



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Neighbourhood Watch has suffered with a poor image in the recent past, with members dubbed curtain-twitchers or nosey neighbours. More recently it has become regarded as beneficial to a neighbourhood, helping to reduce crime and helping to create a community spirit amongst neighbours.

Neighbourhood policing teams have been greatly reduced, and bobbies on beats are now a thing of the past. The police are looking to Neighbourhood Watch members to be their eyes and ears and report suspicious activities. They also look on the members to keep their neighbours informed of risks and pass on advice about safety and security.

Although East Cambridgeshire has low crime figures when compared nationally, and continues to be a safe place to live and work, nevertheless, home owners need to ensure that their homes and vehicles are safe and secure. Most burglars are 'opportunists' and break into homes that are easy targets and thus good security and basic precautions reduce the chance of your home being targeted.

Neighbourhood Watch is not just there to reduce crime but to build local communities and encourage people to be more neighbourly. When Neighbourhood Watch started over 40 Years ago it was not necessary to ask people to chat to their neighbours, most were chatting away over the garden fence. This is no longer part of modern life, people are more isolated in their own homes, often not knowing the names of those that live two or three houses along the street from them. We want people to feel at home in their community, and have neighbours they can call on if they feel the need.

For a neighbourhood watch scheme to exist, it needs a coordinator, the person that acts as a leader and administrator and it needs to be registered. The coordinator then sets up a means of communicating with their neighbours, either by email, Facebook or WhatsApp. The aim is to inform the members of crimes and potential crimes and encourage them to take appropriate safety measures. This includes passing on advise on how to reduce their risk of being defrauded by the many types of scams that are now current.

If your part of Burwell is not covered by neighbourhood watch and you wish to be part of this endeavour, please contact the secretary, Kevin Evans at ecnhwa@hotmail.com or on 01353 614892.