

HARINGEY ASSOCIATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCHES

MINUTES OF THE HANHW QUARTERLY MEETING

Civic Centre, Wood Green

28th January 2016 at 7pm

Present:

Ian Sygrave (A/Chair), DCI Marco Bardetti (Guest Speaker), Sgt. Craig Holzinger (guest speaker), Insp. Lorna Taylor, Fui Amevor, Jennifer Bell, Celia Bower, Paul Boylan, Joseph Boyle, Pat Bromley, Jenny Buzzard, Yvonne Denny, Lynn Eastman, Ruth Edwards, Renee Fletcher, Margaret Fowler, Bernadette George, Jackie & Phil Goodwin, Richard Green, Lauritz Hansen-Bay, Sheryl Hendrickson, Wendy Hill, Martin Isle, Eric Jury, Petal Kaddu, Deborah Lambrou, Rhonda Lewis, Eustace McKnight, Susan Mears, Cllr. Peter Mitchell, Ged Murphy, Sally Mustoe, JE Noutch, Louise O'Connell, Tom Palin, Cllr. Sheila Peacock, Mary Rawitzer, Vivienne Rochester-Clarke, Vivien Rodgers, Patrick Shannon, Nick Summers, Pauline Syddell, Peter Thompson, Judith Varley-Evans, Mark Watson, Alan Whitehouse, Fred Williams, Harry Yeates, Francesca Zeeman

Apologies received from:

Istvan Allender, Alison Atkinson, Doreen Bailey, Christine Barnwell, Rita Cotteridge, Lesley & Patrick Flynn, Maggie Gennin, Cllr. Kirsten Hearn, Ralph Hinton, Robert How, Eileen Jackson, Arthur Leigh, Liisa McDougall, Joan Morrison, Andy Newman, Christine Nickles, Cllr. Lorna Reith, Jacqueline Servat, Viv Sharma, Alison Smith, Gail Stean, Cllr. Elin Weston

1. Welcome and Introductions from the Vice Chair: Ian Sygrave

- The number of Neighbourhood Watches now stands at 300.
- We welcome new Watch, Claremont Road.
- Ian welcomed "Friends of Parks".
- A student journalist joined the meeting and with the permission of the committee and attending members recorded the comments of DC Marco as well as the Q&A.

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 15th Oct 2015:

- Minutes from the last meeting were agreed.

3. Guest Speaker: Sgt Craig Holzinger - MetTrace (SmartWater) Team - burglary update:

- Craig is the Acting Sergeant in charge of MetTrace and spoke on the SmartWater initiative.

- The project started in June 2015 and this first phase, year 1, is due to end in February/March 2016.
- Craig mentioned that the target was to distribute 13,300 SmartWater kits.
- Approximately 12,000 kits have already been delivered and the team are aiming to achieve their target by the end of the financial year.
- There has been a 34.5% above Borough average reduction in residential burglary.
- 5,356 community addresses have been recorded based on crime data from the last 3 years.

Q: Is there an option to buy?

A: Yes, there is a special discount of £25.00 for Neighbourhood Watch members; it normally costs about £75.

- Craig relayed the possibility that some households might not have been eligible in Year 1 of the kit distribution; however they may be eligible in Year 2.
- Once Year 2 addresses are received the team will start distribution, so members may want to wait to check if their addresses are on the year 2 list to receive a free kit before buying direct.
- Craig presented the burglary stats and promised that he would return with an update.
- The 1st priority for MetTrace is to reduce crime and the SmartWater initiative is sponsored by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) to reduce burglary.
- In essence, SmartWater is considered a crime prevention tool.
- Last year burglary was up 20%. This year it's down 20%.
- Craig relayed that robbery was up by 15% last year, 180 offenses.
- Motor vehicle crimes (such as theft from a vehicle) are reduced and there is a 10% less "theft of vehicle" trend across London.
- Moped and 2-wheel vehicle crime has increased.
- 144 of the most prominent thieves had a Christmas card delivered to them over the holidays to make them aware that they were being monitored and to spread word of the new technology that is out there to help with investigations/catch criminals.
- The team also promote initiatives like SmartWater by giving talks, presenting at schools etc.
- The SmartWater kit includes window stickers, which warn burglars that the property is SmartWater marked.
- There has been an overall 85% take up/saturation rate of SmartWater from properties in the identified Met Trace areas, meaning 4 of 5 homes will have stickers in their windows, plus also a lamppost signs in their street.

- This not only puts an offender off, but saves 1,650 police hours because officers are able to spend time investigating other crimes.
- Craig detailed that Bounds Green has an 81% SmartWater saturation.
- Tottenham Green has a 67.8% saturation.
- What accounts for this lower rate?
- The team struggle to catch people when they are home (they normally deliver between 9am and 9pm), but do leave a note asking the occupier to call a number to arrange an appointment for police to return with the SmartWater.
- This delivery time changes depending on the time of year. Summer affords longer days/more daylight versus the opposite in winter.
- In Alexandra, 524 of 614 kits have been delivered – they have reached saturation.
- Use of SmartWater has proven a 35% reduction in crime over London.
- The team have been able to record 3 years' worth of crime data (e.g. residential burglaries) where they have delivered and want the trending towards crime reduction to be even better in Phase 2 and Phase 3.

Q: How can you be sure the reduction in crime is due to MetTrace?

A: We measure against other areas of burglaries that are not using SmartWater.

- Apart from SmartWater, there is also a high visibility of officers/neighbourhood policing teams in the locations where kits are delivered, which is a visual deterrent.
- The Met waited six months to purchase SmartWater and Haringey was the first Borough to use it.

Q: Any evidence of the displacement of burglars?

A: Evidence of this has been seen in Islington, yes. There is less crime occurring, which could be due to a combination of both displacement and fewer incidents in general.

Q: Have any SmartWater kits been delivered to Tower Block flats?

A: Yes, kits have been dispersed in some Tower Blocks.

Q: How many?

A: Cannot say for certain. Is there an issue?

Q: Some flats have been missing kits.

A: We can speak more about this after the meeting. However in general, boundaries can sometimes be fuzzy. The North side of a neighbourhood might be taken into account, but the South side might be included for the next round. This is true even for flats along the same road. Maybe the top of the road falls into the boundary, but the bottom of the road doesn't for the time being. An exclusion has nothing to do with the type of property – it's in relation to geographical boundaries.

Q: Some Neighbourhood Watch members may be curious as to why certain areas are excluded and may solicit a clearer response as to why that is. Is it possible to share details on “neighbourhood blocks” rather than quoting particular areas?

A: If a household has not received a kit, then it’s because they experience less crime than other areas and may receive SmartWater in a different phase/year. The operational focus at the moment is on areas where more crime is experienced.

Q: What is the kit?

A: Smartwater is a small vial of a special type of water that acts like an applicant, similar to lip gloss, and dries clear. SmartWater remains active for up to 7 years, with immunity against household bleaches and associated chemicals. With the SmartWater kit comes a window sticker and an information leaflet on the product.

4. Guest Speaker: DCI Marco Bardetti - Gangs and Gang Crime in Haringey

- Marco is from Haringey - born and bred - and works at the moment in Tottenham and Hornsey on serious assaults, serious frauds, robbery and non-domestic, stranger attacks.
 - This type of critical crime is up 20%, specifically in North London.
 - Current initiatives the team are we are working on are:
 - MetTrace
 - Reduction in burglary
 - Reduction in robbery
 - Reduction in motor vehicle crime
 - The team monitor the top 5 burglars on the street and catch them when they trip up/through an offence they commit.
 - A high proportion of those who commit burglary and motor vehicle crime have a drug addiction.
 - The motor vehicle penalty is not a lot unfortunately.
 - MetTrace use “sting” operations to catch offenders in the act.
 - “Decoy” cars are placed in strategic areas, kitted with cameras and SmartWater contraptions. Miscellaneous property that will entice an offender is placed in the car, so when the offender breaks into the car to remove/steal the property, the SmartWater spray goes off thus tagging that offender and providing evidence of them breaking the law.
- Q:** Is any type of property (e.g. a shared flat where residents are out during the day) prone to being burgled?

- A:** It comes down to security. If the place is left insecure with unlocked doors or windows, overflowing letters in the post box etc., it doesn't matter how affluent the area or how good the alarm, security will be compromised and there lies the risk.
- For example, if you/your neighbour go on holiday, then perhaps you can offer to hold their post for them so that burglars would not know that the flat will be unoccupied for an extended period of time. It may also be possible to contact the local post office to temporarily hold post.
 - A Neighbourhood Watch member relayed that this might not be possible. Marco took the action to check whether holding post was an option at post offices.
 - In terms of burglary rates, winter months are slower due to the colder weather and there are more burglars out and about on the weekend than on the weekdays.
 - As previously mentioned moped crime is up e.g. mobile phone theft.

Q: Is it true that moped riders are no longer chased by police?

A: Yes, this is true. We cannot chase mopeds as officers can be liable for criminal prosecution e.g. manslaughter charges if something happened to the offender while being chased. Officers can observe and "contain" the offender, for example, by putting things in their way.

Q: Is it possible to tackle that frustration with legislation?

A: Not really. Liable is liable. Yes, the offender is a menace to the community, but so long as they don't have a knife to someone's throat, it's risky to chase.

- Camden/Islington, Westminster, Crouch End are all hot spots for moped robberies of smartphones. Offenders target their activities to coincide with the next "technology release" and are more often than not driven by drugs/have established offending history.
- Where there is a prevalence of this type of offence, you will see Met officers on bikes/horses. The aim is to target the offender before they get on the bikes.

Q: Is there some responsibility on the public to be more careful when using their phones?

A: Yes.

- A member conveyed that there is not enough publicity around this type of offence and that it would be good to know more about how to deal with it.
- Marco suggested that the Met do communicate via the local papers, however it is often the case that murders/other serious crime often dominate the pages. The police do release campaigns around new mobile phone releases such as iPhones.
- Marco walked members through his work on gang related crime and mentioned that he ran this unit for 18 months.
- Marco recounted an incident in which 25 firearms were seized in relation to the Kosovo and Serbian conflict.

- Once a firearm is seized, DNA analysis is requested to identify to whom the property belongs.
- Offenders now hide firearms in baby cots, unbeknown to the baby's mother.
- Gangs used to be identified by the type of bandana they wore. This is something that does not tend to happen now.
- Applying for a search warrant enables officers to take advantage of targeted intelligence (e.g. there are guns and drugs in a house). There are no "no-go" areas.
- Police also use targeted intelligence on the street to saturate target areas that are known for crime proliferation.
- These incidents are not in relation to Mafia activity.
- Street gangs prey upon controlling drug turf and engage in activity based on violence and control.
- Class B drugs (cannabis) – these are the drugs of choice.
- Heroin, Cocaine - these drugs are expensive to buy.
- Street gangs base themselves around an estate and operate as an organised criminal network.
- Haringey currently has worst knife crime figures.
- Marco relayed that in the last 6 months more police have been on the beat to tackle this issue. E.g. Northumberland Park is a key area of interest.
- In July 2015 legislation changed around knife offences.
- If an offender is charged for the second time with a knife offense, the police can apply to the courts to give the offender a minimum of 6 months in jail. The courts are accommodating to such requests.
- Marco also works on "weapon sweep" initiatives and detailed how 60 knives were seized the previous Monday.
- Offenders are not stealing elaborate knives. Very simple kitchen knives are being used in offences.
- Amnesty bins have been set up around the area where knives can be deposited – no questions asked.
- There are 11 main gangs in Haringey.
- Gang members work like soldiers, they are told what to do, and are dispatched where they are needed.
- There can exist a type of rivalry or dispute between gangs, for example over money or women, and when the gangs clash/retaliate it can be detrimental (Wood Green has a dispute with Tottenham, with Lordship Lane as the fighting ground).
- If officers show up at a location and someone has died in a suspected gang attack, officers ask themselves these key questions:
 - Who was the deceased?

- What were their gang affiliates?
- Did they have a criminal history?
- Officers will then warn the gangs and let them know that they are being watched.
- Every week there is a multi-agency meeting where different networks come together and go through risk issues.
- The aim is to prevent and minimise violence between groups by sharing information and coordinating intervention plans.

Q: Are all these gang members male?

A: Yes. Of the 202 known gang members, all are men. Women are used/traded/exploited sexually, or used as the pushers of drugs. They are the victims.

Q: Do gang members control prostitution?

A: No, it's those who sit above the gang members.

- What can the Neighbourhood Watch communities do?
- Be the Met's eyes and ears. Marco's team maximise these types of speaking opportunities to involve the community and leverage community relationships.
- Haringey is infamous for its gangs, so help the Met sort through the issues.
- Ex-offenders are sometimes solicited to speak with youngsters, and social services, child services, family members and friends. Church communities are also used to investigate more around this topic. Some church members are also being trained to spot the signs of someone being involved in gang behaviour/being part of a gang.

Q: 202 known members in Haringey

A: It's an exclusive club. Gangs form out of defence and members change affiliate gangs all the time. The statistic quoted is just the number of members we are aware of. It could be 5 times that many.

Q: When gang members/gangs navigate to other parts of the country how do you tackle it?

A: The National Crime Agency helps us to police according to County lines. Every gang member has a police record, so wherever they go, Marco will know about it. Some Country officers will target trains for their patrols because there is gang movement all the time.

Q: The Mark Duggan shooting in 2011 was notorious. Has there been a backlash since the Jermaine Baker shooting?

A: No, they are standalone events. The positive community reaction was remarkable.

5. Acting Inspector Lorna Taylor – update on Safer Neighbourhoods, question and answer session.

- Inspector Taylor is In charge of the North Cluster and provided an update about bogus doorstep charity collections.

Q: My Ward never sees police on the beat. What is the policy on this? Is it still 3 PCSOs, 2 PCs, and a Sergeant?

A: 1 Sergeant, 1 Dedicated Ward Officer and 1 PCSO. There are a number of officers aligned to a Ward and patrol in shift patterns. There has been a shift pattern change, which means that the officers are more visible out on the streets (i.e. more visible during the day).

Q: You're saying this is so, but it's not in place. There is no one on the streets. Please take this feedback and tell those in charge. Also, due to the budget cuts, the smaller offices are no longer there/have closed, which means that some officers need to travel far to get to their wards. It's not ideal.

A: Each ward has a dedicated PCSO. It's not economical to have bases everywhere. I know it's not ideal but it's the best we've got.

Q: Ducketts Common seems to have incidents involving gangs. Are there gang against gang issues here?

A: Yes, we have ongoing operations taking place here.

Q: Westbury Avenue and the High Road accumulate a lot of people. People smoking etc. what is being done about this?

A: There are disposal zones. We tell loiterers to leave the area. If they come back then they get arrested. There are a lot of plain clothes officers.

Q: These individuals loiter between 3pm and 8am. Who is working during those hours to disperse them?

A: The latest we work is to 2am. Speak with your dedicated Ward Officer if issues arise outside of these times.

Q: Do you conduct a lot of weapon sweeps? E.g. on a weekly basis?

A: Not as many as before.

Q: There are groups of beggars in my area. They come, disappear and then come back using techniques to prey on elderly or vulnerable people. Is there anything we can do?

A: Yes call us on 101 or your local Safer Neighbourhood Team. They have been possibly displaced from some other area. ASBOs can no longer be issued. If this is a grave issue where you are then I will take a note to get someone to call you about this.

- Inspector Taylor provided an update since October and detailed that pick-pocketing and purse and bag dipping is still prevalent. This type of crime is often seen in crowded areas, busy shopping centres and on public transport.
- Shopping trolleys with handbags left unattended are common.

- A member suggests having supermarkets warn people not to leave their bags unattended.
- Inspector Taylor mentioned that shops have been providing a lot of help. For example, Primark had an issue with pick-pocketing and decided to help their situation by displaying crime prevention signs and asking staff to proactively tell people to watch their bags.
- H&M did not want to help.
- Some people can be watching you for a while. They are looking for your inattention.
- Pauline had brought some purse/bag cables along to the meeting and invited members to take one.
- Inspector Taylor explained that the gradual tensioning system of the cables helps to ensure that if in the event a thief does attempt to remove a purse, the victim can be aware of this and will not be harmed or pulled over as the cable will extend 10 times.

Q: There seems to be a lot of crime prevention activities to mitigate incidents on Wood Green High Road. What about Tottenham?

A: It has to do with the volume of people. The quiet places will not gain the same type of police attention.

- Inspector Taylor mentioned that there is a focus for the Met to be more Social Media savvy and advocates for members to follow the Met on Twitter. You can read success stories, get some crime prevention advice and information on statistics [@MPSHaringey](#).

- Inspector Taylor mentioned an incident that went viral on social media.
- A woman used a phone to record someone stealing luggage.
- The footage went viral and officers from the Safer Transport Police were able to get the culprit. The offender spent 9 months in jail.

Q: Sometimes you don't know that a crime has taken place or is until you go onto Twitter. Reporting/logging crimes via 101 is good; however is there a similar way to report a crime via social media?

A: On the MPS website. If you navigate to "Report a Crime" you can ask to be called back.

Q: Why is dialling 101 so expensive?

A: It costs 16p to call 101 from a mobile or landline and you are not charged any more even if you are on the call for a long time. This is charged by your phone operator, not the police.

6. Any other business

- Any advice for future topics or speakers would be great, assuming they are relevant to Neighbourhood Watch.