leaving empty boxes and branded packaging outside your home could advertise to a criminal all the lovely gifts you have received this Christmas. Package them down as small as you can and put them in the bin.



It's a good idea to keep any gift receipts in a safe location. As well as allowing you to exchange your gifts, this keeps them out of the hands of potential thieves. If a thief was able to stumble across your receipts, this could enable them to return what you've bought in exchange for cash.

Make friends with your neighbours. Planning on being away from home this Christmas? Try asking a neighbour to keep an eye on your home whilst you're not there. Just by taking in the post and opening and shutting curtains for you, it can help to prevent unwanted attention from prying eyes.



Postpone regular deliveries, this avoids making it obvious you're away by temporarily cancelling your usual milk and paper deliveries. These can stack up outside the front door, highlighting the fact no-one is around.

Light up dark areas around your home. Criminals don't want to be caught in the act, so installing lighting outside your home is another great deterrent. Focus on entry points such as front and back doors, patio doors, sheds, garages and passageways.



AGM Update



A full-on agenda awaited the members attending the Neighbourhood Watch Scotland (NWS) 2019 Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Stirling on the 23rd September. The theme of the day was New Opportunities.

Due to significant changes afoot the NWS AGM had a lot of business to get through. From changes to the constitution, a new partnership agreement with Scottish Community Safety Network (SCSN), presentations and the Acting Chair and Trustee stepping down; it was an eventful day!

Acting Chair, **Bill Campbell**, started off the morning session by providing his update on the significant change, development and success of Neighbourhood Watch Scotland over the last year. The annual accounts, prepared by Anne Knox of Stirling Voluntary Enterprise, were accepted and Brian Connel, the Manager, provided an overview of the income and expenditure.

You may remember last year NWS had a few Board members stand down, Alan Dobie, John Cunningham and Duncan Littlefair. We have however welcomed some new trustees to support the team going forward, they are Bill Gray – Denny & District Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, John Gray – Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, Stewart Prodger – SEPA, Roddy Ross – Perth & Kinross Council, Kirsten Halliday – Trading Standards Scotland and Lorraine Gillies of the SCSN, the CEO of the new co-operative partnership between SCSN and NWS.

Willie Clark will be assuming his new role as NWS Coordinator whilst

management and strategic support will be provided by Lorraine Gillies of SCSN. As previously mentioned NWS and SCSN are entering into a partnership. The Partnership is an important milestone in our evolution and brings together two significant organisations delivering services and support under the banner of Safer Communities. This is also key to the further development of the Neighbourhood Network and the Alert Service and increase our reach across the Local Authorities and their community safety and planning partnerships.

The NWS constitution was reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose. The changes would allow continued development of the Board, increased strategic influence, increased involvement of key partners whilst retaining representation from formal members.

After lunch attendees sat down to hear presentations from Gordon Paterson – Scottish Government, Lorraine Gillies – SCSN and Alan Dron – Police Scotland.

Gordon Paterson is the Programme Lead within Building Safer Communities - a collaborative programme which seeks to help national and local partners and communities work together to make Scotland safer and stronger. Gordon explained a little about CashBack for Communities, a unique Scottish

Government programme which takes money seized from criminals under the proceeds of crime legislation and invests them in our future – our young people. Gordon then spoke on the National Performance Framework – their aim is to create a more successful country; give opportunities to all people living in Scotland; increase the wellbeing of people living in Scotland; create sustainable and inclusive growth; reduce inequalities and give equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress.

Lorraine Gillies is the Chief Officer at SCSN - the national forum for officers who are responsible for the strategic development of community safety at both local and national level, in the private, public and voluntary sector. They are the strategic voice for community safety in Scotland and through working collaboratively with their members and partner agencies, they champion community safety and influence the shaping and development of national policy and local delivery. A membership organisation that sit on various community safety groups, strategic groups and policy led discussions. Lorraine reinforced that the partnership provided a lot of opportunities for both organisations and would create new links across the country to communities.

Alan Dron is part of The Scottish Partnership Against Rural Crime (SPARC) and his teams main focus is rural crime. SPARC started in 2015 and recently launched the Rural Crime Strategy. The strategy has set priorities as it recognises the need to tackle rural crime in all its forms. These are agricultural vehicles, farm machinery and plant; equestrian incidents; fly tipping; fuel theft; heritage crime; livestock offences; poaching. Alan provided an overview on each of these priorities, how rural crime is linked to serious organised crime and highlighted that reporting anything suspicious in rural areas is key to catching criminals.

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland now looks forward to a year of change and fantastic opportunities in 2020.



Winter Support / Fire Safety New Legislation

New Fire Detection Legislation

Working together
for a Safer Scotland



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

In February 2019, the legislation relating to smoke detection changed. This means all domestic properties, regardless of tenure should have the same levels of detection; increasing fire safety.

The regulations do not come into force until February 2021, meaning all homeowners and landlords have until then to comply. However, installing alarms at the earliest opportunity will provide improved fire safety in the home. The standard requires:

One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes (normally the living room/lounge)

One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallways and landings

One heat alarm installed in every kitchen

Alarms may be hard-wired or tamper proof long-life lithium battery powered (wireless / bluetooth) and should also be interlinked.

Carbon monoxide alarms will also be required where there is a fixed combustion appliance (such as boilers, fires (including open fires), heaters and stoves) designed and installed to operate on a carbon based fuel (i.e. oil, solid fuel or gas).

For more information please visit - https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/1361484/SFRS_Fire_and_Smoke_Alarms_v1.0.pdf

Extra support for those who need it most

At SGN, we're dedicated to keeping our customers safe and warm all year round. Winter, however, can be a difficult time for some customers who might need extra support, which is why we'll do everything we can to take good care of you whenever we're working in or around your home.

We can offer extra help to those in vulnerable circumstances who need priority support either temporarily or long-term. We provide these services **free of charge** in collaboration with partners such as energy experts, fire and rescue services and other utility companies.

Our range of services is designed to support people who are over 65, have children under five or are pregnant, have longterm physical or mental health conditions, have a disability or have additional language or communication needs. We are also able to help customers who have other additional needs, so please do get in touch to find out how we can support you. You can apply for these services by speaking with our engineers who'll complete an online referral form with you. Alternatively, you can call our Customer Careline on **0800 975 1818**. Once we've received your details, you'll be contacted by one of our team or by our partner organisations, by email, phone or post.

We offer a range of services to provide extra help for those who need it most:

- We can register you on your energy supplier's **Priority Services Register**, so you'll receive priority support in a gas emergency or power cut. The free register lets energy companies like us tailor our day-to-day services to make sure we're helping you stay safe, warm and well-informed all year round.
- Be **Carbon Monoxide (CO)** aware - CO is the silent killer. We're carrying out an awareness campaign on Mumsnet and Gransnet. Remember, **always** have your appliances installed and regularly serviced by a qualified professional.
- Our free **locking cooker valve** helps keep vulnerable people, such as those with dementia or autism, safe in their own homes. The simple safety device stops gas cookers being turned on or left on unintentionally.
- If you're struggling to afford keeping your home warm, we could connect you to our gas network **for free** or **for less** through our **Help to Heat** scheme.
- Our expert partners offer confidential, independent advice about home **energy efficiency**, help with switching to better tariffs and support with clearing energy bill debt.
- Your local fire and rescue service will visit you at home to carry out a **safety check** to make sure you're safe, supported and remain independent in your own home.



SGN
Your gas. Our network.

www Read more
sgn.co.uk

Follow us
@SGNgas

Find us on
Facebook

THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE IS URGING FAMILIES TO STAY SAFE THIS FESTIVE PERIOD



This winter SFRS will work closely with local communities and partner agencies to keep Scotland safe from fire and other emergencies - but as always, we need the public's help to reduce the amount of preventable fires we might see in the coming months. We want people to join Scotland's fight against fire and use our six winter safety tips.

- **Keep portable heaters away from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes, switching them off before you go to bed.**
- **Never leave an electric blanket switched on when you're in bed unless it's marked 'suitable for all night use'. Check your electric blanket, plug and flex regularly for damage. If you're in any doubt, don't use it.**
- **Unplug fairy lights or other electrical Christmas decorations and blow out candles when you leave the house or go to bed.**
- **Leaving cookers unattended or being distracted while cooking is the most frequent cause of fire in the home. Never cook hot food while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.**
- **Most fatal fires are caused by smoker's materials. Don't smoke in your chair if you've been drinking or you're feeling tired. If you do feel tired smoke outside or stand up and smoke at a window or outside door.**
- **Check your smoke, heat and Carbon Monoxide alarms are working. Replace batteries if necessary.**



People aged 60 or over are more likely to die in house fires. Over the last five years **61%** of all accidental dwelling fire fatalities were people aged 60 and over. More than a third of accidental dwelling fire casualties (**38%**) were also people aged 60 and over.

As part of our commitment to building a safer Scotland, we offer everyone in Scotland a free home fire safety visit. We'll help you sort out a fire escape plan and provide information about smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms.

GET IN TOUCH WITH US, IT'S SO EASY TO ARRANGE:

CALL 0800 0731 999

TEXT "FIRE" TO 80800 FROM YOUR MOBILE PHONE

DON'T LET FLOODING CAUSE CHAOS THIS WINTER.



If you were flooded, would you know what to do?

Flooding is the most common natural disaster in the UK, and can happen at any time of the year, destroying homes, businesses and communities. If you were flooded, would you know what to do?

The first step to being flood prepared this winter is to understand your flood risk and the watercourses in your area. Not everyone has the same level of risk and not everyone will be affected by the same type of flooding. The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) has information available online to help you check this, including SEPA's flood maps and SEPA's water level data.

If you do live in a flood risk area, SEPA's Floodline service may also be able to help you. Our flood warning service is free to join and can notify your phone when flooding is forecast in your area, giving you time to prepare and take action.

It's important to remember that if a flood were to occur, it's up to you to protect yourself, your loved ones and your property. There are

steps you can take to prepare now, including putting together an emergency flood kit, purchasing flood protection products for your home, making sure you have the right insurance coverage for a flood and creating a list of useful contact numbers. If you are part of a local community group, it may also be worth creating a community flood resilience plan so that the group can help respond to a flood by deploying resources or checking on vulnerable neighbours.

Recognising your risk and preparing for a flood now, could save you thousands of pounds in damages or even save your life.

More guidance and information can be found online at floodlinescotland.org.uk or from the Scottish Flood Forum at scottishfloodforum.org

Don't let winter catch you unprepared

Scotland might be no stranger to bad weather but with a little planning and action now you can be ready for winter disruption.

Our winters often bring snow and ice, thunder, lightning and heavy rain, all of which can cause frozen or burst pipes, blocked drains, localised flooding, treacherous conditions out and about, risks of hypothermia and isolation. And that's on top of Christmas chaos!

But don't worry, there's plenty you can now do to prepare for and deal with wild winter weather.

The first thing you can do is be informed. Sign up to alerting services and be aware of the risks in your area. You can do this by checking forecasts and keep up to date with weather warnings through the MetOffice; sign up to the Floodline alerting service and follow ReadyScotland on Facebook or Twitter. Another great way to be ready is to make a

plan. By making a simple household plan and creating an emergency kit you and your family will feel much more in control if the winter affects you. It's important that you make a plan and a kit that works for you and your family – this could include key phone numbers, local radio station frequency, agreed meeting places and essentials like spare medicine, copies of important documents and emergency food. Don't forget the car either! Having winter essentials like a snow shovel, ice scraper, and blankets will

make a huge difference if you find yourself stuck.

And finally, think of others. Look out for neighbours who might need a hand in an emergency. If you have the time and ability then volunteering for groups like neighbourhood watch or forming a local community resilience group, allows you to help others in your community, while learning new skills and building friendships. Whether it's providing practical, medical or emotional support, or assisting with search and rescue or transport services, our voluntary organisations make a huge contribution during emergencies.

Find out more at ReadyScotland.org and stay safe this winter.

When emergencies occur volunteers make an incredibly positive contribution. Whether it's helping your community or volunteering with a charity in your area think about what you can do to help www.volunteerscotland.net



Neighbourhood Watch Scotland SCIO

Office 23, Enterprise House, Springkerse Business Park, Stirling, FK7 7UF, Tel No: 01786 463732

 www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk

 twitter.com/nwatchscotland

 www.facebook.com/neighbourhoodwatchscotland



Neighbourhood Watch Scotland is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation Charity Number: SC036510