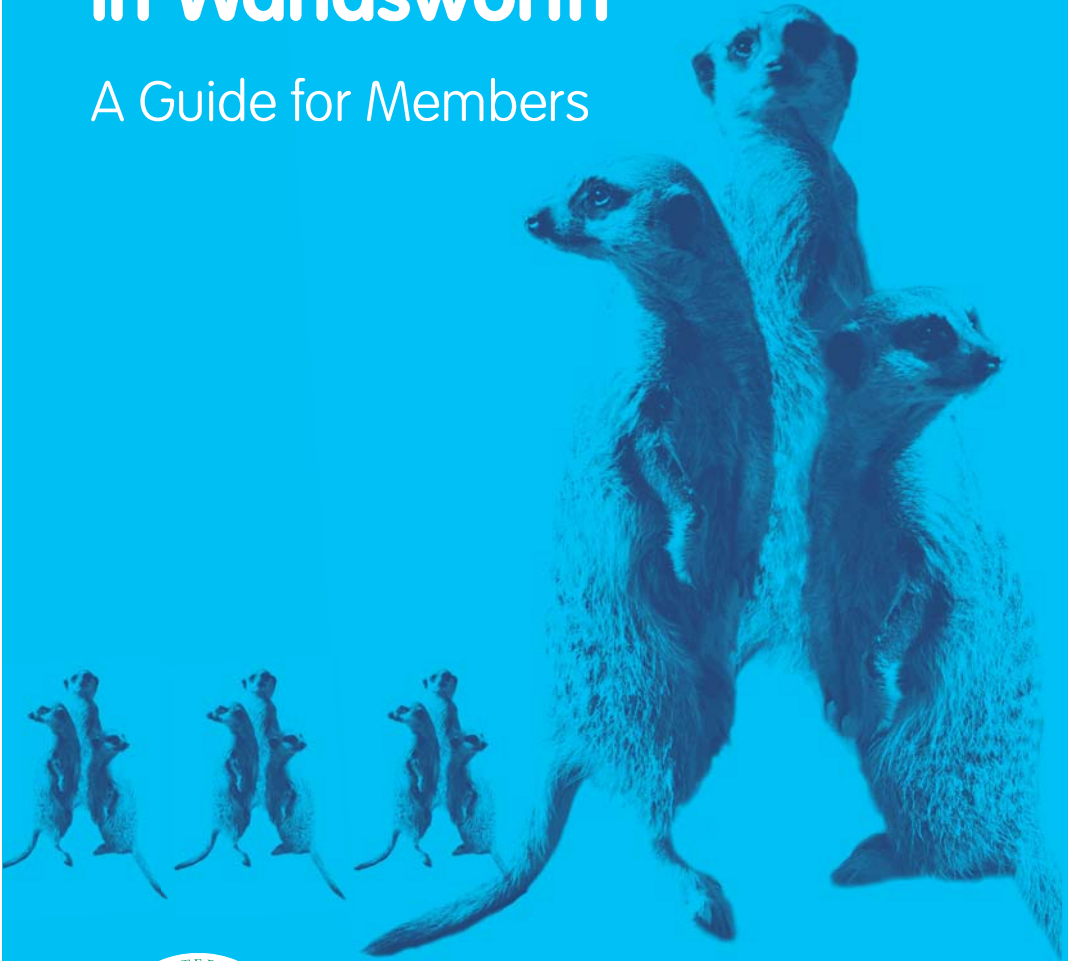


Neighbourhood Watch in Wandsworth

A Guide for Members



Wandsworth Council
Technical Services Department

Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Getting to know your neighbours	4
Home Security	5
Home Safety	6
Keeping an eye on vulnerable neighbours	7
What should you report and how?	8
What should you do if you or your neighbour become a victim of crime?	9
What are the benefits of being a member of Neighbourhood Watch?	10
Useful numbers	11
Home self-assessment	12



Foreword

Wandsworth Council is a proud supporter of Neighbourhood Watch and the incredible work its members do every day to make Wandsworth a safer place and reduce the fear of crime.

Wandsworth is inner London's safest borough, but that cannot be a cause for complacency.

By being part of an active Neighbourhood Watch you will get help in making your own property safer, but also show - through the distinctive Watch signs and stickers - that you are part of an active community and that you look out for one another; a major deterrent to would-be criminals.

This guide has been put together to outline some of the actions you can take and some of the help we can offer. I hope you find it useful, but if there's any help or advice you need don't hesitate to call one of the numbers at the back of the guide; we're here to help you make your neighbourhood safer.



James Cousins
Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Community Safety



Introduction

Neighbourhood Watch has been around since 1982 and is proven to reduce crime and the fear of crime in local neighbourhoods. Initially set up to tackle burglary, it now covers the whole range of crime and anti-social behaviour as well as helping to build that all-important sense of neighbourhood.

The Co-ordinator who looks after your Watch will have close links with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) who have responsibility for the safety and security of the Ward. Also they will link with the Council's Community Safety team who look after the scheme. All Co-ordinators in Wandsworth are Police checked before they are signed up.

Now that you are a member of a Neighbourhood Watch what are your responsibilities?

Getting to know your neighbours

Simply knowing who your neighbours are can play a major part in reducing crime, since people are more likely to recognise, and therefore report, strangers who should not be there. It might be as simple as saying hello to each other in the street so you can recognise someone out of place. You may also know, for example, that a neighbour is having some work done reassuring you that a stranger with ladders isn't going to burgle them.



Home Security

Being part of Neighbourhood Watch means taking some responsibility for your own security. Simple steps will help avoid falling victim to a burglar. You can accomplish this with some very simple and cheap steps.

- Ensuring you have a good five lever mortise lock fitted to your door and that all your windows - especially on the ground floor - can be locked.
- Using timer switches when you are away from home for an extended period.
- Keeping your keys away from the front door. There have been a number of burglaries when keys were reached through the letterbox using a 'fishing rod' device.
- If you live in a house with a side entrance, having a lockable side gate and sensor lights in the back garden
- Marking the property in your home with your postcode and property number using a permanent marker pen, and photographing unique and precious items.
- You might want to register your property with the free Immobilise service, which the Police will check against any property they recover.
- You could also use our FLASH (Fires, Locks and Safer Homes) service, which provides free home security and fire safety advice to residents in Wandsworth – see Useful Numbers at the end of this guide.



Home Safety

Neighbourhood Watch has traditionally been linked with the Police, but in Wandsworth Neighbourhood Watch has been an innovator in seeking new partnerships. One of our key partners is the London Fire Brigade who increasingly focus on preventing fires happening in the first place.

Smoke alarms don't prevent fires but they give you time to get out of your home safely and raise the alarm by calling the Fire Brigade. If you have a smoke alarm make sure you check the battery at least once a month.

The Fire Brigade will fit smoke alarms FREE for those who don't have them and at the same time will carry out a home fire safety check. This will assist you in dealing with things that may cause a fire in your home.

We have included a simple self-assessment form in this guide but why not call in the experts? All you need to do is call this number and make an appointment to suit you - 0800 0284 428.



Keeping an eye on vulnerable neighbours

There are two particularly nasty types of criminal that target our most vulnerable neighbours:

Distraction burglars

Distraction burglary is exactly what it sounds like: they often work together and whilst one 'distracts' the owner the other looks for money and valuables. Many older and vulnerable people do not report this crime, thinking they may have mislaid the stolen property or just because they feel ashamed for falling victim. If you or any of your neighbours do become a victim it is important to report it.

By reporting the incident to the police they will:

- have a greater understanding of how big a problem distraction burglary is in Wandsworth;
- be able to put more resources in the areas where the burglars tend to go.

By also telling other people like your neighbours, families and friends you may help to prevent other people from becoming victims.

Rogue traders

These people again will knock on the door say they are working in the area and will point out something like a loose tile on the person's roof or that their drive needs resurfacing. They grossly over charge the person and then come back again and again taking more money each time. They may even charge without doing any work.

Helping prevent this type of crime doesn't take much, it's just a case of being a good neighbour - the backbone of a good Neighbourhood Watch. Just keeping a watchful eye on those that may be vulnerable and letting the Community Safety team know if you see anything suspicious will mean we can alert the Police and Trading Standards and get these criminals caught.



What should you report and how?

- If you believe a crime is taking place then you should call 999 – don't hesitate, the emergency services would rather get a well-intentioned call that isn't an emergency than no call at all.
- If you need to report something that has happened but you are not witnessing it at the time then you should call the Wandsworth Police non-emergency number - 0300 123 1212.
- You can report non-urgent crime at www.online.met.police.uk

There is also a lot of information that your local Police SNT would like to know about, for example any anti-social behaviour like noisy neighbours, abusive and threatening behaviour by both young people or adults and dangerous dogs.

Your SNT can also help with other issues, for example if you are concerned about a particular neighbour the SNT can check to make sure everything is okay.

The Council can also help in some circumstances by dealing with noise nuisance or graffiti, the contacts at the end of this guide contain useful numbers to report these.



What should you do if you or your neighbour becomes a victim of crime?

If you return home and you think someone is in your home who shouldn't be there you should phone 999 immediately. Tell the Police that there are suspects in your home and wait outside for them to come.

If you return home and it is clear that someone has broken into your home but they have already gone then phone the Police non-emergency number to report you have been burgled. Try not to touch anything until the investigating officers have been – there may be important evidence that could be disturbed, such as fingerprints.

What are the benefits of being a member of a Watch?

Being part of an active community who are looking out for one another provides reassurance and peace of mind, whether to those who live on their own and feel isolated or those concerned about leaving their home unoccupied while on holiday.

Advertising your Neighbourhood Watch is vital to its success. As a member you will get a sticker for your window. Street Signs will also be put up - these act as a deterrent, highlighting that there is an active scheme in the road or the block of flats.

The Council's Community Safety team produce a quarterly newsletter for all members containing some very useful seasonal crime prevention tips and community safety advice. Your copy will be delivered to you by you local Co-ordinator.

Both your SNT and the Council's Community Safety team have a wealth of knowledge and expertise. These resources are available to all residents in the borough, however being part of a Watch means you can tap into a proven successful network.

Finally many insurance companies know that being part of the scheme does help to reduce crime, particularly burglary. Often this will be recognised with a discount on your home contents policies.

All these things and more are brought to a community with Neighbourhood Watch.



Useful Numbers

- General community safety advice (020) 8871 6567
- Neighbourhood Watch team (020) 8871 8919
- Police non-emergency 0300 123 1212
- London Fire Brigade 0800 028 4428
(For FREE smoke alarm fitting and fire safety checks)
- Anti-social Behaviour Unit (020) 8871 8894
- Graffiti removal (020) 8871 7049
- Noise nuisance (private property) (020) 8871 7869
- Noise nuisance (Council property) (020) 8871 7490
- Trading Standards (020) 8871 7720
- Parks Police/Dog control (020) 8871 7532
- Victim Support (020) 7223 1234
- Wandsafe Burglary Aftercare (020) 8871 6950
(For first time victims of burglary)
- Council emergency control (020) 8871 6000
- FLaSH (020) 7223 1234
(Fire, Locks and Safer Homes –
for FREE lock fitting and fire safety advice)
- CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111

REMEMBER – ALWAYS CALL 999 IN AN EMERGENCY

Your local Co-ordinator is:



Home self-assessment

Go through this checklist and see how many you can tick off:

- 1. Is the cooker hob turned off when it is left unattended? Yes No
- 2. Are matches and lighters kept in a safe place away from young children? Yes No
- 3. If someone in your home smokes, are cigarettes always put out properly and ashtrays emptied carefully? Yes No
- 4. If you have candles at home, are they always put out when you leave the room? Yes No
- 5. Is there just one plug per socket in your home? Yes No
- 6. Do you unplug your TV at night? Yes No
- 7. Is there at least one smoke alarm in your home? Yes No
- 8. If you have a smoke alarm, does it have a working battery? Yes No
- 9. Do you test your smoke alarm regularly? Yes No
- 10. Do you have an escape plan to help you get out if there's a fire at home? Yes No
- 11. Does everyone living in your home know how to call the Fire Brigade if needed? Yes No
- 12. Do you know what you should say to the Fire Brigade when you get through? Yes No
- 13. Does your front door have two locks? Yes No
- 14. Are all your windows lockable, especially any on the ground floor or accessible levels? Yes No



If you have difficulty understanding this in English, please contact:
Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751

English

إذا واجهت صعوبة في فهمه باللغة الإنجليزية، يرجى الاتصال بـ:
Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751

Arabic

যদি আপনার এটি ইংরেজিতে বুঝতে অসুবিধা হয় তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে এখানে যোগাযোগ
করুন: Wandsworth Interpreting Service (020) 8871 5751

Bengali

如果你看不懂英文版，請聯繫：

Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751

Chinese

Si vous avez des difficultés à comprendre ce texte en anglais, veuillez
contacter: Wandsworth Interpreting Service (020) 8871 5751

French

અગર તે અંગ્રેજીમાં સમજવી મુશ્કેલ લાગે તો મહેરબાની કરીને
Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751 પર સંપર્ક કરો.

Gujarati

W razie problemów ze zrozumieniem tekstu w języku angielskim prosimy
o kontakt z: Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751

Polish

Se tem dificuldades em compreender isto em Inglês, por favor,
contacte: Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751

Portuguese

Hadday kugu adag tahay inaad ku fahamto Ingriis faclan la xiriir:
Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751

Somali

Si tiene dificultad para entenderlo en inglés favor contactar a:
Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751

Spanish

இதை ஆங்கிலத்தில் புரிந்துகொள்வதில் சிரமம் இருந்தால் நீங்கள் தொடர்புகொள்ள
வேண்டியது: Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751

Tamil

اگر آپ کو انگریزی میں اسے سمجھنے میں دشواری کا سامنا ہو تو براہ کرم رابطہ کریں:

Urdu

Wandsworth Interpreting Service: (020) 8871 5751

For further information or to receive
this booklet in a different format please contact
the Community Safety Division,
Technical Services Department on (020) 8871 7696
or email dtscommunitysafety@wandsworth.gov.uk.